



HISTORY

The *AH-1T Improved SeaCobra*, manufactured by Bell Helicopter for the U.S. Marine Corps, is in essence, the next generation of the *AH-1J SeaCobra* of the early 1970's. The first two *AH-1T* prototypes were in fact the last two *AH-1Js* manufactured by Bell Helicopter, modified with more powerful engines and a stretched fuselage and tailboom. This improved prototype was first flown on May 20, 1976, but politics had played a major role in the early hours of the *AH-1T*'s development.

In 1974, Congress had made it clear that it would not appropriate funding for the *AH-1T* production unless all were armed with the TOW missile launch system. The Marines resisted arguing that the *Improved SeaCobra*'s primary mission was to be the armed escort of troop assault aircraft, not an antitank weapons platform like the Army's *AH-64 Apache*. In the end a compromise resulted in the initial manufacture of two variants. Of the total 57 *AH-1Ts*, including the 2 prototypes; the first 33 were received as "slick" (basic) craft - without the TOW missile launchers installed. The other 24 had the TOW missile system added during production. The original 33 "slicks" were subsequently retrofitted with the launchers.

The first production *AH-1T Improved SeaCobra* was delivered to the Marines in October of 1977. The Corps presently has 43 *AH-1Ts* in its inventory. With the exception of its longer fuselage, repositioned tail rotor and ventral fin, the *AH-1T* is similar externally to the *AH-1J*. These fuselage modifications were necessary to readjust the crafts CG (Center of Gravity) after the addition of the TOW related equipment and ECM (Electronic Counter Measures) gear which made the prototype nose-heavy. Both pilots and mechanics praise the *Improved SeaCobra*'s superior performance over the *AH-1J SeaCobra*.

SPECIFICATIONS

Engines	2	1,637 hp T400-WV-402 turboshafts
Rotor Diameter	48 ft 0 in	
Overall Length	58 ft 0 in	
Height	14 ft 3 in	
Weight	14,000 lbs max. loaded	
Max. Speed	149 knots (171 mph)	

Armament	Heavy Anti-armor 20mm cannon w/750 rds.
8	TOW missiles
14	2.75" rockets in two LAU-68 launchers

REFERENCES

Aerofax Datagraph 4 Bell AH-1 Cobra Variants,
Kenneth Peoples (Aerofax Inc.)

BEFORE STARTING

1. Study the illustrations and sequence of assembly before beginning.
2. Decide how much detail you wish to add to your model and whether or not you intend to modify or "convert" the basic model in any way. Study carefully all available reference material before beginning to ensure an authentic model.
3. Due to the amount of parts in this kit, do not detach the parts from the runner of the parts tree until you need them. This helps avoid confusion and lost parts.
4. When cementing the parts together, check the way one part fits together with another. This assures a neat job with no surprises.
5. Always remember when working with plastic model cement and paint to keep your work area well ventilated. The fumes from plastic modeling products can be harmful if inhaled.

PREPARATION OF PARTS

1. Never tear parts off the runner (parts tree). Use a Testor Hobby Knife, fingernail clippers, or a small wire cutters to remove the parts from the tree.
2. It is possible some parts may require a little attention with a file or sandpaper to ensure a proper fit and neat appearance. Hobby files and Testor Hobby Sandpaper appropriate for model building are available in most good hobby shops.
3. If you desire you may fill any seams (where parts go together) or imperfections with Testor Contour Putty for Plastic Models which is also available at good hobby shops.

PAINTING

You can obtain an excellent finish on your model using Testor finish preparation products and paints. Detailed descriptions of paint types and color are included on the pages that follow.

Good brushes are essential for proper detailing. Testor *Model Master* brushes are recommended and available at good hobby stores. Be sure you have the entire selection for all your modeling needs. Always clean them in Testor thinner, wash in soap and water, and store with bristles upward when not in use.

Wash plastic parts before detaching them from the parts tree. Warm water and liquid dishwashing detergent will remove the oils left from the manufacturing process. Let the parts dry and avoid excessive handling. Immediately before painting, wipe the parts with a "tac rag" (available at auto parts stores) to remove dust and lint.

Most small parts are best painted while still attached to the parts tree. You can also detach them and hold with tweezers or "magic" tape while painting. Paint in one direction only. If your paint is the correct thickness brush strokes will disappear as the color dries. If the paint seems too thick, thin with Testor Paint Thinner. Wheels may be detached from the parts tree and fit onto toothpicks or matchsticks for painting. Just hold the paintbrush against the edge of the wheel and rotate the stick and wheel to obtain a neat finish.

Let the paint dry completely before handling. When the parts are dry, assemble the model, following the directions closely. Remember cement will not hold strongly to painted surfaces. Use your Testor Hobby Knife to carefully remove paint from all surfaces to be cemented. After you have assembled the model you can touchup areas where cement might have marred the finish.

Use the drawings of the complete parts trees as a part locating reference while building the model.

Tweezers will be useful in assembling the many small parts in this kit. The type used by postage stamp collectors is recommended.

Liquid cement, Testor #3502, is recommended for construction since it can produce the neatest, quickest, and strongest glue joints. Apply small amounts of cement, using the tip of a Testor *Model Master* No. 2 brush, to the surfaces to be joined while holding the parts in place. **Do not** use large amounts of cement.

