

THE LITTLE AVIATION MUSEUM

Random Modelling Notes

THREE CHEERS FOR MONSIEUR DUJIN

(the uniqueness and challenge of making a Dujin model)

(January 2009)

A decade or so ago I decided to find out more about French aviation. France has been at the forefront of development in aviation from the earliest days and more recently Dassault, Aerospatiale and Airbus have produced some of the world's most important aeroplanes. My interest was also spurred by the appearance of the limited run *Azur* kits in the model shops, of aeroplanes I knew nothing about. I went into Hylands Bookshop (which has *everything*) and asked for a book on French aviation, but they didn't have one. You could get a hundred books on Bf109s or Fw190s, but not one on the whole French aviation industry. That got me even more interested. I found myself in the State Library reading old issues of *Janes All the Worlds Aircraft*, where a whole new world opened up.

Soon I was poking around in the dusty corners of model shops looking for odd and obscure kits of French aeroplanes, mostly old *Heller* (or *Smer*) kits of varying quality. Along the way I came across *Mach 2* kits which are, generally speaking, ordinary, but still the only source of kits on some of the most important French aeroplanes. Still, the more I looked into the history of French aviation (as much as is possible with my very poor Francaise) the more I realized that there were whole classes of French aeroplanes that would never be kitted. I thought there wouldn't be enough interest in these obscure aeroplanes to warrant all the effort and cost of making kits of them. Then I discovered resin kits and soon after that the phenomena that is *Dujin*.



This is recent kit of the SOCATA Epsilon. Decals are a relatively recent innovation

There is another maker of resin kits in France, the fabulous *F-RSIN* label that makes 1/144 kits of all kinds of airliners. Over the past few years I've had the opportunity to swap emails with Messieurs *Mach 2* and *F-RSIN* but, despite several attempts to find out where *Dujin* kits come from, the internet affords no clue. So I know absolutely nothing about what wonderland these kits come from, but I can imagine.

From the range of aeroplanes covered, from the early interwar period to the present day, from France and several other European countries, from light aircraft to heavyweight fighters, there is clearly a vast knowledge of aviation history at work. From the increasingly high quality of the kits there are also skilled modellers at work. I like to imagine a small but dedicated team of highly skilled, knowledgeable and talented folks somewhere on the Loire Valley who spent the mornings and afternoons working away on their kits and lunch and dinner time eating and drinking well. They must also be people who love what they do because, even though the kits they produce are not cheap - there can't be too many people in the wide world interested in all the variations in Caudron racers from the interwar period, and wishing to make models of them. These people must labour away for the love of their craft, they can't do it for mere money. The truth of the matter is probably much less romantic, but leave me with my dreams.



The first model I made from a *Dujin* kit was the lovely little Robin Petit Prince. It was a severe trial, forcing me to new ways of doing things and the kind of language that would make a sailor blush, but the end result was a lovely looking little model. At that time I was far from happy but, looking back on it, making that model was one of the most absorbing modelling experiences I've had. More recently, I've made the *Dujin* Arsenal VG.90, and I'm very happy with what I've achieved. *Dujin* kits don't go together easily, but once you get used to the *Dujin* idiom they are far from impossible to make. I've acquired quite a few and when life becomes more relaxed, you will see more of them on club nights. In the meantime, when Hannants advertise that they have some more *Dujin* kits in stock I'm always interested.

Leigh Edmonds

PS. Since writing this I have discovered that Dujin kits were all produced by one man, Jean-Pierre Dujin. Sadly he died in March 2010, leaving behind him a legacy of over 300 model kits of diverse aircraft types and periods. While his kits have become increasingly rare the people at FSC Dujin have released many of them with additional etched metal parts and excellent decal sheets. They are not Tamigawa kits that fall together, they require skill and work, but they are worthwhile if you want to venture off the well worn path of kits provided by most manufacturers.

Have a look [here](#) for a gallery of some models made from Dujin kits and look [here](#) for FSC Dujin if you would like to try one of these lovely little kits for yourself.

THE LITTLE AVIATION MUSEUM

R003