



**SILVER WINGS 1:32 FIAT CR.42 "FALCO"
BUILD REVIEW BY MAURIZIO DI TERLIZZI**



The model kit is included in a carton box, with all the parts carefully wrapped. The fuselage halves are joined together with several Tamiya tape stripes, to avoid distortion. At a glance, one can easily note the beauty of the castings, really bubble-free, and the fact that they all miss the casting-blocks. This is very important because it helps the modeller avoid unwanted part breaking, and long and boring saw sessions removing the blocks with dangerous resin powder spreading.

I started my building enthusiastically. I always wanted a CR 42 in this scale, so this build represents a quick build without omitting precision and details.

Interiors and cockpit

Building the cockpit is easy and few details can be added to enhance realism. PE parts number 21, 22 and 23 are a little bit difficult to bend, so it is better to not bend and use only a half of them. Part 20 is too long and must be trimmed to adapt it. The complex framework of the cockpit tub, composed of several tubes with different diameter, is really well done and maintains the correct scale effect. I decided to replace some of the upper tubes with plastic rod, to avoid the boring cleaning stage. For an Italian CR 42, part PE10 is not to be fitted, instead of it we'll glue a little rounded thin plasticard part with a 0,5 mm hole in the middle. This represents the hook where the parachute rip cord where secured during the flight.