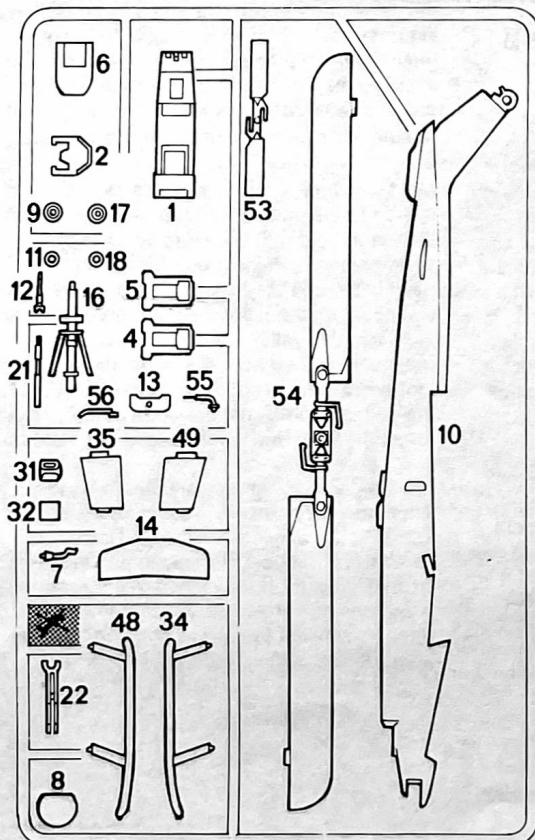
The Testor *Model Master* paint system is specially designed to be used on military models. The **Preliminary Painting** instructions on this sheet indicate which *Model Master* colors to use as indicated by name and Federal Standard (FS) number. These colors are called out by **bold italic type**. Wherever *Model Master* colors are not applicable the required Testor color will be called out by number and name in **regular bold type**.

APPLYING DECALS

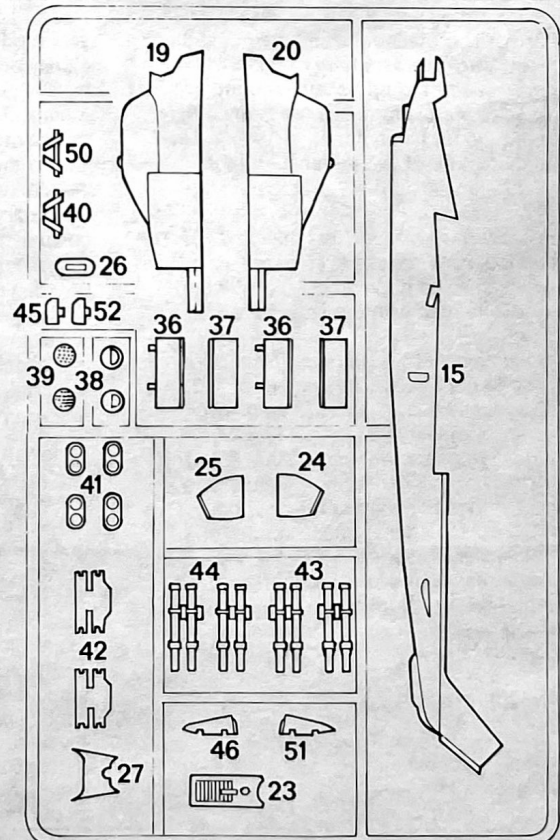
- After carefully masking clear areas, spray entire model with Testor Glosscote #1261. Decals adhere best to a smooth surface and the shinier the finish the smoother it is. Allow the Glosscote to dry before going further.
- Select the decals you plan to use and cut them from the decal sheet with scissors or a Testor Hobby Knife.
- Working with only one decal at a time, dip the decal in clear water for no more than five seconds. Remove it from the water and place on a dry paper towel for about one minute.
- When the decal slides easily on the backing paper, slide it to the edge of, and onto, the surface of the model with a soft Testor *Model Master* paint brush or tweezers. Remember the decals are very thin and can be easily ripped. Work slowly and carefully.
- Once the decal is in the desired position apply a small amount of Testor Decal Set #8804. This will help the decal conform to any irregularities in the surface of the model. Allow the decal to dry undisturbed. Should you desire to purposely move it before it has dried, apply a little Decal Set to a soft brush and push the decal slowly into the desired position.
- When the decals are completely dry (usually overnight), apply a coat of Testor Dullcote, #1260, to the entire model. This will give it an authentic, dull finish and protect the surface of the model. Now you can carefully remove the masking from the clear parts.

Note: Parts in shaded areas are not used in assembly of this kit.

