

IPMS First Coast

Jacksonville, FL

August 2009



It is almost time for the “Nationals”, and I hope some will make the trip because it is something to see. It is without a doubt the biggest toy store one could go to. Along with all the booths of everything one could want, there are seminars on different building techniques and the people who give them are always glad to answer any and all questions.

Another nice part of the Nationals, is the new models and products that are about to be released and a real chance to talk to the model companies as to what might be coming in the future.

As we read articles in various publications, at the Nationals you sometimes have the chance to talk to some of those who wrote them and to ask question about the articles

One of the best parts of going to the Nationals is the people. You will meet and make friends who have the same hobby as you and are always glad to talk modeling. Another is that those who attend are from all over the world and that in it's self is just truly great. With the contacts you make the next time you are looking to build you might just remember someone who knows something about your build or is near a museum and has access to information you might need.

For something closer to home, there is the show in October at Warner-Robbins and that is just a short drive from here.

Happy Modeling



USS NIMITZ (CVN-68) CARRIER AIRWING 9 CIRCA 1993-1995



BUILT BY
JASON R. MARTIN

SHIPS HISTORY

USS *Nimitz* (CVN-68) is the [lead ship](#) of [its class](#) and is one of the largest [warships](#) in the world. The [keel](#) of *Nimitz* was laid down [22 June 1968](#) by [Newport News Shipbuilding](#) in [Newport News, Virginia](#), and she was commissioned [3 May 1975](#) by President [Gerald Ford](#). She was named for [Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz](#), who commanded the [Pacific](#) fleet in [World War II](#). She was laid down, launched and commissioned as CVAN-68, but was re-designated CVN-68 (nuclear-powered multi-mission aircraft carrier) on [30 June 1975](#) as part of the fleet realignment of that year.

Since her commissioning over 30 years ago, she has seen and accomplished a great deal. She has also seen countless amounts of modifications to her structure and weaponry. **This build reflects her 1993-1995 configuration**. It was during this time that I served onboard her (1992-1996) that she was deployed to the Persian Gulf for several months in [1993](#), relieving [Kitty Hawk](#) during [Operation Southern Watch](#). In March [1996](#), she was deployed to patrol the waters off [Taiwan](#) amid [missile tests by the PRC](#) in the area, becoming the first U.S. warship to pass through the [Taiwan Strait](#) since [1976](#).

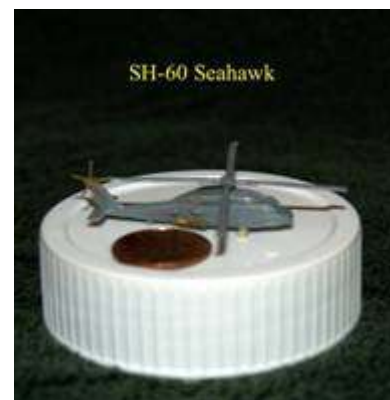
THE KIT

The kit is from Trumpeter and comes to you circa 1975, but as previously mentioned, I am built her in her 1993-1995 configuration. This is a HUGE Kit, with just under **1,000** parts to it! The kit retails for about \$199, but you can find it much cheaper than that, at around \$150. The kit does not come with a detailed hanger bay, so I had to scratch build one that included battery powered lighting.



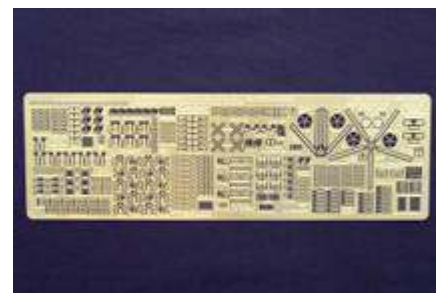
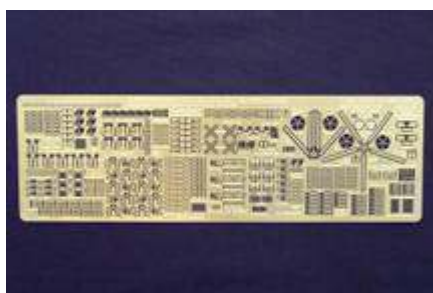
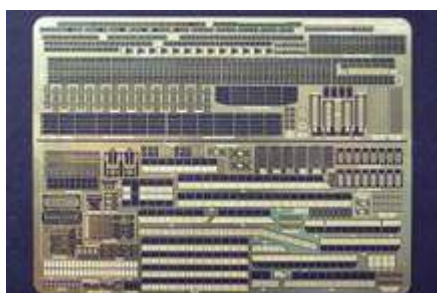
THE AIR CRAFT

