

For more information on how Uncle Les made his kit in 1/32 (seen here) go to

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COMMONWEALTH AIRCRAFT CORPORATION

CA-31

PROPOSED AUSTRALIAN SUPERSONIC TRAINER



Another classic Australian aeronautical “nearly made it” from the same folk who didn’t bring you half a dozen other aircraft that Uncle Les may cover in the near future !

1/32 scale

It started in 1/72 and eventually it became 1/32

It happened one winter's evening, rugged up in front of the fire going through some old Aircraft mags as is my want when I chanced upon an article in the September 1967 issue of "Aircraft" on the CA-31 Supersonic trainer. I looked at this diminutive aircraft and was immediately struck with the same intrigue mixed with sorrow I feel when I thumb through "Project Cancelled", the wonderful book by Derek Woods on the British Government's ineptitude towards aircraft research and production from the 40's to the 60's.



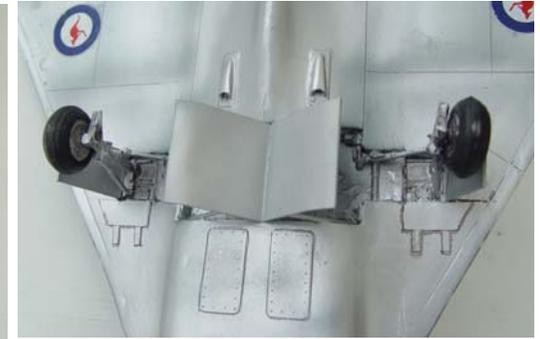
It becomes apparent when one reads literature on the subject of aircraft research, development and production in this country that up to the 70's we had a world class industry that became stifled by government hampering and the general pandering to foreign influences. (Some would point out that the rot set in decades earlier !)

This aircraft represents an asset that would have provided sub to supersonic training capability for conversion to the Mirage from Vampires and the like. The relationship with the Delta shaped Mirage becomes obvious when you look at the general arrangement—it's almost a 2/3 scale model of a Mirage ! This aircraft could also have been a minor ground support craft fulfilling a similar role that the Aermacchi MB326 eventually took on.

This project like so many others was scrapped in favour of either a foreign design or, in this case, nothing at all.

Fate being what it is, after the masters were completed for this model the real aircraft mockup turned up at Moorabbin Air Museum so a trip there is recommended to gather further reference. The Ballarat Air Museum has another example of one of the lost designs similar to the CA.31, but that's another story.

This model is a follow on from the 1/72 version where I wanted a manscale version and set about to make a couple.





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Views of a couple of Uncle Les's completed 1/72 models made from the smaller kit to give you some ideas. The schemes are of my impression on what might have been.

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Here's what you get in the kit.

All of these parts will need trimming from their bases.

The main fuselage/wing section .

The clear PVCS canopy has been vac-formed and will require careful trimming to get it in place correctly. If you're modelling with canopy open it hinges from the starboard side.

I recommend PVA glue as it dries clear without fogging.

Ejection seats are basic units that may require some trimming to fit in the cockpit

Main, front wheels, undercarriage doors

Some of the pitfalls in this kit will be some air bubbles and possibly some "potatoes" here and there. Uncle Les apologizes for any inconvenience but this is a limited resin model kit guys and a little work will be expected from your end of the deal ! (I have since improved techniques so later issues should be superior to older ones—nonetheless there'll still be plenty for the modeller to do !)

I recommend a little Tamiya, Milliput or Squadron putty be on hand !

Tail section needs trimming prior to attaching

The tail cone is cemented on with the fairing facing upwards.

The rear fuselage will sit cleanly (after trimming) Check drawings for correct alignment.

The inside engine parts fit neatly into the fuselage.

Front and main oleos

Wings.

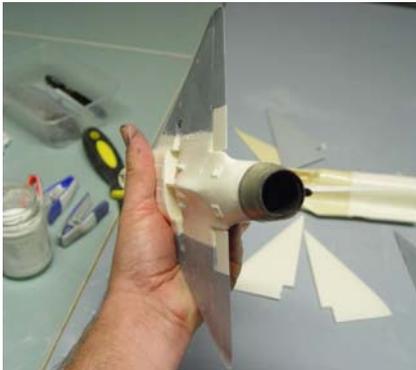
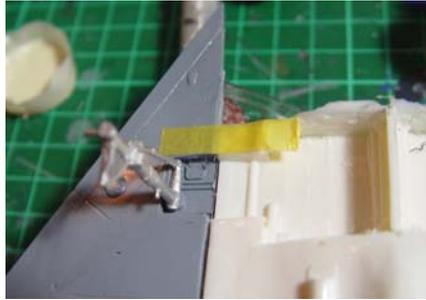
Main u/c doors

Elevators

Super, crazy or CA glue is recommended for use in the adhesion of the main parts.



If you've purchased this kit there's a good chance you're an experienced resin kit builder so I won't outline how to build it as you'll have a pretty good idea. I will however include a bunch of photos here that will show mine being built to assist with construction.



If the printing worked out properly this drawing should be 1/72 and you can use it to line things up if necessary. The length of the aircraft in 1/32 comes out at a shade under 34.5cm. Just photocopy this diagram at 225% to get a 1/32 drawing.

