

Smoke Trails 32

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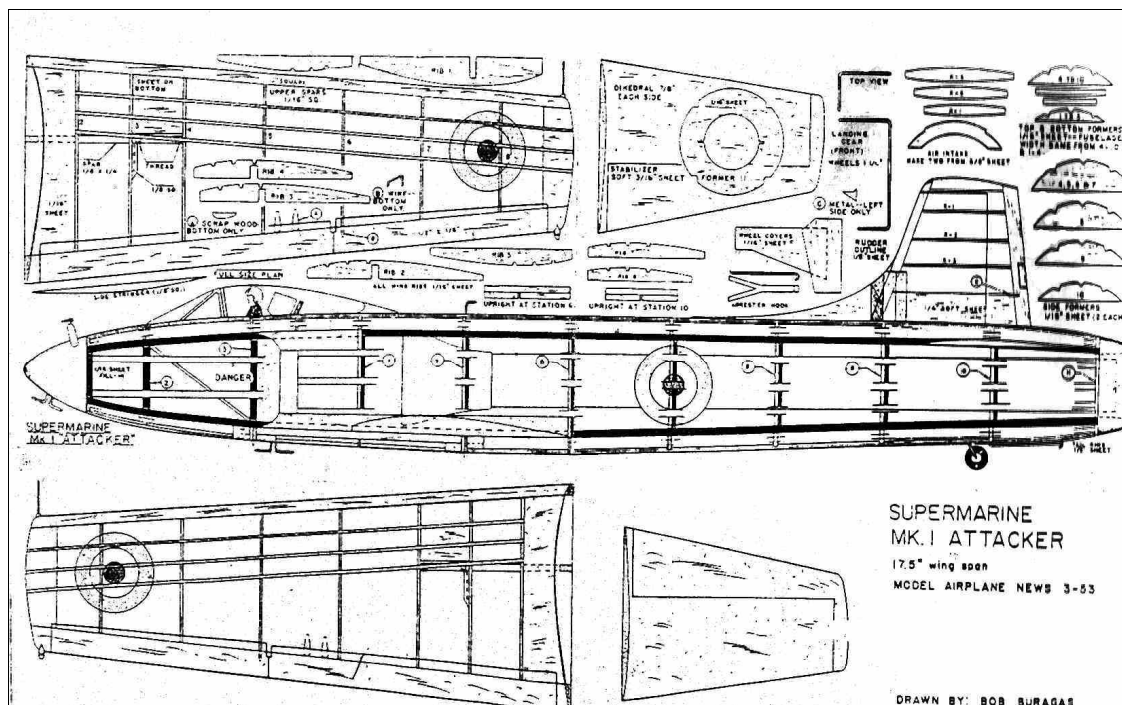
More Attackers

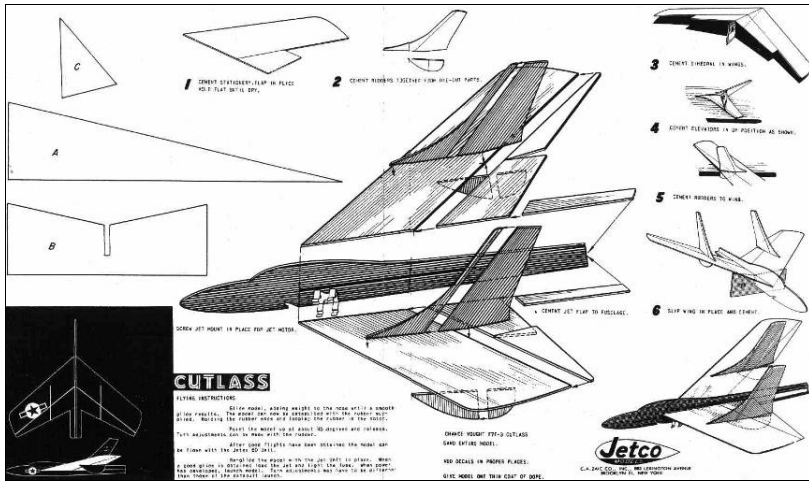


Following last month's description of contrasting, but equally splendid, Supermarine Attackers, I am mindful that the Keil Kraft design wasn't the only one around: though Skyleada didn't include one in its catalogue, the great (and now, alas, late) Phil Smith produced one for Veron. Aerographics have re-kitted Phil's Sea Hawk and Sabre, so perhaps George should now give Phil's Attacker due consideration. At 18" span, it is larger than the Albert Hatfull's model, but there is no reason why it shouldn't fly well, especially if the rear end and tail feathers are kept light – the nice example on the left is finished simply with coloured tissue.