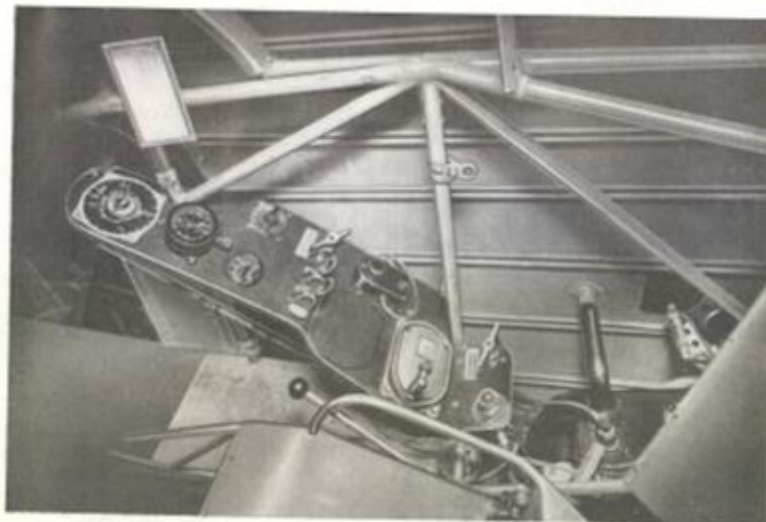
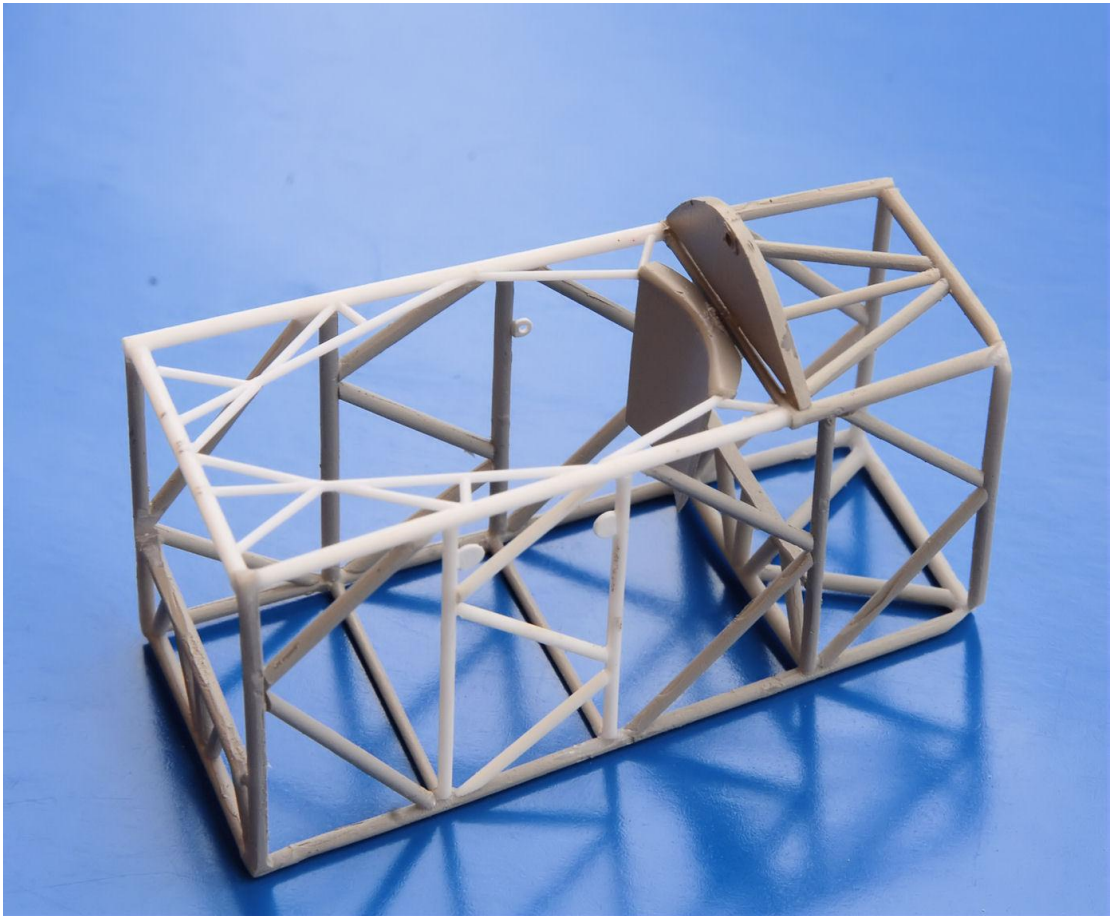
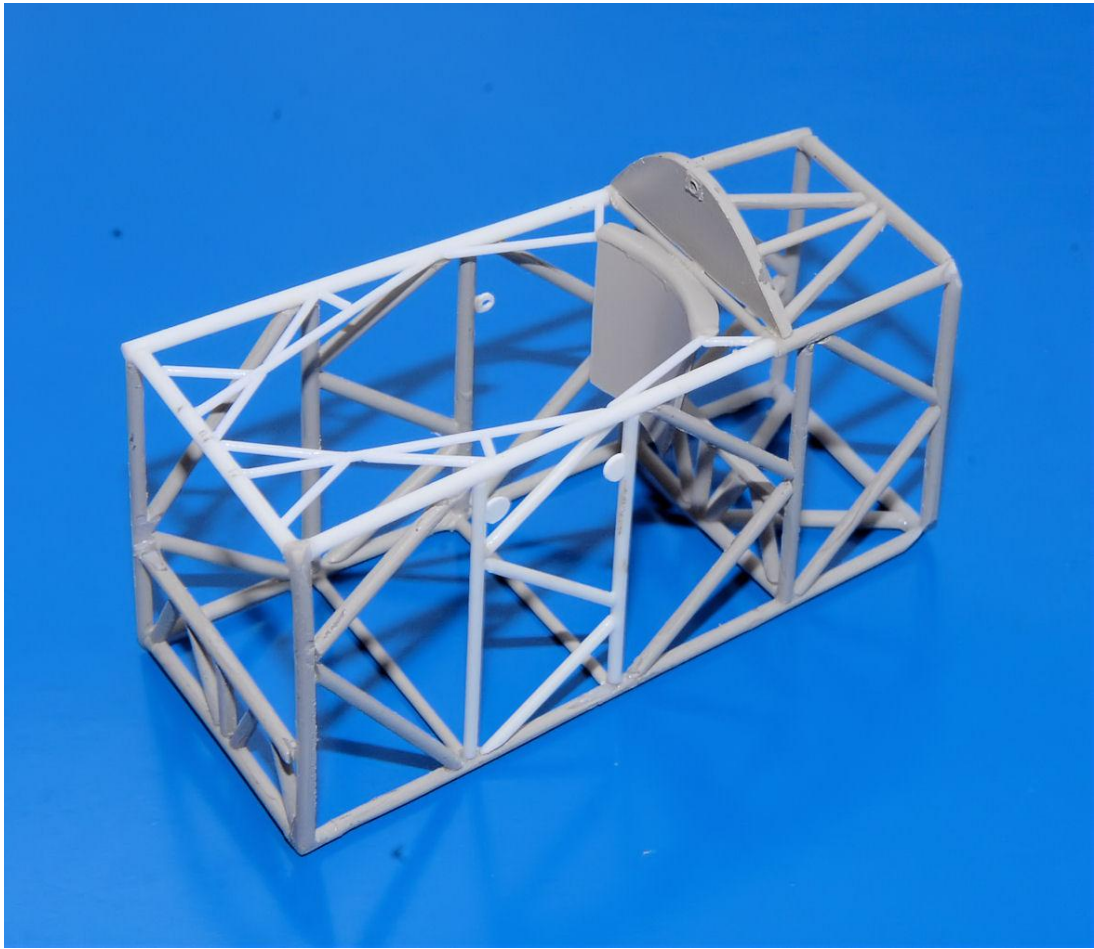


Fig. 26. — Vista della fiancata destra posto pilota.



