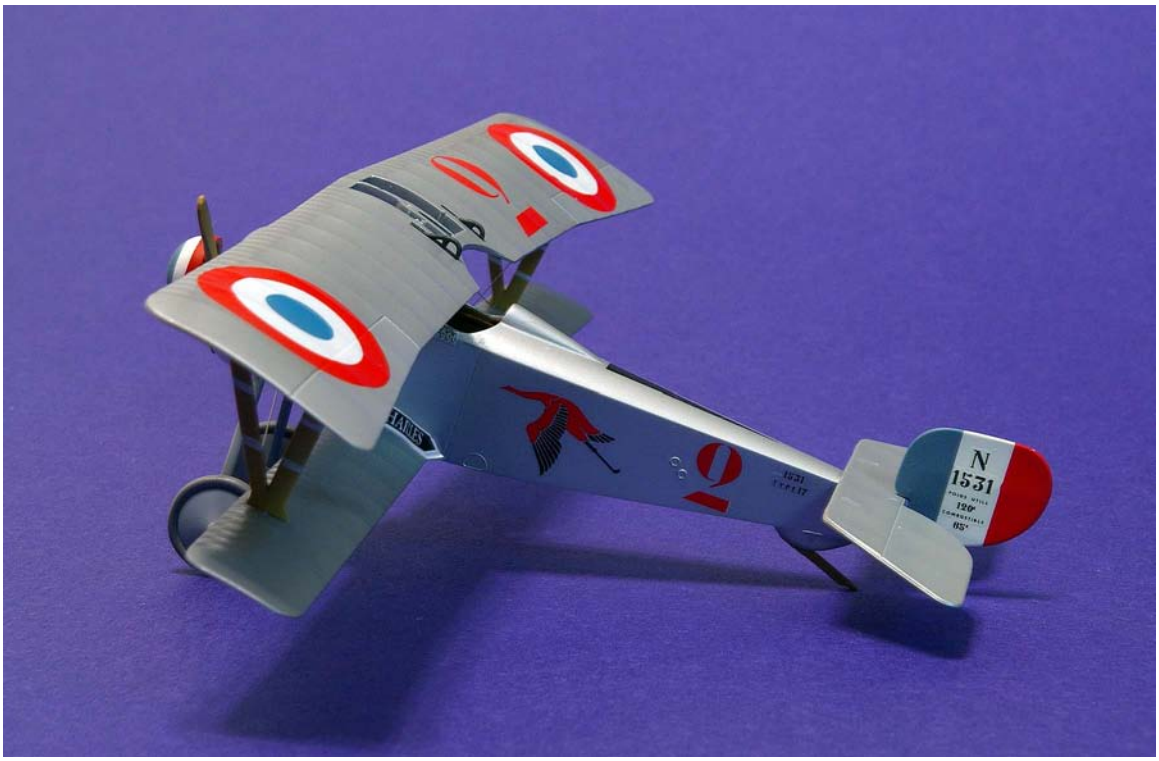
Eduard's 1/48th scale Nieuport 17 (kit #8023)



Guynemer's Nieuport 17-

The French troops slogging and fighting in the World War I trenches called the Nieuport 17s that circled above "silver hawks." One of the most famous "silver hawks" was Georges Guynemer, known to many as "the most famous stork," a reference to the red and blue bird emblazoned on the side of Escadrille 3's aircraft.

Eduard's 1/48th scale Nieuport 17 (kit #8023) is complete with all of the modifications, painting masks and markings needed to build Sous Lieutenant Guynemer's aircraft as it appeared in July 1916. Construction starts with painting the sidewalls and floor of the cockpit "wood." The seat is "leather" with belts made from paper strips. Stain the strips with black coffee and while they are still wet drape them over the seat to give the straps a realistic arrangement.

The rest of the cockpit has a throttle side panel and rudder bar painted aluminum. Strangely there is no instrument panel included in the kit but one can be easily fabricated from a piece of styrene stock and a few dots of paint. Don't spend too much time on the cockpit since not much is visible when the fuselage is closed.

Attach the bottom wing and the horizontal stabilizer to the assembled fuselage and set aside to dry. A complete LeRhone 110 hp 9J engine, somewhat unique to Guynemer's aircraft, is contained in a separate bag in the kit. The engine is painted steel with a wash of gloss black to bring out the details. An additional cutout portion of the cowling, included in the kit, is attached to the top center.

Newports belonging to Escadrille 3, with a few exceptions, were painted overall with an aluminum dope to protect the linen fuselage covering from ultra-violet light. Painting the entire model one shade of aluminum is correct but to give it some "depth of color" it is recommended to break up the finish with various shades of the silver paint. The cowling and the forward portion of the fuselage were aluminum and can be painted with Model Master's "buffing aluminum." The remainder of the fuselage and wings are sprayed with Floquil's "platinum mist." (Platinum mist is a lusterless shade that gives the appearance of paint on fabric.)

The vertical stabilizers of French WWI aircraft were painted red, white and blue. There are decals provided in the kit but they do not fit well. Paint this control surface overall insignia white (FS-17925) and when dry use the kit masks to paint the rear portion insignia red (FS-31136). The forward section is U.S. Navy blue-gray lightened with a little white so that it matches the center color of the French insignia roundel.

One of the distinctive portions of Lieutenant Guynemer's aircraft was the "cone de penetration" that was attached to the front of the propeller to alleviate some of the drag caused by the LeRhone engine. Spray the cone white and then using the masks provided in the kit; use the same colors as on the vertical stabilizer. (This is not an easy task and requires a steady hand.) The "cone" was only on the aircraft for a short time and can be excluded. Another important feature of Guynemer's aircraft, included in the kit, is the top wing with the two special cutouts that gave improved vision during aerial combat. Micro Scale "crystal clear" is used to fill in these cutouts in final construction.

The outer wing struts are painted wood and when dry are masked and the metal strengthening bands painted aluminum. There are decals in the kit that can be used for this job. To add additional interest to an overall silver model, paint the inner wing struts and the landing gear assembly light gray (FS-36375) mixed with a little aluminum. It is incorrect to assume that WWI aircraft tires were black. Most were light gray, light brown and some, pink. Model Master gray (FS-36231) is a good match.

WWI Newports carried the French roundel on the top and the bottom of the upper wing. Apply the national markings and then attach the outer wing struts using white glue. The inner struts can be cemented in place at this time and then the top wing can be glued to lower wing and the fuselage.

Newport 17s had few rigging wires. Minimeca (ref. 106) stainless steel 0.20 x 250 wire is excellent for this job. Use a pair of dividers to determine each wire's length and attach them with white glue. The final task is to paint and attach the windscreen to the area in front of the cockpit.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