

THE ROTUNDA

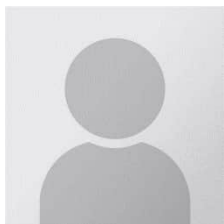
IPMS Birmingham Newsletter - August 2023

INTERNATIONAL PLASTIC
IPMS Birmingham
MODELLERS SOCIETY (UK)

Wombourne Show, Ships in the pink, Mythological Panzer & DRAGONS!



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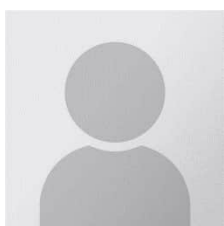
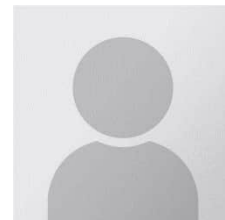


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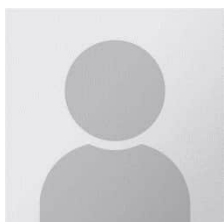
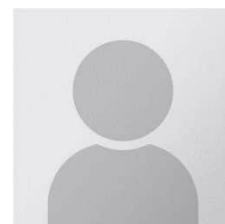


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FROM THE CHAIR

The view 'From The Chair'

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Something for August

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From the Chair, August 2023

Where does the time go? As I write this, it is already September; mornings are already getting darker and birds are starting their migrations for winter. Yet it feels like Easter was only yesterday and Christmas a couple of weeks ago, not a few months away... but there is still plenty to fit in before the end of the year.

We have the Blue Lamp Expo coming up; preparations are well underway for the club display and it promises to be an excellent show. I am rather upset that work commitments mean I am unable to attend our most local show, but I hope if you have an hour or two to spare you will be able to go and take a look and show support for our most local modelling event. I hope someone will take plenty of pictures as I'd love to see some featured in this wonderful newsletter!



Thoughts are also focussing now on Telford and Scale Model World. There is still time to get a few final kits finished and ready for our club display. The Really Wild SIG has been promised a 12ft space to fill as well, and hopefully will be situated next to or at least within reach of the Birmingham Club Stand. I have been madly painting in whatever few hours I have spare in the evening over the last few weeks so will be adding a few more submissions to our mythology theme. As you all know I am huge fan of this versatile theme and I'm looking forward to seeing all of the submissions at Telford.

On this note, I strongly encourage everyone to put forward at least one model for the table, theme related if possible but anything will be amazing. We have a broad spectrum of interests and you lot are a talented bunch, so let's take the opportunity to showcase our versatility and talents to the whole world!

We also have the AGM approaching in November, which will include voting in the committee for next year. Unless anyone has a burning desire to step up, I am happy to continue in the role as Chair for next year; once we get to November my work hours are shorter for the winter, so I will actually be able to attend some meetings in person again, if only to remind you all of what I look like. I have missed you lot, so I hope you've been behaving in my absence!

I am personally saddened to hear that Martin has decided to step down as Newsletter Editor, though I do understand and accept his reasons for doing so. Martin has done a phenomenal job over the last 5 years of keeping the newsletter running, especially during Covid and lockdowns, and his enthusiasm for our club has been inspiring. He has fought to keep the newsletter fresh, relevant and interesting while trying to drum up support and filling in contributions, as well as reminding a certain absent-minded Chair of looming deadlines, while remaining patient and understanding as said deadlines sail merrily by... sorry, Martin!! In short, you will be missed, and I thank you for your years of service in presenting this newsletter.

We will therefore need someone to step up to edit the newsletter, so please give some thought to whether this role might interest you. The newsletter is written by the members, for the members, and is a wonderful feature of our fantastic club, so please - if you have any questions or are interested in the role, please contact Martin or any other member of the committee for more information.

I hope that you are all well and enjoying the end of summer. My thanks, as ever, to my fellow committee members who are doing a sterling job of keeping everything ship shape and running smoothly.

Happy modelling!

Gem

Branch Secretary Report Sept 2023

Thank you to Martin, Chris and Dean for attending the Avon Show with myself. We had a successful show and our stand attracted a large number of people.

We are booked to attend both Wombourne Show on Sunday 3rd September and The Blue Lamp Show on Sunday 17th September. Please make an attempt to attend these shows as they are very local to us. The Blue Lamp show is also doubling as a club meeting so do not go to the usual venue. There will be a club competition so make sure you let in this instance Martin know you are attending with models for the competition, a change is that the public will also get a vote !

Scalemodel World is not far away. For IPMS members entry is free with your IPMS Membership Card and opens at 9am on both days. If you are not an IPMS member then you have to buy tickets online from the IPMS website and entry is from 10am, there is still time to join IPMS and get free entry.

Can you please let George and myself know asap what models you are intending to display at SMW, any model from the competition table is eligible and normally a max of 5 per person. We would also like any beer mat challenge entries from any year to showcase that competition. We will be setting up on the Friday (myself, Chris and Andy) and hopefully will arrange a collection time but if not models can go onto the table early on Saturday or Sunday. Remember though club members must take home their own models from the display and on Sunday we would like all attending to stay and help take down the stand. The show will be 3 halls, over 100 traders are now confirmed but despite optimism from the National Committee it now looks like there are few if any overseas traders (oh the joy of Brexit!).

Build nights have become very well attended, often 10-12 a session and especially pleasing is the number of new Members attending these. If you haven't been to one do try and come along. As a challenge we are proposing a speed build night of an Airfix starter kit for the December build night, only using what is provided in the kit. Let Martin know if you will be attending and taking part so we can ensure we have the right number of kits.

Stephen Baker
IPMS Birmingham Branch Secretary

IPMS Birmingham	Club Meetings Shows	Attending show
	Club meetings, Sundays, 3.30-6.00pm Midweek Build Night, Thursdays 7.00-10.00pm Longbridge Methodist Church B45 9TY	
2023		
September 3rd	Wombourne Show	yes
September 7 th	Midweek Club Meeting (Build Night)	
September 17 th	Club meeting (meeting cancelled, attending Blue Lamp show) Blue Lamp Show	yes
October 5th	Midweek Club Meeting (Build Night)	
October 15 th	Club Meeting + AGM	
November 2nd	Midweek Club Meeting (Build Night)	
November 11 th /12 th	Scale ModelWorld, Telford	Yes
November 19th	Club Meeting Beer mat challenge	
December 7 th	Midweek Club Meeting (Build Night) speed build of Airfix Sarter Kit	
December 17 th	Club Meeting-Christmas Party	
2024		
November 9 th /10th	Scale ModelWorld, Telford (60 th Anniversary)	yes

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EDITOR'S CORNER

I've gone a little mad in the last few months; I've actually built quite a lot of kits and actually finished them.

There are a couple of builds that are still on the Shelf-of-Doom but a lot of other builds have progressed or completed.

Since the end of July I've finished a whole TWELVE builds. Admittedly, two of them are refurbishments but ones I'd planned, which includes one of my "Original" kits.

Two of the new kits are MT Minatures resin ship kits, which are essentially just a paint job on a resin mould of the ships but I still had to prime and paint it all as well as do a little bit of modelling.

In addition, I've got another refurb in progress that just needs some decal work and it's done as well.