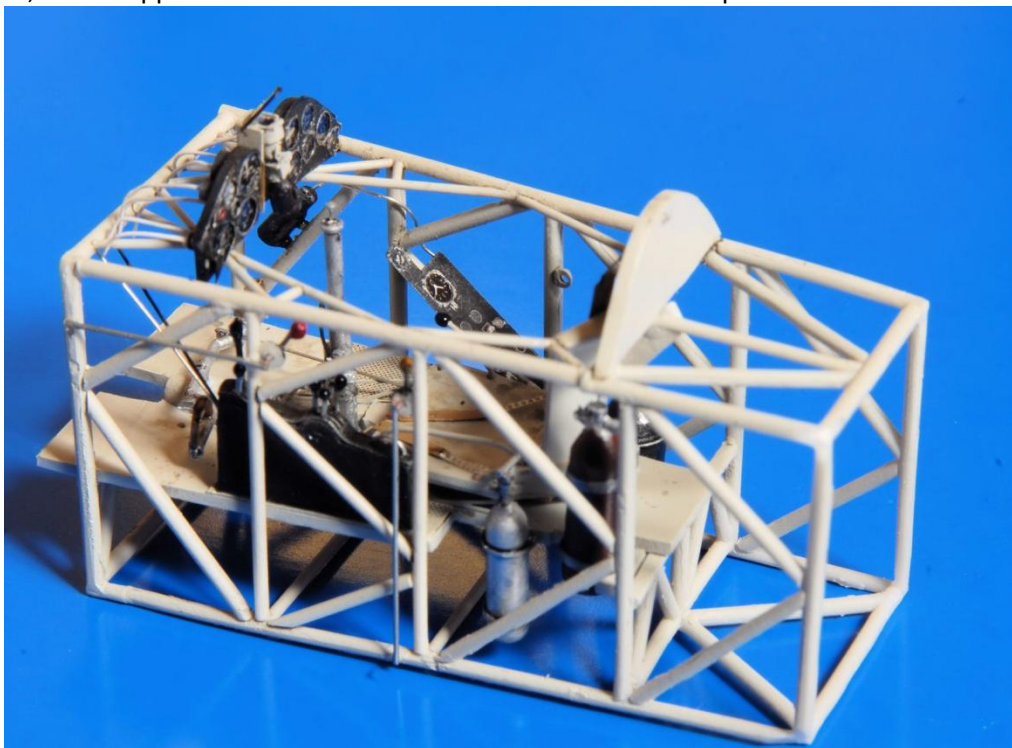
On the right hand side of the pilot's seat, a third bottle is missing. This was for the compressed air and can be easily realized with a rod, 3 mm in diameter, painted in satin black, and glued offset from the seat.

