



Tom Grossman

MODEL KIT REPORT

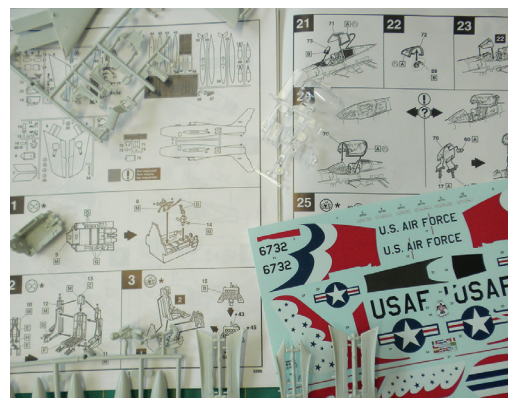
MILITARY MODELS FROM SOME OF THE MASTERS

In this edition of the Model Kit Report, we'll look at two great kits from two long-time leading manufacturers that show why they've been leaders for years.

Revell 85-996 1/48 Republic F-84F Thunderstreak Thunderbirds

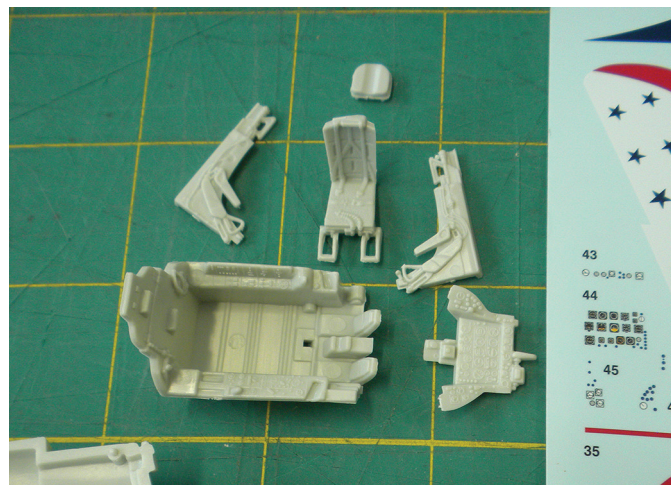


The swept wings on this jet were upgraded from its straight-wing predecessors in an effort to reach higher speeds in the early days of the Jet Age. The F version showed great improvement in speed and handling compared to earlier F-84 A to E straight-wing airframes. This design was improved with field modifications over the service period of the aircraft. This kit replicates the F-84F version flown by the best pilots in the US Air Force, the Thunderbirds. The higher level of performance from the F-84F made it the best choice for this crack aviation demonstration team.



Understandably, the instructions from Revell have a paint guide for Revell paints. There's a parts map with any unused parts identified. The clear, easily read diagrams feature only a

few parts added at each step. The decals include six pilot names with matching ID numbers. The decal carrier film is tight to the images. The pilot figure is well shaped, without that often seen caved-in chest. Tabs on wings and horizontal stabilizers ensure proper assembly and alignment. Builders will need 35 grams of weight for the nose to keep the model level on the landing gear. The canopy can be built open or closed, and the same options are there for the air brakes. Drop tanks, bombs and an ordnance cart are also included in the box.



The well-detailed cockpit has a separate instrument panel with decals for the instrument faces. Other details include a joystick with pedals, an avionics cluster for the cockpit bucket wall and a four-part pilot's seat. The heads-up display is on the clear parts runner. There's more cockpit detailing on the inside of the fuselage. Note the crisp injection and lack of flash, which make the building process more straightforward because there's less cleanup to do on the parts before assembly.

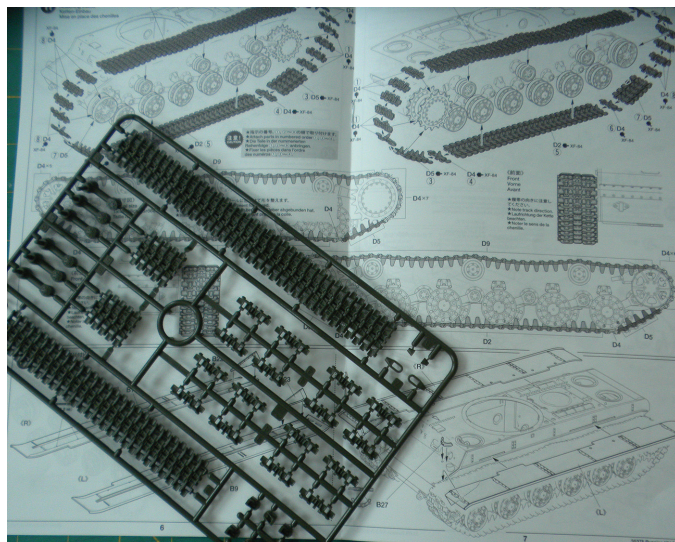
This kit is designed to be built with the landing gear lowered, with extensive details molded in. The struts and actuators are packed with detail and will need to be assembled and painted according to the guide. The ground lights on the main landing gear are separate pieces. The front landing gear doors are part of the intake and landing gear bay assembly. All landing gear bay interior surfaces have raised details like electronics and hydraulic lines molded in.