Admittedly, I've slowed down a little recently, but it does mean I've made quite a dent in my stash, including getting a couple of Theme builds and a Three-of-a-Kind that sat incomplete for over two-years, with only one of the three built before this year!

Speaking of builds, a number of people have either taken on Gareth's kits, or are building kits in his memory. I think it would be a nice tribute if both the Hunter SiG table and our main table were able to have some sort of display in Gareth's memory, so if you are working on something and can have it finished for Scale Model World, I do think that will be a great way to pay tribute to him.



A few months ago, someone asked me how many small-scale ships I have actually built. I did a count not so long ago. Let's just say, it's a large number!

My Post-WWII Royal Navy count stands at 20. Not a small number, but not insane. But my WWI-WWII Royal Navy... oh boy. Thirty Five is the total count, although I have

plans for that to grow and there are a number of ships in the stash that will increase this number.

So yeah, that's a large number!

Add in the 12 ships from other nations and I'm closing in on triple figures for small-scale builds. No wonder I fill shelf space as fast as I can create it!!

Something For August

We're into what I call "Show Season" now. We had the Avon show, on the 3rd of September was the Wombourne show, a regular fixture in our calendar and on the 17th is the Blue Lamp Expo.

October is then a break before Scale Model World in November with December then our "Award Season"; with the Christmas Party and 2023 trophy giving.

A quick note on the Blue Lamp Expo, which is occurring on the 17th of September, which is our usual meeting date. Because of this, we are not having a meeting at Longbridge Methodist Church and will be attending the show instead.

We are running our monthly competition at the show, giving passers by the opportunity to get involved and help vote for the winning build. It is (As far as I know) an innovation for us, so thank you to everyone who has shown enthusiasm for it, I'm hoping it'll be a good draw for passers-by at the show.

If you are entering a build into September's competition, send the details to myself and bring your entries to the show. I will make sure that there is plenty of time for votes to be cast.

Final Thought

September and October are the last two months for this year's competition and George has asked for a first call for trophies to start to be returned to him ahead of the award-giving in September.

If you received a Trophy last year, please make an effort to get it back to George.

George may well contact individuals directly but asked for a newsletter call.

Membership

Just a reminder that as we are now past May, club membership rises to £25 for the rest of the year.

IPMS BIRMINGHAM

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WhatsApp Group

We have established a Club WhatsApp Group for general chat, sharing pictures, and generally giving members another way to keep in touch on short notice.

If you want to be a part of that please get in touch with one of the committee and we can get you added.



Competition Secretary Role

Hi All

I regret that I am going to have to step down as Competition Secretary for at least the coming year. In November I go into hospital for a major operation, and I'm informed that the recovery process can take several months. As it is I will miss the A.G.M. as the op. is scheduled for November 17th and I can't envisage being able to attend the December branch meeting/prize giving.

I may be back in action sooner than anticipated but I felt it was best to plan for the worst while hoping for the best.

I have informed the Committee already and I'm now looking for someone to take over the reigns for the coming year.

I will get everything prepared in advance for the Dec. meeting and hope that someone will be able to stand in for me. I'll also be able to pass on help, advice and paperwork to my successor.

Best Regards

George

Competition News

We're fast nearing the end of the year for the Competition categories, with just September and October left to make your bid for one or more of the trophies on offer.



As you will hopefully be aware, September's competition is taking place at our table during the Blue Lamp Expo show, a little innovation for us, partly to see if the idea works, promote the club and the things we do at a show and also to ensure we still get September's competition.

But first, the August results:

The well deserving winner was Dave Child with his 1/35 scale Bedford QLR



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Second place went to Martin with the distinctive Italeri 1/72 "Big Cat" Jaguar GR.3 and third place went to Chris Woodrow for his 1/144 Hawker Hunter, probably one of the rarest scales that the competition table sees.

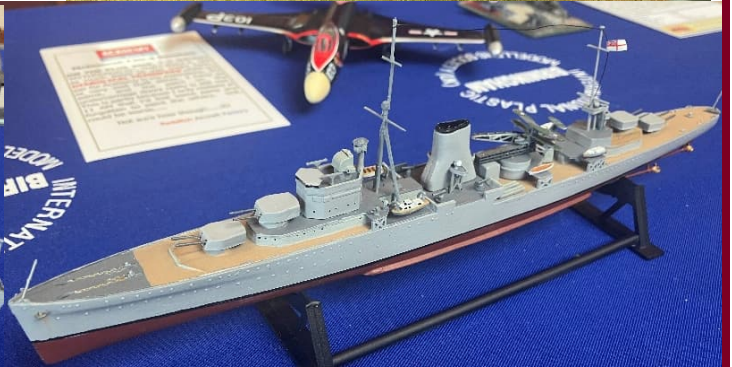


The oddly-reluctant John Duffield came in fourth place with his McDonnell F2H Banshee and rounding out the top five was Martin with the Tamiya 1/700 HMAS Vampire.



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BRANCH COMPETITIONS LIST FOR 2023

COMPETITION	TIMESCALE	SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS
EAGER BEAVER	JAN-OCT	Any modelling subject. One yearly winner - most points acquired over the year.
THEME	JAN-OCT	2023 theme is "MYTHOLOGY" Any model which reflects this theme is eligible. All points gained are also counted for the Eager Beaver Trophy, all entries qualify for T.A.Trophy.
BRANCH CHAMPIONSHIP	DEC	All monthly winners plus Charity Trophy winners return at December (party) meeting. Winner voted by club members.
RON ROWLEY	DEC	Trophy for the member gaining the most certificates as overall monthly competition winner. (Theme & Eager Beaver combined).
BILL NICHOLLS CHARITY TROPHY	DEC-MAR	Donated kits are drawn at random at Dec. meeting. A payment of £5 per kit is levied. Kits should be built and displayed at the April meeting. All proceeds to charity.
HUDSON*	JAN-OCT	Awarded for any conversion - it is not enough to apply different decals and/or colour schemes - winner is the highest scoring conversion of the year. Super-detailing is NOT conversion. Entrants must give details of modifications.
BEST ALL-ROUNDER*	JAN-OCT	Members submit models in at least 4 of the 7 categories (Figures, Military Vehicles, Civil Vehicles, Dioramas, Aircraft, Sci-Fi & Ships). Subjects that have been entered in Eager Beaver are eligible, as this is a "one-off" competition.
JAGUAR*	JAN-OCT	Any subject which can, in any way, be associated with the word Jaguar. Entrants must clarify the link if it is not obvious.
BUSTS, FIGURES & FLATS*	JAN-OCT	Specifically for those who like to model figures in 2D or 3D.

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IVOR DOWE	JAN-OCT	Any diorama in any theme
SCI-FI & FANTASY	JAN-OCT	Any models that link to a science fiction or fantasy theme or setting.
THREE OF A KIND*		Three models on a linked, e.g. 3 variants of the same tank, aircraft, etc. 3 models depicting the evolution of a type - e.g. Mig 15, Mig 17, Mig 19. <i>There must be a strong, well-defined link. All 3 must be entered at same time.</i>
RON ADAMS MEMORIAL*	JAN-OCT	Any ship, vessel, etc whose working environment is on/in/under water
BEST RUSSIAN AIRCRAFT*	JAN-OCT	Any aircraft designed in Russia/USSR, whatever the markings. Alternatively any aircraft of any origin in authentic Russian/Soviet markings
TRANS-ATLANTIC	NOV	A joint effort with Syracuse Branch. Alternate years one branch nominates a theme. Each Branch judges their own models and photos of the other branch's models, they then declare a UK and a US winner.
BEER MATT CHALLENGE	NOV	A mini-diorama set on a base 110mm x 110mm. The diorama must not overlap the edge of the 'matt' and a max of 4 lengths high.