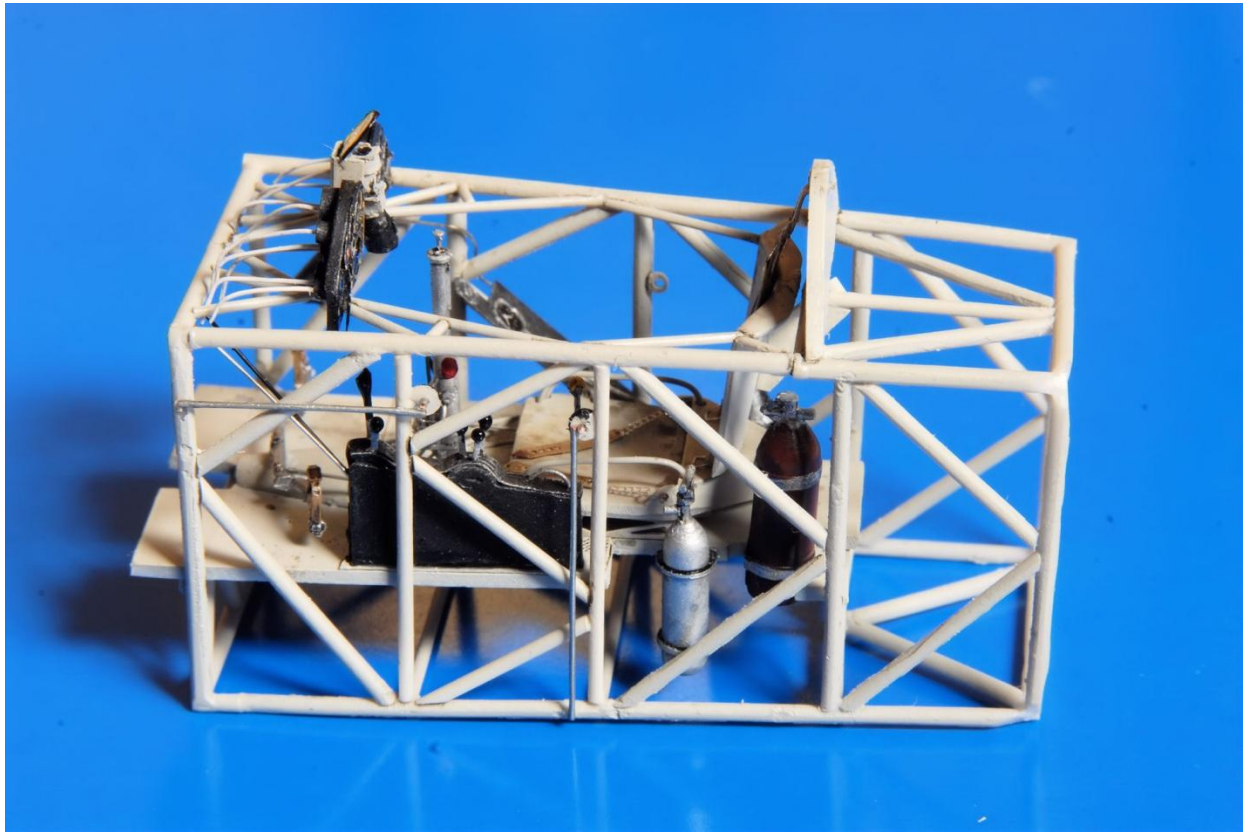
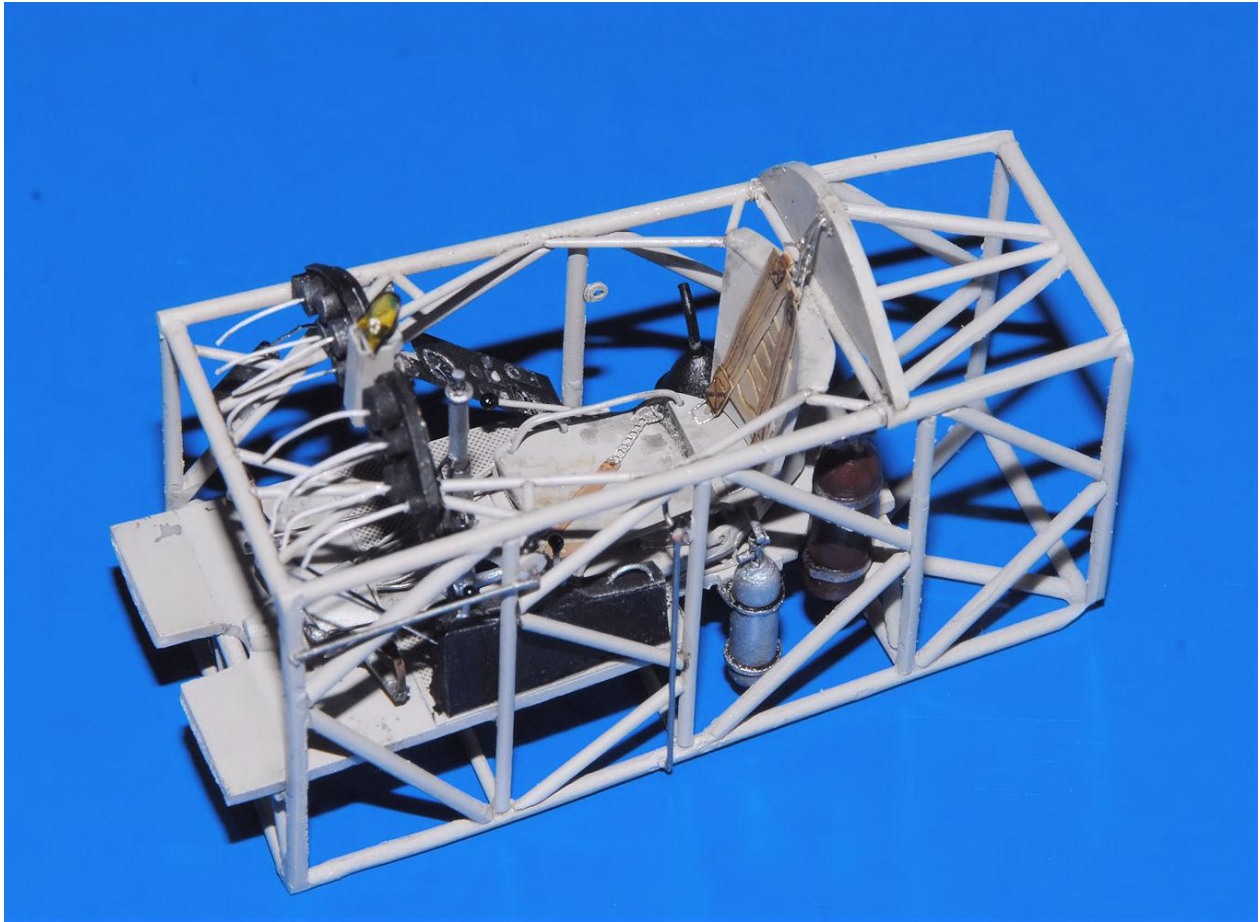
On the left hand fuselage side, we have to add a little squared structure with five - 1 mm diameter holes that represent the reinforcement for the pilot's foot step. It must be glued inside with the outside foot step as a reference. Once the tubular internal structure is complete, we must add two thin plasticard supports for two small levers as shown in the pictures. This was for the main fuel cock and for the auxiliary fuel tank. Paint the fuel knob yellow and the other knob red. Overall interiors included tubular structure; floor, bulkheads and seat are in light gray, best match is FS 36307. After a light weathering and few washing with oil colours, we can start building black coloured parts that are the instrument panel and the throttle and lever left console. In particular, the panel is very well detailed and the side console is complete with all the parts in PE. I started painting the back face of the acetate instrument sheet flat white; this will bring to life the dials, allowing – after complete drying – to be cut along the line. The side console and panels (left and right) were painted in satin black, not flat, because Italian panel were covered with a special anti-glare paint called "nero raggrizzante", its rough surface doesn't reflect light but wasn't flat nor opaque.