Steve Bage comments on Howard Metcalfe's Attacker: "I'm amazed Howard got away with only 2g of lead in the nose. I love the look of the Attacker, but one thing that's always put me off was the expectation of having to add close to 50% of the weight of the model in lead to get the CG right. It's good to know it's not really so bad". Howard, it will be remembered, cut away the rear fuselage formers and substituted a built up fin and tailplane. Harry Hannant's model, built as the plan, needed very little noseweight after I had put a Jetex 50, which is of course heavier than a Rapier motor, as far forward as possible. Even at 44g all up it flew very well indeed.

US modeller Bob Burgas published a plan for a 'Supermarine Mk.1 Attacker' in *Model Airplane News*, 1953. This was quite an ambitious design: the motor, which is enclosed, is not specified. The span is 17.5", so I'm guessing Burgas had a Jetex 50 or 100 in mind. I had previously thought this an 'interesting' model, as the weight of the augments tube would need to be balanced by a massive amount of noseweight. But perhaps, if Metcalfe-type modifications are made, it is not as impossible as I had thought. I love the tail wheel!

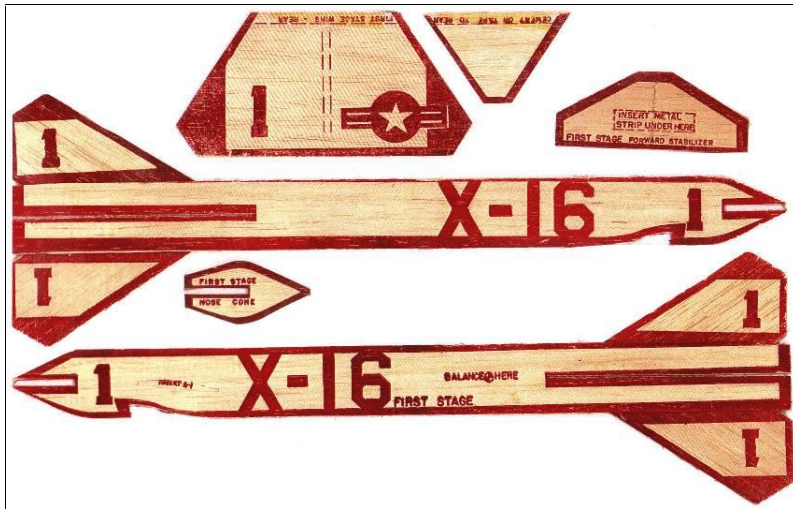




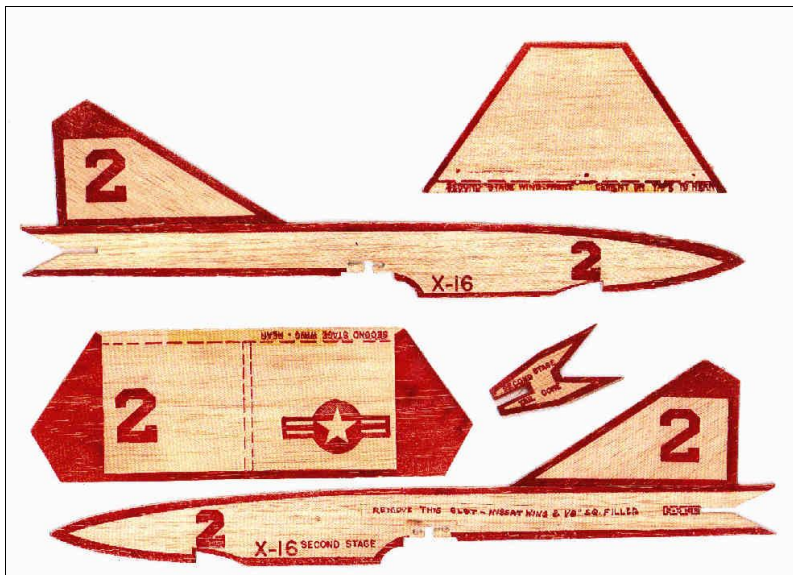
Moving on from a US design to a US 'Jetex' kit, I was able to examine a Jetco Cutlass recently. This simple profile model was well presented – the box is actually rather fine, the wood is die cut and not pre-decorated (like the Wilmot Mansour Javelin and Swift) and the plan is well drawn with useful illustrations. The instructions are sensible too, suggesting catapult launches before trying a Jetex 50. The design *qua* design is inferior to the Keil Kraft Shadows or Veron Quickys, but I'm tempted to make one just to see how well it goes.

The Berkeley 'Ready to Fly' Bomarc and Regulus II are more analogous to the Veron and Keil Kraft profile models in that the wood in both is pre-decorated ready for assembly. These are interesting models, produced little later than the Cutlass, and Berkeley, out of sorts with Jetex, hedge their bets by stating they are suitable for propulsion by 'CO-2 cartridge [sic] or Safety-Approved PSST-50 or Jetex-50 Engines'. The admirable Tony Butterworth has promised to lend me his examples so that these can be replicated. If Rapiers motors remain unobtainable I shall fit a Jetex 50 (though I do have a PSST-50) rather than an (equally) authentic Sparklets bulb!