The above table outlines the list of competitions on offer throughout the club year. Following discussions held at the AGM in November 2018 the competitions marked (*) are under review because of poor take-up in previous years; if the trend continues these competitions could be revised or even scrapped.

A Trophy will only be awarded if there is more than one entry in the relevant competition.

In the **10 months Jan to Oct**

A section of the competition table can be set aside for members who wish to display models (complete or part built) but do not wish to enter them in competition.



Sunday 3rd September 2023

ASVC Wombourne Scale Model Show



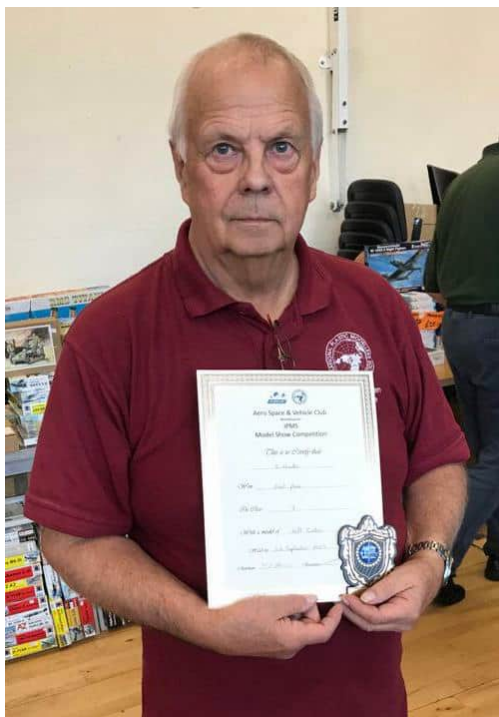
Dave and Christian Child, Harry and Steve Newton, Roland and myself, attended the Wombourne Show held on Sunday 3rd September.

Although a relatively small Show, it is a friendly show with a good atmosphere and well attended by many clubs and traders. (Approx 10 each including Parabellum). So, there was plenty to occupy yourself with.



There was a problem in that there was a charity cricket match over the road, which made parking difficult for visitors. I overheard some traders say that there had been little advertising and that the show was disappointing sales wise.

Personally, I thought the show was well organised on the day. There was a generous raffle, I won a few items worthy of Santa's sack, I somehow missed all the better prizes.



Non-alcoholic drinks were available but no sandwiches etc available. However, a good deli selection was just the other side of the car park.

Steve won one the classes, see picture.

Would I go again, yes most definitely.

Dave Jeffery

Editor Note: Below is a 1/200 scale HMS Rodney that had apparently been modified to be radio-controlled, so an impressive build all round



Mythological

THEME for 2023 (Jan>Oct incl.)

'Armour supplement ONE'

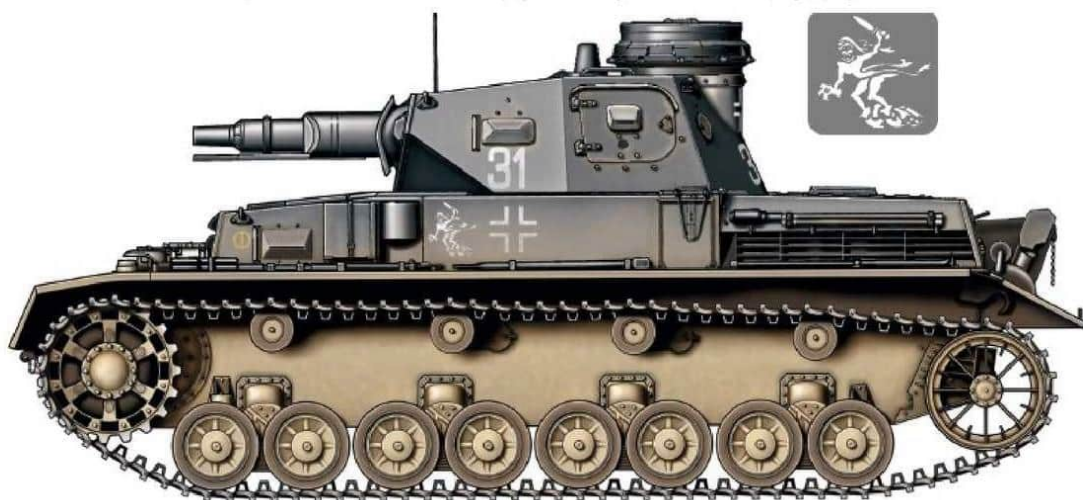
It's been suggested that armour is underrepresented in the mythological theme subjects, well they may not be as numerous as the NEMS machines (aircraft), however there are still quite a few to be considered. I have been studying my OLD (circa 1977 for the original release) Tamiya Panzer IV Ausf D kit #35096 and just realised that two of the decal options on the kits sheet are 'mythological'.

11th Pz Division '**Ghost**' division

5th Pz Division '**Devils head**' division



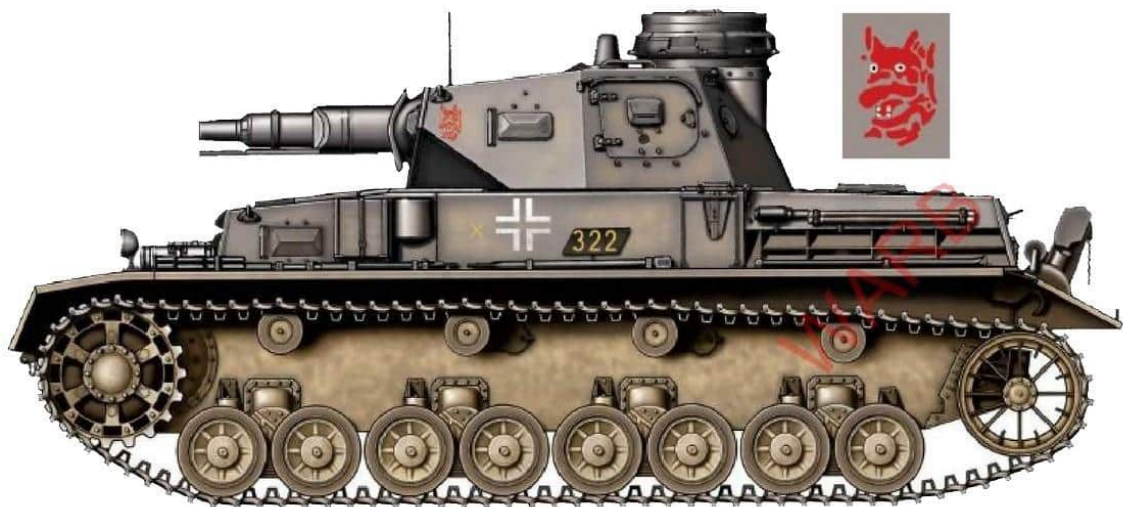
OK, its not a Pz IV but it's the best illustration I have found!