Acetate sheets were stuck to the back of the PE panel using some tiny drops of cyano glue, once dried, we'll fill the recessed instrument holes with drops of Future floor wax, that will be a perfect glass for them. Two segments of stretched sprue will be added to the side console to simulate the Bowden levers that come out from the top front of the console and disappear in the left lower part of the instrument panel.

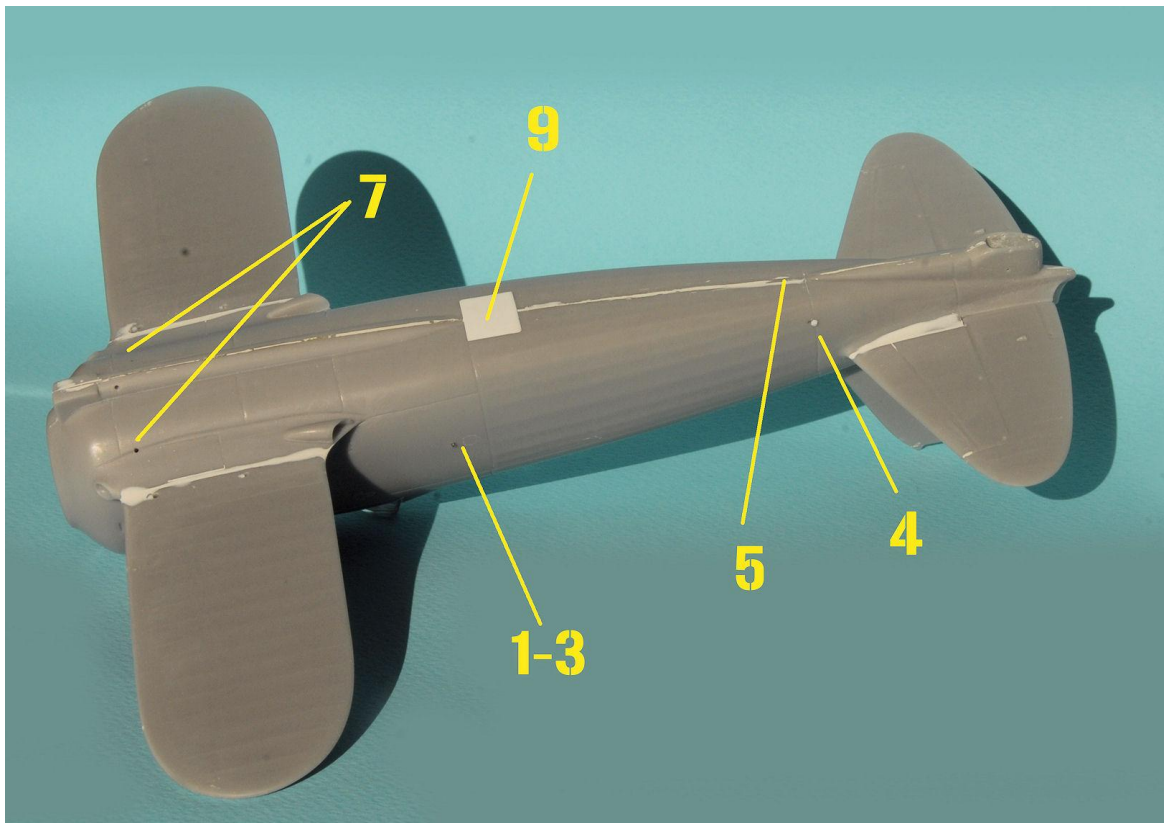
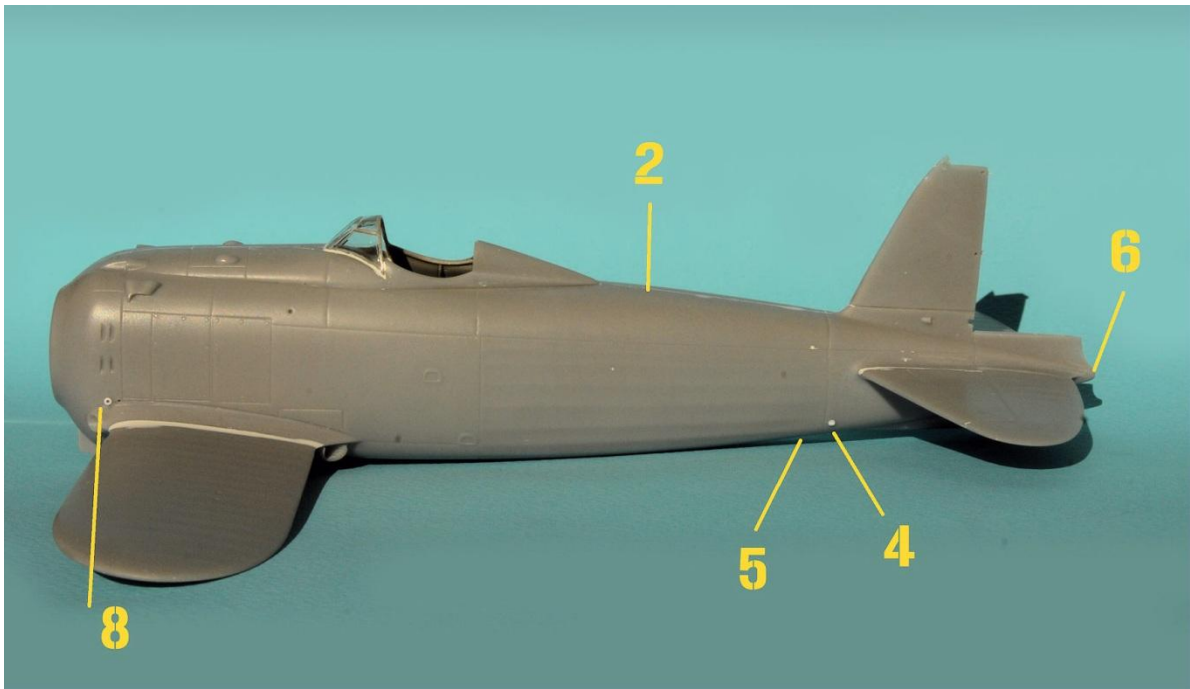
The compass and gunsight are represented in one piece, but it will be better to split them and paint the compass in black and the gunsight in a light blue/gray. I replaced the its glass with a thin acetate part painted in clear yellow with three very small white dots, to represent the secondary aiming device that was not luminous but engraved onto the glass.