The aircraft that were on the Nimitz in 1975 are not the same as in 1995, so I had to purchase some after market 1/350 scale USN aircraft. Specifically, F-14's, F/A 18's, and Sh-60 Seahawk Helicopters. The kit comes with Two EA-3B's, One E-2C Three A-6E's Six F-4J's, Two S-3A's, Six A-7E's, One SH-3H and One RA-5C. Most of these I didn't need, so I am selling them cheap!



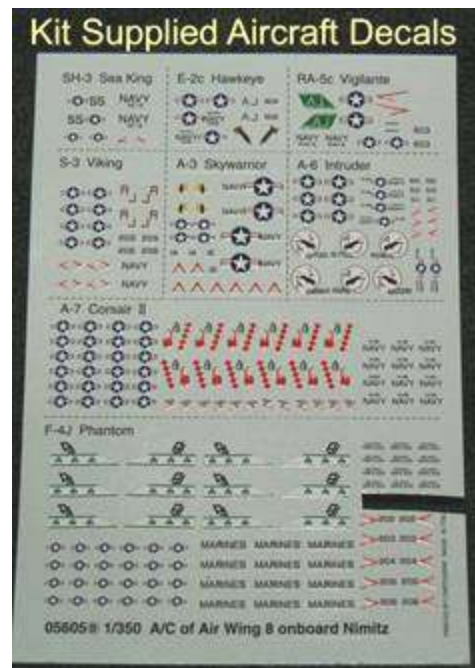
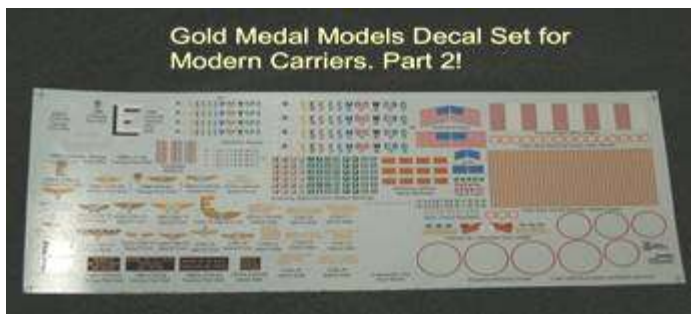
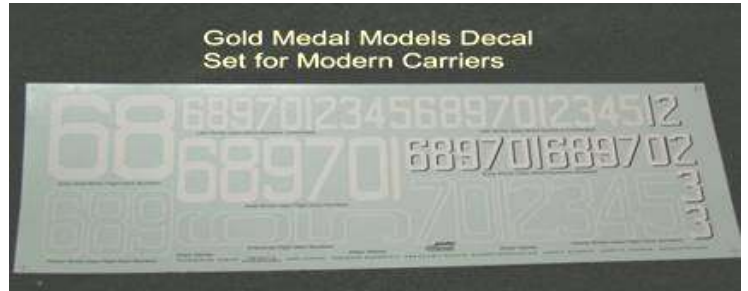
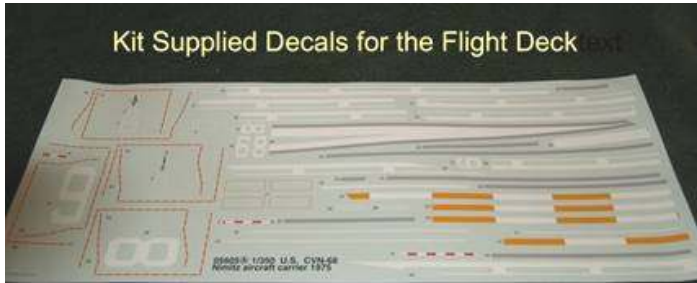
THE PHOTO ETCH

All photo etch that the ship is sporting comes directly from **Gold Medal Models**. I had to purchase 3 different frets of photo etch to accurately build this model. One of the frets is specifically for the aircraft. I didn't use it all.