PzKpfw IV Ausf. D 15th Panzer Regiment 11th 'GHOST' Panzer Division – Yugoslavia April 1941

The 11th Panzer Division was an armoured division in the German Army during World War II, established in 1940. The formation's emblem was a 'ghost'.

The division saw action on the Eastern and Western Fronts during the Second World War. The 11th Panzer Division saw action for the first time in the invasion of Yugoslavia in April 1941. Passing through Bulgaria, it arrived in Belgrade and assisted in the capture of that city.

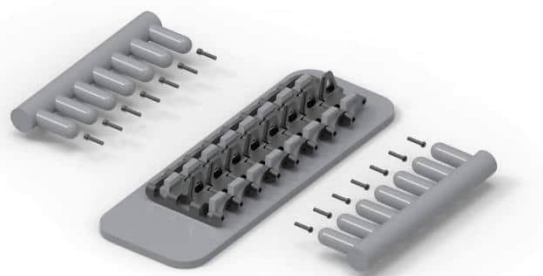


PzKpfw IV Ausf. D 3rd company 31st Panzer Regiment 5th 'DEVILS HEAD' Panzer Division Yugoslavia April 1941

The 5th Panzer Division was formed in Oppeln, now Opole in Poland, on 15 November 1938 as part of a second wave of new armoured divisions in Germany following the creation of the original three tank divisions in 1935. Alongside the 5th Panzer Division, the 4th had been formed in Würzburg five days earlier. The personnel of the division were mainly made up of Silesians and Sudeten Germans, the Sudetenland having been annexed by Germany shortly before.

The division fought in Poland, France, the Balkans and in the Soviet Union; first as part of Army Group Centre (1941–44) and then Army Group North. The division surrendered to Soviet and Western Allied forces in April and May 1945.

I have a MiniArt workable track set (oh hell just found another set, better get another kit!) of early tracks to swap for the vinyl kit tracks which some reviews consider to be wrong pattern/size for the early Ausf D, just hope they fit the sprockets and I have the patience with all the securing pins!!



Kit reviews allude to a lack of details on turret and the hull and the associated shape and detail of hull tools, it's up to you to decide if your going to tackle those issues or simply cover them all up with SNOW!

There are lots of ejection pin marks under the fenders and all the motorisation holes left over from when the kit came with a battery powered motor! Sheet plastic and putty can take care of the lower hull or lots of MUD added: Oh, old Tamiya kits are notorious for open sponsons, so more sheet plastic and putty!



Mythological Mike Feb 2023

Aoshima 1:700 HMS Berwick (HMS Cornwall 56721)

Build Report



When I get a ship kit, I do my research on the class to see if any of the ships have a particularly interesting story. While HMS Cornwall, the original subject of the kit, has a dramatic history, the story of HMS Berwick was more fascinating on several levels.



The kit is largely the same except for a few minor details, most of which are provided in the kit. In fact, Aoshima pack so many additional parts and items into the kit that it has the ability create TEN full turrets for a ship which has just four turrets, or put it another way, I could arm two and half ships!

Extra main guns, heavy AA, torpedoes, light AA, scout planes, lifeboats and rafts, and even a bow deck section are just some of the extras that Aoshima throw in the box. I know why they do it; the County Class is a very varied group of ships that were refit differently throughout their long careers and Aoshima do at least 5, maybe 6 different ships, but rather than package specific sprues, they throw absolutely everything in and just change the box art and instructions each time. It's efficient for Aoshima, keeps my spares topped up and means I can upgrade lower detail kits very easily but it does seem rather silly to have several times the number of parts you actually need.

All of these parts do indeed nicely top up my Royal Navy spares box, although the spare 8" gun barrels found new uses elsewhere.

I take some artistic license with the deck; some are just grey painted but that's boring so I stay with a paint scheme that is a bare wood effect. I use a light brown base layer with a dark-brown wash to give the right tone as well as some texture. I like it and think it works.

One of the interesting things about Berwick is her sporting the infamous Mountbatten Pink camouflage scheme. I'd researched the scheme and then bought a tin of the paint from Sovereign Hobbies. The colour was actually darker than I expected, but given that it is a standard grey with

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venetian red mixed in, and designed to help *lower* the visibility of the ship wearing the paint, it made sense that it wouldn't be the bright pastel pink that you often see depicted in profile drawings.

The Mountbatten Pink was applied at a later stage in Berwick's career and so I did have to adapt the kit slightly to create the tripod mast arrangement, the kit has older pole-masts.

I had to make a couple of adaptations to the fire-control directors, which got radar guidance gubbins later as well as adding the AA gun pod to B and X turrets, a common addition to County Class ships and are included in the previously mentioned All-The-Parts sprues Aoshima provide.



The metal weight that Aoshima provide give the kit some nice heft; it genuinely feels like a substantial item. Two bars are provided, one of which I saved and reused on the build I've done for USS New Jersey.

I also added radar antenna to the top of the masts, previously these were metal decking pieces.

Aoshima ship kits are generally really good; everything lines up, fits really well and requires a small amount of trimming and sanding. Some of the plastic is thicker than it would be, but it means the kits are fairly robust and it's a build that I really enjoyed.

There's plenty of detail to enjoy, and my tweaks to update the ship needed a bit of thought and planning when it came to raiding the spares box, but at the same time it's a reasonably straight forward build and although I've never picked up an Aoshima kit that isn't a ship, I am very positively inclined towards the brand.

At this point I've built a few Royal Navy camo styles, including several Western Approaches schemes, a typical light grey/dark grey Mediterranean scheme and now the Mountbatten Pink and several of them are on County Class cruiser so at some point, perhaps as we get into Autumn and Winter, I do hope at some point to find a way to do some photography to 'test' and compare the camo schemes, just to see if I can capture and demonstrate how effective, or not these schemes are. Should be something fun to play around with.



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The last build photo was one that amused me: I took the finished build outside for some pictures and my cat, Shadow came and sat behind it, which for all the world looked like he was having his photo taken with his completed kit, so here it is for (hopefully) your amusement also.



HMS Berwick (65) - History



HMS Berwick was actually the first of the County Class cruisers to be laid down, with her construction starting on the 15th February 1924, although she was only the fifth to be launched, hitting water on the 30th March 1926 and formally commissioned into the Royal Navy on 15th February 1928.

As I've said before, the County Class design is an example of the Royal Navy being very clever with its designs. Like the "Support Carrier" HMS Unicorn, which absolutely, 100% was not an aircraft carrier.

When it came to cruisers the 10,000 ton displacement limit intentionally made it practically impossible to get a fully balanced heavy cruiser design.

The perfect balance of firepower, protection and speed was basically impossible to achieve within the limit. Germany flat out lied, Japan initially built its ships too lightly and then simply lied. Italy cheated, although no where near as much as Germany. The US Navy and France both managed to come up with well balanced designs, with the French cruiser *Algerie* is widely considered the best all round treaty-compliant design, with the New Orleans class considered the best multi-ship class.

Meanwhile, the British took a different approach. They identified the need for long range and high freeboard (The height from the water to the deck), which meant having to compromise. Speed was not something that the British wanted to compromise, likewise the minimum acceptable armament was eight guns. So it meant armour had to be sacrificed.