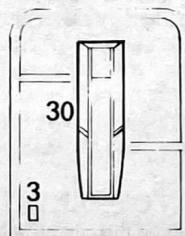
A Parts



B Parts



C Parts



1 PARTS 1 - 7

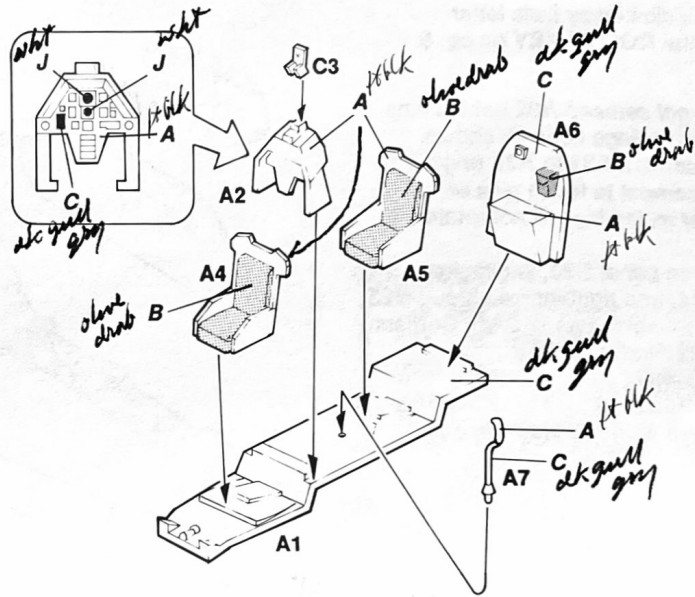
Preliminary Painting

Paint parts as indicated by italic letter callouts using the **COLOR KEY** on this page.

Assembly

1. Cement copilot/gunner's seat **A4** and pilot's seat **A5** onto floor **A1**. Cement control stick **A7** to **A1**. Cement sight **C3** onto instrument panel **A2**, then cement **A2** to floor **A1**. Finally, cement rear bulkhead **A6** to **A1** as shown.

Cockpit Assembly



COLOR KEY

- A** No. 1749 Flat Black FS 37038
- B** No. 1711 Olive Drab FS 34087
- C** No. 1740 Dark Gull Gray FS 36231
- D** No. 1708 Insignia Yellow FS 33538
- E** No. 1795 Gunmetal
- F** No. 1796 Jet Exhaust
- G** No. 1103 Red
- H** No. 1124 Green
- J** No. 1145 White

2 PARTS 8 - 22

Preliminary Painting

Paint parts as indicated by italic letter callouts using the **COLOR KEY** on this page.

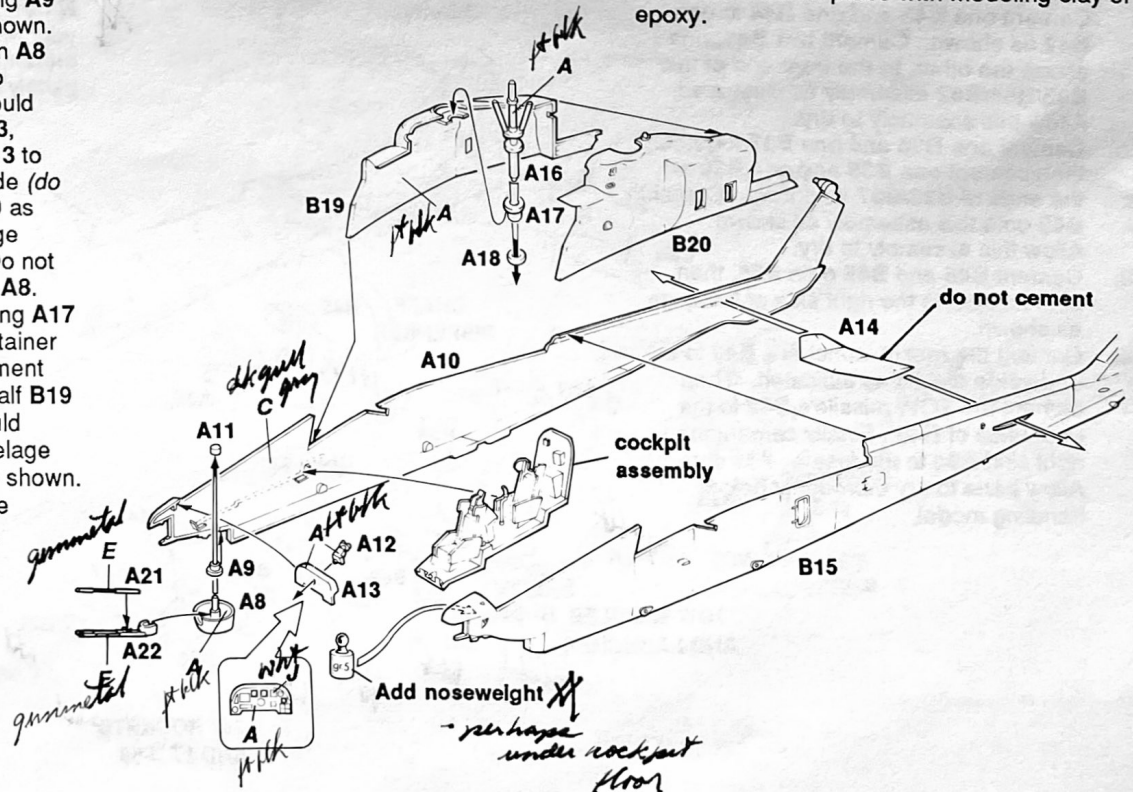
NOTE: Prior to assembly, add ~~1/8~~ 1/6 ounce weight inside fuselage nose (see **NOTE** below).

