

THE LITTLE AVIATION MUSEUM

Workbench notes

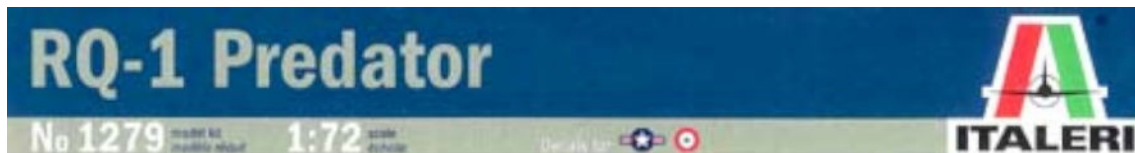
GENERAL ATOMICS RQ-1 IN 1/72 BY ITALERI

(January 2009)

I'd read that this kit was due for release so I was delighted to wander into Hearn's Hobbies one day and find one on the shelves. What did not please me was the price, near enough to that of a kit twice or three times the size. But since I wanted to make a model of one of these UAVs I didn't have much option. Later, peering into the box I found a lot of air and very little plastic. What there was came on a single small sprue which contained a little note saying that the contents had been imported from Japan. (I can only speculate on what this means.)

The kit is not difficult to put together but there are some tiny and fragile parts that break off very easily. (Trust me, I and my trusty vacuum cleaner went over my floor twice for this model.) Apart from that, the only problem was a couple of little gaps that needed some filler and the model was completed, needing only painting. I've decided that I like models of UAV's, you don't have to spend all that time and energy fitting, masking and painting cockpit canopies.

Painting is where all the grief started. The instructions say that if you want to make the US Air Force version you use a very light grey, if you want to make the Italian version, you use a darker grey. I happened to have a bottle of paint with the right FS number for the Italian version, so I sprayed on a coat and it looked very nice. Then I decided to do some research and discovered that the



instructions are wrong, the Italian version is exactly the same shade of light grey as the US version. Grump, grump.

I also happened to have a bottle of the correct colour for the US version and when I went to spray it my airbrush started misbehaving, but since the shade was so light I didn't find out what an appalling texture the paint job was until it was dry and too late. Sanding back and washing off the model did no good for all those fragile little bits. I tried again, this time being much more careful, but still getting the same results. More sanding and washing, with the same results. It is all too horrid to recall now, but I solved the problem by buying a new airbrush which worked perfectly first time.

The result is an interesting little model, but don't look too hard or you will see all the signs of the struggle I had in completing this model.



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