

## The KORA Folkerts SK-3 – Kit review

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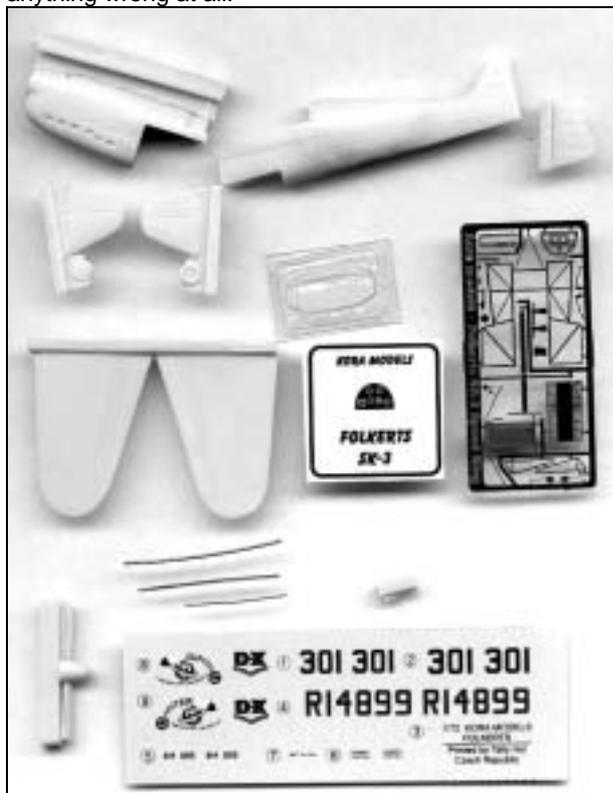
**Kora Models** (kit No. 7249) "Folkerts Speed King SK-3". 1/72 resin kit with etched metal parts, vacformed canopy and decals. Available from [www.lfmodels.cz](http://www.lfmodels.cz) and the bigger mail order houses.

### First impression

This tiny kit is packed in a small square box with nice box-art. Major components are in beige high quality resin, interior and small parts are photo-etched, and the canopy is vac-formed. Decals and some small bits of wire for the undercarriage are also supplied. Everything is to a very high standard, the resin has no holes or bubbles, the canopy is crystal clear, and the decals are well printed and in register. Well the proof of the pudding is in the eating, so lets see how these lovely looking parts stand up to actual building!

### Accuracy

I scaled the Harry Robinson plans to 1/72 scale, and checked the kit parts. They were perfect, I couldn't find anything wrong at all.



### Construction

The interior is all photo-etched, and to be honest it is mostly unnecessary, very little is visible. It is visible through the undercarriage bay though. As a model in it's



own right, it is fun, if a little frustrating. The photo-etch folds nicely and looks great, the problem is that it doesn't fit. My advice is to shorten the photo-etch by about 3 mm at the front, before starting, then it will fit, and you won't have to demolish it as many times as I did.

The fuselage is very cleverly engineered so that the joint between the two halves is below the wing and is also where the metal panels and fabric join - if care is taken it

can be left unfilled. I missed this, partly I think because I had ended up with a too narrow fuselage interior (due to the above-mentioned demolishing), so I did a little puttying with Milliput here. Don't drop the fuselage because it's heavy, and this joint is very weak until the wing is glued on. Yes I know because I did it! At this stage I decided to install the canopy. I'm glad I did because all the screw-ups I made would have ruined the paintwork. I can't blame Kora for any of this, but I would humbly suggest that a reserve canopy would be a good idea, in fact half a dozen! I started by cutting it out too small, then I tried to fill the gaps with CA - yes I know you can't do that, but the last optimist hasn't been born yet (old Swedish saying)! So I had to make myself a new canopy, after I did everything exactly right, using epoxy, adding support strips around the edge of the cockpit, and cutting out to a fraction of an inch, I finally got it on to my satisfaction. It can be done straight out of the box, but it requires a more careful modeller than me. I realised later that part of the problem was that I'd been trying to line up the hinge line on the canopy with the fuselage centre-line, it should be offset to the right. Hardly surprising that I found the canopy too shallow on one side!

