



**Building and Flying a Ziroli P40E Kittyhawk....**  
**Instalment 9**

**Decorating and Fiddly Bits:**

**Decals:**

Nomenclature: NO STEP, LIFT HERE, etc

Ross doesn't have the plane covered in nomenclature as a military P40 would. Most of the nomenclature on military aircraft are over or near hatches and are identification or instructions to ground crew for servicing the aircraft. Ross's plane is maintained by his own highly experienced people and they are therefore not required which suits me fine in a modelling sense.

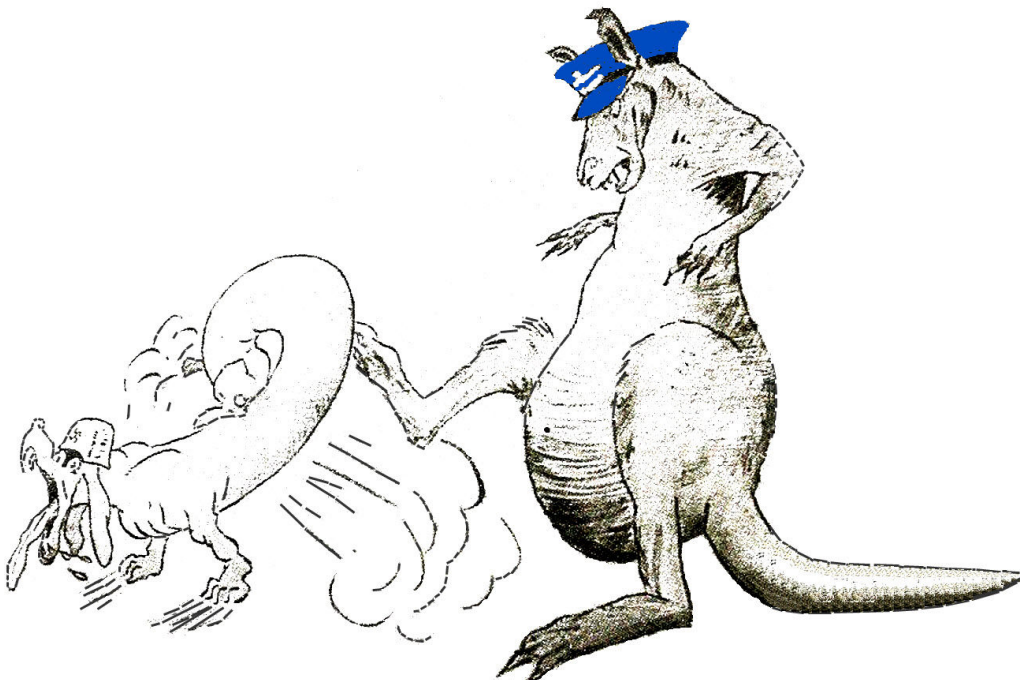


Nevertheless, there are other decals required and one of them was a real challenge to create. The major decals on Ross's plane are the upper and lower wing roundels, the fuselage roundels, the fin flash, the squadron ID letters, the Australian register letters and the nose art on the port lower cowl.



This picture is of the port lower engine cowl on the full size.

The picture below is of the above photo converted to monochrome and then touched up with the **Snagit** drawing editor. This can now be transferred and printed on clear waterslide decal paper



All the geometric decals were easy to reproduce with a brilliant piece of software called **Snagit** which includes a simple drawing feature. The other feature of **Snagit** is it has the ability to convert a photograph into a monochrome .jpg and this is what I needed to convert my photo of the cowl on the full size into a water slide decal. This took a bit of a fiddle to achieve and required a bit of touching up but after a steep learning curve, it turned out OK.

