

## The LF Models 1/72 Curtiss R2C-1 – Kit review

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**LF Models kit No. 7255 "Curtiss R2C-1".** 21 resin parts, vacformed windshield, decals included. Produced by **LF Models, Gagarinova 10, 787 01 Šumperk, Czech Republic** (www.lfmodels.cz, phone/fax: +420 583 221282, e-mail: lfmodels@lfmodels.cz). Available in the USA from **Joe's Models, P.O. Box 81, Verona, NJ 07044** (e-mail: joefrancesco@comcast.net, phone +1 973 2397682).

### *The kit*

The fuselage is a solid one-piece casting, with a cut-out for the cockpit. The cockpit includes a floor, a seat, a stick and a paper instrument panel. The instrument panel will be in the right position if it is glued to a 3 mm block attached to the cockpit front wall. The exhausts are separate parts in the form of a row of eight tube ends. They are grossly overscale and I suggest replacing them by drilling a row of twelve holes on each side and scribing a narrow rectangle around them.

The wings are thin and sharp, and the radiator corrugations are depicted by fine scribed lines. From a simple scale measurement point of view they are perhaps slightly overscale, but they will look right when painted. There were a couple of bubbles in the leading edges, but since there is a header tank there they do not reach the corrugations. The wings fit well in recesses in the fuselage and will only need a little filler. The horizontal tail surfaces are also very thin and sharp, but have to be butt-joined to the fuselage.

The landing gear legs are cast as a single inverted V, and are intended to be butt-joined to the fuselage bottom without any location tabs. This will probably be a tricky operation and it would have helped to have some location means. Note that the legs should not attach to the wheel axle, as shown on the kit instructions, but to the wheel hubs above the axle – see the R3C article in BT#17 for details! The wheel hubs protrude a little too

much and should be sanded down. The landing gear legs could also be slightly sanded to improve their airfoil.

The propeller is well shaped, but has separate blades that have to be butt-joined to the spinner. The tail skid and the wing I-struts are sharp and nice, but I believe the front part of the of the fairing in front of the windscreen should be widest in front and not the other way around.

The instructions do not show the rigging:

- A single flying wire between the lower wing rear spar at the root and the upper wing rear spar inboard of the I-strut.
- A single landing wire between the upper wing fairing, above the vertical panel line, and the lower wing at the centre of the base of the I-strut.
- The flying and landing wires were connected by a rod parallel to the line of flight.
- A single wire between the wheel hub and the top wing at the front of the I-strut.
- This landing gear wire was connected with the landing wire by another rod.
- Each landing gear leg was supported by two wires that were attached to the engine bearers – see the sketch below. Note that the rear wire passed through the lower wing, not in front of it.

There should be a fairly long, around 10 mm, pitot tube in the left top wing leading edge, at the point where the straight leading edge turns into the curved wing tip.

### *Colours and decals*

The instructions give the fuselage colour as "Navy blue grey", while according to the "**Monogram US Navy and Marine Corps Aircraft Color Guide**", which cites contemporary sources, the fuselage was medium blue (perhaps Navy "true blue"?). The interior should be mainly natural wood, probably including the seat, with black instrument panel and natural metal details.

The decals are on two sheets, a first giving the national markings and the rudder stripes and a second small one giving the race numbers, the "Bureau of Aeronautics" badges and the rudder texts. The proportions of the national insignia are not perfect, the red centre dots are too big. I believe, but I have no proof, that the lower wing insignia are too big – they cover the whole chord, but I'm pretty sure it would have been against regulations to let national insignia extend onto a control surface. The second sheet looks like it might be ALPS-printed. The race numbers and rudder texts look good, but the "Bureau of Aeronautics" badge, although well printed, is too big and printed in cyan and yellow, rather than dark blue and gold.

### *Accuracy*

The kit definitely looks like a Curtiss racer, although perhaps a bit of a hybrid between an R3C and an R2C. The R2C was similar to the more famous and well-documented R3C, but there were some differences:

- The R2C had thicker wings, 8% instead of 6%

- On the R2C the top wing trailing edge was straight all the way to the fuselage, while the R3C had cut-outs near the root.
- The lower wing span on the R2C was slightly shorter (19'3" instead of 20'0" on the R3C). The R2C only had six radiator elements on each lower wing (starting at the aileron and not reaching all the way in to the fuselage), while the R3C had seven (also starting at the aileron, but reaching further in to the fuselage). The aileron dimensions were identical, so the R3C wings must have been extended at the roots rather than the tips.