The Berkeley kit I have been able to recreate is the 'X-16' (*Smoke Trails 30*). My X-16 is around 70% of the original, so that (a) templates are suitable for an A4 printer (b) the upper stage is compatible with a Rapiers L1 – I'm not going to risk one of my antique Jetex motors in this one! Both stages go well from a vigorous catapult launch, but, alone or piggy-back, have yet to fly under power.



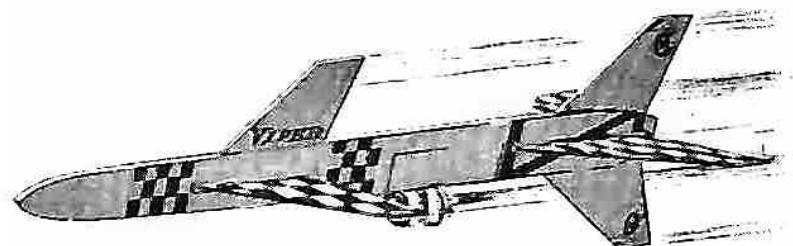
Left: High resolution scans of the Berkeley X-16 components were cleaned up in the digital domain (the wood had darkened and the colour faded somewhat) and, not having an A3 printer, were reduced by 30% or so before printing on to tissue.



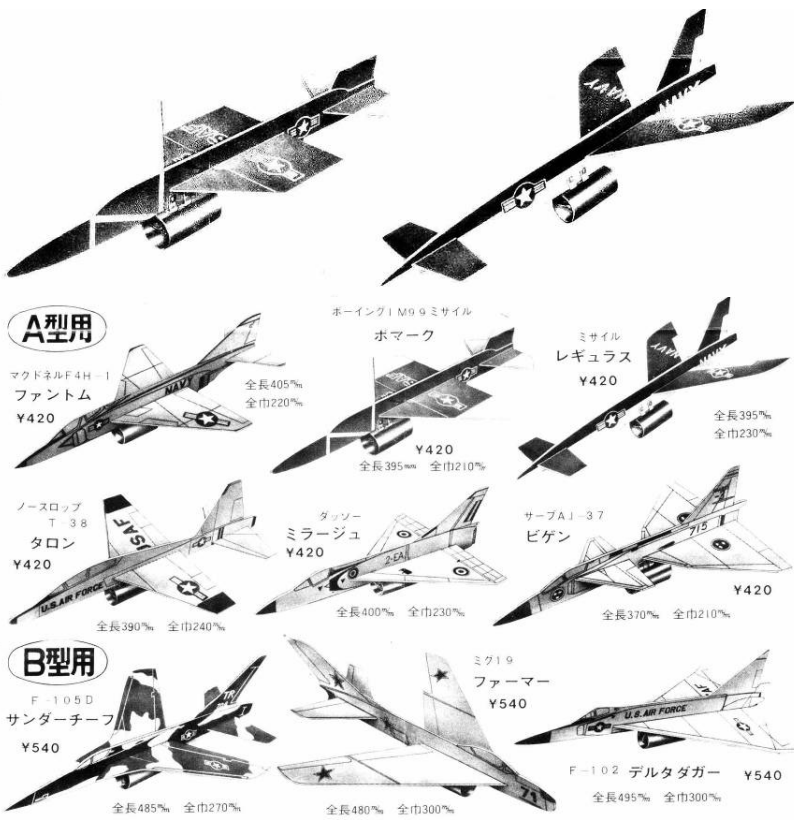
Above: The X-16 ready for launch, needing only a high-power L1 to see if it works!



Telasco also had a range of 'missiles' (left), which they promised (with some hyperbole and dubious grammar) 'flies [sic] like the real ones'. These appear to be Paul del Gatto designs (*Jet (X) Files 17*). I haven't seen any in the flesh, so I don't know if how comparable they are to the X-16 or the Jetex Viper – were they 'ARTF' and were the balsa parts pre cut and decorated?

