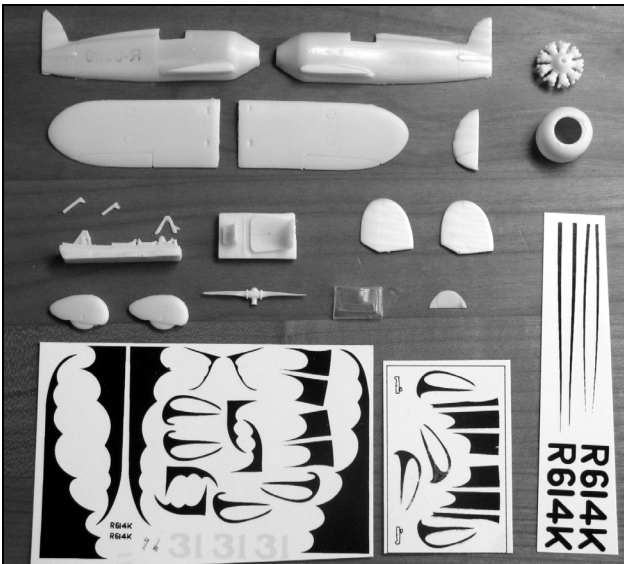


## ***The Dekno Travel Air "R" – Kit review*** ***Anders Bruun***



**Dekno "Travel Air Model R-2001 Mystery Ship"** (kit number 72010). 1/72 resin kit, comprising 24 parts, a vacuum-formed windscreen and complete decals. Price xxx, available from [www.deknomodels.com](http://www.deknomodels.com).

The kit parts are conventionally broken up. The fuselage consists of two vertical halves, which enclose a floor, a seat and an instrument panel. The fuselage castings are very thin, in fact so thin that the embossed markings on the inside of the rear fuselage make the wall almost transparent! I wouldn't dare to assemble the kit without first filling the thinnest places. The wind-screen is rather cloudy, but it shouldn't be too difficult to replace it with a piece of clear acetate or similar plastic. The engine is well-detailed and has to be trimmed slightly in order to fit inside the cowling. The propeller looks very good, but the blades are pitched to turn the wrong way – you can either pretend you don't know or find a replacement.



The rudder is a separate part. Its trailing edge is razor-thin, in fact so thin that some of the trailing edge has disappeared, leaving a scalloped trailing edge similar to a WW1-era wire trailing edge. The fabric surface on the tail surfaces is a bit exaggerated for my taste. The one-piece wing panels butt onto wing roots that protrude from the fuselage sides. Some filler will be needed here, since the wings are thicker than the roots. Note that the bigger holes for attachment of the wing struts should be on the top sides of the wings, otherwise the (rather faintly marked) corrugated oil cooler surfaces will end up on the wrong (right) side.

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The wheel pants with integral wheels look very good, but the resin landing gear legs, which are intended to be butt-joined to the pants, look frightfully fragile and I would recommend replacing them with brass strips or something similar. The rigging isn't too complicated, but the kit instructions don't mention the wire-spreader rods between the front and rear flying and landing wires.

The kit is very well produced, with clean, bubble-free castings. Built out of the box the kit will result in a nice-looking model. However, there are some little inaccuracies that irritate my nit-picking eyes:

- The wing doesn't have a proper airfoil. The original plane had a rather thick wing with a cambered airfoil, but the kit has a symmetric airfoil with the maximum thickness far to the front. Furthermore, the wing thickness tapers along the span, while it should be constant until the chord starts to reduce at the tips. These errors are difficult to correct, but on the other hand they are perhaps not that obvious.
- At least on my kit the wing tips are noticeably asymmetric seen from above. It can easily be corrected by sanding, but you have to sacrifice a little of the span to do it.
- The rear fuselage is too deep and too hump-backed. Again, this is not so difficult to correct, but you will have to fill the fuselage spine from the inside first, otherwise you will sand through.
- The cowling opening is far too small, only 8 mm diameter while Kerka and Abbott give 10.5 – 11 mm – again easily fixed with a rolled-up piece of sand paper.

The decals feature a full set of scallops, but read the accompanying article for other opinions! They don't feature the green pinstripes of the black trim, which in my opinion is just as well – they would have been microscopic in 1/72 scale and impossible to print properly. The printing was a bit thin in places, but it should be easy to touch up, and a bit of touch-up will probably be needed around the leading edges anyway. The unusual font of the wing registrations are reasonable well depicted. The race numbers look right. They look a bit off-white, but Wayne Moyer says they look good on the kit.

### ***Conclusion***

This is a simple little kit, which should be relatively easy to build and result in a good-looking model of this beautiful plane. In the next issue you will find a complete build review by Wayne Moyer!

### ***References***

- Edward H. Philips "Mystery Ship – A History of the Travel Air Type R Monoplanes"
- Edward H. Philips "Travel Air – Wings over the Prairie"
- Robert S. Hirsch and Ross N. Hirsch "Aircraft of Air Racing's Golden Age"
- Bruce E. Bissonette "Travel Air – A Photo History"
- Drawings by William Kerka

***Thanks to Albert Serra i Arévalo and Dekno for the review kit!***