

KIT BUILD

Scale: 1:72, 1000 pieces

1:72

SPECIFICATIONS

Italeri 1:72 Short Sunderland Mk I
Kit No. 802
Materials: IM
Availability: The Hobby Company Ltd (UK
Importer) and Italeri stockists worldwide
Price Guide: £34.99

BEFORE STARTING:

- Thick Cyanoacrylate & Accelerator
- Gunze-Sangyo Mr Cement S
- Tamiya Masking Tape
- Gunze-Sangyo Mr Putty
- Tweezers
- Sanding sticks & files
- X-Acto Modelling knife and #11 blades
- Fiskars straight edged scissors

PAINTS USED:

Alclad 2 lacquer:
ALC314 Klear-Kote Flat
ALC101 Dark Aluminium

Halfords acrylic (aerosol):
Grey Plastic Primer

Lifecolor acrylic:
UA519 RAF Dark Earth
UA520 RAF Dark Green

AIRBRUSHES USED:

Iwata Hi-Line HP-BH and HP-CH
Available in the UK from The Airbrush
Company, visit www.airbrushes.com

DIMENSIONS 1:1

Span - 112ft 5in (34.39m)
Length - 85ft 4in (26.0m)
Height - 32ft 10in (10m)

DIMENSIONS 1:72

Span - 484mm
Length - 361mm
Height - 138mm

REFERENCES

- Short Sunderland by C. Bouyer (Aston Publications)
- Short Sunderland, Profile No.889 (Profile Publications)
- Short Sunderland by T. Butler, Warpaint No.25 (Hall Park Books 2000)
- Short Sunderland by K. Delve (The Crowood Press 2000, ISBN: 1-85126-355-4)
- Sunderland at War by C. Bouyer (Ian Allan Ltd)
- Sunderland Squadrons of World War 2 by J. Lake, Osprey Combat Aircraft No.19 (Osprey Publishing 2000 ISBN: 1-85176-024-2)



The box contents look pretty good, heavy panel lines aside this is a quality presentation and awesome subject matter



Built & Written by Steve A. Evans from the UK

It's been some time coming, to be sure, but the wait looks to have been worth it as this new offering from Italeri is streets ahead of the older edition in just about every way. The kit comes in a large, top-opening box with some neat art on the lid. Inside you get five sprues of light grey-coloured plastic, one large sprue of transparent bits, a neat etched fret and even a small length of string (for the anchor, how many aircraft kits can you say that about?) The decal sheet looks great and the instruction sheet is clear and easy enough to follow, even if it is printed in 3D CAD style which won't be to some people's taste. There is also a little information booklet with some atmospheric wartime shots of operational Sunderlands...great stuff. The plastic is well formed with reasonable detail, although the



Beware the

Iconic WWII aircraft don't come much bigger than this: the mighty Sunderland. and

"I fancied the darker version for myself, purely because it was more unusual, and painting began with planning out the method of doing the chipped and flaking paint associated with the Mediterranean theatre"

Plane Facts

The Sunderland was developed from the Empire (C class) flying boat to meet Specification R.2/33, revised in March 1936 as Specification R.22/36. The prototype first flew on the 16th October 1937. The type was ordered into production as the Mk I and 69 were built with Bristol Pegasus XXII engines (15 built by Blackburn Aircraft). Later marks included the Mk II with a power-operated dorsal turret (43 built); Mk III with ASV Mk II radar fitted and revised planning surface; Mk V with Pratt & Whitney engines and ASV Mk VIc radar (150 built + converted Mk IIIs). The type was withdrawn from RAF service in May 1959, while it continued in use by the Aéronavale until 1960 and with the RNZAF right up to 1967.



The Porcupine!

at last we have a replacement for the venerable old Airfix version!

STAGE-BY-STAGE - CONSTRUCTION



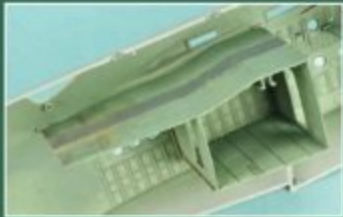
The panels and rivets, a bit overdone maybe but let's see what they look like under the paint and weathering



The interior parts aren't bad at all. The instrument panel is the star



OK, so there are a few bulkheads and bits missing but considering you won't see any of this when it's finished I'm not complaining



This is the mid-upper gunner's station and this area could certainly do with some additional detail as you'll still be able to see in here later on



Tail-gun Charlie, all alone. At least in the real aircraft he could climb out, crawl forward and get himself a cup of tea if he fancied it



The fit of the fuselage is OK, nothing brilliant but not too bad either; the transparent bits aren't so good, however, those portholes are horrible

external panel lines are a bit overdone and there are rivets absolutely everywhere! There are some awkward ejector pin marks to deal with, plenty of flash and a few heavier mould lines on some of the bits. At least the basic shapes look very good and the breakdown of parts point to later versions to come.

