

Revell's 1/144 Scale E-2C Hawkeye



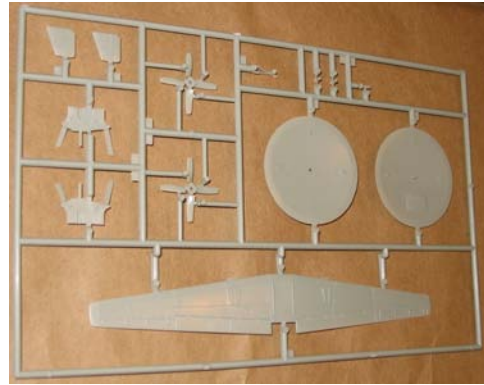
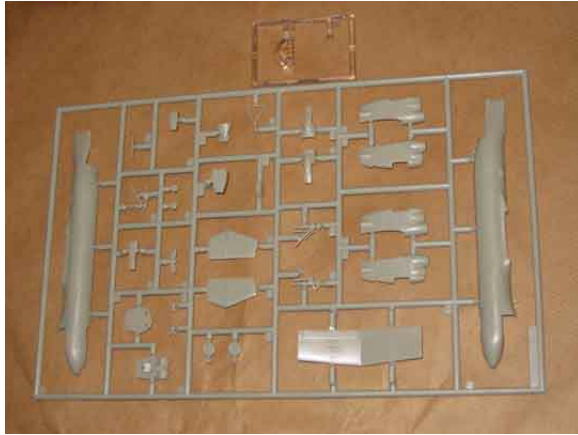
An In-Box Preview By Mark Soppet

The Grumman Hawkeye has been a mainstay of American naval aviation for over 30 years. Its distinctive “flying saucer” radome has become a welcome sight on carrier decks, as the Hawkeye has ably scanned the airspace looking for threats to the carrier battlegroup.

Until recently, the only kit of the Hawkeye was a 1/72 scale offering from Fujimi. The kit is fairly dated and hard to find. Further, it’s really big, and may require the builder to rethink his or her display options.

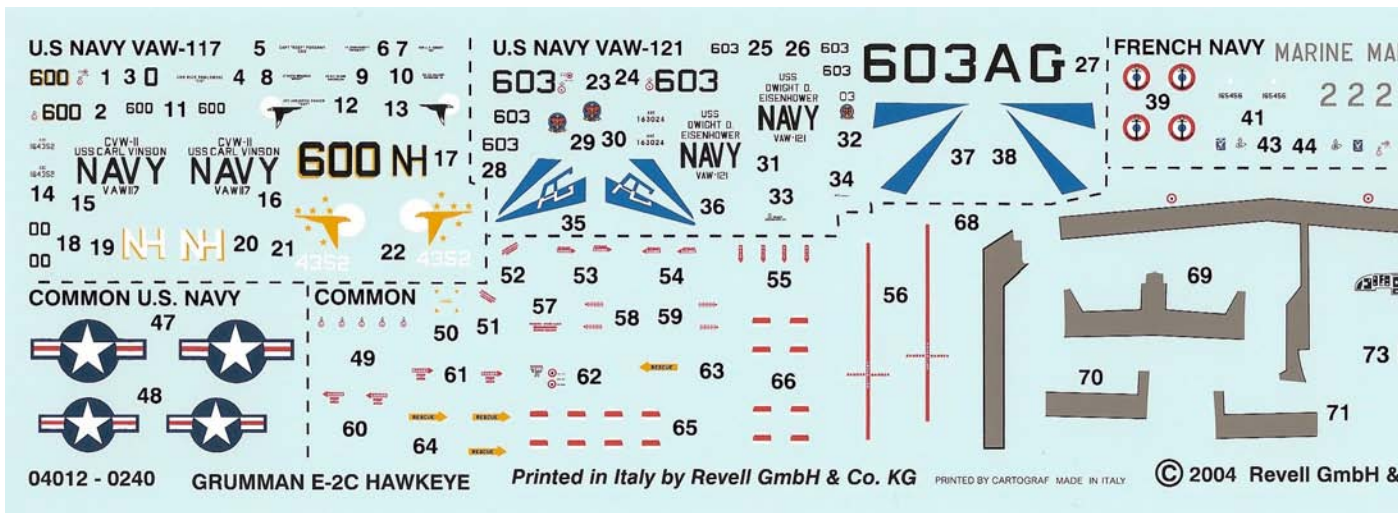
Revell came to the rescue in 2004 with a 1/144 scale Hawkeye. Revell has done exquisite small-scale kits of combat aircraft during the past few years, and the Hawkeye is a welcome addition.

Inside the box, you’ll find two main parts trees and a smaller tree with the transparencies. The moldings are crisp and flash-free. Panel lines are a bit heavy for the scale but still not bad. My canopy was scratched because it was packaged with the main sprues—fine grit sandpaper, toothpaste, and Future floor wax will come to the rescue.



The kit's cockpit includes petite details like the steering yokes, but looks fairly plain compared to other Revell kits like the JSF X-35, YF-22, and Tornado in 1/144 scale. Instruments are provided in the form of decals. Also suffering from a lack of detail are the wheel wells. Side walls are noticeably absent; in fact, the main gear wells are completely open. At least the landing gear looks pretty good for this small scale.

Construction doesn't appear to be a significant challenge. The wing is molded as one piece, taking some of the assembly steps out of the picture. The plane's unique tail will no doubt create a few headaches, but it won't be an insurmountable problem.



Three sets of decals are provided. The first is a VAW-121 "Bluetails" plane from 1990. A second option is a more contemporary plane from VAW-117, the Wallbangers. The third choice is from 4 Flotille, French Aeronavale. The two US Navy choices are very colorful; the French option is very plain. Sacre Bleu! Plenty of stencils are provided to make the model look busy. Surprisingly, none of the decal options have the "corkscrew" pattern on the radome that has distinguished past E-2C's.

Overall, this little kit is a welcome addition to my 1/144 scale carrier air wing, next to my DML Hornets, Tomcats and Intruder. The \$15.99 retail price is steep for the size of the kit, but a Hobby Lobby half-off sale will ease those concerns. Recommended.