THE DECALS

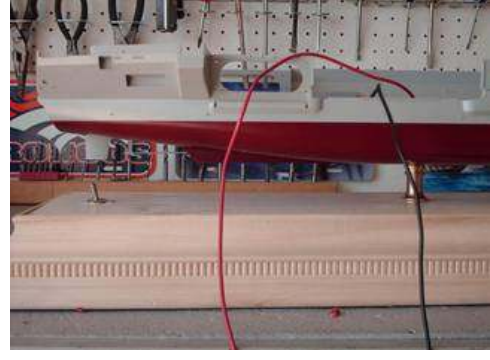
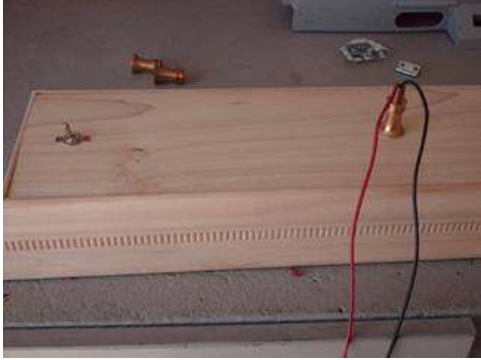
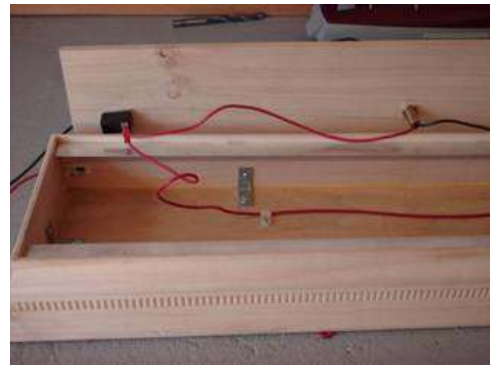
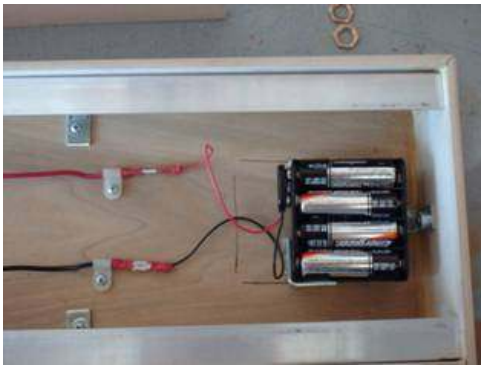
The kit comes with one sheet of decals for the ship, and the decals necessary to build the air wing that was onboard in 1975. So, I had to purchase a few aftermarket decals sets from Gold Medal Models, and with the help of **Jim Pear-sall**, I was able to create decals that identify the planes as part of carrier air wing 9, circa 1993-1995.