Assembly

1. Cement gun barrel **A21** to gun system **A22**. Cement **A22** to **A8** as shown. Slide (*do not cement*) pivot bearing **A9** onto the pin of the turret **A8** as shown. Cement retainer **A11** to the pin on **A8** *only*. Cement pivot bearing **A9** to fuselage half **A10**. Turret **A8** should rotate freely. Cement **A12** to **A13**, cement cockpit assembly and **A13** to fuselage half **A10** as shown. Slide (*do not cement*) **A14** in place on **A10** as shown. *Carefully* cement fuselage halves **A10** and **B15** together. Do not allow cement to touch gun turret **A8**.
2. Slide (*do not cement*) pivot bearing **A17** onto rotor shaft **A16**. Cement retainer **A18** to rotor shaft **A16** *only*. Cement bearing **A17** to upper fuselage half **B19** as shown. Rotor shaft **A16** should rotate freely. Cement upper fuselage halves **B19** and **B20** together as shown.
3. Cement complete upper fuselage assembly to **A10/B15** as shown.

Fuselage Assembly

NOTE: In order for your **AH-1T** to rest properly on its skids, weight must be added inside the nose before assembling the fuselage halves. Lead split shot as used in fishing is recommended. Lead weights should be held in place with modeling clay or epoxy.



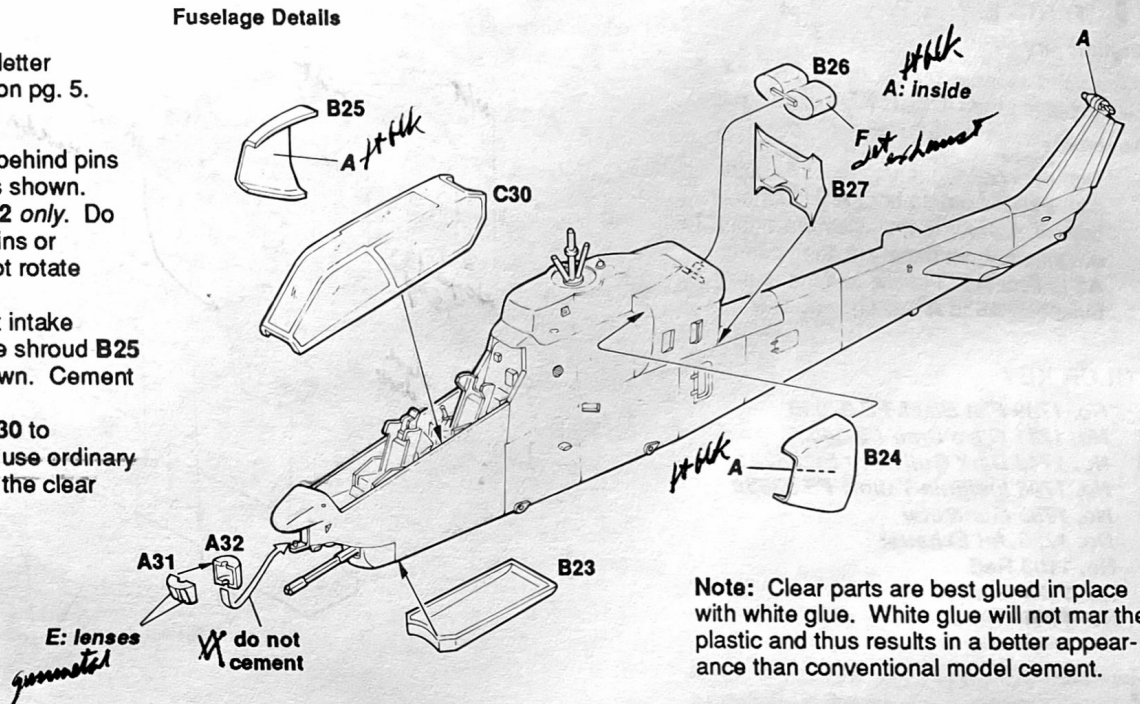
3 PARTS 23 - 27, 30 - 32

Preliminary Painting

Paint parts as indicated by italic letter callouts using the **COLOR KEY** on pg. 5.

Assembly

1. Place (*do not cement*) **A32** behind pins located on fuselage nose as shown. *Carefully* cement **A31** to **A32** only. Do not allow cement to touch pins or fuselage or assembly will not rotate properly.
2. Cement chin panel **B23**, left intake shroud **B24**, and right intake shroud **B25** in place on fuselage as shown. Cement **B26** and **B27** to fuselage.
3. *Carefully* cement canopy **C30** to fuselage. You may wish to use ordinary white glue so as not to mar the clear plastic.



