

SUPERMARINE F7/30 224.



The Spitfire started life as a gull-winged, fixed undercarriage, four gun, single seat day and night fighter in 1934 and it was to pass through a number of major design changes before its final metamorphosis into the unmistakable shape that is still remembered decades after it took to the air in 1936. It all began in the last months of 1931 when the Air Ministry published Specification F7/30

The specification was a bold move in a plan to provide the Royal Air Force with a modern, front line interceptor which was, in the Air Ministry's edict - "To be on par with any Air Forces' equipment by the year 1940". The significance of the pronouncement was to be fully appreciated during the Battle of Britain. The Specification called for a maximum speed of 195 mph, reasonable landing speed, good visibility for the pilot by day and night and an armament of four .303in machine guns (much heavier than contemporary fighters then in service). It also stipulated that the aircraft be constructed entirely of metal. This being in keeping with the Air Ministry's decision, taken in April 1928, to accept all-metal aircraft only for the Royal Air Force.

A copy of the specification arrived at the Supermarine Woolston factory on 5 November and for R-J. Mitchell, Chief Designer, it was a challenge as it was the company's first venture for ten years into the design of a single seat fighter. Work started immediately and one hundred and six days later on 20 February 1932, the Supermarine Type 224 design tender arrived at the Air Ministry's offices in Kingsway London.

Many well known pilots flew F7/30, including George Pickering, who managed to land it safely after the engine cut out on two occasions, and Flt.Lts. Atcherley and White, the latter to be killed in the prototype Type 300 Spitfire in 1939. All work on K2890 was cancelled on 9 January 1935 but test flights were continued as part of the program to produce its successor - K5054. Engine cooling still proved to be troublesome and inverted flying prohibited because of loss of water. McLean wrote to Air Marshall Dowding (CinC Fighter Command) requesting permission to deliver the aircraft to an RAF station in February, but this was denied.

By the following July K2890 had changed shape once more, particularly the tailplane which had been clipped at the tips. A model was tested in the Farnborough wind tunnel, followed by further tests at Weybridge. In addition three models of different configuration were tested. It was also proposed to introduce an under slung radiator, but this altered the air flow so drastically it has to be abandoned. Numerous wind tunnel tests were carried out to decide the shape of the windscreen during April by using the complete mock-up of the fuselage mounted in the tunnel. A total of 44 tests were made using six different shapes.

PARTS LIST

RESIN;	fuselage, wing.
WHITE METAL	2 tailplanes, seat, propeller.
VAC FORM	canopy

Caution-This kit contains parts made from resin. Dust created by sanding can be harmful if inhaled so wear a dust mask during heavy construction. Use cyanoacrylate or epoxy adhesives.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Check parts with parts list.
- 2 Clean up all resin parts and remove from casting blocks as necessary
- 3 Attach fuselage to wing.
- 4 Attach tail planes.
- 5 Attach propeller.
- 6 Trim and fit windscreen.
- 7 Paint and decal