THE BASE

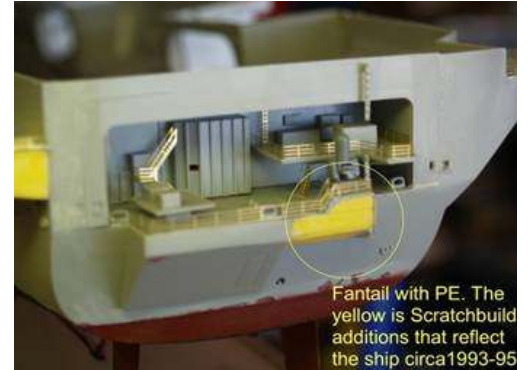
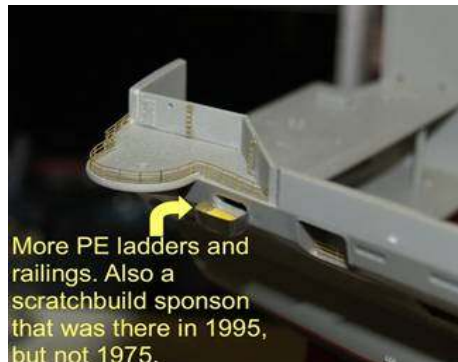
Since I have decided to light the interior hanger bay, I had to have a place to hide the wires and battery pack that I'm using to power the bulbs. I decided I didn't want to just use light that you can plug into a wall, because I don't want to deal with wires hanging down from the model. The base is made of chair rail, 1/4" wood sheet and some "L" brackets.





THE MODIFICATIONS

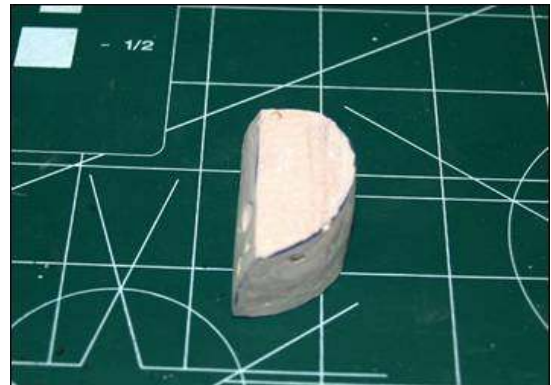
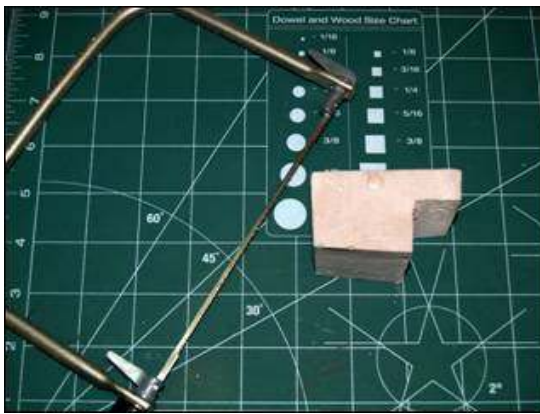
The modifications seemed to be endless. Those ship yard workers sure did a heck of a lot to that ship over the course of 30 years! Below you will find various sponsons that needed to be created. The fantail sponson includes a scratch built CIWS mount. The kit did not include any CIWS guns, so I acquired them in a trade.



Below is a picture of a port side forward CIWS sponson that was added to her hull sometime in the 1980's. The kit does not have this part, so it had to be scratch built. The CIWS gun was acquired in a trade with a fellow ship builder. This picture is modern, and does not show the CIWS that was once on there.



With a massive amount of help of fellow IPMS member **Greg Ewald**, I was able to scratch build this sponson from resin. The following pictures should tell the story of this sponson creation. The whole thing started with a hardened piece of automotive bondo...



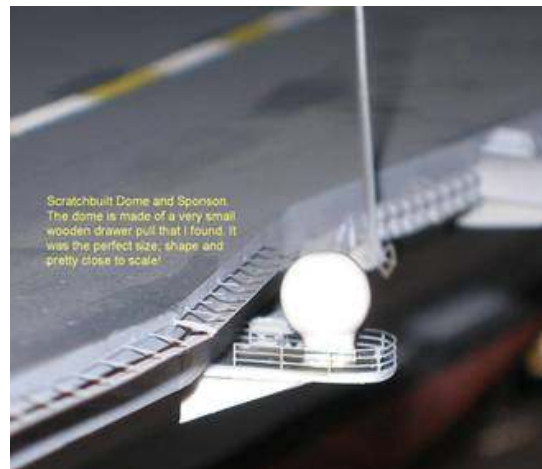
Once I shaped the piece of Bondo to perfection, Greg was able to make a mold of it, and cast a new piece in resin. Here is the final result of his work.



