

THE LITTLE AVIATION MUSEUM

Workbench notes

ERC-90 F1 LYNX AND PANHARD M3 IN 1/72 BY ACE

(May 2009)

I know why Zim makes little model tanks, they aren't the great fuss that little model aeroplanes are. In my youth I built up quite a collection of little tank models and even more of those lovely Bandi 1/48 AFVs that started coming out in the mid 1970s but have now totally disappeared. However, I later found that while I enjoyed making tank models I did not have much interest in them as historical subjects while I have interest in aeroplanes as models and historical entities. From time to time these days I allow myself a little indulgence but restrict myself to French tanks (though if somebody knows of a 1/72 kit of the British Conqueror I might be tempted).

Ace make a lot of 1/72 kits of all kinds of armour, most of it German or Russian and therefore quite uninteresting. They include a couple of versions of the ERC-90 and I picked this one because I didn't know that the SAGAIE version had a bigger main gun and can be done up in UN white. Perhaps later...

When you examine the sprues of an Ace kit you get the impression that the kit is going to be something of a struggle to make but if a little effort goes into preparing the parts well assembly is a breeze. Then you can paint it without all the masking fuss of aeroplane models. The kit offers four different schemes and a tiny little decal sheet with marking for them all. Putting this together was, in comparison to the Etendard IVM, a cheap thrill. (In terms of time and effort if not money.)



My comments are the same for the Panhard M3 as they are for the ERC-90. If you treat the parts with a bit of respect and patience the kit goes together with hardly a fuss. And since there is no turret on this kit assembly is even easier.

Both kits come with little rubber wheels and while I personally prefer plastic so they can be painted, these wheels don't look too bad. In both kits it takes a little care to line up the axles so the model sits nicely on four (or six) wheels and it may be that the rubber is more forgiving so that even with my poor technique on such things the M-3 does actually sit solidly on all four wheels.

I should also note one oddity in both these Ace kits. The instruction sheet shows you where to put the rear vision mirrors and smoke grenade dischargers but there are none in the kits. On the other hand, there are strange little bits of plastic on the sprues that don't seem to have any place to go in the kits.



Again, painting is simplicity itself. I could have chosen another version with two or three colours in the scheme but I think that this nice green scheme shows off the chunkiness of the real thing.

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