4 PARTS 34 - 46

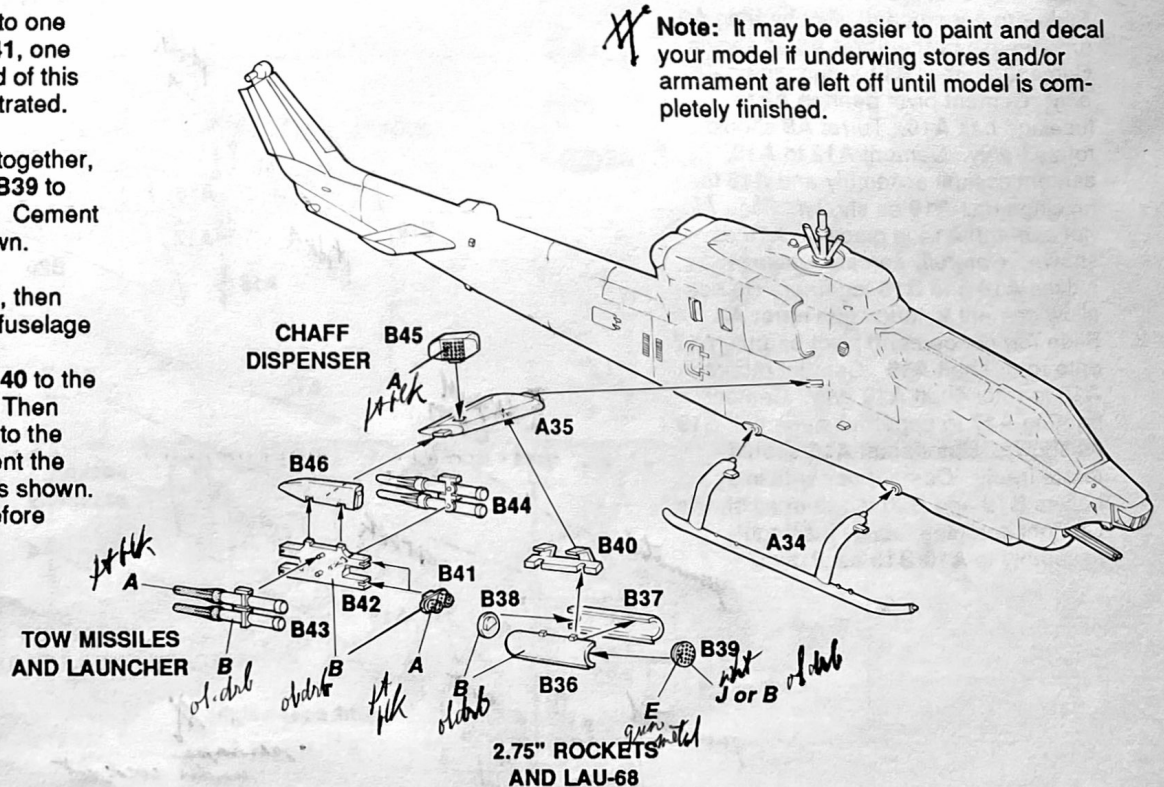
Preliminary Painting

Paint parts as indicated by italic letter callouts using the **COLOR KEY** on pg. 5.

Assembly

1. Cement one **B43** and one **B44** to one **B42** as shown. Cement two **B41**, one above the other, to the front end of this **B43/B44/B42** assembly as illustrated. Allow this assembly to dry.
2. Cement one **B36** and one **B37** together, then cement one **B38** and one **B39** to the ends of **B36/B37** as shown. Cement **B40** onto this assembly as shown. Allow this assembly to dry.
3. Cement **B46** and **B45** onto **A35**, then cement **A35** to the right side of fuselage as shown.
4. Cement the rocket launcher's **B40** to the underside of **A35** as indicated. Then cement the TOW missile's **B42** to the underside of **B46**. Finally cement the right skid **A34** to the fuselage as shown. Allow parts to dry thoroughly before handling model.

Right Side Details



5 PARTS 48 - 56

Preliminary Painting

Paint parts as indicated by italic letter callouts using the **COLOR KEY** on this page.