Construction begins as usual with the interior and you get plenty of bits and pieces

to deal with here, including a truly excellent instrument panel that is offered in a couple of formats with either a decal or the etched fascia. The etched bits are a bit thick and difficult to work but the fit of the smaller parts is pretty good, once the flash has been cleaned off, anyway. The interior consists of the main flight-deck, the forward compartment and the mid-upper gunner's area. The last bit

could really do with some additional details as it's all rather plain back there and will be reasonably visible on the finished model. I'm sure the aftermarket boys will be doing something about that even as I write this. The worst bits of it all are the transparent portholes, which are a poor fit and clumsily done. The turret glass-work is vertically split, front to back, which is a bit of a pain but at

"There are some awkward ejector pin marks to deal with, plenty of flash and a few heavier mould lines on some of the bits"



least the main windscreen fits neatly enough (even if there is a lot to mask off).

Once the fiddly bits of the interior are complete, construction springs forward pretty rapidly with fitment of the fuselage halves, main wings and tail, all of which go together without any real problems and only a small touch of filler along the joints. These are swiftly followed by the engines, which are easy to construct but also easy to get wrong, so pay particular attention to which part goes where. They are nicely detailed and look pretty good when painted up and slotted onto the wing.

Colouring In

The Italeri version of this great machine comes with no fewer than six options in the box, each one of which would look just great. There are four in Dark Green and Dark Slate Grey and two in Dark Green and Dark Earth, one of which has the black underside. All have subtle differences in camouflage and markings, with variations in roundels and tail flashes being the most obvious. If you really want the white versions then you'll have to hang on for the Mk III or Mk V to be released but that won't take too long, I'm sure. I fancied the darker version for myself, purely because it

was more unusual, and painting began with planning out the method of doing the chipped and flaking paint associated with the Mediterranean theatre. I opted for the tried and tested Alclad undercoat and masking fluid applied by sponge to get the chipped areas. In this case the Maskol fluid was applied very carefully, trying to follow the panel and areas where the water would have had the greatest effect. The camouflage paints were from the Lifecolor range as I needed to use acrylics to allow for easy removal of the masking fluid. They do the full set of RAF colours, albeit in their own version of the 'authentic' shades; as always open to interpretation. First up was the Dark Earth and a couple of good layers of that were followed by a very protracted session of making White-Tack worms for the camouflage demarcations. There are couple of camouflage patterns that could be used, subtle variations on a theme, really, so go with whatever photographic references you have. The ones shown on the Italeri Instructions are pretty accurate although you do have to watch how the colours wrap around the tail as some of them are a little suspect. Anyway, on with the painting and once the pattern had been lined with the rolls of tacky stuff the centre portions



Fit of the major parts is very good! with almost no letting, this is the gap you get



The underside of the wing joint needs a bit more effort, though, but still nothing a little filling won't sort out



The upper vision ports are a poor fit but at least the centre joint is neat and tidy



The tail pieces are a good fit as well, even the odd separate left hand vertical fin

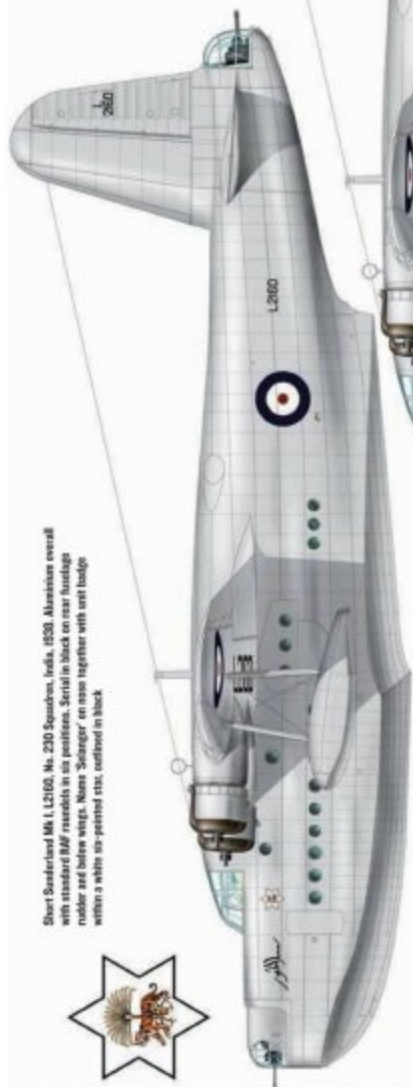


The engines are a pretty good bit of moulding with some neat cylinder detail and positive location. Just be wary about the odd engine out



That's the odd engine with the internal exhaust, its construction is different to the other three

Short Sunderland Mk I, L2160, No. 230 Squadron, India, 1939. Aluminium overall with standard RAF roundels in its positions. Serial in black on rear fuselage rudder and below wings. Name "Schiever" on nose together with unit badge within a white air-painted star, outlined in black.



