

The LF Models Gee Bee R-2 – Kit review

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LF Models kit No. 7237 “**Gee Bee R-2**”. 1/72 kit, comprising 17 resin parts, a vacform canopy and a piece of metal wire. Decals included. Produced by **LF Models, Gagarinova 10, 787 01 Šumperk, Czech Republic** (Internet: <http://www.lfmodels.cz>, E-mail: fofi@post.cz, Phone/fax: +420 649 221282)



The fuselage consists of two halves, into which the interior is fitted. This consists of a floor, a seat, a stick and an instrument panel decal. The big hollow fuselage could need some extra detail, for example in the form of some tubular framework, but not a lot will be visible through the small canopy. On my example the fuselage halves were a bit asymmetric, the left half was deeper than the right half. Most of this could be easily corrected by holding the kit parts below the hot water tap and bending. The engine looks good, but you will need to sand the rocker boxes slightly in order to position it correctly with the front of the crank case just inside the opening. After that you will also need to add a spacer between the engine and the fuselage.

The wings are separate panels that are butt-joined to the root fairings. This should give no problem, but make sure the wing panels are parallel in plan view and have the

correct dihedral. The landing gear legs and fairings look very good and have separate wheels. Check with drawings when fitting them at the wing/root joint. The remaining parts are the horizontal tail surfaces, the tail wheel and the propeller. The latter is a beautiful piece of resin casting, but looks more like a Hamilton Standard unit than the correct Smith. The canopy is a bit thick, but perfectly adequate.

The surface detail, including the fabric-covered parts of the fuselage, is superb. The shape looks good to me, but the wing trailing edges should perhaps taper to a sharper tip. Casting standard is good, with only a few bubbles in the hard, cream-coloured resin. Most parts are attached to heavy pouring gates – some could be scored and broken off, but some other, especially the fuselage halves and the seat, need more work.

The decal sheet looks good, it is well-printed, complete and thin and with only one inaccuracy: The “Powered by” texts on the cowling should be black instead of red. However, it does not include any black pinstripping around the race and registration numbers, and it does not give any assistance in painting all the red scallops, which should also ideally have black pinstripes. It might be argued that the pinstripes would be microscopic in 1/72 and impossible to reproduce in correct scale. However, I must admit that I would have liked to have them. They can be made, as described by Neil Crawford in BT#7, but I guess many builders will not have his patience and ability to handle small things. Refer to photos when painting the model. The kit drawings are not accurate, since the scallops differed slightly between the R-1 and the R-2. The main difference was that the colour border across the top of the fuselage should be further to the rear on the R-2, around midway between the panel lines.

Conclusion

I was very impressed with this kit – superb pattern-making and good production. However, the desirability of the kit will probably be decided by the potential builder's confidence in painting and marking it.

A big thanks to LF Models for the review kit!