However, the British played a trick that is used even to this day in Royal Navy designs; the "Designed For But Not Fitted With" tactic. In the case of the County's, the as-built armour scheme was 4 inch 'boxes' that were installed around the magazines, and a 1 inch splinter belt was fitted on the rest of the sides and turrets.

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This meant the class complied with the treaty regulations while having enough armour to be able to resist destroyer-grade guns. However, in the late 1930's, the ships went through refits, after which they magically reappeared with a full belt of 4.5 inches on the sides... Apparently the Royal Navy had just happened to 'find' a load of armour plates of the right size and thickness to fit the class just laying around in its warehouses... It's almost as if the Royal Navy planned this from the start.

It's widely accepted that this is exactly what the British did, and if you ask me, it's genius.

Initially Berwick deployed to the China Station until 1936 when she was recalled to have her share of the armour the Royal Navy conveniently found laying around, probably while gasping in surprise and asking "Who left *THAT* there? Certainly not us... Don't want to waste it though!"

Among other things, she had the box hanger fitted and had the single 4 inch guns replaced with the twin mounts commonly found on Royal Navy ships and the basic configuration she served WWII.

Her first 'kill' was in March 1940 when she cornered the German Blockade Runners *Wolfsberg* and *Uruguay*. While the *Uruguay* was scuttled by her crew, *Berwick* sunk the *Wolfsberg* with gun fire after taking the steamers crew on board.



Berwick's claim to fame is due to her almost unique record in that she was tested against not one, but two of her peers (And the reason why I wanted to model her).

In fact, to my knowledge (which is admittedly not totally comprehensive), but *Berwick* is the only Allied heavy cruiser, or any WWII heavy cruiser for that matter, to have directly engaged her opponent peers and survive.

HMS Exeter did engage German and Japanese heavy cruisers in the *Admiral Graf*

Spee and Japanese *Myoko* class ships but was sunk in the latter engagement. *Hipper* did engage *Berwick*, but generally German naval units avoided direct engagements where possible and despite the best efforts of both sides, Italian cruisers didn't get into too many direct engagements.

In the Pacific, American and Japanese heavy cruisers rarely engaged each other due to the long-distance nature of the theatre.

Berwick never got to complete the three-of-a-kind by engaging Japanese units, but she did engage her European opponents; she engaged the Italian cruiser *Fiume* as part of the Battle of Cape Spartivento. *Berwick* was hit by two shells from the Italian ship, a peer heavy cruiser that also carried the same number of eight inch guns. One of the lightly armoured turrets on *Berwick* was disabled and two men killed, but the ship survived the engagement and was repaired in short order.

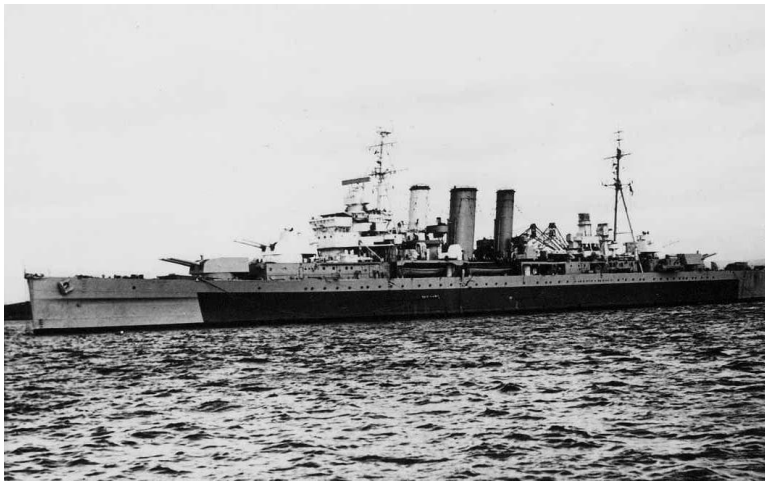
While this sounds unremarkable, it should be remembered that the Italian *Zara* class exceeded the 10,000 ton treaty limit by 15%, with some sources suggesting the class could have weighed in as much as 13,000 tons. While *Berwick* did gain weight after her refit, she still remained at around 10,600 tons meaning the *Fiume* still out massed *Berwick* by at least 1,000 tons, perhaps as much as 2,500 tons but showed very little for this advantage.

THE ROTUNDA

While the lightly armoured turrets on Berwick meant she was far more vulnerable to hits than ideal, the ship was a match for its peer (HMS Norfolk would suffer similarly, seeing her X-Turret damaged beyond repair at the Battle of the North Cape).

A month later, Berwick would face another peer heavy cruiser in the shape of the German cruiser Admiral Hipper on December 24th 1940. The Admiral Hipper was a design that not only broke the Treaty Limit, it flat out destroyed it, with the ships weighing in as much as 15,000 tons, with Admiral Hipper estimated to be slightly over 16,000 tons, meaning she out massed Berwick by nearly 50%.

But ask any historian and they'll struggle to tell you where that extra mass goes. The class had the same number of guns, with the British guns being more powerful but shorter ranged. Berwick carried 8 torpedo launchers to the Hipper's twelve, and the Hipper carried two more sets of 4 inch secondary guns.



Berwick's main armour belt was actually thicker than Hipper's, although did not have as much coverage and not angled, which meant the two ships could be considered equal in belt armour. The Hipper carried much heavier armour on its guns. But Berwick had an advantage in range over the Hipper class.

Berwick engaged the Admiral Hipper in defence of the convoy

WS-5A. Berwick's gunnery was... less than impressive and suffered four hits in return, with her belt and box armour shrugging off the hits, once more proving the effectiveness of the British design against the much larger but inefficient German design.

While Berwick was not able to damage Hipper in return, she did succeed in preventing the German raider from reaching the convoy, and thus it is considered a victory for Berwick although she did have to return to Britain for repairs which lasted until June 1941.



It meant that HMS Berwick engaged two peer opponent vessels, survived the encounters and could consider to have "won" the engagement.

Like many British cruisers, HMS Berwick spent the remainder of her career escorting convoys to Russia, although she would transport Free Norwegian troops to Murmansk to take part in the Liberation of Finnmark in October of 1944 and she would escort aircraft carriers that engaged in strikes against the

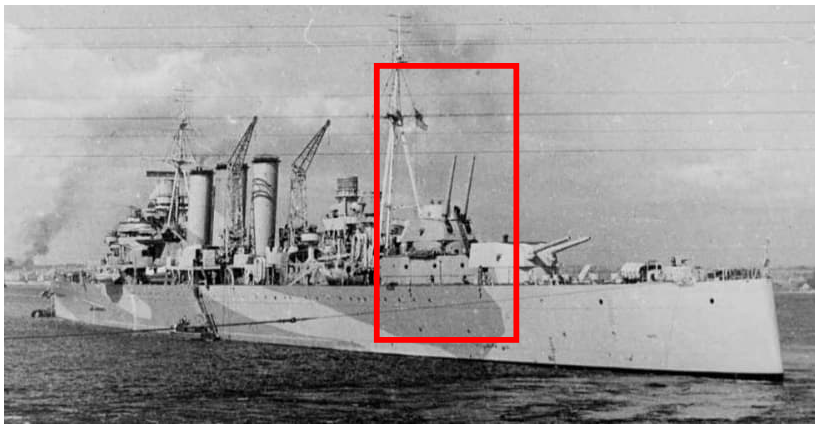
THE ROTUNDA

battleship Tirpitz and her final major task would be in a similar role escorting carriers that were striking targets in occupied Norway.