A few parts are missing to complete the cockpit, the control stick and the rudder pedals. The first will be detailed by adding on top, a small mushroom-shaped plastic rod as the brake button. Then comes the trigger lever placed in its rear top part of the handgrip and then two copper wires that comes out from the middle side of the stick, and disappear behind the rudder pedal bar. These were the compressed air for the brakes. Two little wires (painted in black) are to be fitted in the front upper part to simulate the Bowden cables for the machine guns. Rudder bar needs two copper wires that start at the bar, and disappear under the seat. These two items are to be painted flat aluminum.

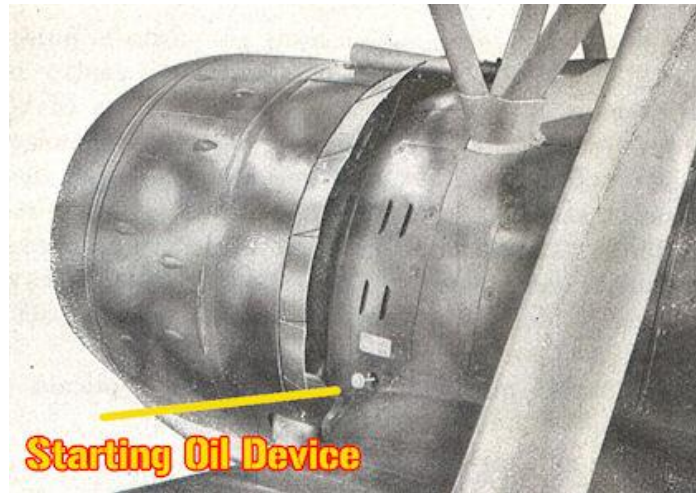




Now it is time to glue the two fuselage halves together, using cyano or epoxy glue. Fitting is perfect and little putty is needed. The fuselage is missing a few external details, which can be easily recognized and created using the two side pictures and the indications below.



- 1) Make a plastic template as the attached 1/1 scale drawing, to scribe the compressed air hatch right fuselage side under the windscreen.
- 2) Using the same template, scribe one more hatch on top of the fuselage behind the cockpit hump.
- 3) With a small segment of a 0.8 mm dia. needle, make a scoop in front of #1 hatch, right hand side of the fuselage.
- 4) With a small plasticard circular piece, 2 mm dia., make on both sides of the fuselage, the tubular support for aircraft lifting, adding a horizontal plastic segment on each piece. These tubular support were retractable and offset, so please be careful to place the port one in the “metallic” part of the tail area (not in the “fabric” area), and the starboard one exactly across metal and fabric area – see images for references.
- 5) Add a small “halfmoon” shaped support just in front of the tail wheel – see picture – that served as a fuselage protection when aircraft was placed tail-high with a fuel drum as support.....
- 6) Discard the kit’s tail light and replace it with a small 1,2 mm. dia plastic rod segment.
- 7) Make two vent holes 1 mm dia. under the aircraft belly between the undercarriage legs.
- 8) With a small 1.8 mm. dia plastic circular piece, make the housing of Starting Oil device, placed on the nose, right side.



