

Snark Missile, 1/48, Lindberg #91001JL

by Paul Gasiorowski



The Snark was America's first intercontinental guided missile, produced by Northrop to deliver a nuclear warhead to a target 5,000 miles away from a mobile launching platform. It was activated by SAC in 1958 and withdrawn from service in the early 1960's as silo launched ballistic missiles became available. The actual missile was 67 feet long, with a wingspan of 42 feet. Only one base became operational, Presque Isle AFB in Maine. The original accuracy was within 17 nautical miles and improving to 4 NM. One missile launched from Cape Canaveral never made down range, but ended up in the Brazilian jungle and was not found till 1983. The standing joke on the Eastern Test Range was that the Caribbean Sea was known as "SNARK ALLEY". Since there were a lot of launch failures.

The kit is really three models in one - the Snark, the launching platform and the hauling tractor, plus the attendant launch crew. I started the build process by washing all the sprues in a warm soapy water solution and rinsing the sprues and let them air dry. The missile itself contained about 17 parts. I started with the engine assembly of 5 parts. Once inserted into the fuselage it would be hidden from view. The tail assembly was put together, along with the rudder. The engine assembly was painted a flat aluminum color out of a rattle can. The center of the fuselage was assembled next and the engine inserted into this assembly. A few misc. parts were added to this section.

Prior to assembling the tail section and nose cone to the main section all the seams were taken care of by filling and sanding.

The wings were assembled next, glued and sanded where necessary. All the parts were then glued together and given a coat of Tamiya white primer. There were decals for the white stripes to go over the red fuselage.



Previous experience showed that the red will bleed through the white decals, so this time I taped off the section to be Gloss White stripes and painted them. After letting the paint dry for a day or two, I used Tamiya yellow masking tape to mask off the parts the needed to be left white.

The next step was to paint the rest of the missile Guards Red (MM acrylic). The JATO bottles and extra fuel tanks were built and painted separately. They were then attached separately. The model was given a couple of coats of Future before applying the remaining decals.

The tractor consisted of approximately 40 parts. It consisted of 3 separate assemblies; the body of the tractor and 2 ea of track drives. Each assembly was painted Insignia

Yellow (MM acrylic) and then assembled. The final step was to attach the track to each track drive.

The launch platform consisted of 30 parts. The parts on the sprue with mating surfaces were taped off and given a coat of Tamika White primer. After the paint dried, the parts were given a coat of Insignia Yellow. The launch platform was then assembled per the instructions.



The kits were a nice build, not too much flash. This was pretty big model and with the tractor and launch platform would make a nice diorama.

