

Detailing A Ryan Navion

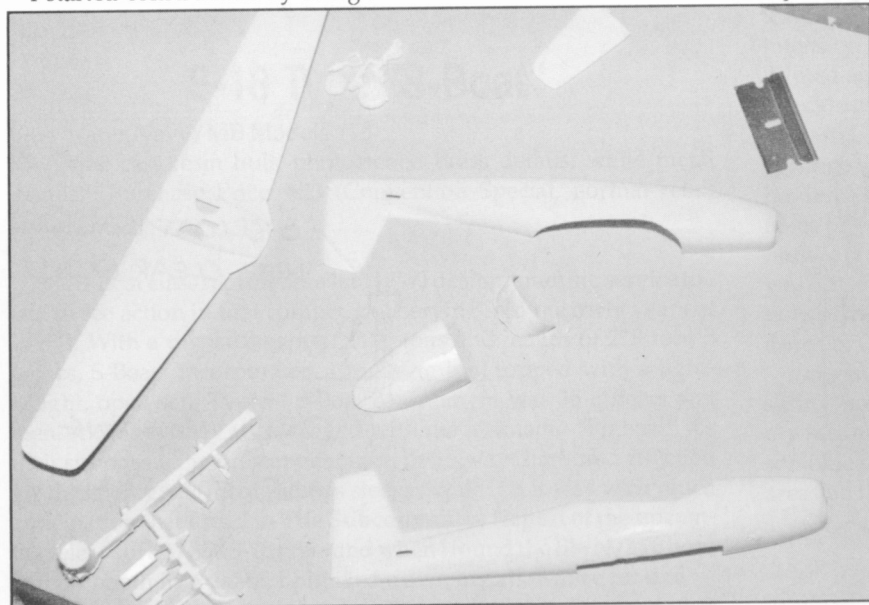
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A few weeks ago a friend, who recently bought a Ryan Navion painted as an L-17, asked if I would build a model of his plane. This presented an immediate problem because the only Navion kit I knew of was the old Lindberg offering from the fifties. Not having one handy, I turned to the "Wants & Disposals" service of the *Journal* and sent in a wants request. Soon thereafter I got a phone call from our society President, Fred Horky. Amazingly, Fred had the very kit I needed and offered it to me at a very fair price. Even though it was the Pegaso made kit (Mexico) it was just what I needed.

Once the kit was in hand, the research photos taken and developed, and some stick time flying the plane was in my log book, I began construction. I knew these old kits were pretty basic and would need a lot of work to approach a reasonable representation of the plane. Boy, was I right! The canopy is molded right into the fuselage halves and of course there is absolutely no interior detail. The front grill, a distinctive feature of the plane, was just an engraved line and the prominent flap and aileron hinges are missing.

I started construction by using a Dremel Tool to thin down the



plastic on the inside of the fuselage along the line where the canopy joined the fuselage. I then used a #11 blade to cut the canopy halves from the fuselage. I glued the canopy together using tube glue and plenty of scrap plastic reinforcement along the seam. I also used large round sprue as "spreader" beams across the bottom to prevent it from curling in when I vacuformed over it. The windshield was severed from the rest of the canopy since I wanted to display the model with an open canopy. The canopy and windshield on my friend's plane was modified leaving out the center brace in the windshield and using one piece side windows. Very thin strips of masking tape were used to lay out the shape of the windows and windshield frame. Then I masked off the rest of the windows with larger pieces of various shapes and sizes. After all painting was done, I attached the canopy and windshield with white glue.

Since there was no interior with the kit I used sheet plastic to make the floor and both bulkheads, front and rear. The instrument panel was also made from sheet styrene and includes, what I hope are, fair representations of the throttle, prop and mixture controls, flight and navigation instruments, and the communications avionics. The control yokes are copper wire bent to shape and attached to sprue rods.

The four seats used came from a Bandia 1/48 Beechcraft Bonanza kit. The overall interior is gray in this plane and Pactra 1R44 Airframe Gray was a close match. I left out all of the interior parts and pieces until the model had been fully assembled and painted.

Again using the Dremel tool and small grinder bit, I opened up the nose grill following the engraved lines. Very thin stripes of sheet plastic were then cut and trimmed to fit. I placed these stripes one at a time until the grill looked right. Then, two 1/4 ounce fishing weights, painted black, were positioned in the nose so as to prevent seeing through the grill into the cockpit.

The kit prop was molded in one piece without a spinner. To correct this I turned to my spare prop inventory where I found a spinner from a 1/72 Japanese bomber, long since parted out. The blades were cut off and replaced with the Navion blades. The venturi tube is

from a Monogram/Revell T-6 racer kit.

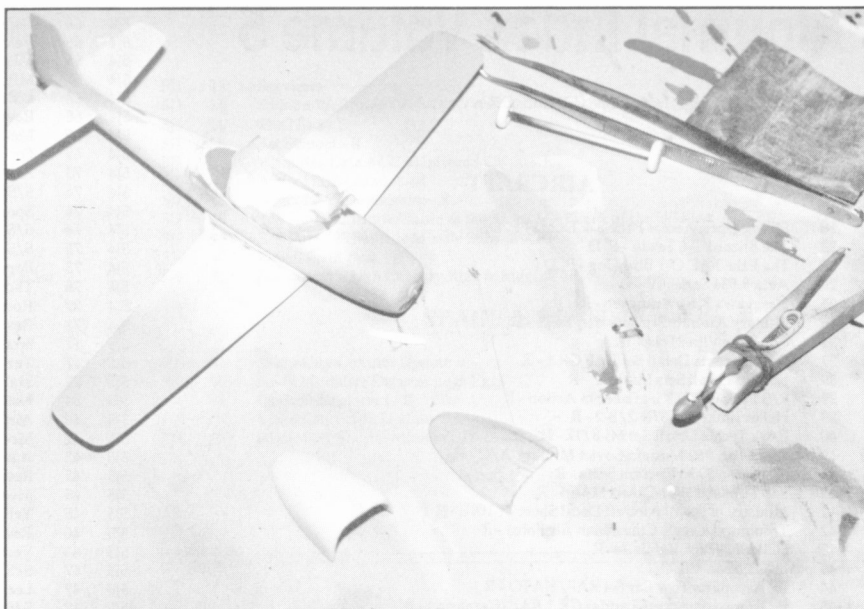
Some filling, sanding and trimming was needed but really not as much as expected in a kit this old. The horizontal tails required nothing but gluing them in place. The wing is one solid piece with the correct dihedral built in. Copper wire bent to shape was used to represent the eight flap and aileron hinges. These were attached with superglue before painting. Antennas are from either wire or my scrap box. The rotating beacon on the belly is a taillight from a Monogram Corvette (yes, a car!) kit.

The basic exterior color is Pactra Flat Aluminum. It had to be airbrushed on in several very thinned down coats to avoid that grainy look. The blue is Testors #1110 and the yellow is Pactra M-11 with a little red added. The overall glossy finish is Future floorwax airbrushed on in several coats until the proper sheen appeared.

Decals are all spares or aftermarket products. The little stars on the tail were the hardest to find but eventually were located on a spare sheet for the old Airfix F-86D. That's why I never throw away any unused decals.

To finish the project off I used aluminum tube for the exhaust stacks.

My thanks to Fred Horky and the *Journal* Wants and Disposals section, for with out my membership in IPMS/USA this project would not have been possible. **IPMS**



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