

## Kit Review

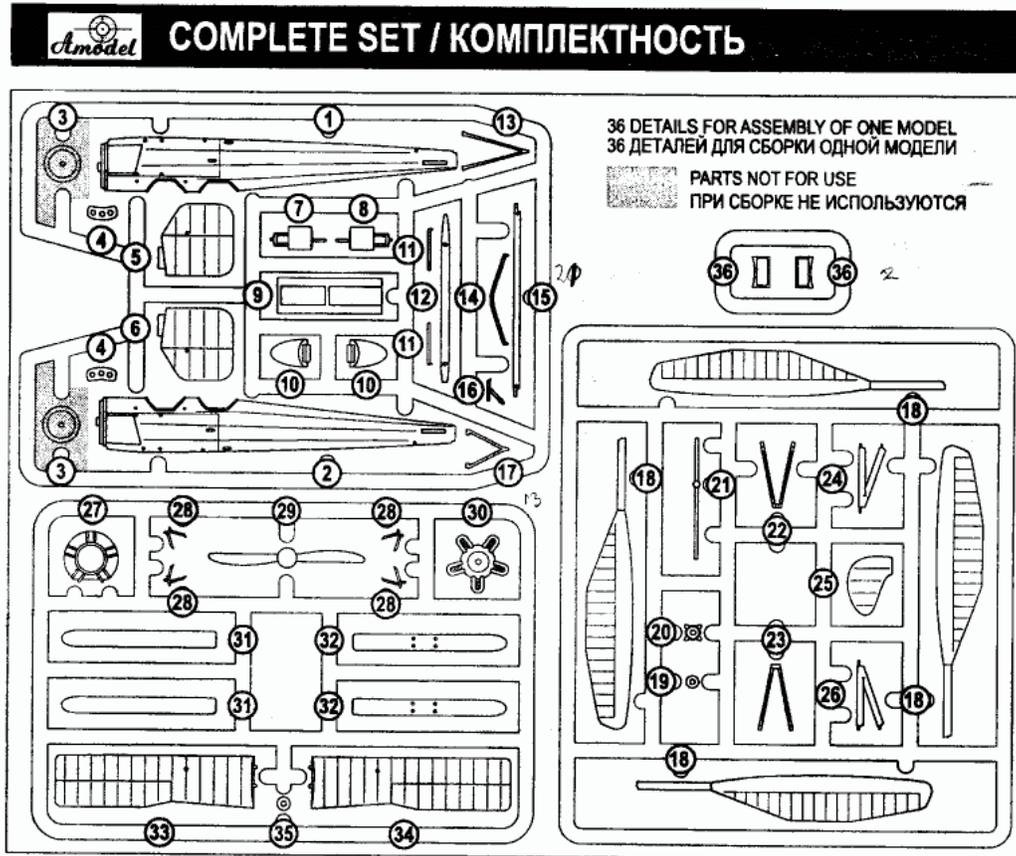
(February, 2005)

### Amodel KaSkr-2, kit number 7279, 1/72 scale

#### Inspection of the kit:

There are 46 parts distributed over 3 sprues of light grey-blue plastic, with two thick and not very clear windscreens located on a single sprue of clear plastic. Apart from the clear pieces, the plastic is soft and easily damaged.

#### KaSkr-2 Sprue Layout:



The Amodel KaSkr-1 kit and this one are basically the same, sharing two of the same sprues. The third sprue contains the parts that differ between the two kits. In the case of the KaSkr-2, this sprue contains a set of new wings, engine and cowls, prop, plus skis. The instruction sheet indicates that the wheels, part 3, are not to be used, but if you do a search on the web you will find pictures of the KaSkr-2 with either wheels or skis, so you could use wheels if you wish. For me, I just had to build this kit with the skis. They would make this kit stand out from the crowd.

Amodel chose not to include a decal sheet probably because the craft carried no markings, though it would have been nice to have at least instrument decals. Instruments were included on the KaSkr-1 decal sheet, but for some reason Amodel decided against including instrument decals with the KaSkr-2 kit.

#### Construction:

As Yogi Berra would say, "...it's deja vu all over again". Building this kit followed almost the identical path as I ventured on when building the KaSkr-1 kit.

Construction started with the cockpit. I added ribbing detail to the interior sides which lacked this detail. With no decals, I had to use spare decals for the instruments. No control sticks are included, so one was fashioned from round plastic rod to be added to the rear cockpit near the end of the build. I didn't want to break it when I stuffed the cockpit openings with tissue paper prior to painting. The seats were also left out until later.

The supplied engine was pathetic, so I decided to replace the exposed cylinders with pieces cut from a donor engine in the spares box. To accomplish this, I first sliced off the crudely molded engine cylinders on part 30. Then the arches located in front of the cylinders were hollowed out. Next was the creation of some openings in part 27 to accept the new cylinders. A hole was drilled in each spot, widened with a sharp Xacto knife, and finally shaped and sized using a round file. The new cylinders were test fit along the way to ensure that the new cylinders would press into their holes without too much effort.

As with the KaSKr-1 kit, all the small parts in this kit need to be hewed from the blobs of plastic they are molded into. Much work in the form of scraping and sanding needs to be done to get them acceptably thin and straight. Just like the KaSKr-1 kit, I again broke the axle (part 15) & rear strut for the central skid (part 17).