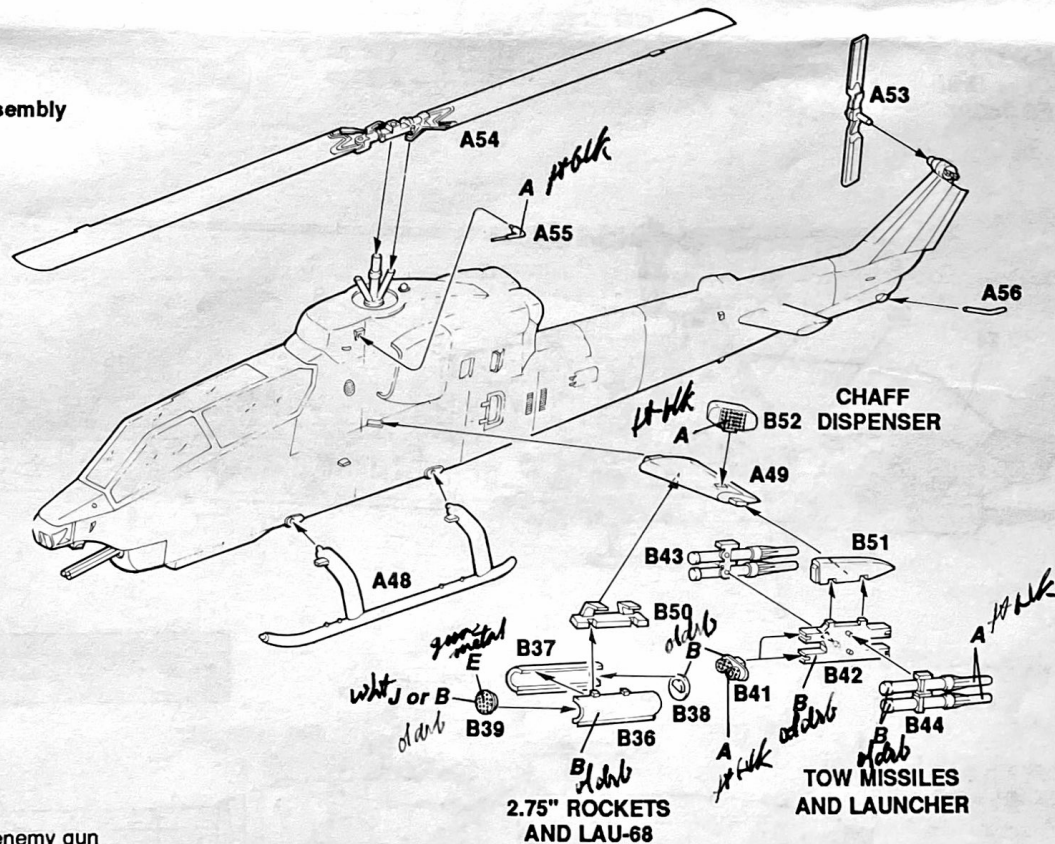
Assembly

1. Cement **B43** and **B44** to **B42** as shown. Cement two remaining **B41**, one above the other, to the front end of this **B43/B44/B42** assembly. Allow parts to dry.
2. Cement **B36** and **B37** together, then cement **B38** and **B39** to the ends of **B36/B37** as shown. Cement **B50** onto this assembly as shown. Allow parts to dry.
3. Cement **B51** and **B52** onto **A49**, then cement **A49** to the left side of fuselage as shown.
4. Cement the rocket launcher's **B50** to the underside of **A49** as indicated. Then cement the TOW missile's **B42** to the underside of **B51**. Cement the left skid **A48** to the fuselage as shown.
5. Cement tailskid **A56**, pitot tube **A55**, tail rotor **A53** and main rotor **A54** in place as shown. Allow parts to dry thoroughly before handling model.

COLOR KEY

- A** No. 1749 Flat Black FS 37038
- B** No. 1711 Olive Drab FS 34087
- C** No. 1740 Dark Gull Gray FS 36231
- D** No. 1708 Insignia Yellow FS 33538
- E** No. 1795 Gunmetal
- F** No. 1796 Jet Exhaust
- G** No. 1103 Red
- H** No. 1124 Green
- J** No. 1145 White

Final Assembly



TECHNICAL NOTE

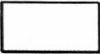

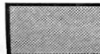

Even though the *AH-1T* taunted enemy gun positions in 1982 when Marine pilots launched from assault craft to aid Marines ashore in Lebanon, the supreme test came during the 1983 American-led invasion of Grenada.