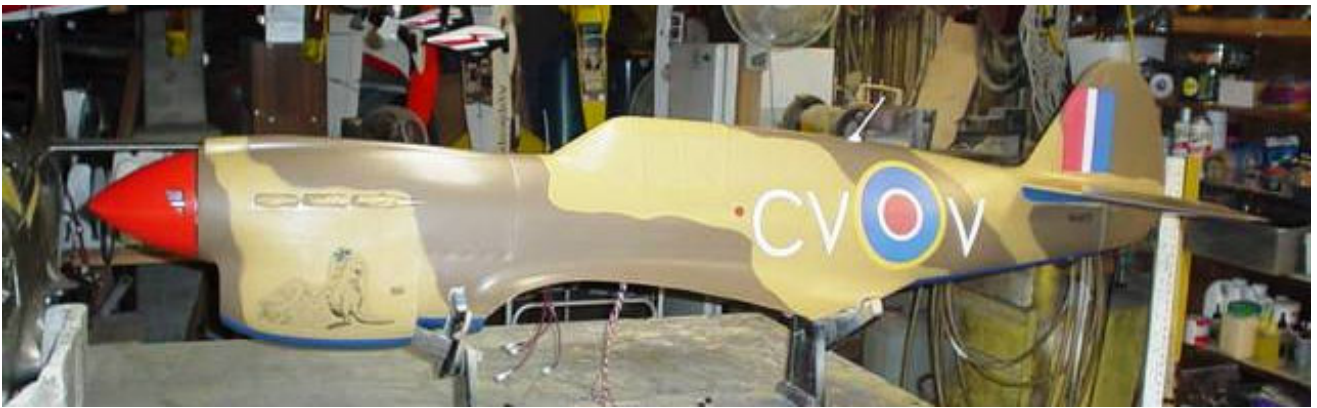


The other small decals I created from photos are the prop decal, one for each blade and the fuel filler cap which is fitted to the port side of the fuselage behind and under the canopy.



All of the decals were then printed on clear and white waterslide decal paper with a colour laser printer and applied to the aircraft.

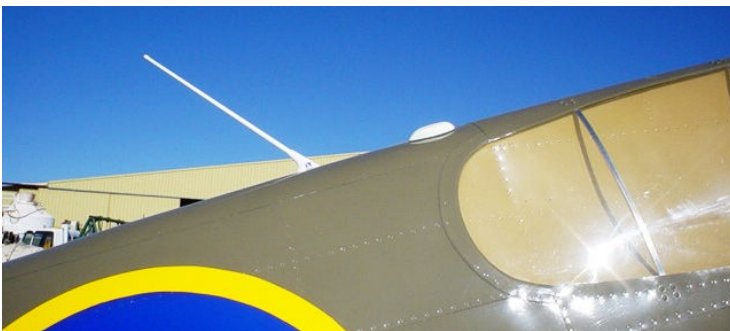
The clear film background is visible where a decal has been applied over the light Mid Stone colour. I am hoping that when I spray the whole plane with its final coat of gloss clear they will disappear.



The only decals that I couldn't make myself were the squadron ID letters CV V. They are an off white on Ross's plane and as nearly all computer printers are incapable of printing white I had to get some vinyl lettering done by the local sign shop, bloody expensive. I needed to buff the shine off the letters with steel wool to tone them down a bit and now the whole plane is ready for its final coats of clear..

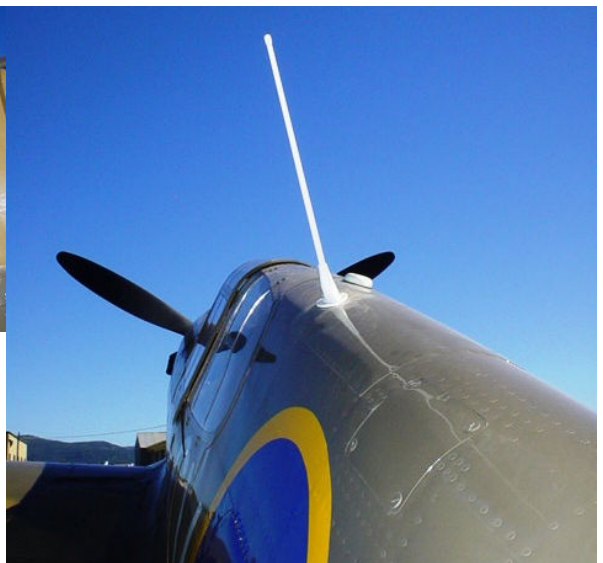
### **Fiddly Bits:**

Radio Mast: Ross's aeroplane has a very distinctive couple of items that are a concession to convenience and safety. They are the modern white radio mast and a transducer of



some sort both mounted on the spine of the aircraft.

