

Special Hobby Flettner Fl-265, Kit Number SH 72020, 1/72 scale

The Kit:

The model comes in a typical Eastern European style of box - very thin and opening from either end.

Inside there are fourteen tan coloured polyurethane resin parts on 6 casting blocks, two clear vacuformed parts pressed into one sheet, and one sprue with twenty four injected plastic parts. The plastic is soft and light blue-grey in colour. There is a 6 page, 15cm by 21cm instruction booklet.

There is one small decal sheet printed by Propagteam that was in register, with nice colour density, and very thin. The markings state they are for the V1 prototype TK+AN, but searches on the web seems to indicate that TK+AN is actual the V2 prototype.

Construction:

Let's start by stating that I almost didn't make this kit.

My first attempt at building this kit revealed that the vacuformed windscreen with accompanying side panels was about 2mm too short to completely cover the cockpit opening. Having no idea on how to rectify this problem, I shelved the kit. I was sure that I had wasted my money on something I was never going to build. But the kit was resurrected when a purchase of the old Schiffer book on early German helicopters plus searches on the web showed that the Fl-265 quite often operated with only the front windscreen in place. Aha! I can build the kit and remove the offending pieces from the cockpit glass. Armed with this information, construction commenced in earnest.

I started with the cockpit. The resin pieces for the cockpit, seat and instrument panel are exquisite. The cockpit piece consists of a floor, rudder pedals and a gear case. The seat has finely molded belts and is cast with the rear bulkhead. To get it to fit into the fuselage halves requires a little sanding, but once that is done, the fit is excellent. I left the casting block on the part as it really helped to align everything when the fuselage was joined together later.

The cockpit interior has the ribbing molded in. You need to add some struts that run from the top of the cockpit opening to the underside of the gear cover. I added these using plastic rod before joining the fuselage halves together. You'll need to measure the length for these struts yourself, since the length indicated in the instructions are too long. I suspect they are more appropriate for 1/48 scale. Also added at this time were the rotor drive shaft and joystick. I replaced the drive shaft with plastic rod instead of using the resin part, which was too thick and too long anyway. The joystick needs to be shortened, otherwise it almost touches the ceiling. I glued all the struts with fast setting liquid glue, and when they were set, added a drop of super glue to strengthen them. Even then, these struts are fragile, so be careful when sanding near the cockpit, or they will detach. If this happens it will be much harder task to put them back once the fuselage pieces are joined. The fuselage halves fit well together and there is just a bit of a seam to remove. There are no alignment pins, so do glue carefully.

Next came the engine and its cowl. Pictures of the aircraft show that the cowl is mounted some distance from the front of the fuselage. The kit only allows the cowl to be attached directly to the fuselage. So, to get some space between the cowl and the fuselage, I did two things.

First, I left the molding block on the engine to act as a spacer in the rear portion of the cowl. Then I glued some plastic to the front of the fuselage to act as a firewall and as another spacer. When the cowl and fuselage assemblies were joined, a small gap was produced between the fuselage and cowl because the two spacers meet at a point in front of the fuselage.

I did do some improvements as I went along, though one thing I did not do was cut out the section in the fuselage directly above the pilot's seat for the small window. I felt it would make this area weak and easily damaged.

The kit spinner is much too flat, so I replaced it with an Airfix Fiat G-50 spinner. This was done by sanding down the existing spinner and then attaching the new one. The fan blades were not all the same length, so using my dial calliper for measurements, I sanded them until they were all equal in length. The

blades needed strengthening since they kept bending back whenever I worked on them. I glued small strips of plastic to the rear of the blades as stiffeners.

The resin shaft attaching the fan to the engine was replaced by plastic rod.

Annoyingly, there are no locating marks on fuselage for the horizontal stabilizers, so they were glued to what was felt to be the correct spot, with the vertical location being determined by counting the stringers and the horizontal location based on the distance from the rudder hinge. Test fit them to the fuselage before gluing. The joint angle is incorrect, and if you do not adjust the mating surface with some sanding, you will end up with a slight forward sweep to the tailplanes.

The rotor shafts were warped, and not very well represented, so they were replaced with metal rods cut from straight pins. This gives a much better representation of the delicate appearance of the real F1-265's blade shafts.

The not so round resin exhaust pipes were replaced with plastic rod that was hollowed with a very fine drill bit. There are seven exhaust stacks that come with the kit, but only 6 holes to drill on the cowling. Strange indeed! An additional pipe was added to the fuselage on the starboard side near the cowl. Pictures show this but I have no idea why it is there.

Paint and decals:

The cockpit opening was masked with tissue paper - applied wet to allow it to be formed around all the struts. Again, be careful otherwise some of these delicate parts will come loose.

The instructions indicate that the aircraft should be painted overall RLM 02 grey. This is the currently accepted colouration for WWII Luftwaffe test aircraft, but I have seen other information, plus one colour picture of a Me-163 prototype, that indicate the colour may actually be RLM 76 light grey-blue. This is the colour I chose, and the kit was painted overall with Aeromaster RLM 76 enamel paint, and then given a thinned coat of Testors Glosscoat.

The decals are produced by Propagteam and as expected they were difficult to position, being so thin. Floating them in a pool of water eased the task of movement. A couple of coats of Microsol were applied to get them to snug down tight. All the kit decals were used except for the swastika. This needed to have a white outline, so I applied an Aeromaster swastika. I added the aircraft codes TK and AN, along with the cross that goes between them, to the undersides of the horizontal stabilizers. Though I could find no pictures showing this on an F1-265, photos of Flettner's F1-282 helicopters show that aircraft codes were applied to the undersides of their horizontal stabilizers, so I felt that I should do the same for the F1-265. The extra crosses needed were obtained from the spares box, while the letters are rub on transfers, which were not quite a perfect match, but quite close. A final coat of Aeromaster Acrylic Flat was applied, and then the wheels, windshield, cowling, and rotors were attached.

Conclusion:

Definitely not a kit for the beginner. The fit is marginal compared to other more mainstream kits, but with some effort a nice model can be made. The decals are the high point, while the poor fit of the vacuformed canopy pieces were the low point.

Instructions:

DILY · PARTS · TEILE · PIÉCES

POLYURETAN PARTS (PUR)

CLEAR PARTS (CP)

H11 EPPURUS SPEER ZEPER AGERT	H33 CERNI MATE BACK MATEH/WEAT KOF M02	H56 KORNING KORNING KORNING KORNING	H67 SERS BLACK LINE GREY MATE STAINLESS C/O ALUMI M02
H62 CANNON MATE LIGHTER MATE LEADER COP M02	H113 KORNING MATE PURT MATE PURT KOF M02	H146 KORNING BLACK MATELUM GREY MATE MATELUM GREY C/O MATELUM M02	H182 CORNING BLACK GREY KORNING C/O M02

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Flettner FI 265

RLM02 **RLM66**

SESTAVA · ASSEMBLY · BAUANLEITUNG · ASSEMBLAGE

2

3

Flettner FI 265

3

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RLM02 **RLM66** **H132**

Legend for H132
CERNI
MATE
MATE