Having spent time on the Far East, Mediterranean, Atlantic and North Sea and been in near constant use for the entire war, Berwick, like many British ships, was heavily worn and so would not survive long after the end of WWII, being sold for scrap in June 1948.

Berwick has one last little historical point of interest; she was one of the ships to be coated in the experimental "Mountbatten Pink" camouflage and to my knowledge, the only heavy cruiser to do so. The idea was that the ship would be harder to spot and target at dawn and dusk. While this was true, it made the ship far more conspicuous in the rest of the daylight hours, and engagements are statistically far more likely to occur during daylight.

As mentioned, Berwick is the only heavy cruiser to have received this camo, with light cruisers, destroyers and auxiliary ships the ships that mainly experimented with the coating.



Berwick's other quirk, like the rest of the Kent-sub-class ships, was her main guns. Normally ships of this type have gun elevations of around 50°. The Royal Navy were aware of the need for long range, heavy anti-aircraft firepower and so the Mk I guns that equipped the first seven ships were designed to

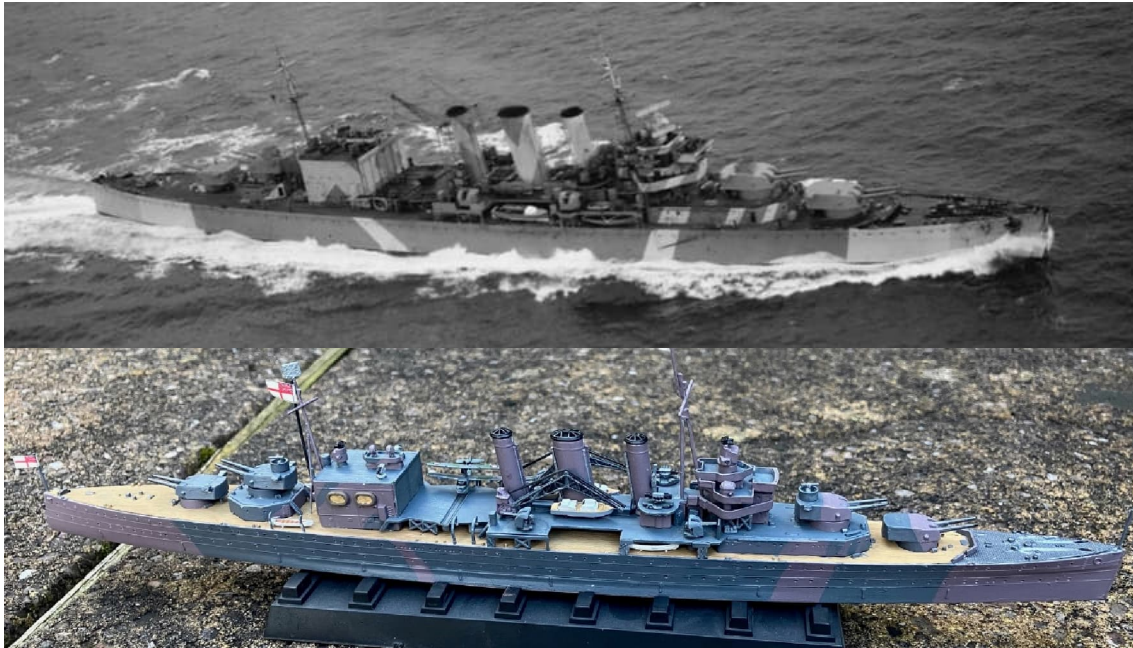
be used in an anti-aircraft role and so could elevate to 70°. In photos, the guns look slightly absurd.

Ultimately the turret rotation was not fast enough to be actually effective and an effective eight inch AA shell was never developed, but I'm pretty sure that these could have been pretty devastating. The Japanese got a shock when Royal Navy ships arrived in the Pacific with the 5.25 inch guns that had greater range and stopping power than they were accustomed to and directed by very effective radar systems, which meant the British warships racked up a great deal of kills very quickly by literally sniping Japanese planes from long range. An 8 inch gun would likely have been even more devastating, but alas it was not to be.

So that was the history of HMS Berwick. A ship that led a very storied life and one I wanted to be able to talk about.

THE ROTUNDA

A final note that I spotted while I was proof-reading this piece: the below photo is of Berwick wearing the Mountbatten Pink/Mid Grey scheme that I had reproduced for the build and while exact detail is hard to check, I'm pretty pleased with the outcome.



MD

Web Sources

Wikipedia: [HMS Berwick \(65\) - Wikipedia](#)

Wikipedia: [County-class cruiser - Wikipedia](#)

U-Boat.net: [HMS Berwick \(65\) of the Royal Navy - British Heavy cruiser of the Kent class - Allied Warships of WWII - uboat.net](#)

Navweaps: [Britain 8"/50 \(20.3 cm\) Mark VIII - NavWeaps](#)

WWII Cruisers: [HMS Berwick - RN Kent class cruiser \(world-war.co.uk\)](#)

Mythological

THEME for 2023 (Jan>Oct incl.)

- **relating to mythology or myths:** myths dealt with in a mythology: lacking factual basis or historical validity: mythical, fabulous.
- ***Check with George if you have any doubts about your proposed entry!***

*The object of these articles is to illustrate some (**not exhaustive**) concepts and show modelling potentials available to you, some might be controversial, but what the hell!!*

Part Nine

DRAGON'S part B

The dragon is a **European mythological symbol of 'evil'**, in both the chivalric and Christian traditions. Dragos can have 2 or 4 legs and wings or no wings!!

In the Orient, it symbolizes supernatural **power, wisdom, strength, and hidden knowledge**. In most traditions, it is the embodiment of chaos and untamed nature. Note oriental dragons have no wings but still fly using mystic powers and by writhing their bodies similarly to a snake's movement.



Figures via ETSY or ALIEXPRESS

EASTERN DRAGONS

FC-1 Xiaolong ('Fierce Dragon') The CAC/PAC JF-17 ('Thunder'), is a lightweight, single-engine, multi-role combat aircraft developed jointly by the Chengdu Aircraft Corporation (CAC) of China and the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC). It was designed to replace the ageing A-5C, F-7P/PG, Mirage III, and Mirage V combat aircraft in the Pakistan Air Force (PAF). The JF-17 can be

used for multiple roles, including interception, ground attack, anti-ship, and aerial reconnaissance.

