

PEANUT SKYRAIDER

By
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Our "Peanut Vendor" gives us another "Shrink Job." Build the original AD-4B from Full Size Plans, and/or a Peanut version from plans on the next two pages. They're both great flyers!

● The Douglas Skyraider is one of the all time great airplanes. It was Pre-Designed overnight by Ed Heinemann, Leo Devlin, and Gene Root in a Washington Hotel room, in order to meet a Navy deadline, for which several other companies had already been at work on prototype airplanes. The AD emerged, in the long run, to be the best of them all . . . and the one that was built in greatest numbers over the longest period. There is a lesson here somewhere with respect to, "Too many cooks spoil the broth", which could have been helpful to Douglas's competition.

Most military airplanes have rather boring color schemes that tend to camouflage their true lines. But in 1965, Profile Publications came out with the Skyraider Profile No. 60, and the very last color scheme on the very last page is the one copied on the airplane in this article. It turned me on with its' red, white, and black color scheme, and so, in 1967, I built a 26 inch span model. Recently, I was interested in building a Navy Peanut Scale model and this airplane looked like a good choice. We shot the plans down to half size and, "voila!", there was a Peanut Scale Skyraider. There are seven years between my first view of Profile No. 60 and the Peanut version. If you look closely you'll notice that the Peanut has a little more dihedral than the original. This is a result of earlier trimming difficulties, and the Peanut version has been stable right from the first flight.

Construction is the standard two-sides-built-over-the-plan-box, with formers and stringers, notched ribs with multiple-spar wings and tails, etc., which have been described so often in the past. We'll skip the basic construction, therefore, and get down to a couple of specific details and a more thorough discussion of how to achieve this color scheme on a Peanut Scale model and still have a relatively light weight airplane.

Details worth discussing: The bubble canopy. It is made by carving a solid mold out of hardwood, we used white pine, and then using a toy Mattel

Vacu-form to pull a clear plastic canopy over the form.

The vertical tail leading edge was made by laminating three pieces of one-sixteenth wide by one thirty-second thick balsa, using thinned-out white glue and a waxed form, cut out of one-eighth sheet, for a guide. Our laminated part runs down the centerline of the top of the model, from the back of the cockpit to the trailing edge of the rudder.

The four bladed propeller is made from two Sleek Streak propellers (plastic). These have half of their hubs notched away and are then dovetailed together in the proper way. Next, the hub is coated with a thin layer of epoxy, which gets into the joint and makes a good strong hub again. Make sure you have a lightly oiled wire in the propeller shaft hole when you are applying the epoxy so it doesn't get into the shaft hole and ruin your whole day. (Pun intended.)

We used the smallest Williams Brothers nose plug as a thrust bearing, and Marlow Engineering's wooden wheels. Also, we used a small ball bearing thrust washer between the propeller and the thrust bearing. These parts are handled by Bill Hannel (Plans & Things).

Stringers and the forward two wing spars are one thirty-second square and were cut from hard balsa sheet for the Peanut Scale version. All dimensions are doubled for the larger model and you'll have to carve a hardwood prop or find some larger plastic props for it.

Color scheme: The colors used on this model are mostly of tissue paper for lightness, with a little black, yellow, white, and red Pactra enamel for plastics for fine details.

The wing and tail structures were designed to give a good color separation line without requiring double covering. Cover the wing forward of the main spar with white tissue and the remainder with red. The same goes for the horizontal tail. The only touchy part here is getting the front line of the red tissue straight and exactly where you want it.

Cover the entire fuselage and vertical

tail with white tissue. Now water shrink the covered model. When this is dry and the tissue is tight, give the model one coat of thin dope. Dope as obtained from a model shop should be thinned half-and-half with thinner. When this is dry, start to add the color to the fuselage. Carefully cut out the red tissue to match the color line required. Lay it carefully in place on the fuselage and brush on real thin dope (3 to 1, or even less) to get it to adhere to the white tissue. Then cut out black tissue for the forward fuselage sides and follow the same procedure. Because the cowl has compound curves use red paint on it. Paint the anti-glare panel in the cockpit area with flat black paint and then install the canopy. The aft canopy frame is painted white and the windshield frame is flat black.

I used commercial decals for the insignia, and after the insignia was applied I used india ink for all the numbers and lettering and the dive brake outlines on the Peanut Scale version. The large numbers and letters on the big model were cut from tissue and applied just like the other colored tissue. I draw the numbers on a piece of bond paper, and tape this over several sheets of tissue on my work board. The letters are then cut out using a sharp razor blade.

Control surface outlines are drawn in using india ink. The propeller is painted flat black with yellow tips. The real airplanes did not have square tipped propellers, which we kept on the model in the interest of more duration.

Add other details as desired, including such things as the fin mounted pitot tube and the various antennas. If you don't go for the red and white color scheme, there are a lot of military variations to choose from.

After the model was all covered and detailed I gave it a very light spray coat of Standard Brands clear Magic Lacquer. Any gloss top coat that won't louse up your decals will probably work as well. This keeps the india ink from washing off in the dew. Mask the flat black so it doesn't get shiny. ●

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The MODEL BUILDER