

## THE ORIGINS OF TRANSPORT WINGS KITS

Large model airliners have always fascinated me, and having spent most of my life in the airline industry, I have a variety of 1/72 models in my collection. I never managed to acquire any of the large modern jets however, until I was able to buy mouldings from a commercial model making company - when the company ceased trading, my wife and I were offered the chance to take over their 1/72 activities. We thought long and hard and decided to go ahead, with a view to expanding our collection.

When we saw what we had bought, we doubted our sanity - the tools made an impressive pile, and then there were the moulding, and the models, and the decals, and the.....! We had to find secure premises for storage, then the work (fun?) began.

We decided that it was a pity not to make these models available to fellow modellers, so we packed a few sets of formings and offered them for sale at the 89 Nationals. They were well received but the same comments came back every time - "They would be much better with landing gear" or "They would be much nicer if they came with decals" were the two commonest remarks. With the help of John Adams (of Aeroclub fame), we produced the landing gear for our first two 'improved kits', the DC-10-30 and the 737-300. The DC-10 has injection moulded main wheels, otherwise they are all white metal. I made the masters, using the most accurate information available and Aeroclub did the castings.

The next stage was to produce decals for the models and here we had a good data bank in the form of the sheets that came with 'our package purchase'. We wanted to cover the widest range of colour schemes and yet make it as easy as possible to produce other markings, if anyone wanted to. The solution was to produce the window decals as separate sheets, we decided to produce these with the thin silver frame round each window, which is so characteristic of the modern airliner. The choice of liveries is purely personal choice, some of the (the UTA DC-10 for example) are aircraft we have flown in, while others are markings which we find attractive (our 747-300 is to be in Cathay Pacific markings).

As things are now, we have had considerable success with the models and are still planning to extend the range, the main limitation being the time it takes to produce masters. We have tools for many more types, but are concentrating on a projected range of:

DC-10-30	UTA	41.85	Available now
B737-300	Lufthansa (New)	24.75	May 91
Comet 4B	BEA red/black	24.75	June 91
B747-300	Cathay Pacific	49.62	Autumn 91
Airbus A310	Lufthansa (Old)	41.85	Autumn 91
DC-8-63	KLM	41.85	Winter 91
Trident 3B	BEA	24.75	Winter 91

The moral of this tale is that if you enjoy something, it is worth taking a chance now and again. My wife and I have had a few headaches over our 'production line' but agree that it has been worth it - I find the satisfaction of actually moulding something yourself is quite remarkable.