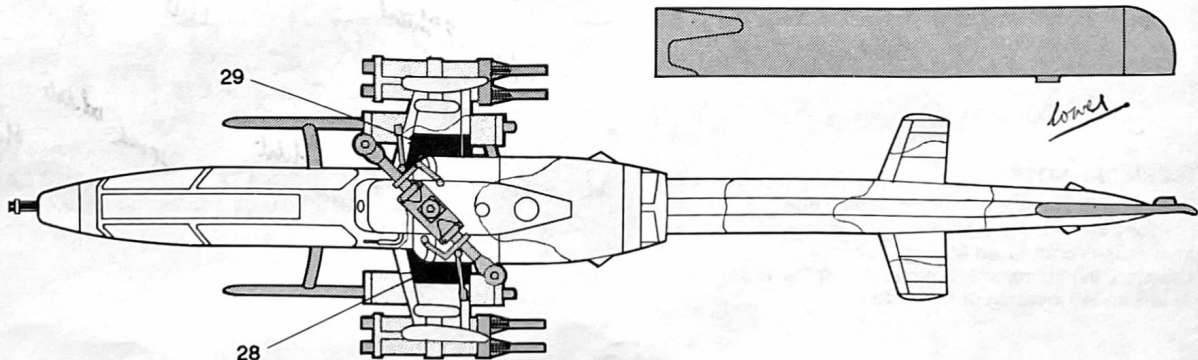
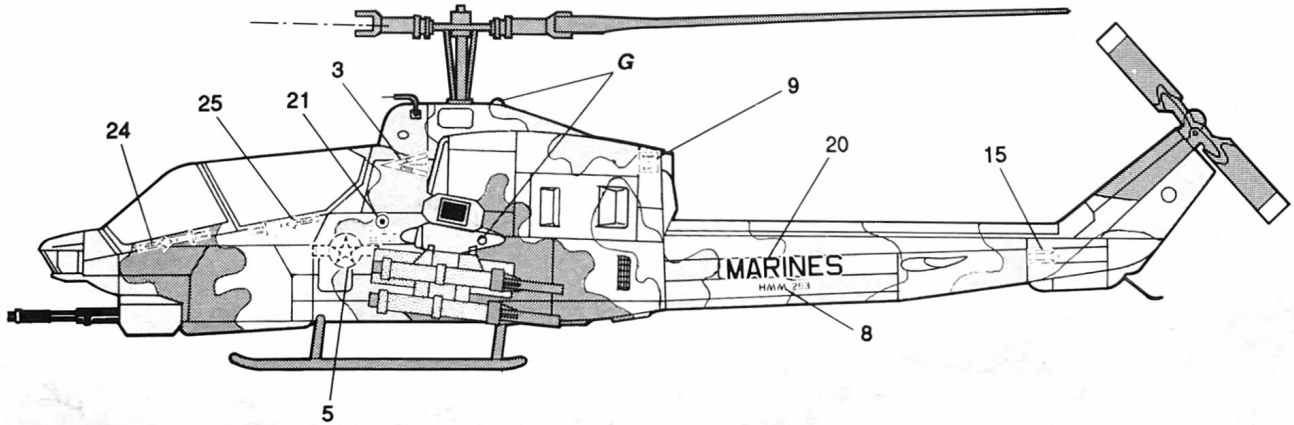
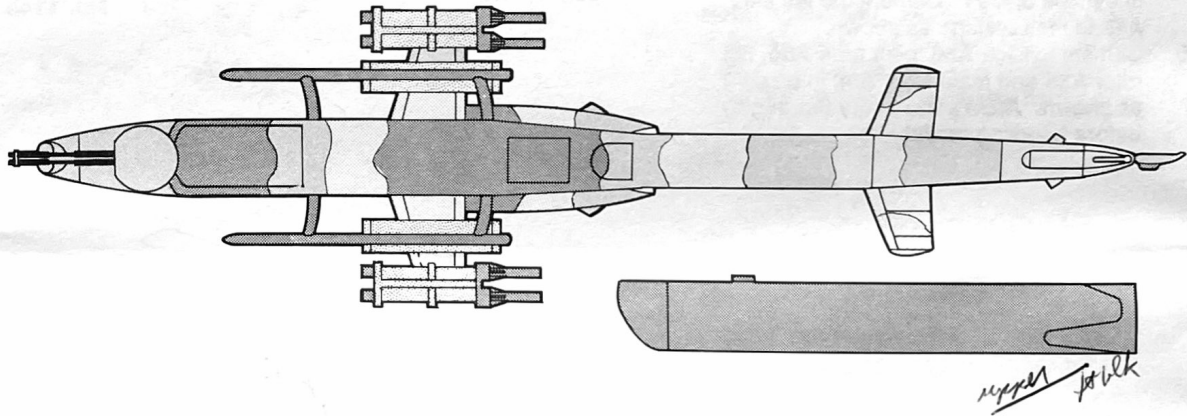
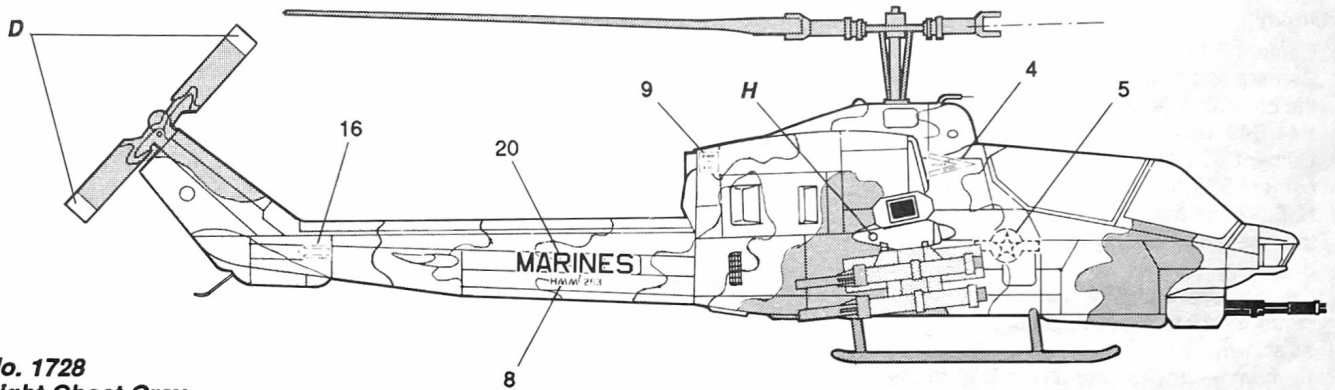
AH-1T SEACOBRA
HMM 263 U.S. Marine Corps

Italic letter callouts refer to the **COLOR KEY** on pg. 7.