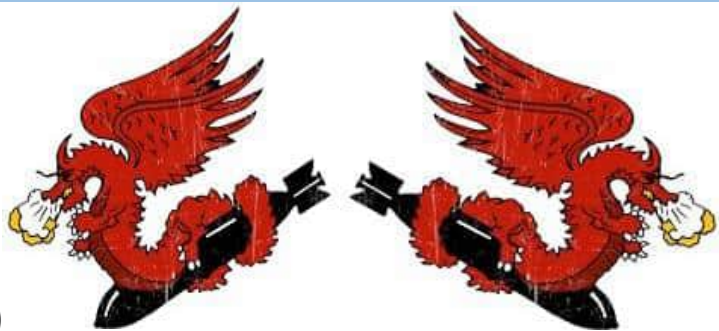
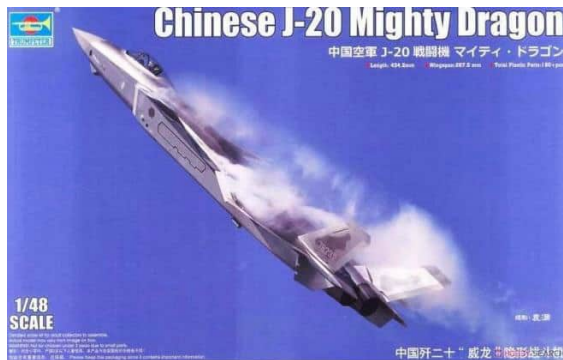


The Pakistani designation "JF-17" stands for "Joint Fighter-17", with the "-17" denoting that, in the PAF's vision, it is the successor to the F-16. The Chinese designation "FC-1" stands for "Fighter China-1".

The **Chengdu J-10 (Vigorous Dragon)** (NATO reporting name: Firebird), is a medium-weight, single-engine, multirole combat aircraft capable of all-weather operations, configured with a delta wing and canard design, with fly-by-wire flight controls, and produced by the Chengdu Aircraft Corporation (CAC) for the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF), Pakistan Air Force (PAF) and People's Liberation Army Naval Air Force (PLANAF). The J-10 is mainly designed for air-to-air combat but can also perform strike missions.



The **Chengdu J-20 (as Mighty Dragon)** is a twinjet all-weather 'stealth' fighter aircraft developed by China's Chengdu Aerospace Corporation for the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF). The J-20 is designed as an air superiority fighter with precision strike capability. The aircraft has three variants: the initial production model J-20A, the thrust-vectoring J-20B, and twin-seat aircraft teaming capable J-20S.



Attack Squadron 35 (VA-35)

An aviation unit of the United States Navy. The squadron's nickname is unknown. Its insignia, a **winged dragon**, was revised several times during its lifetime.

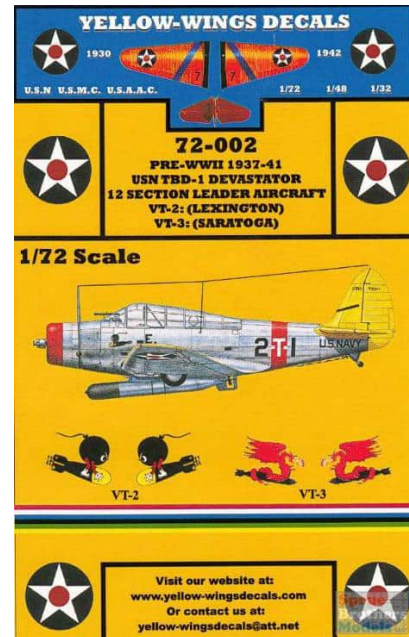
The squadron was first established as **Torpedo and Bombing Squadron 2 (VT-2)** on 6 July 1925, and was redesignated as **VT-2B** on 1 July 1927, **VT-3** on 1 July 1937, **VA-4A** on 15 November 1946, and, finally, **VA-35** on 7 August 1948.

The squadron was disestablished on 7 November 1949. It was the first squadron to carry the VA-35 designation, the second VA-35 was redesignated from VA-34 on 15 February 1950.



BOEING PHOTO

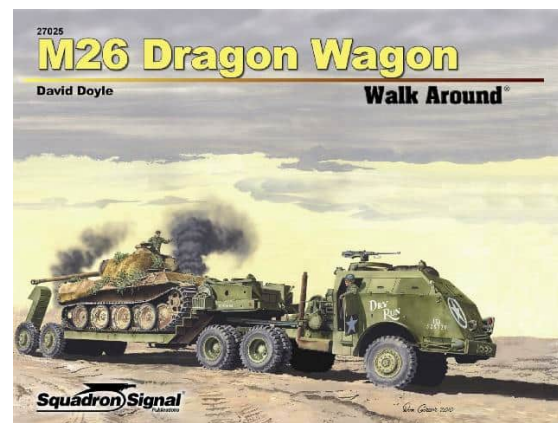
The first operational TBDs went to U.S. Navy torpedo squadron VT-3 in 1937. In this photo, the squadron's emblem, a dragon riding a torpedo, is clearly visible just below the pilot's windscreen. Torpedo 3 flew from the aircraft carrier USS Saratoga (CV3).



Dragon Wagon

The M26/25 Tank Transporter (G160) was a combination 6x6 M26 armoured heavy duty tank transporter/tank recovery tractor and companion 40-ton M15 trailer introduced into US Army service in Europe in 1944–45. Manufactured by Pacific Car & Foundry Co., it was a substantial upgrade over the Diamond T M19 transporter/trailer duo introduced in 1940.

Unusually, the tractor unit was fitted with both an armoured cab and two winches with a combined pull of 60 tons, allowing it to do light battlefield recovery work.



A later unarmoured version of the M26 tractor was designated the M26A1. An experimental ballast tractor conversion was evaluated by the British Fighting Vehicle Proving Establishment.

After the war, some of them (both armoured and unarmoured) were bought as Army surplus and used to carry grossly oversize/wide/long loads such as transformers, railway locomotives and heavy boiler equipment.



Dragon Rapide DH84

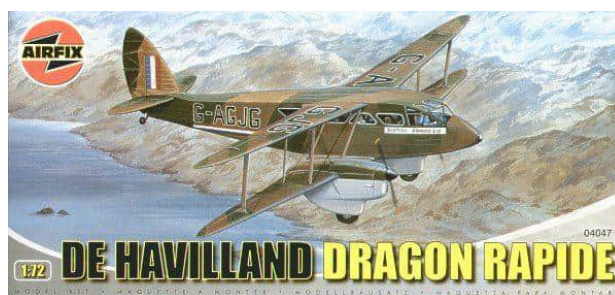
The prototype De Havilland Aircraft DH89 Dragon Six (E-4/CH-287) flew for the first time on 17th April 1934. Designed to carry 6 - 8 passengers, it became one of the most successful British built short-haul aircraft of the era and despite its primitive plywood construction, it proved to be extremely durable.

It was the first new aircraft type to be flown at Hatfield after the company moved its flying activities to Hatfield from Stag Lane. Production aircraft were known as the Dragon Rapide or simply the Rapide with the majority being the DH89A variant which was fitted with small trailing edge flaps.

The type was immediately successful in both the home and export markets with a significant number of pre-war British operators including Hillman Airways, Railway Air Services, Olley Air Services, Northern & Scottish Airways and Jersey Airways.

It also boasted a royal connection as Edward, Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) owned a DH Dragon Rapide and upon his accession to King, he flew the aircraft to London becoming the first UK Monarch to pilot their own aircraft.

Upon the outbreak of the World War II, many of the civil Rapides were impressed into service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) and Royal Navy. Referred to in military service by the name **de Havilland Dominie**, the type was employed for radio and navigation training, passenger transport and communications missions.



HMS Dragon is the fourth ship of the Type 45 or Daring-class air-defence destroyers built for the Royal Navy. She was launched in November 2008 and commissioned on 20 April 2012.

Dragon joined the Royal Navy Surface Fleet on Friday, 20 April 2012. On Friday 27 April, she made her maiden visit to Liverpool, staying for three days. She opened to the public on Saturday 28 April, with visitors able to see the inside of the ship, including the operations room.

