Marking and Fitting Canopies

by George White

One of the more tedious and frustrating tasks of model building is the process of fitting up a canopy or windscreen. Of course there's the old bond paper thing where you make a test pattern out of paper, but then you somehow have to transfer that to the clear plastic. "Somehow" is the operative word here. The simplest way to do it is to just trace the correct pattern onto the plastic with a "Sharpie" or similar alcohol based "permanent" marker. Don't let the word "permanent" cause you to shy away from this. When it comes time to remove the markings, simply wet a tissue with rubbing alcohol (91% works best) and the marking comes off instantly with no damage to the plastic. Almost all permanent markers are alcohol based, but just to be sure, do a test.

Then there's the issue of adding frames to the canopy or windscreen. One of the simplest ways I've found is to use 3M adhesive auto body striping tape. It comes in various colors and widths beginning with 1/16", and any good auto body paint store will have it. If you can't find the exact color you want, buy the white color, roll out a length of tape on a piece of clean glass and spray it the color you want. The black tape works well as is. This stuff sure beats painting bond paper, stripping it and then trying to glue it to the canopy/windscreen.