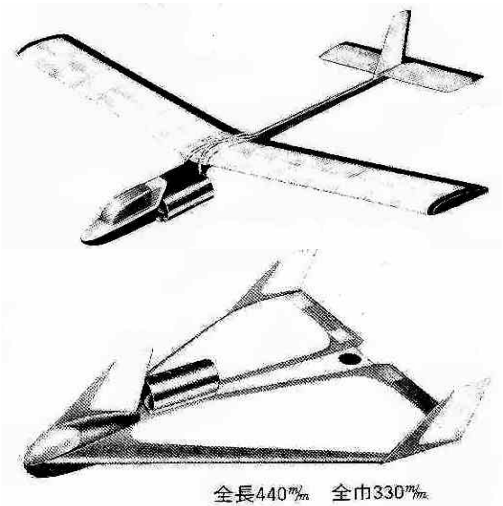
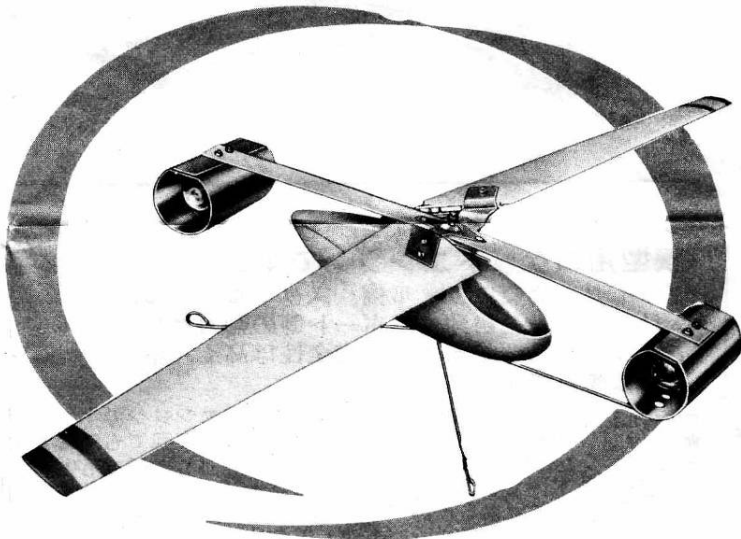


But I have recently acquired a very nice example of an early Jetex 'Tailored' Viper (bottom left). 'Early', because the contents included a 50B (not a 50C). I have scanned in all the pre-coloured wood parts and prepared templates ready for 'cloning'. Look out for a full description in next month's bumper Xmas article!



The very tasty missile-like models (top left) look to be fully the equivalent of the X-16 or the Viper. They come, not from the UK or US, but from Japan. We are making some progress in describing and replicating some of the ARTF kits produced in the US; these two, taken from a catalogue included in the box for a 'Tiger B' motor show that we have scarcely started to explore what was available in the Far East at this time.

The range of profile models was eclectic to say the least: as well as the missiles there was a Talon and an F-102, what appears to be a MiG 19, a Mirage, and wonder of wonders, a Viggen! If the illustrations are any guide they appear to be pre-decorated and most desirable! The Tiger range included a number of built up 'sport' models:



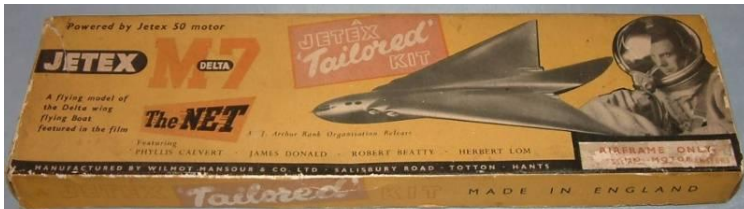
全長440mm 全巾330mm

Blue Star

And, unexpectedly, a helicopter, powered by two Tiger A motors in a similar fashion to the Wilmot Mansour Jeticopter. The photo of the Japanese gentleman flying the Tiger helicopter (left) is priceless!

If the kits match the quality of the motors, they will be superb. Though Tiger motors have appeared on eBay from time to time, I have yet to see any of their kits up for auction. But one lives in hope!





If this seems a forlorn hope, on the left are just some of the gems that have appeared on eBay recently. An exorbitant amount of money was asked for the M7 Delta, but the Cleveland F-86 and Graupner Sylphe went for quite reasonable sums. The latter in particular is uniquely splendid and confirms my assertion that eBay is a treasure trove for the model aircraft historian and vendors can be so generous with their photographs!

‘Living in hope’ is all very well, but, as the Good Book tells us, ‘Hope deferred makes the heart sick’. So I am very loathe to put in writing anything about Rapiers, their manufacture or availability at the moment – please contact me directly if you want to know the latest news.

I described Don McGovern’s ‘Mother-Hawk/Squawk-Hawk’ models in June’s article. I was delighted that Peter Smith’s reminiscence of launching a Skyjet 200 on the back of an Ethereal Lady in similar fashion appeared in the same (June) *SAM Speaks*. If Peter can send me his photo I would love to include his story in my compendium of *Smoke Trails* articles. I’m not surprised Peter couldn’t repeat his inspirational flight – that it worked once is a miracle. McGovern’s system was more than a little ‘Rube Goldberg’. In a later edition of *Model Airplane News* (Oct 1966) he describes an improved system, which sensibly involves Radio control. The ‘Squawk-Hawk’ design too has been refined: the ‘Drop-Out’ (below) is Scorpion powered and one of the very rare examples of a radio controlled Jetex model aeroplane.