Dragon features a red Welsh Dragon on each side of her bow, the only Royal Navy ship to be adorned in this way. The dragons were there when she was launched, but were removed in a 2011 refit. They were restored in 2016 following a fundraising campaign led by the British Warships Association.

Weapons load:

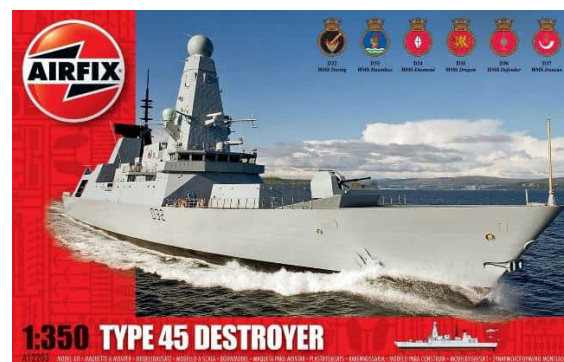
Aster 15 missiles (range 1.7–30 km)

Aster 30 missiles (range 3–120 km), to be upgraded with a ballistic missile defence capability.

1 × 4.5 inch Mark 8 naval gun. 2 × 30 mm DS30B guns.

2 × 20 mm Phalanx CIWS. 2 × 7.62 mm Miniguns.

6 × 7.62 mm general purpose machine guns.



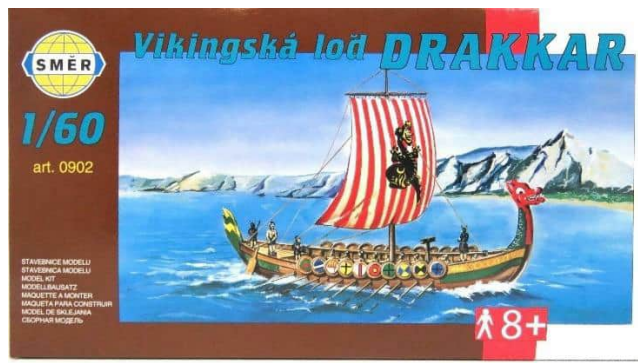
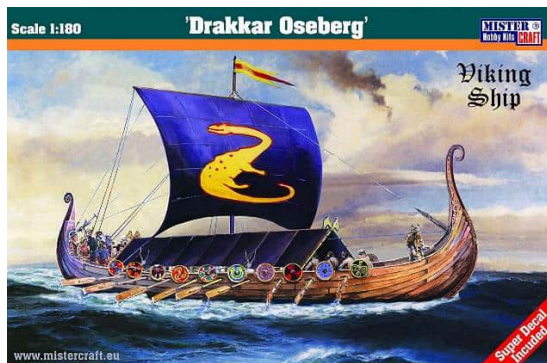
Norse Longships

Warships – Longships 3 Types (Snekke, **Drekkar** (also spelt **Drakkar**), Skeid)

Longships were a type of specialised Scandinavian warships that have a long history in Scandinavia, with their existence being archaeologically proven and documented from at least the fourth century BC.

Originally invented and used by the Norsemen (commonly known as the Vikings, a term which should have been 'a Viking' meaning a raid or to plunder) for commerce, exploration, and warfare during the Norse, many of the longship's characteristics were adopted by other cultures, like Anglo-Saxons, and continued to influence shipbuilding for centuries.

The longship's design evolved over many centuries, and continuing up until the sixth century with clinker-built ships like Nydam. The longship appeared in its complete form between the ninth and 13th centuries. The character and appearance of these ships have been reflected in Scandinavian boatbuilding traditions to the present day. They were all made out of wood, with cloth sails (woven wool) and had several details and carvings on the hull.



Drakkar

Drakkar, or *dreki* 'dragon', are the type of ship, of thirty rowing benches and upwards that are only known from historical sources, such as the 13th-century *Göngu-Hrólfs saga*. Here, the ships are described as most unusual, elegant, ornately decorated, and used by those who went raiding and plundering. These ships were likely Skeid's that differed only in the carvings of menacing beasts, such as dragons and snakes, carried on the prow of the ship. For ships which could be used for raiding or trade the dragons head would be removable to indicate the purpose of the crew on board!

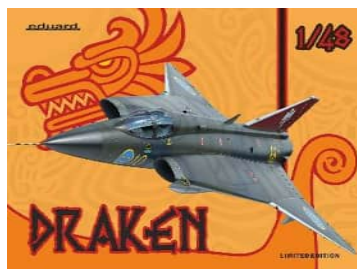
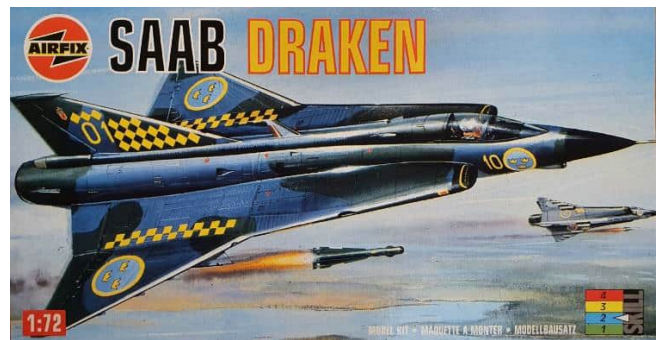
Saab 35 Draken

Draken ('The Kite' or 'The Dragon') is a Swedish fighter-interceptor developed and manufactured by Svenska Aeroplan Aktiebolaget (SAAB) between 1955 and 1974. Development of the Saab 35 Draken started in 1948 as the Swedish air force future replacement for the then also in development Saab 29 Tunnan dayfighter and Saab 32B Lansen night fighter. It featured an innovative but unproven double delta wing, which led to the creation of a sub-scale test aircraft, the Saab 210, which was produced and flown to test this previously-unexplored aerodynamic feature. The full-scale production version entered service with frontline squadrons of the Swedish Air Force on 8 March 1960. It received the designation Flygplan 35 (Fpl 35; 'Aeroplane 35') and was produced in several variants and types, most commonly as a fighter type with the prefix J (J 35), standing for Jaktflygplan (Pursuit-aircraft), the Swedish term for fighter aircraft.

The Saab 35 Draken is known for, among other things, its many "firsts" within aviation. It was the first Western European-built combat aircraft with true supersonic capability to enter service and the first fully supersonic aircraft to be deployed in Western Europe. Design wise it was one of, if not the

first, combat aircraft designed with double delta wings, being drawn up by early 1950. The unconventional wing design also had the side effect of making it the first known aircraft to perform and be capable of the Cobra manoeuvre. It was also one of the first Western-European-built aircraft to exceed Mach 2 in level flight, reaching it on 14 January 1960.

The Draken functioned as an effective supersonic fighter aircraft of the Cold War period. By the 1980s, the SAF's Drakens had largely been replaced by the more advanced Saab 37 Viggen fighter. Because of cutbacks and high maintenance costs, the SAF opted to retire the Draken during December 1999. The type was also exported to the air forces of Austria, Denmark and Finland. Danish aircraft have also been exported post service to the United States where they have seen use as training aircraft for test pilots.



Don't worry about the limited access to the 'Hasegawa limited edition kits', the schemes are all done as separate decal sheets on various sites.