**North American aviation F-100A/C Super Sabre** **IOC 1954**

I built the Monogram kit F100D back in the early 80s. I looked at it again, but the wing of the D model and some others had structural differences—bigger brakes, less sweep in the flap section—so I switched to the Trumpeter F-100C kit.

An interesting thing about the Trumpeter kit is the landing gear: the main gear is so large that it wouldn't even fit in the wheel wells. Luckily, *Reskit* makes F-100A wheels and tires. Also, when I bought the kit on eBay, someone included the Monogram intake and a copy of an article from about 15 years ago that said the intake on the earlier kit was too flat at the bottom. I grafted the Monogram intake onto it, and I was staring at the Trumpeter nose and the Monogram intake side by side. I couldn't tell the difference. I don't think it's worth it; if you really want to round out the bottom of the nose, you can squeeze the nose of the Trumpeter kit a little to get more curvature in the bottom. There’s more than one way to solve it.

**Regarding references, I used some general ones I had on hand, but for specific sources, I referred to the Japanese publication, Famous Airplanes of the World, North American F100 Super Sabre. #22. I believe they get reissued periodically, and this edition was published by Bunrindu Ltd. It contains a lot of good photos of early model Super Sabers.**

**McDonnell F-101A Voodoo**  **IOC 1957**

For most of my life, the F-101A was a unicorn kit, because a 1/48 scale model didn't exist when I was a kid. Before Kitty Hawk, if you wanted an A or C model, you had to buy a Monogram F-101B, and an A/C conversion kit… if they even made one. So, I used the 1/48 scale F-101A/C by Kitty Hawk. Kitty Hawk’s kit is pretty good, but a bit overcomplicated. The “buzz-numbers are incorrect (they say FR but should be FB), and the smallest stencils are jumbled English sentences! I was required to steal some parts from the old Monogram kit—specifically, the flaps, the landing gear, the speed brakes, and the ejection seat—because I thought they were molded better. “

**Getting good reference data on the F-101 was very difficult, especially for the F-101A and C models. However, there is more reference material available for the RF-101C and the F-101B. The best resource I found is called The F101 voodoo: an illustrated history of McDonald's heavyweight fighter by Ronald Easley, published in 2014 by Schiffler Publishing.**

**Convair F-102A Delta Dagger IOC 1956**

I used the Monogram F-102 kit from the 1990, this version coms with he later Case XX wing. I had to buy the Pro Modeler version with the Case X wing. There were two different wings on the F-102. The first wing was shaped differently, If you want to build an early F-102, you need to research and find out which Monogram or Revell boxing has the Case X wing. I think there's good information about that on ScaleMates.

 Although this is the last fighter in the Monogram Century Series (1990), it still has some major fit issues. The canopy frame was designed to be displayed open. Showing it closed requires a lot of filling, sanding, and modifications to fit properly. The intakes were also challenging; matching every contact point between the intakes and fuselage isn’t possible, so you must compromise—match as many contact points as you can and modify the rest. By this time, I was already willing to buy aftermarket parts, so I purchased the SPS Model nose cone because the shape appears more complex than it seems. However, in hindsight, it wasn't necessary; I think the kit’s original nose cone accurately captures the complex shape. Actually, I believe the SPS nose cone over-exaggerates the conical tip, making it look more pointed than the original rounded nose, so I wouldn't recommend spending money on it. Other than that, it was an out-of-the-box build. I looked for the earliest versions to enter service because I wanted to replicate the long US Air Force lettering that curves downward to match the intake’s curve. It almost looks like a kid who ran out of room at the end of the line in his notebook.