- 9) Make a rectangular fuselage inspection hatch under the belly, with thin plasticard, dimensions 12x11 mm.

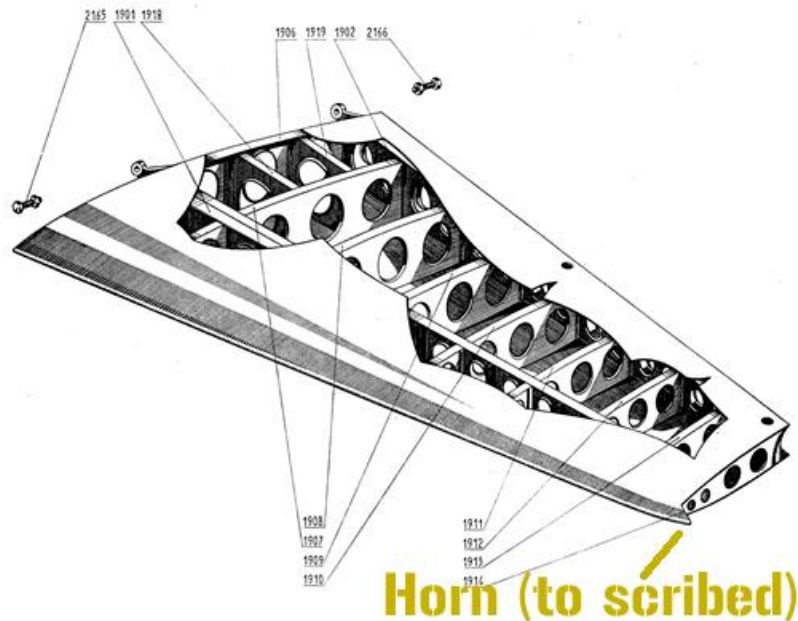
Canopy area and windscreen

Before attaching the windscreen, I have painted the inside with Future floor wax. Once dried, we have to paint the inside frames in light gray, being carefully that there weren't front frames so don't paint them. After a careful sanding and polishing, the windscreen needs the all-round soft padding for pilot's head protection. The headrest of the kit is good, while I removed the moulded pad in the windscreen to make room for a complete new one. I used Evergreen's half round plastic stripe to make three different segment. Two were used for the cockpit edges, while the third was carefully bend by hand, and glued along the windscreen curved edge. After glue has dried, the parts were painted in leather tones.



Lower wings, fin and tailplanes

The lower wings have well cast fabric appearance and can be mated to fuselage without problems. We have to add two triangular rigging points, one under each wing in relation to the point where the two wing struts converges. All the moveable surfaces of the CR 42 could be disassembled inserting a wrench in a little hole to reach the hinge, so we have to create twelve 0.7 mm holes in relation to the scribed hinge in each tailplane and on the fin. Then we'll modify the tailplane panel line in the balancing horn area, because the oblique line generates a little horn in the fixed part.



Engine, cowling and guns

Engine is finely detailed and just needs the adding of 7 lead wires that, departing from the lower part of the reduction gear crankcase, run around it to reach each front cylinder. Then we'll add the spark plugs wire using thin lead wire segments. Even after the adding of all the fuel and exhausts tubes, the whole engine assembly fits perfectly inside the cowling. We have just to add two thin fuel dump tubes in the right lower hand part of the cowling. Machine guns are a perfect reproduction of the front end part of the barrel, fitted with flame damper; although the damper is a little too long and must be trimmed by 2 mm.

Propeller

The propeller is very well done, with the hub and spinner are separated from the blades, so it is easy to paint all the parts separately. Once assembled, I tried to measure its diameter, just to discover that it is a bit more than 8,7 cm – real one is 2,80 metres...simply PERFECT !!

I started by painting the rear prop blades in flat black, then after an accurate masking, I proceed with RLM65 Hellblau colour that is so close to Celeste 2, the colour of front prop blades and spinner. This particular received the same Celeste colour as a factory painting, but once in service with operative units, spinners were the very first item that was customized by unit's personnel. The prop hub and 2 mm of prop blades' roots should be painted in Chrome Silver.

Painting

I started the painting stage keeping the kit in five different sub-assemblies: one as the upper wings, one for all the wing struts, one for the cowling, one for the undercarriage and one for the fuselage. I decided to model the airplane of Tenente Enzo Martissa, an Italian 4th Stormo pilot that was seriously wounded during a clash with Hurricane in the desert, early in the war. His plane was hit by more than 100 bullets, which almost severed his leg. Despite this, he successfully landed perfectly in the desert with no hope to be saved. He stayed under the wings for days, until he knew that his end was close, so wrote his last Will in the gear's griffin badge. A little time later, he was discovered and saved by a Bersaglieri patrol that saved his life and towed the riddled aircraft to repair shop. The words of his Will moved colleagues and troops.

