

Royal Aircraft Factory SE5a

The SE5a was one of the best British fighters of World War I. It was sturdy and fast and equipped many RAF squadrons at the end of the war. After the war 35 were given to the Royal Australian Air Force and were its first fighter.

The SE5a ('Scout Experimental 5) was designed in the Royal Aircraft Factory in 1916 and the prototype made its first flight on 22 November 1916. It was initially equipped with an unreliable engine but when fitted with the more reliable Wolsely Viper engine it became a formidable fighter. It was not quite as nimble as the Sopwith Camel but was easier for new pilots to fly, was sturdy, a good gun platform and was faster than any contemporary German fighter. Over 5,200 were manufactured.

In 1919 the British government gave Australia 35 SE5as and they flew as the RAAF's main fighter until about 1928.

This model represents SE5a A2-1 of the Royal Australian Air Force in 1927.

Data: single-seat fighter. *Engines* one Wolsley Viper water cooled V8 engine of 110kW. *Wing span* 8.10m. *Length* 6.38m. *Maximum take-off weight* 902kg. *Maximum speed* 222km/h. *Range* 480km. *Armament* one 7.7mm Vickers machine gun and one 7.7mm Lewis gun. *Crew* 1..

Roden 1/72 kit completed by Leigh Edmonds in July 2023.



The Little Aviation Museum