

THE LITTLE AVIATION MUSEUM

Workbench notes

FOKKER F-28 & 100 IN 1/144 BY AUTHENTIC AIRLINERS AND REVELL

(June 2019)

After the success of the Fokker F-27 Friendship, the Fokker company next developed the F-28 Fellowship, a medium jet airliner that gave greater speed and range than the F-27 but was still smaller and cheaper than other jet airliners of the time such as the Douglas DC-9 and BAC 1-11. F-28s did very well in Australia because the niche they filled, suited the longer and thinner routes of rural New South Wales and outback Western Australia. They began arriving in Australia in the early 1970s with MacRobertson Miller Airlines being the first to fly them, in Western Australia. Other major operators were Airlines of New South Wales and East West Airline in New South Wales, and the Department of Civil Aviation (later the Department of Transport and later again the Department of Aviation) which flew three, mainly to give Departmental staff flying time on jets and to test Australia's radio navigation aids.

The F-28 came in three versions, the F-28-1000 with capacity for 70 passengers, of which 10 were registered in Australia, the F-28-3000 with increased wing span and greater range, of which three were registered in Australia, and the F-28-4000 which also had an extended fuselage and a capacity of 85 passengers, of which 12 were registered in Australia.

Making models of the F-28 is not easy. There was an ancient American Airliners kit made many decades ago which is best consigned to the scrap bin of history. More recently there has been the F-Rsin Plastic injection molded version and the Authentic Airliners full resin version, both kits coming in both the -1000 and -4000 versions. The F-Rsin kit is a fairly dreadful thing, generally



poorly cast and difficult to assemble. Looking at it with the benefit of hindsight, I'd reckon that F-Rsin have taken a Revell Fokker 100 kit and modified it a bit to become a F-28. The end result is hardly worth the money paid, but it is the only game in town unless you are willing to pay for the much more expensive Authentic Airliners kit, which is a dream to assemble.

I started off with the F-Rsin F-28-1000 which I finished as one flown by MMA, using Hawkeye decals. I was so disgusted by the quality of this kit that I threw my F-Rsin F-28-4000 in the bin and ordered the Authentic Airliners kit instead. It was a pleasure to build, with the exception of the undercarriage legs which were so thin and fragile that they both snapped. The only thing to do was to dive into my rubbish bin and retrieve the legs from the F-Rsin kit which may be deformed but at least hold the model off the ground in a reasonably realistic fashion. This model was completed in the livery of Airlines of Western Australia, provided by an ancient Jet Set decal sheet which was showing its age, but the only one every printed for that airline.



I did give some thought to making a third F-28, this time in the livery of the Department of Transport, which I flew in a couple of times. It would not be beyond my limited skills to make one, but the expense of having to buy another Authentic Airliners kit (and probably a F-Rsin one too for the undercarriage) made me think otherwise. Besides, there were Revell Fokker 100s now wanting to be built.

A further development was the F-28-0100, which was marketed as the Fokker 100. It had new, more powerful engines, a stretched fuselage that typically accommodated 107 passengers, improved wings for greater efficiency and other improvements. When production of the Fokker 100 started 1988 it was virtually the only airliner in its class but by the mid 1990s several competitor airliners had entered the market and it became less attractive to airlines so sales fell. As a result, only 283 had been delivered when Fokker went bankrupt in 1996. The Fokker 100 was popular in Australia and as F-28s were taken out of service they were replaced by Fokker 100s and eventually

27 were registered in Australia, flying mainly with Skywest, now Virgin Australia, and Alliance.

Unlike the F-28, the Fokker 100 is well represented in plastic, though only by one kit. Revell's 1/144 Fokker 100 has all the attributes that kits of the F-28 don't; it is easy to put together and relatively inexpensive. (It is out of production at the moment so you will have to find copies on the interweb or at your local friendly swap n sell.) I would warn you about any problems in building this kit but, frankly, I can't think of any.

Aftermarket decals for the 1/144 Fokker 100 are fairly common, but not ones for those flying in the Australian region. The only two I know of are the Southern Skies decals made for the Skywest livery and Ric Warcup decals for the Air Niugini livery. It seems that the Skywest decals are now out of print but Ric Warcup seems to print copies of his decals when they are ordered so you should be able to get the Air Niugini decals relatively easily. Alliance and Norfolk Air also flew Fokker 100s in Australia but I don't know of any decals available for them.

The only challenge most modelers will face in building this kit is getting a presentable white finish, a necessary skill because almost the entire airframe is white. My way of achieving this is to make sure the surface of the model ready for painting is absolutely smooth, which means a thorough going over with wet and dry paper of no more than 400 grit. Then a coat or two of Tamiya white primer, followed by a light sanding with about 6000 grit micromesh. Then three coats of white acrylic lacquer which I bought at my local automotive paint shop, another light sanding with 12000 grit micromesh and then two coats of Tamiya rattle can pure white. What can go wrong?



A final note. Fokker also made a shorter version of the Fokker 100 called the Fokker 70. A model of this can be made relatively easily by shortening the fuselage of a Revell 1/144 Fokker kit or buying the Welsh Models conversion kit, which is basically a shorter fuselage. As the process

of converting the Revell fuselage will entail cutting out sections before and aft of the wings, and this takes a fair bit of calculating and careful cutting to get right, I've bought the Welsh Models conversion kit. So far as I can find out, only Alliance had flown the Fokker 70 in Australia, so if I'm going to make one of these I'll have to improve my decal making skills, which I don't appear to have done much to improve recently. Never mind, just in case I become a decal making genius one of these days I'm on the hunt for two more Revell 1/144 Fokker 100 kits. We can only dream.

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