I planned to paint my own Martissa's fuselage side codes, but I would need the 91^a Squadriglia's griffin. I talked with some friends and my request for help met Claudio Canton, a skilled computer graphic that offered 8 ALPS printed griffin, perfect in size and colour saturation !

Now it was time to paint the model in the standard Fiat camo scheme, composed of a base of Giallo mimetico 3 with mottles of Verde mimetico 3 and Marrone mimetico 2. Every modeller is free to choose his favourite combination of paint brands or color tone, as this camo scheme is still very discussed and full of doubts. The only known clear colour pictures of Cr 42 – although in Swedish markings but in official Fiat scheme – are seen on Mikael Forslund excellent Cr42 book. It can be easily interpreted to match colours and mottles shapes. It must be remembered that upper wings and tailplanes were painted separately from the rest of the aircraft, because in Fiat intentions, it must represent the Cliffs!! It is easy to spot that the mottles in these parts are larger, more irregulars and sprayed in a oblique way through wing's chord. Mottles in the rest of the aircraft are smaller, more close between them and more rounded.





After several years of study, it is probably well documented that early Fiat aircraft were painted Aluminum in their lower surfaces, while the struts of wings and undercarriage were Grigio mimetico.

After the camo scheme was done, I sprayed the entire upper surfaces with a heavily thinned Giallo mimetico 3 to melt the three camo colours together in several passes and streaks. This allows us to achieve a realistic mimetic scheme, now ready for decals after a gloss coat of Future floor wax. I now created masks for the 91-9 numerals, starting from a scan of a 1/48 profile from an Angelo Brioschi's drawing. Then with my home PC, I retraced all the numerals, reduced to 1/32 size and flipped them horizontally as seen on a mirror. This was then printed in the back of a Frisket film. Thanks to its consistency and cutting attitude, I was then able to hand cut all the numbers with a new X-Acto #11 blade. Applying and spraying with red and flat black was a real piece of cake.





Decaling continued and I discovered that the kits wing fascias had unfortunately a translucent white background. The drawing is correct and I wanted to use them, so planned a white-spraying session to create four 2,9 cm. dia discs on upper and lower wings as fascias background, two white discs on wheel spats for the griffin badges, the two upper wingtips and the Savoy cross on the rudder. Propeller logo are undersized and must be replaced. I choose three of them coming from a totally different kind of fighter: a P-51, but the logo is the same, it will be sufficient to paint over the yellow surround with some thinned white applied with a fine brush.

This last detail has been painted in two different shades of white, the vertical arm a little “yellowed” because it was the original central section of the early war markings, when rudders wore the Italian flag tri-coloured stripes. In summer 1940, green and red were covered with camo scheme, adding the horizontal arms.

Final finish was achieved using Vallejo Air satin varnish, that gives a smooth lusterless finish.

Finishing

Weathering was applied using four different stages. First, I dry-brushed Giallo mimetico 3 on all the aircraft surfaces, focusing on wings and tailplane leading edges. This to have the effect of sanding that desert agents had on the surfaces. Then followed the long and boring phase of washing the panel lines and recessed parts with black and dark brown oil paints, heavily thinned with turpentine. The day after, I proceeded with careful dry brushing with silver and silver chipping, being careful to NOT act on fabric covered surfaces. The last phase was composed of several passes of Tamiya weathering powders, which will give a real dust appearance on the model.

Finishing is the more difficult part of this wonderful build, because it is time to fit and glue the upper wing and struts. I decided to build a custom-made template using a rectangular sheet of acetate plastic; I put it on the bottom of the upper wing to copy with a pencil, all the struts' holes. I divided the measure in two and trace a line as a reference for the

wing center. I then glued the central “v” struts with cyano, inserting the copper wire in the struts into the holes drilled on the template. I was able to easily get these part aligned and centered, using the template and also maintained the horizontal level.



The upper wing is glued with cyano, adding the struts starting from the inner part towards the tips. The last part to be glued is the engine/cowl, being careful to give this part a very little left and down attitude. This was necessary on real Cr42s to counteract propeller torque, and is clearly evident.

Final details, including the machine guns, the actuators wires for all the control surfaces (using stretched sprue), wingtip lights and pitot tubes are attached.

Now that the model is complete, our Falco appears as a huge aircraft and it is difficult to think that production of this biplane lasted until 1944 !

Silver Wings surely filled a gap in the field of 1/32 modelling, where many important planes were produced by several firms, always forgetting Cr 42. One of the merits of Silver Wings has been to fulfill modellers needs and at the same time, adding a milestone of Golden Age of Aviation to its stunning catalogue. Well done, a warm “arrivederci” to their next wonderful project !

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