I can't think of a good way to glue on the wings without pinning. There are no tabs or anything, just flat mating surfaces. So I drilled 0.5 mm holes in the wing-ends and corresponding holes in the correct place (and I mean correct, no margin for error here) on the fillets marked on the fuselage. Then I inserted 0.5 mm piano wire stumps, and glued it all together with CA glue. I suppose you could use epoxy, but I prefer CA, it's easier to use, and the pins give CA the shear strength so lacking otherwise. After gluing on, I had to do some puttying. The tail plane was more difficult, because it is so thin, I drilled a couple of tiny holes, and used two strands (in each hole) of stainless steel rigging wire as strengtheners. They both fell off eventually, due to rough handling, so I glued them on again. Some kind of gluing tabs would have been a great help on this weakest part of the kit.

### Painting

I masked off the canopy with Tamiya tape, cut to shape with a sharp knife. Then I mixed up some nice cream coloured paint, and started spraying, fixing all the

blemishes and poor filling, between coats of paint. A couple of final coats of gloss paint finished the job. I asked Anders about the exact shade, but he said nobody probably knows for sure, so I just aimed for something that looked nice.

The red striping on the wing leading edges was masked off with Tamiya tape, then sprayed with some bright red paint I found. To get the wingtip curve onto the masking tape, I used one of those panel-engraving templates, there are some big roundish hatches that have the right shape. I first put some Tamiya tape on a good cutting surface (I have a glass square, 20x20 cm). A sharp knife will follow the template well enough, and then continue with a straight cut. Getting the masks in the right place is always tricky, but patience will persevere!

I forgot to do the tail plane leading edges, so used a different technique. I made very thin slices of red decal, if they are thin enough, they can be bent into a nice curve following the leading edge. Then I just filled in with red paint. This was easier than the method I used on the wing, but I think the wing leading edges do look better.



#### *Decals*

The decals were excellent, no problems at all, I removed most excess decal-film, and they still hung together where I'd left the film. Removing the film was probably unnecessary, but better safe than sorry. They are very thin so watch out for the old "rolling into a ball" syndrome, easily cured on these decals by just laying them in water and sorting out with a paintbrush. I recommend doing things properly here: cut them out, lay them in water, move the decal AND the backing on to the model, then slide the decal into place (CAREFULLY!). My only gripe with the decals is that the red stripe on the side is missing, and it would have helped if they had supplied the red leading edges as decals.

#### *Detailing*

The undercarriage is made of (supplied) wire bent to shape, with photo-etched add-ons. I was worried that it wouldn't fit, but everything went together fine, and height

and ground attitude seem about right without any changes. I painted it red according to Harry Robinson's plans. The tailskid is a tiny photo-etched thing, I very carefully drilled a hole for it in the end of the fuselage, and then promptly lost it. I used a staple that I found on my desk instead. I haven't realised how good staples are for tail-skids, they're pliable, strong and the right colour already, much better than P/E junk! Glued on with CA-glue it will last for ever, at least I hope so. The prop was ever so brittle, so be careful when cutting it out. I broke one blade, but luckily enough I was able to stick it back together with CA, and for some reason it stayed on - I was very surprised. I sprayed it with the rest of the model, painted the spinner red, left the tips in the same colour as the rest of the plane, just masked them off, and used Anders's trick of scribbling with brown and orange pens (the kind meant for overhead film) to simulate the unpainted wooden part of the propeller. There are some other small photo-etch parts to add, and don't forget the fuel cap!



#### *Summary*

A very nice little kit, not as easy as I had hoped, but even so I did build it in five weeks, which is very fast for me. I think a more careful builder might do better, my building is rather slapdash, the more mistakes the merrier, which doesn't really suit this kit. A more tempered and careful approach will pay dividends on a kit like this. The result is a tiny little model, my 1/72 GeeBee R-1 dwarfs it, and I thought that was small. It is absolutely gorgeous, if I am allowed to say that myself(!), and an important addition to a collection of racers. Highly recommended, but build carefully, and I hope this article may be of some help in avoiding the pitfalls that I bungled through.

***A big thanks to Kora Models for the review example!***