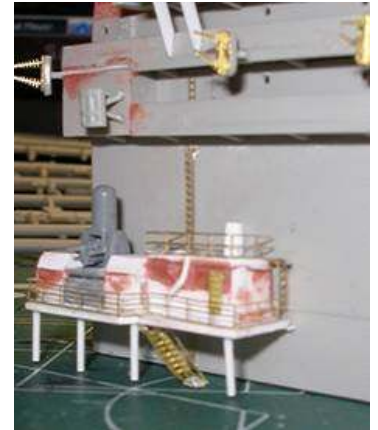
I didn't want my flight deck or hanger deck to have that nice, smooth plastic look when I painted it. I wanted to simulate non-skid. I was able to accomplish this by spraying the decks with some 3M spray adhesive, then pouring baking soda on top of it. Below is an unpainted example of some weapons elevators that show this baking soda technique. It works very well.



This is a picture of another sponson I had to scratch build. The white dome is made from an old wooden drawer pull that I happened upon

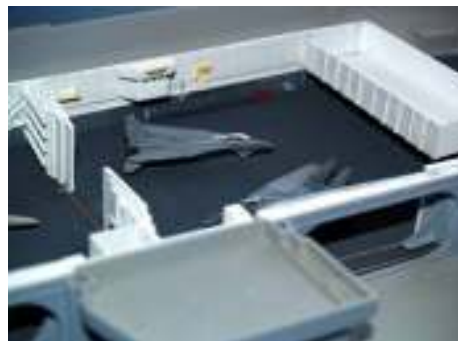
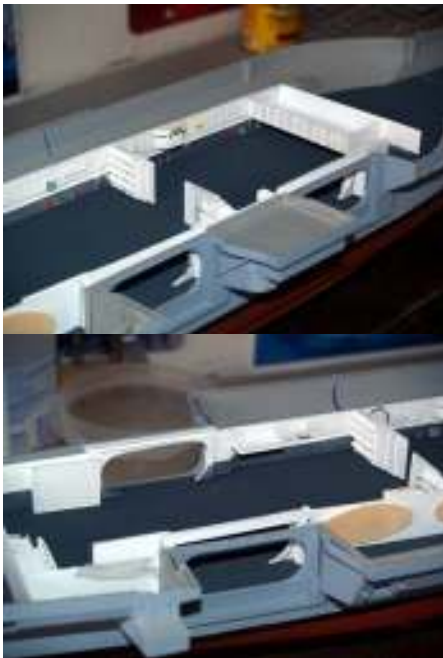


The last major modification that needed to be done to this ship was to scratch build the port side island CIWS sponson. This was not there in 1975, it showed up later, then disappeared sometime in the late 1990's. I had the pleasure of building it completely from scratch, with a 3rd CIWS gun that was acquired



THE HANGER BAY

The Trumpeter kit does not come with any type of hanger bay, and is really designed to have the hanger doors shut. Because I am a glutton for punishment, I decided to scratch build the entire thing. Please note the hanger deck "conflag" stations. These are scratch built using the same technique as the port CIWS sponson, and with a great deal of help casting resin from **Greg Ewald**.