Short Sunderland Mk I, L2633C, No. 260 Squadron, 1939. Aluminium overall with standard RAF roundels in its positions. Serial in black on rear fuselage and on rudder. Unit badge on nose within a six-pointed white star, outlined in black.



Short Sunderland Mk I, N9229, NW-1, No. 220 Squadron, Eastern Mediterranean, late 1940. Dark Earth/Dark Green upper surfaces with Night Underlines. White serial and Medium Sea Gray codes. Yellow starboard added to fuselage roundel. Blue/red roundels above wings.



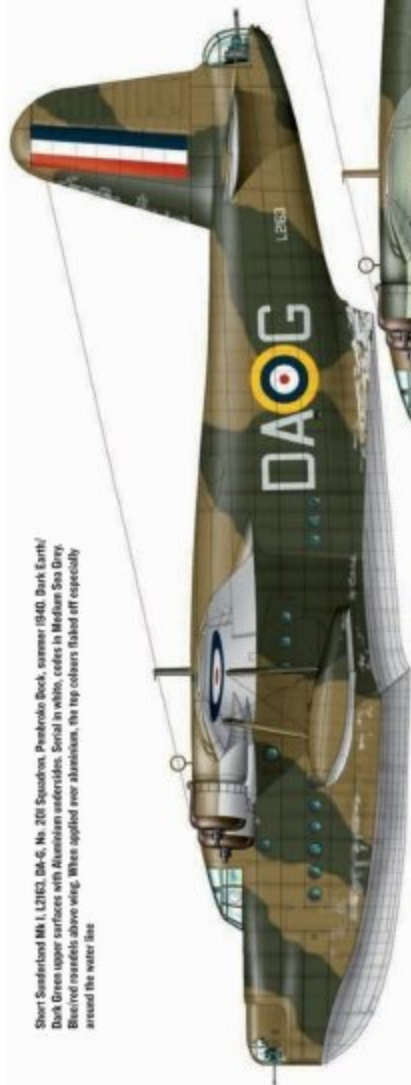
Short Sunderland Mk I, N0048, delivery scheme to No. 204 Squadron, June 1939. Dark Green/Dark Earth/upper surfaces with Night Underlines. White serial on rear fuselage and below wings. Blue/red roundels on fuselage sides and above wings. Blue/White/red roundels below wings.



Scale: 1/144



Short Sunderland Mk I, L2103, DA-C, No. 201 Squadron, Pembroke Dock, summer 1940. Dark Earth/Dark Green upper surfaces with Aluminium undersides. Serial in white, codes in Medium Sea Grey. Bleached roundels above wing. When applied over aluminium, the top colours flaked off especially around the water line.



Short Sunderland Mk I, T9048, DG-H, No. 228 Squadron. Dark Earth/Dark Green upper surfaces with Sky undersides. White serial and Medium Sea Grey codes. Bleached roundels above wings.



Short Sunderland Mk I, L5790, GD-B, No. 204 Squadron, Gibraltar, 1942. Extra Dark Sea Grey/Dark Slate Grey upper surfaces with Medium Sea Grey undersides, codes and serial. Bleached roundels above wings.



Short Sunderland Mk I, N0125, NM-V, No. 250 Squadron, Eastern Mediterranean, late 1940. Dark Earth/Dark Green upper surfaces with Night undersides. White serial and Medium Sea Grey codes. Bleached roundels above wings.



Scale: 1/144
0 1 2
1 cm 1 in

STAGE-BY-STAGE - PAINT & WEATHERING



Alclad Dark Aluminium is the base coat for all the labor paint chips with sponge-applied Maskol as the preferred method of chipping it off.



Multi-shade black on the underside gets the full 'masking treatment' because I know how messy I am.



Top surface base colour is Lifecolor (IAS19 RAF Dark Earth, liberally smothered in tacky worms for a soft demarcation edge. These worms took ages to apply.



The camouflage pattern is filled in with some tape and then Lifecolor (IAS20 RAF Dark Green) is sprayed on. This version of the Green is closer to FS 34092 so it has a slightly 'blue' tinge to it.



With the masking and Maskol removed you can see the chipping effect, still rather raw here without any weathering applied.



