

Fokker F.IV V.L.E. Modelsⁱ vacuum kit

Passenger monoplane

Scale 1:72

The Fokker F.IV was a large, single engine monoplane for one pilot and ten passengersⁱⁱ built along the same principles as the F.III. It was, however, too large for the passenger air transport market at the moment of appearance in 1921 shortly after the Fokker F.III. Only two copies have been built, both for the U.S. military, where it got the designation T-2. The first one became famous for executing the first U.S. coast-to-coast flight; extensive modifications were required to extend the range of the F.IV from the normal 750 km (modified by the factory already into 1500 km for this special purpose) to XXXX km (additional oil, water and fuel tanks in the cabin, accommodation for the second pilot and his flight controls, which were located in the passenger cabin, and some structural reinforcements, as the aircraft maximum weight went up considerably due to the fuel required. The second aircraft has been modified into an ambulance plane with the U.S. Air Corps designation A-2.



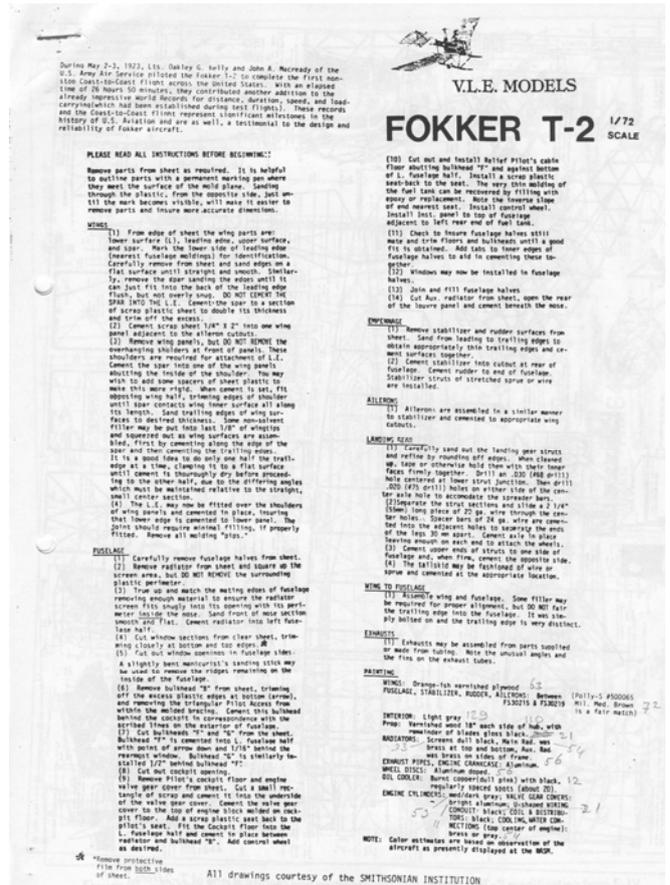
V.L.E. MODELS

FOKKER T-2 1/72 SCALE

The kit is delivered in a plastic bag and includes several sheets with vacuum parts, some lengths of metal wire, excellent decals for the T-2 version in its coast-to-coast flight livery, a sheet of (protected) clear plastic for the cabin windows some white metal parts for the exhaust, wheels and the propeller (TBC), resin parts for the undercarriage struts (TBC) and an instruction sheet. The instruction sheet consists of a very extensive description of the building steps to be taken and a detailed drawing of the T-2 flight aircraft (taken from ref. 10), with some limited information on the A-2 version of the F.IV. I have built the T-2 version.

Alting (ref. 1), Hegener (ref. 2), Hooftman (ref. 3), van der Klaauw (ref. 4), de Leeuw (ref. 5), van de Noort (ref. 6), Wesslink (ref. 7), Arnken (ref. 9), Casey (ref. 10) and Fokker Bulletin (ref. 19) report dimensions, while Hegener, Weyl (ref. 8) and Casey present a three-view drawing. Quotes for the span fall in two classes; the difference between both groups is too small to be explained by span including and excluding ailerons. For the actual T-2 Casey (his book contains a wealth of information) is the most reliable reference; all dimensions he is quoting are those of the T-2 exposed in the Smithsonian museum. His book does not mention any modification of the span in the US during the adaptation of the F.IV for the coast-to-coast flight. Dimensions have been collected in the table below.

	Ref.	Ref. 10 (Casey)	1:72 (Casey)	model
Span	24.23-24.30/24.80-24.81 m	24.23 m	326.5mm	mm
Length	14.92-15.00 m	15.00 m	208.3 mm	mm
Height	3.34-3.71 m	3.61 m	50.1 mm	mm
Engine	Packard Liberty V-12, 423 hp			



	<i>Ref.</i>	<i>Ref. 10 (Casey)</i>	<i>1:72 (Casey)</i>	<i>model</i>
<i>Crew</i>	1			
<i>Passengers</i>	8-12			

General

The vacuum parts have been removed from the sheet in the usual way, first outlining the parts with a felt pen, then sanding the individual pieces on sandpaper glued on a flat surface, until they come loose of the plastic sheet. Joints have been filled with Milliput putty, and sanded carefully avoiding damaging the softer plastic of the model.

Painting

I have used the painting scheme as given in the instruction sheet and used the Humbrol colours in the table below.

Orange-ish finished plywood (wing)	63	Light grey (interior)	129
Medium brown (fuselage, stabilizer, rudder, ailerons ⁱⁱⁱ)	72	Varnished wood (propeller)	110
Gloss black (propeller tips, U-shaped engine wiring conduit)	21	Matt black (radiators)	33
Brass (radiator edges, engine cooling, water connections)	54	Aluminium (exhaust pipes, engine crankcase, wheel disks)	56
Burnt copper (oil cooler)	12	Medium/dark grey (engine cylinders)	53
Bright aluminium (engine cylinders)	11		

Cockpit

<text>

Fuselage

<text>

Wing

The wing dihedral is not accurate. The spars of the wooden Fokker wings were built “upside down”, so that the top of the wing was flat, giving the wing a slight V-shape. The wing in the kit has a flat lower side.

Undercarriage

<text>

Final assembly

I have first tried to cut the cabin windows to size from clear plastic sheet, using the fuselage (prior to the attachment of the wing) as a template. As the shape of the windows is very irregular, I did not manage to get the windows fitting well, so in the end I decided to produce the windows with Humbrol Clearfix. Although the size is on the edge of what can be covered with Clearfix and it never dries really fully transparent, the result is quite acceptable.

Below some pictures of the completed model.





References

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19. Fokker Bulletin, *Fokker, Nederlandsche Vliegtuigenfabriek 1919-1929, Vol. V, Nos. 9, 10, 11 and 12*, pp. 61-62, NV Nederlandsche Vliegtuigenfabriek, Amsterdam, 1929

ⁱ vlemodels.tripod.com

ⁱⁱ Some references quote a crew of two pilots, others a passenger capacity of eight up to twelve. The two planes actually built did however have only accommodation for one pilot. The cabin was large enough to accommodate ten to twelve passengers.

ⁱⁱⁱ Only in writing this building report, I noticed that I should have painted the ailerons grey as the fuselage; I didn't, I left them the same colour as the wing.