

## IVL Kurki in 1/72

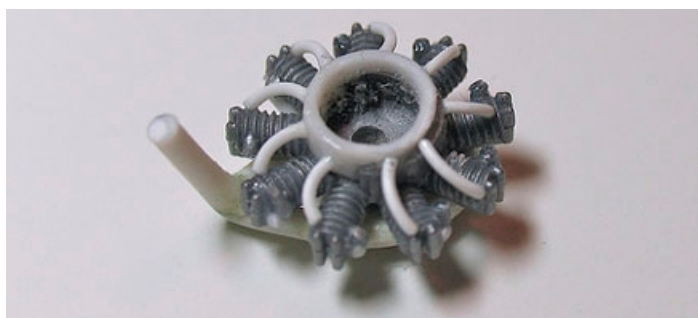
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RECENTLY completed a model of a very obscure aircraft, the IVL K.1 Kurki (“Crane”), the first Finnish aircraft designed for industrial production. The prototype of the aircraft first flew in 1926. Although the Kurki (nicknamed “Järvinen’s Box” after its designer, Asser Järvinen) represented an advanced concept for its time—a four-seater with tandem seating and dual controls—its performance proved inadequate, and eventually the government decided not to fund further development.

The prototype still remains, un-restored, at a storage facility at the old Vesivehmaa airfield in Finland. I had an opportunity to visit the facility in 2006 and study the aircraft. Building the model without the photos I took would have been difficult.



On a more recent trip to Finland, I found the Omega Models 1/72 scale kit of the Kurki. It is a limited-run resin kit with a hefty price tag: 35 Euros, about \$50. The kit matches available plans well. All major parts (fuselage, wings, tail surfaces) are usable; I also used the wheels, propeller and cockpit seats. Everything else had to be scratch-built, the most difficult part being the engine. I built a new Siemens-Halske Sh 12, starting from an engine cannibalized from Frog’s “Southern Cross” Fokker F.VII (ostensibly a Wright Whirlwind). The engine block had to be turned into the correct shape (by attaching the engine to my Dremel tool), and an exhaust collector ring as well as an intake manifold were added by building them from plastic rod.



Landing gear struts and the tail skid were built from plastic rod, wing struts from strips of plastic. Some rigging was done using stretched sprue. Windshields were cut from a clear sheet, and the passenger compartment door from .010 inch plastic sheet. The kit has round holes in the forward part of the cockpit. These are too large, and based on looking at the real aircraft, they were not windows.

The kit’s decals are very good—a bit on the thick side—but on the other hand I did not need to paint white circles underneath. I airbrushed the model overall with my own mixture of “silver dope:” Model Master Flat White, Model Master Medium Gray FS 35237, and Testors Silver. For interiors, based on examining the remains of the original aircraft, Model Master Rust seemed to be close to the color of the original varnish. Testors Dullcote was used as the final finish.

The Kurki ended up being more of a scratch-building project than I had originally anticipated, but I am quite happy with the result. Apparently there is also another resin kit of the Kurki (from Dujin). Scale Aviation Modeller Volume 12 Issue 3 (p. 227) has a naïve, uninformed review—almost a textbook example of how not to review a kit.

Good sources of reference material (apart from visiting the Vesivehmaa storage hangar) are

- Suomen Ilmailuhistoriallinen Lehti 4/2002 (nice set of plans)
- Suomen Ilmavoimat 1918-1927 (Keskinen et al), 2005
- Valtion Lentokonetieteen Historia—Osa 1: Pioneerivuodet 1921-1932 (Raunio), 2005