The underside, especially at the front and around the doors, got the brunt of the Maskol splotches and looks suitably scruffy.



The weathering is my usual streaks of pastel dust and Tamiya Smoke, sealed in with Johnson's Klear, which makes everything look rather high contrast but don't worry, that won't last.



The chipping over the top wing follows the areas that the ground crew would crawl over whilst sorting out the engines and the fuel replenishment.

"Most important is the beaching gear. This is beautifully moulded, to be fair to Italeri, with the two main stanchions, complete with cork flotation devices and the tail trolley"

were filled in with bits of tape. DO NOT use Masking fluid for this job as that will seriously mark the acrylic paint. Then it was a simple matter of a light spray of the Lifecolor Dark Green, letting it dry for a minute or two, then ripping the masking off (I always love that bit). And just look at how that Maskol worked to make some seriously flaky, chipped and worn paint, excellent. For some variation in the colours I mixed a very slightly lighter version of both colours and filled in a couple panels here and there to give it a 'lived in' look. This was helped by liberal applications of pastel dust and Tamiya Smoke, all followed by the normal application of Johnson's Klear, ready for the decals.

The decal sheet is a thing of beauty with six versions and all their markings to look at. Printed by Cartograf it is crystal clear with not a ragged edge in sight and lovely colours in perfect register. Cartograf decals love a high gloss surface under them and apart from being a little 'grabby' they work beautifully. A drop or two of Microscale setting solutions had them settled neatly into the over-large panel lines without difficulty. There are no stencils or other markings to worry about so it's just national markings and codes to do and that takes less than an hour. They are far too bright as always so a dusting of grey pastel dust, followed by a light over-spray of Tamiya Smoke toned them all down quite nicely before another coat of Klear was applied to seal them in

properly. The only questionable bit on the sheet is the colour of the gas detection patch, just forward of the windscreen. This is bright orange on the sheet but should really be a mustard yellow kind of shade, but that really is a minor point.

Finishing Off

With the decals done it's time to get on with the massive task of getting all the bits and pieces finished. Most important is the beaching gear. This is beautifully moulded, to be fair to Italeri, with the two main stanchions, complete with cork flotation devices and the tail trolley. This last bit is made from eight plastic bits and two photo-etched straps. It's the early pattern version with just a single wheel on the axle; later versions had a double wheel to help with the increased weight of the later Sunderland versions. As you can imagine, with six wheels to worry about, getting them all to stand on the floor at the same time is a bit of a juggling act but it needs to be done to get the correct 'sit' of the model. Then there are the bomb racks, complete with photo-etched additions and bombs, the upper gunner positions, various aeriels and pitot tubes and the wing floats, complete with fishing line rigging (yuk, hate that job).

Final surface finish is by Alclad Klear Kote Flat which is a very near matt appearance without being too dull, which could be a mistake in this scale. Having a slight sheen to it also helps with the exhaust staining which is completely matt.

This is a mix of 50% matt black, 30% Matt Leather and 20% matt varnish (Xtracolor XDFF) thinned out and lightly sprayed over the upper wing surface and a light coat on the tail where the exhaust gasses pass over it.

The final part is de-masking the transparent bits, touching up the paintwork and adding the long aerial wire from tail to fuselage mast, then it's time to sit back and ponder the good and bad of this latest Italeri release.

"A truly excellent instrument panel that is offered in a couple of formats with either a decal or the etched facia"

FINAL VERDICT

Great kit, go buy one. What more do you need to know? Oh, OK then, maybe a little more. Bad bits are the panel lines that are much too heavy, a lack of internal detail at certain points and clumsy transparent portholes, but these are really the only faults. Everything else is fine with good detail work on engines, cockpit and beaching gear. The decal choices are stupendous and basic construction is painless and well thought out. It's obvious from the mould construction that more versions are on their way and I say bring them on! Like I said; Great kit

Was it worth the effort? She's a big old bird so you get a LOT of kit for your cash, so yep, worth every minute.



The little etched fret gives some useful additional detailing to various spots around the airframe



There are only 6 bits of rigging on each foot but it's enough to remind me why I don't do WWI biplanes!



The underside and the multiple shades of black/dark grey, radically clipped around the engine servicing platforms built into the wing leading edge



The main undercarriage beaching attachments are huge lumps of angle iron with a cork foot wrapped around them; it's all so agricultural isn't it great?



The tail trolley is the early pattern; later versions had double wheels on the single axle



The windscreen clear vision units are etched items, painted and stuck into place with some Kleer. The eagle-eyed amongst you will notice that I only realised I hadn't fitted them until after I'd done the main photographs