I made up the mast from a bit of sheet aluminium with a bit of tube stuck through it and bogged to an aerofoil shape. The mast itself is a bit of plastic tubing.





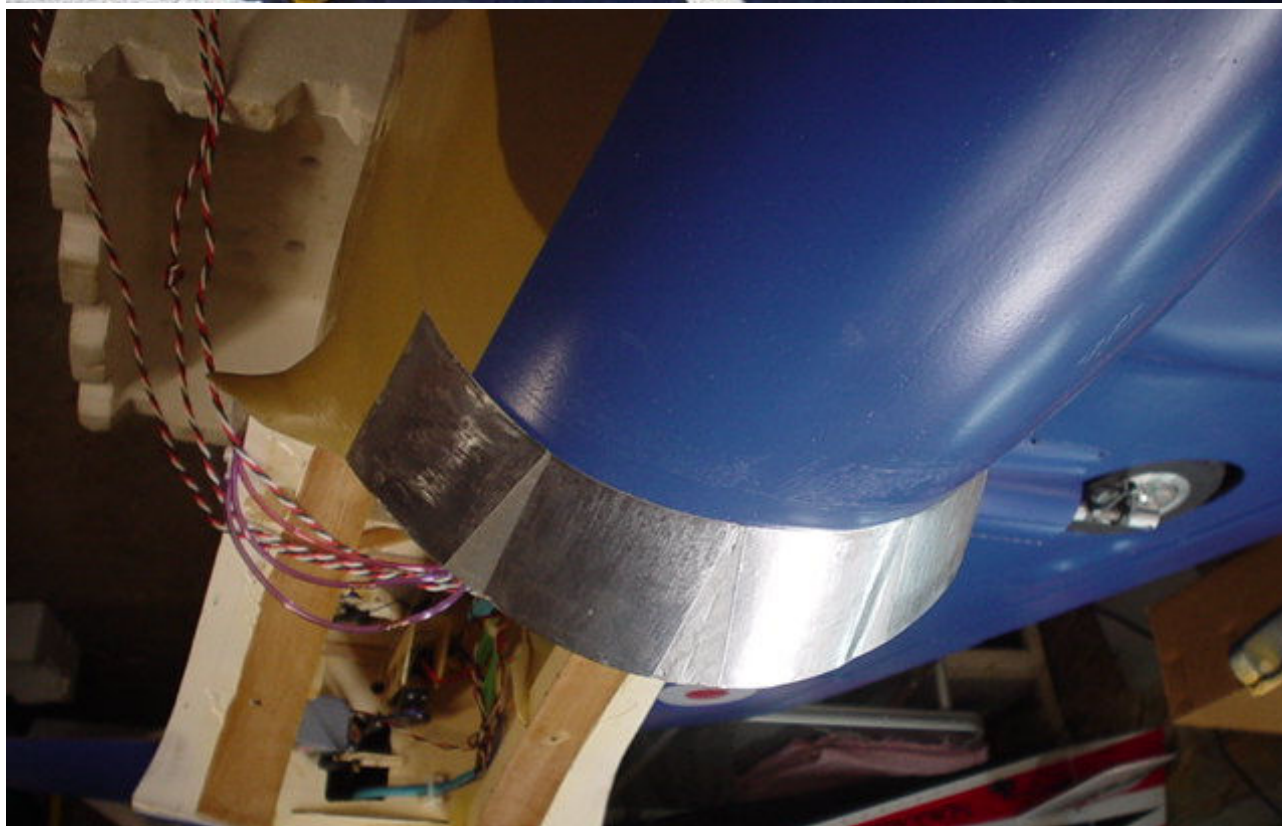
I hope that the plastic mast will bend if it catches on anything and won't rip out as it would if I had made it out of wire.

The transducer thingy was sanded to shape from a blob of the usual bog and stuck on the fuselage with **ZAP** canopy glue.

