



Keith Pruitt

Model Kit Report

Hasegawa EA-18G Growler

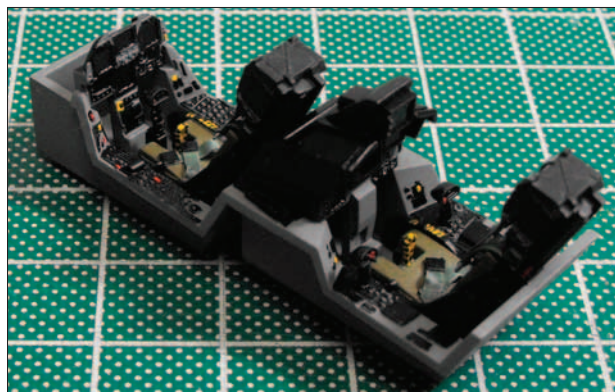
Enjoy this build along with a new limited edition carrier-based aircraft.

Hasegawa USA has recently released the EA-18G Growler. Over the next couple of months, we'll share the journey from start to finish of building this outstanding kit.

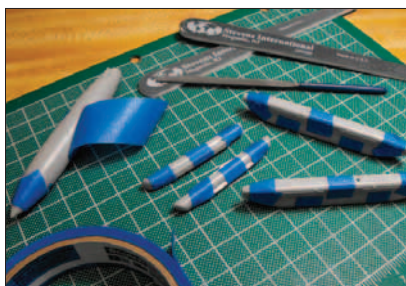
The EA-18G Growler is a specialized version of the US Navy's F/A-18F Super Hornet specifically designed for electronic warfare. The first Navy squadron to use this special aircraft was the VAQ-129 "Vikings" Electronic Attack Squadron, beginning in June 2008. VAQ-129 executed the first carrier-assisted Growler landing aboard the USS *Harry S Truman* in 2009. Operation Odyssey Dawn in 2011 was the first time that the Growler was used in combat.

With its new kit, Hasegawa has included decals for VAQ-129 as well as VAQ-141 "Shadowhawks." While the Shadowhawks version is colorful, with a black spine and tails, the Vikings' low-visibility version was chosen for this model because of its historical significance as the first operational squadron.

With most model aircraft kits, construction begins in the cockpit. The multipart ejection seats in this kit are nicely detailed and include figures for the Naval Aviator and Radar Intercept Officer. However, since I chose not to include the figures, seat harnesses were scratch



The included pilot and electronic countermeasures officer figures will not be used. Finished, the cockpit is a piece of art in itself and will be a nice focal point on the completed model.



Left: The gluing and finishing of all the small detail parts is one of the less glamorous jobs with any scale build, but it is absolutely necessary for the completed project. Right: The fuselage gun ports along with the wing-fold fairings have been filled, sanded and are ready for paint.



built from lead foil and wire. The kit includes decals for the instrument panels and side consoles. Rather than sand off the molded raised detail, the panels were painted instead. The finished cockpit looks great and will be a nice focal point on the completed model.

While filling and sanding seams is not the most glamorous part of building a model, it is necessary. While the cockpit was being painted, the underwing stores were assembled. They have some prominent seams to be filled, and since they tend to be a less-exciting part of building a model, this was the perfect time to diverge from the assembly order and complete them.

Since this kit is based on the F-18F model, there are also some molded features (bumps, panel lines and mounting holes) that have to be removed, scribed or drilled, but the instructions cover this process very well. Additionally, most of the reference photos show



that the Growler has the cannon vents (the cannon has been removed on this version) and the wing fold vents faired over, so they were filled and sanded smooth.

Next month, we'll assemble the fuselage, work on the landing gear and begin painting some of the air-frame details. **HM**

Author's Choice: New Kits of the Month

Moebius Models is now offering its 1/8 Green Lantern figure kit #924 of the DC Comics superhero. The kit is molded in green and clear green plastic. The base includes the figure of a robot, which is being held down to the rocky surface by a giant hand. Molded out of green plastic, the Green Lantern figure is beautifully sculptured with the type of bulging muscles that are suitable for any superhero. With a small parts count and outstanding fit, the kit can be built quickly and easily painted to match the comic book box art. With the recently released *Green Lantern* movie and the inevitable DVD for home viewing, this kit is sure to be in high demand.

Kinetic Models has released its long-awaited 1/48 C-2A Greyhound kit #48025. The Grumman C-2 Greyhound is a U.S. Navy cargo aircraft powered by twin turboprop engines that is used to transport supplies and personnel in its primary Carrier Onboard Delivery duties. The C-2 was derived from the E-2 Hawkeye but has a wider fuselage and a loading ramp at the rear.

Due to the height restrictions of aircraft carrier hanger decks, the Greyhound has four vertical stabilizers rather than a single taller surface. The Kinetic Models C-2A is molded in gray and clear plastic and features open or closed ramp and doors, a detailed cockpit, structural details in the main cargo bay and military style passenger seats. The kit also offers choices of folded or extended wings, flaps closed or open and two different propeller styles. The decals, printed by Cartograf, have stencils, walkways and markings for aircraft of



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Encore Models has introduced its A-37 Dragonfly, a Vietnam War-era attack bomber developed from the T-37 Trainer.

VAW-120 serving aboard the USS *Ronald Reagan* in 2009, or the VRC-30 which served aboard the *Regan* in 2010. The Kinetic Models 1/48 C-2A Greyhound kit will build into a very large model, one that is impressive in detail, size and appearance.

Encore Models has just introduced its A-37B/OA-37B Dragonfly #EC48002. The A-37 was a development of the T-37 twin engined trainer aircraft. Used during the Vietnam War, the A-37 was a light attack aircraft designed for counterinsurgency missions.

The plane was well armed with a GAU-2B/A minigun mounted in the nose as well as wing pylons that could hold gun pods, rockets, missiles, bombs, napalm tanks or extra fuel tanks.

Encore Models has taken the discontinued Monogram kit and added resin upgrades from Avionix and True Details along with a number of photoetched detail parts from Eduard to create a masterpiece of a kit, all contained in one box.

The resin parts include the cockpit tub, sidewalls, controls, instrument panel, gunsight, ejection seats, landing gear wheels, Mk 82 bombs, LAU-32/A rocket launcher pods and more.

The photoetched parts include cockpit details, color instrument panels, landing gear doors, FOD (Foreign Object Debris) screens and other airframe details.

The instruction manual is beautifully printed in magazine format, with historical information about the aircraft. The manual also contains detailed assembly instructions, painting guides and a decal placement guide for three different aircraft versions. **HM**