**The best reference for the F-102 is *F-102 Delta Dagger* by Wayne Mutza, a Schiffler Military History book that came out in 1999.**

**Lockheed F-104A Starfighter**  **IOC 1956**

The next in line is the Lockheed F-104. I chose to build the F104A model. Funny thing is, I’ve never built the Monogram F-104, so I have no experience with that. I jumped straight to the year 2000 boxing of the Hasegawa F-104 Charlie and backdated it. I used some of the backdating kit from Hyperscale Hobbies, but not all of it is necessary. The Hasegawa kit is just beautiful. The wings snap on and off, which is great for travel or transport, and the tail snaps on and off as well. It's just an amazing kit. If I were an F104 fan, this is what I would build. I have the Kinetic kit, and I built the 3-4 Esci kits back in the 80s, but I would highly recommend the Hasegawa kit, any version, any boxing. You can't go wrong.

**A newer good general reference that has some aircraft model reviews in the back is “*Lockheed F-104 Starfighter: A Comprehensive Guide* “ by Andy Evans. Published by Sam publications in 2020**

**Republic Aviation F-105B Thunderchief IOC 1958**

Now comes my favorite Century Series kit, the Republic F-105 Thunderchief. When I was younger, I thought the Delta Dart was the best-looking of the Century Series fighters, but when I got back into the hobby in 2020, I found a Monogram Thunderchief in my stash. I decided to backdate it to an early F-105B because I fell in love with the bare metal finish F-105B with the green stripes on the box of that 1/72nd scale Hasegawa kit from the 70s. I wanted to build that aircraft in 1/48 scale.

The more I researched the F105, the more I learned about its tragic history and original purpose — to take off from a European airfield at Mach 1.0 at sea level with an internal nuclear weapon, then bail out because, by the time the war started, there would be no runways left in Europe. But it ended up flying conventional bombing missions using the same predictable routes repeatedly in Vietnam, through some of the most heavily defended airspace in history.

So, I started with the monogram F105 Delta, which is still available on eBay, but it was later boxed by Revell and, believe it or not, Hasegawa. In this case, I re-scribed the entire fuselage — I bought a Cygnus Scale Conversions kit for it, but there's a good article in Fine Scale Modeler where someone basically reshaped the F105D nose by hand and made it work. There’s more than one way to approach it. Still, my favorite kit would be the early versions of the B. That required removing all the strengthening ribs added to the D during the Vietnam War. They had to be sanded off, including those on the top and bottom of the fuselage and the extra fairing along the top where the hydraulics for the D ran. It was quite an involved process, but I was happy with the final result.

**My favorite reference for the Thunderchief is the “*Complete History of the Republic F-105 Thunderchief*” by Dennis R Jenkins which was published by Specialty Press in 2018**

**Convair F-106A Delta Dart IOC 1959**

I was initially excited about the new Trumpeter kit, which I believe was released in 2019. I started building it but was very disappointed with some of the details, so I dug out an old F-106 from my Monogram stash and began to build that instead. Interestingly, the Monogram cockpit is excellent—much better than the newer Trumpeter kit. Even the seat belts have texture, which is impressive considering the early 1980s injection-molding technology. You might find a better kit or seat, but I think this one is fantastic. In my opinion, the Monogram kit has a more accurate shape. However, like the F-102, the canopy was never meant to be closed, which made it a hassle. Another unique issue with the Monogram kit is that it has a three-part fuselage—left and right sides that don't curve around to the bottom, plus a bottom part—so you end up with three seams along the fuselage length that need fixing. I also had to modify the backdate from the Monogram kit, which features all the telemetry antennas and tail hook, all of which had to be removed.

I decided to model the F-106 that still holds the speed record for a single-seat aircraft, buzz number FE-467. Luckily, Draw Decals makes a kit of that aircraft. This project is probably my most thoroughly researched, though there aren't many pictures of FE-467 available. I did find a YouTube video showing the aircraft, but it doesn't match the pictures in the book, so I used the video as my reference—what I consider more accurate because it was filmed during the record attempt.

**I had a lot of old references on the 106, but my new favorite and my most useful is called, “T*he World's Fastest Single-Engine Jet Aircraft*” by Doug Barbier, Lt Col (USAF Ret.) Specialty Press 2017.**