The small struts that attach the skis to the axle (parts 28) are too fragile and three of the four broke when being removed from the sprue, or while being sanded/scraped. To repair them would be next to impossible, so they were replaced by plastic rod.

Relying on the experience gained during the build of the KaSKr-1, I knew that the rotor assembly was very delicate and easily broken. To avoid frustration during the final assembly of the rotors, I made about a 3 to 4mm notch in the end of the shaft of each rotor blade with a hobby saw and then crazy glued a cut off straight pin into each of the slots. The remaining depression in the slots were filled with more crazy glue and some baking soda, and sanded smooth to the proper contour. I discarded the rotor hub, part 20. It was replaced with a piece of plastic that came from the parts box in the form of a discarded prop retainer from another kit. This was drilled with four holes, which would eventually accept the other end of the pins that were inserted in the rotor blades. The replacement part for the hub is a bit on the thick side when compared to the kit part, but I was willing to accept this for the extra strength it provided the rotor assembly.

I wanted to add the rigging between the blades, so I inserted posts cut from plastic rod into the holes located on the undersides of the blades, and trimmed them to the same height.

I fashioned a small ski for the tail skid from some rectangular plastic rod. For some reason Amodel left out this detail.

Before painting I had to examine all the surfaces on the kit. They are rough and covered with many pits, scrapes, and other blemishes, which all need to be sanded out. Even a primer coat was not enough to find all the minuscule imperfections in the plastic, and multiple applications of paint, with some sanding between coats, eventually produced a smooth surface.

I used Alclad aluminium paint to represent the metal cowl panels, and for on the bottom portion of the skis. The engine cowl was masked and three coats of Aeromaster Russian Topside Green enamel (9073) was used on the upper surfaces, while Russian Underside Blue enamel (9074) was used for the undersides. A coat of Testors Glosscoat evened the paint, and that was followed by a coat of Aeromaster Flat Acrylic (1003). The masking on the engine cowls was removed, and they were coated with Future floor polish to protect the finish.

The final phase of construction was attaching all the separate parts.

First the remaining cockpit pieces were added, those being the two seats and the control stick for the rear cockpit. Just like the KaSkr-1 kit, I was unable to place a control stick in the front cockpit because the rotor shaft takes up too much room.

When I went to add the rotor shaft and its supports, I noticed that the rotor shaft has gone AWOL. Try as I might, I could not find it, so it was replaced by one made from plastic rod.

I didn't bother using the two braces for the horizontal stabilizer (parts 11) . It didn't seem worth the effort to try to sand and scrape them into something acceptable when it was easier to just replace them with plastic rod.

Two small windscreens were cut from clear acetate, to replace the poor ones included with the kit. I painted on their framework with a small brush, and then glued them to the fuselage. At this point I also added the control stick to the rear cockpit.

Next was the radial engine and the cowl. All the replacement cylinders went into their respective holes quite nicely - except for one (Isn't that always the case - there's always one in the crowd that won't get along!). When this cylinder was pressed into the cowl it partly separated the glued seam between parts 27 and 30. To repair this I ended up squeezing the two parts together with one hand while I applied super glue to the inside of the seam with the other hand.

Then came the undercarriage. As was the case with the KaSkr-1, the undercarriage does not possess a lot of strength.

Other than small round holes, there are no alignment guides to help with the placing of the parts, so make sure that your crazy glue sets slow enough to give you time to put the pieces together and steady them for a few minutes in their correct position until the glue sets.

The landing gear is a three phase build. First do the oleo legs (parts 7 and 8) with the connecting bar (part 15). The only way that this will fit properly is to have the oleo legs splay out towards the wing tips ever so slightly. Next put the central skid together using parts 12, 13 and 17. Make sure that part 13 splays forward enough to place part 17 perpendicular to the fuselage. Finally came the skis. As with the KaSkr-1 kit, don't put any undue pressure on the landing gear. It is a very fragile structure.

The last phase of the build was the rotor assembly. This was put together before it was added to the rest of the model.

The whole rotor assembly was built up on a piece of corrugated cardboard. Using a pencil, I drew a cross on the cardboard to help align the blades. I then skewered the replacement rotor hub, along with a spacer underneath the hub, at the center of the cross. The spacer raises the hub above the surface of the cardboard so that the tip of the blades are slightly lower than the ends at the hub. I then added each blade, crazy gluing the exposed end of the pins I inserted earlier, into the holes drilled in the hub, and aligned the blades with the pencilled arms of the cross. Once the glue had set, I turned over the rotor assembly, then measured, cut, and painted the bracing wires that go between the blades. These wires were made from number 9 guitar string. Once the paint dried, the wires were attached with crazy glue to the posts located on the undersides of the blades.

I let the whole rotor and hub assembly set overnight and then glued it to the rotor mast. More guitar string was used for the set of wires that run from the blades to the shaft. The string was measured, cut, painted and then crazy glued to the blades and shaft.

**Conclusion:**

Wow, what a lot of work for such a small kit! Once again all I can say is that this model is definitely for the experienced builder. It takes a lot of patience and steady nerves to get this kit finished. This is my second Amodel build, and based on my experiences with both, I have no future plans to build anything more from Amodel until their quality takes a quantum leap over what they produce now.