Pitot Head: This is the standard pitot head fitted to P40s and mine was made from a piece of **K & S** brass tubing with the fin shape epoxied to it. The pitot is mounted in a hole drilled in the leading edge of the wing at the tip and is removable to avoid hanger rash.



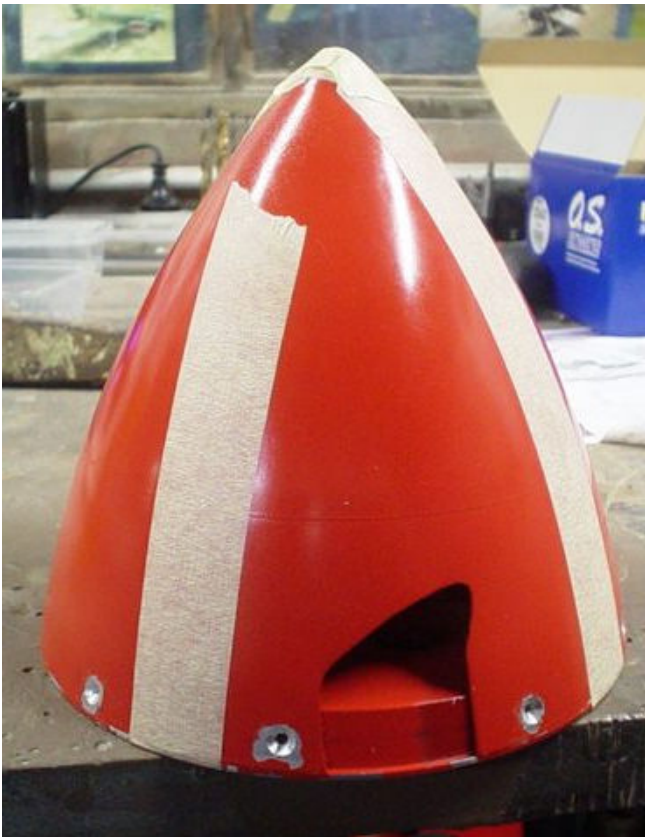
Cowl Flaps: For some quirky reason the cowl flaps on Ross's plane are polished aluminium. At first they looked strange to me but I'm now used to them. I replicated them by spraying the fibreglass flap part of the cowl with an aluminium paint and then cutting to shape and sticking aluminium duct tape over in the shape of the individual panels.



Navigation Lights: A set of teardrop nav lights was bought from [Rob Pike's — Rc Final Touch](#) in the US and the set comprises of two red port lights, two green starboard lights, two clear fin lights and two white lights that I haven't a clue where they go. All were stuck in place with [ZAP](#) canopy glue and look the goods.



Spinner: The spinner as supplied by [Zirol](#) consists of the spun cone and a machined backplate. You are stuck with boring for mounting bolts, cutting out for prop blades and worst of all drilling and tapping nine 6-32 threaded counter-sunk holes in the edge of the cone and the backplate for mounting the cone to the backplate. Not much fun and very time consuming because of the angles and alignments involved. The cone was eventually fastened with 9 x 6-32 x 3/8" s/steel countersunk Phillips headed screws.



Finished machining and a coat of yellow filler primer applied prior to another coat of red. The backplate for this thing is huge and will act like a flywheel. I suspect **Zirol**

nose to get the plane to balance so he didn't mind putting some weight right up the front.



Finished spinner and prop. Prop is an old **Bolly** carbon 21 x 12 narrow three blader..





#### Final Clear Coats:

I know my limitations when it comes to spraying models and my concern was that if I stuffed up on the final coats of clear I would have to sand off all the surface detail and all the camo paint to start again. Not a pleasant thought.....My son Ian is a shipwright with his own business and is continually spraying boats with high gloss so I put the acid on him to finish off the model, no pressure mind you. This is what he came up with, three coats of clear, not a dribble, not a dry spot, perfect....I knew having kids would pay off some day! Thanks Ian.

Well, that's about it. Next instalment will be about Balancing, Running In DL50, Pre-flight Testing.

See you later

Stan