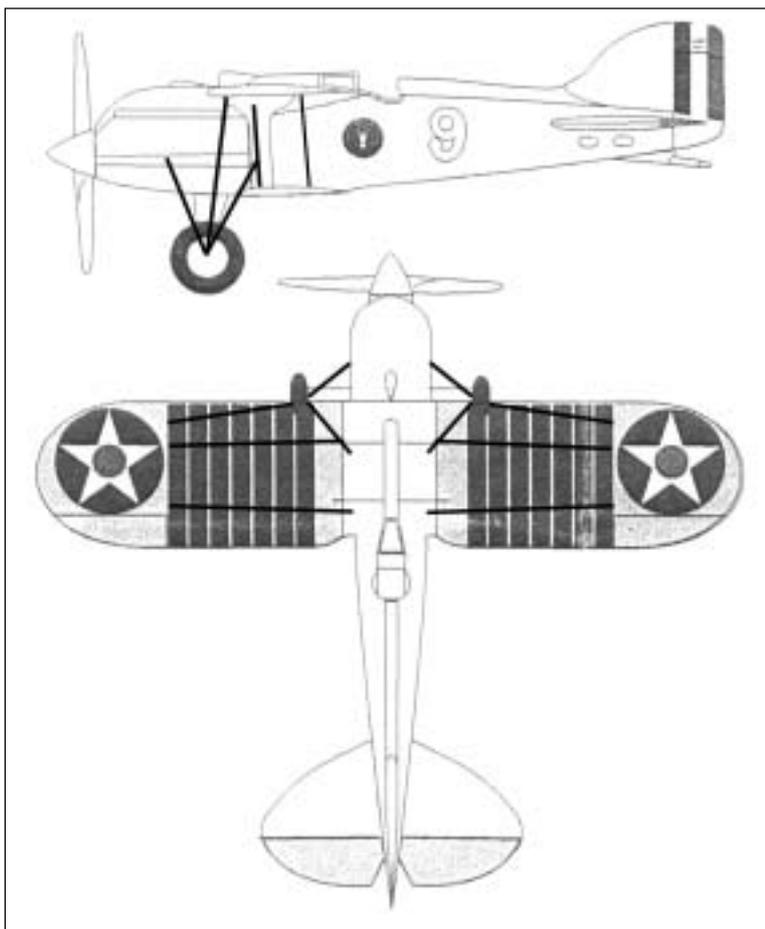
Seen from the side, the wing struts on the R2C were wider where they attached to the top wing, but at the lower ends the leading and trailing edges were parallel until they met the lower wing. On the R3C

- both the upper and the lower ends of the struts were widened where they attached.
- The landing gear legs were attached further to the rear, and were vertical rather than swept-back.
- The nose of the R2C was 5 1/2 inches shorter than on the R3C (50" from spinner tip to top wing leading edge instead of 55 1/2"). The spinners were identical, and the rear fuselage dimensions too.
- The R2C did not have any "bumps" on the cowling below the front of the exhausts.

Some of these differences are really minor and not visible in 1/72 scale, but the kit has some visible R3C features. The bulges below the exhausts are easy enough to sand off. However, the top wing trailing edges are of R3C type, and would be difficult to correct. The nose is also closer to R3C dimensions, but this is not so obvious, and also difficult to correct.

#### *Conclusion*

This is a well-produced and sharp little kit, that will be relatively easy to make into a good-looking model – sharpness is really essential for such a small model! There are a few bubbles, but the surfaces are clean and smooth. The surface detail is sharp and discreet, with nice fabric simulation. The inaccuracies are not that obvious, and anyway your average modelling friends



***Drawings from the kit instructions,  
with the rigging wires added***

won't know of them. The decals are a bit disappointing, but I will do the "Bureau of Aeronautics" badges for a project of my own, so if you want darker ones contact me – but not yet, I haven't started...

#### *References*

There are photos of R2Cs here and there in the air racing literature, but I recommend the following:

- **Thomas G. Foxworth: "The Speed Seekers"** (Haynes, 1989) – easily the best reference, lots of text and several photos.
- **Reed Kinert: "Racing Planes and Air Races, Volume I"** (Aero Publishers, 1967) – several photos from different angles.

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the review example!***