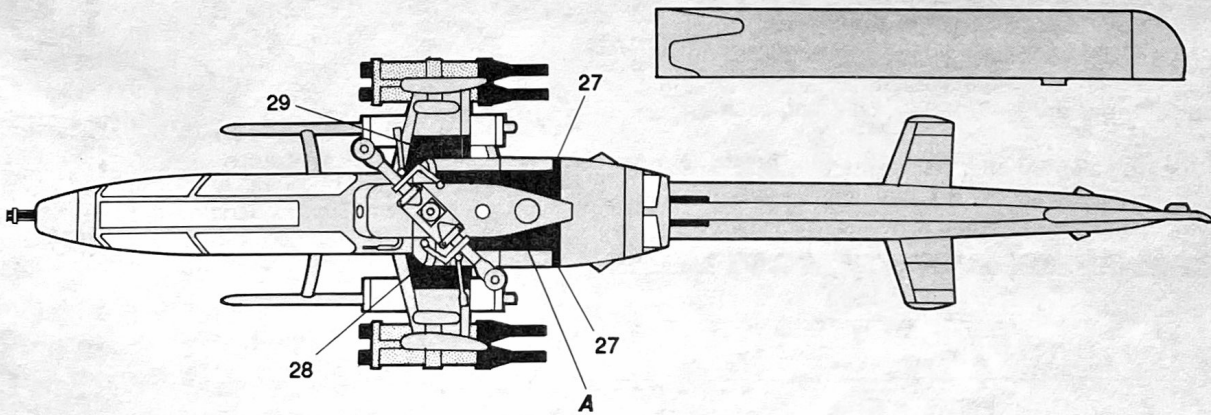
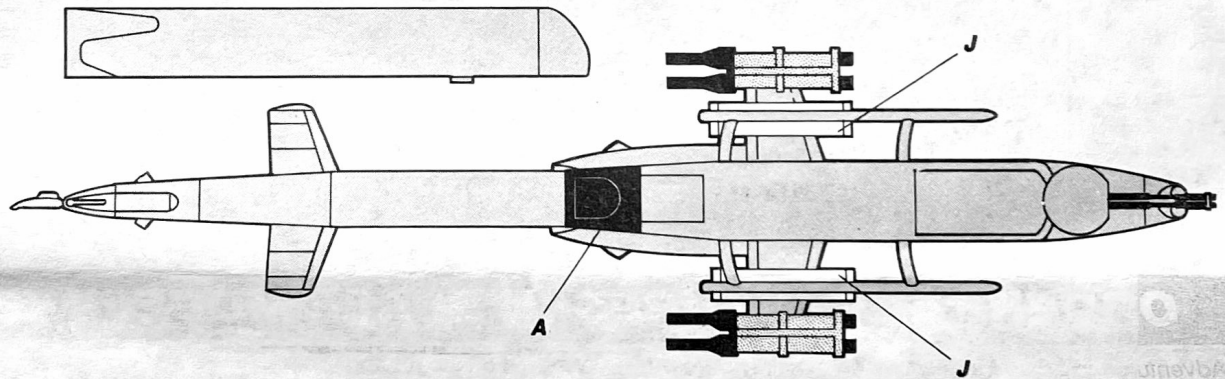
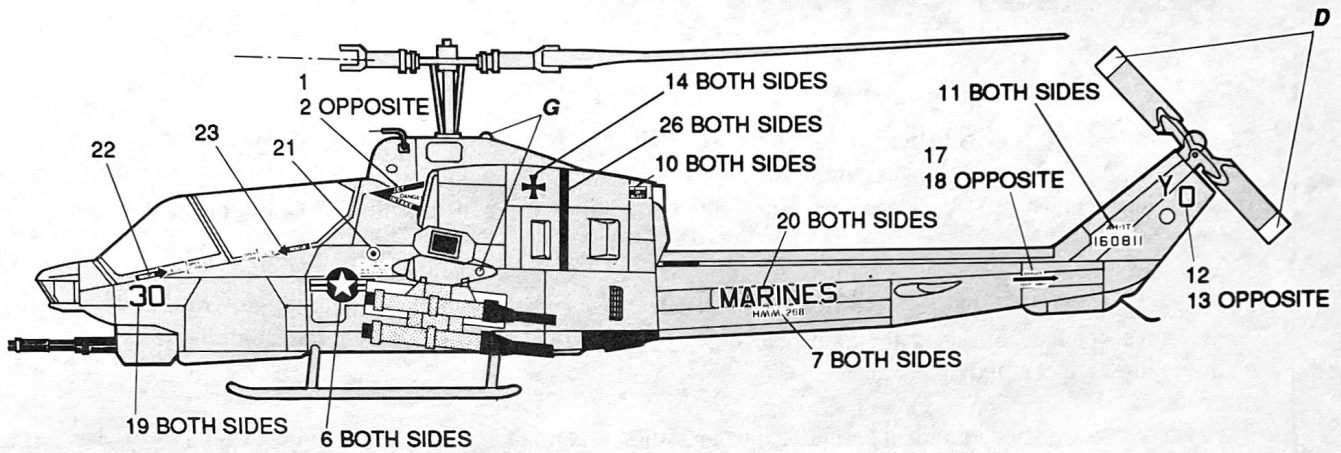
Number callouts refer to decals. See **APPLYING DECALS** on page 2.

PAINTING

-  **No. 1728**
Light Ghost Gray
FS 36375
-  **No. 1710**
Dark Green
FS 34079
-  **No. 1749**
Flat Black
FS 37038
-  **No. 1711**
Olive Drab
FS 34087



AH-1T SEACOBRA
HMM 268 U.S. Marine Corps



PAINTING

 **No. 1710**
Dark Green
FS 34079

 **No. 1711**
Olive Drab
FS 34087

Number callouts refer to decals. See **APPLYING DECALS** on page 2.

Italic letter callouts refer to the **COLOR KEY** on this page.

COLOR KEY

- A** No. 1749 Flat Black FS 37038
- B** No. 1711 Olive Drab FS 34087
- C** No. 1740 Dark Gull Gray FS 36231
- D** No. 1708 Insignia Yellow FS 33538
- E** No. 1795 Gunmetal
- F** No. 1796 Jet Exhaust
- G** No. 1103 Red
- H** No. 1124 Green
- J** No. 1145 White