The parts count is over 70, appropriate for a Skill Level 4 kit. This will make an entertaining build and good representation of a Thunderbirds aircraft.

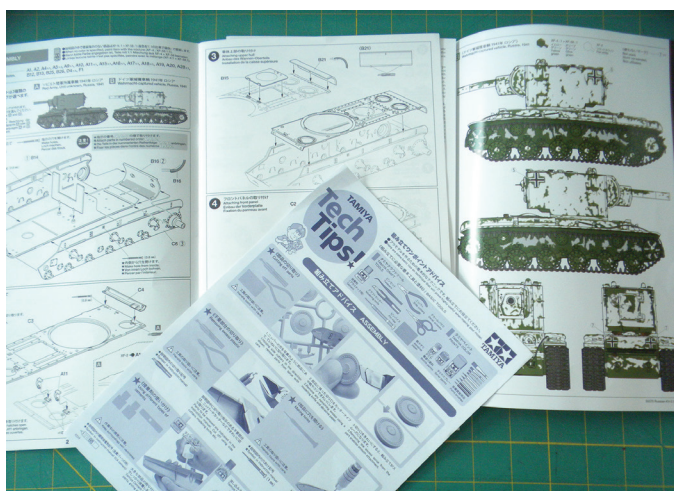


Tamiya 35375 1/35 KV-2 Russian Heavy Tank

The kit has around 300 parts, which makes for a highly detailed kit for experienced builders.

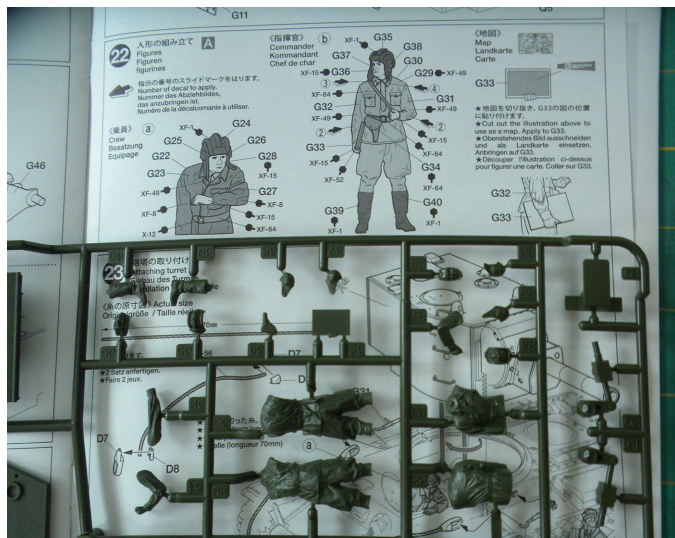


The tracks are injected molded plastic with several pieces for each one. This set up provides the advantages of separate track links without the labor. In addition, these tracks capture the sag across the return rollers and fit very well on the idler wheels and drive sprockets. Instructions include full-size diagrams of parts placement.



Included is an information booklet printed on glossy paper with color diagrams of two versions of finish and markings. The tech tips page features a diagram of the tools and supplies needed. Seven bars of specific tips present text and images with actual models rather than artists' renderings. Required paints and recommended tools are also highlighted on the cover of the 12-page booklet. Expect the usual Tamiya quality in the instructions. I liked that the illustrations for each step show the new parts to be added printed a darker shade than the parts they'll be attached to.

This kit features a super-detailed hull and undercarriage. Multiple parts like the fenders and supports, the latch mechanism in hatches, storage boxes and other details are molded separately. Some of these components require assembly. The outer turret surfaces have a texture created by the production process of the actual turret part. Tow cables are made from heavy thread included with the kit. Poly caps ensure proper alignment of the drive sprocket for the track. The gun mount has poly caps to allow for raising and lowering the gun tube.



A torso for the driver and a full figure for the commander require assembly. An image of a map from the instructions gets attached to the board the commander is holding.

The detailing of this kit is phenomenal. It provides a great opportunity for weathering, too. Make sure your customers have the supplies they need. It will be an involved build ending with a very respectable finished model.

In the next edition of the Model Kit report, I'll provide a build log for some Master Box figures from Stevens International. I'll also take another run with Revell Email paint. See ya next month. **HM**

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