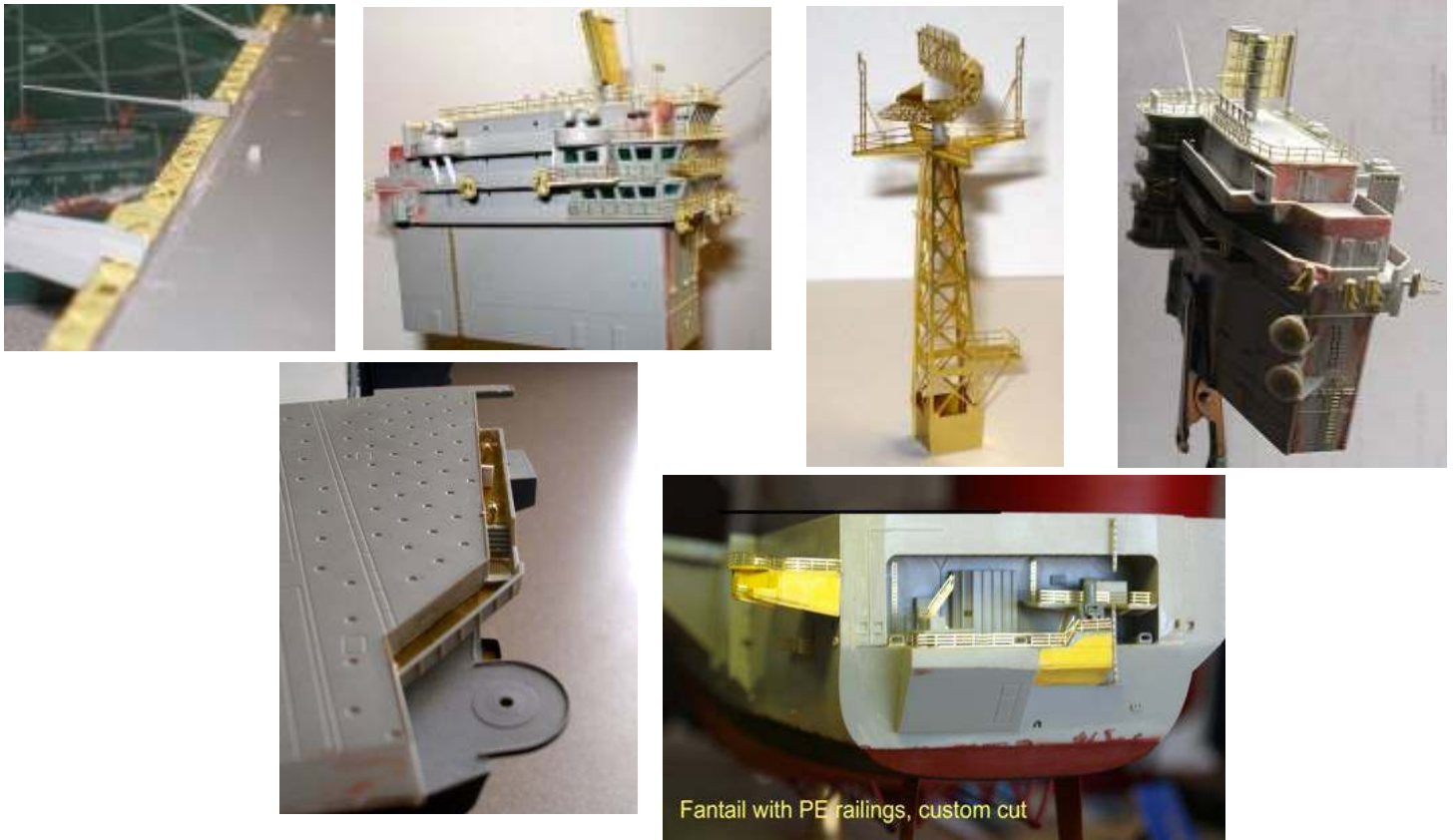


THE LIGHTING

Once I had run the positive and negative wires from the base, I was able to run them along the top of the hangerbay "overhead". Then it was just a matter of connecting the bulbs to the wires.



THE PHOTO ETCH CONTINUED...



Words cannot describe the amount of PE this monster included. Here are just some of the highlights

CONCLUSION

While this was the build of a lifetime, and I had great amounts of fun doing it, I don't think I will be building any more Aircraft Carriers anytime soon. I started this build in January 2007, and finished it in February of 2008. I didn't count the number of hours I put into it, but you can probably imagine the number it would be. I hope you enjoy looking at her as much as I enjoyed building her. She may not win any IPMS awards for "clean" building, but she is definitely the centerpiece of my collection.



JASON R. MARTIN IPMS-PHOENIX