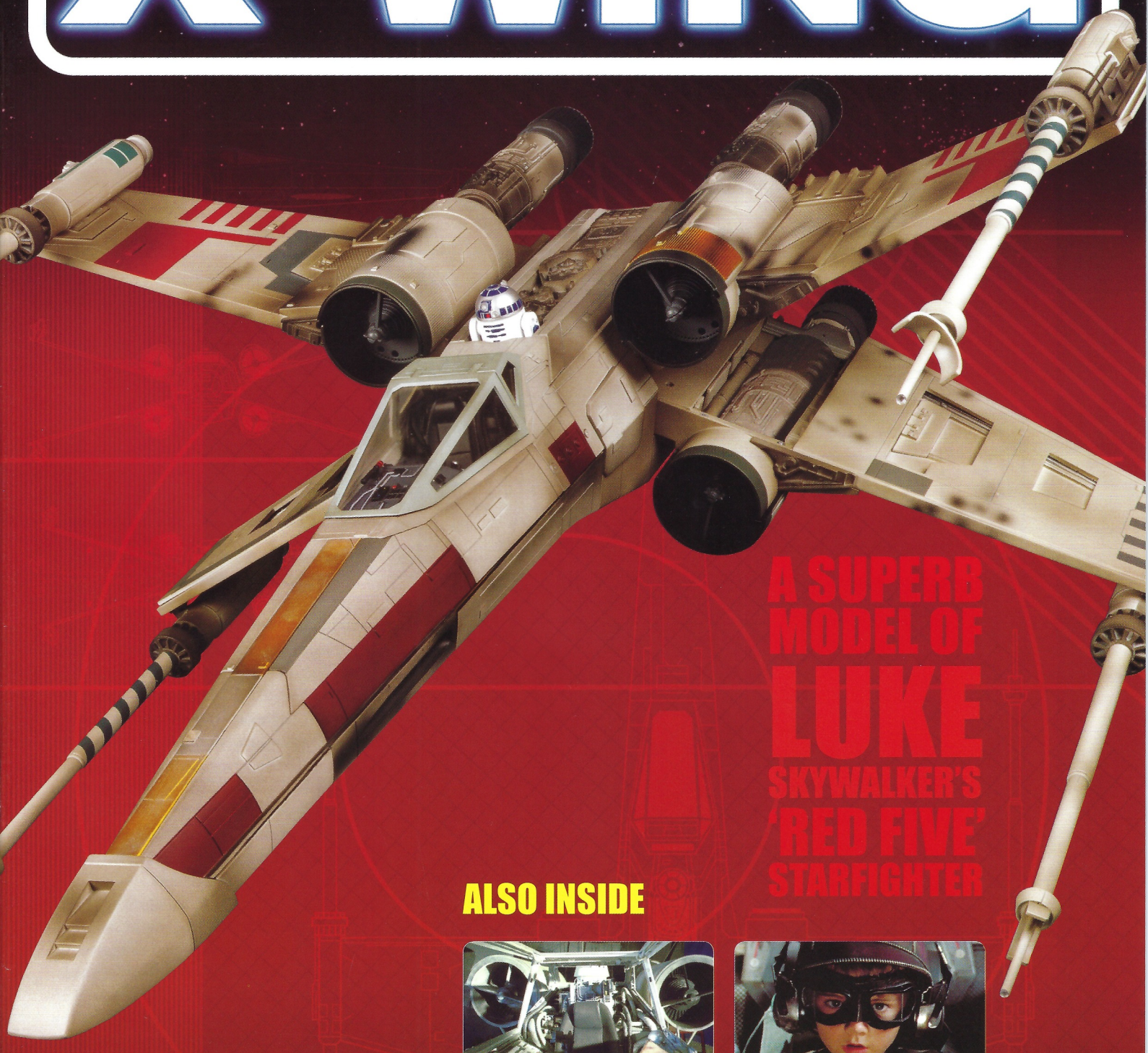
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ISSUE 6

STAR WARS™

BUILD YOUR OWN X-WING



A SUPERB MODEL OF LUKE SKYWALKER'S 'RED FIVE' STARFIGHTER

ALSO INSIDE

CREATING A STARSHIP FLEET
SET-BUILDING – PART 2

STARFIGHTER ACES
ANAKIN SKYWALKER

DeAGOSTINI

CONTENTS ISSUE 6

STAR WARS™
BUILD YOUR OWN
X-WING

CREATING A STARSHIP FLEET 2
SET-BUILDING – PART 2

With Elstree Studios proving too cramped for the production team, a new space was sought – and Shepperton Studios entered the fold.

STARFIGHTER ACES 6
ANAKIN SKYWALKER

The young Anakin Skywalker was a skilled podracer, whose Force-augmented abilities also made him a naturally gifted pilot.

BUILD THE X-WING 12
FITTING THE INSTRUMENT PANELS

Begin fitting the interior details to the cockpit base, starting with the light-up instrument panels.

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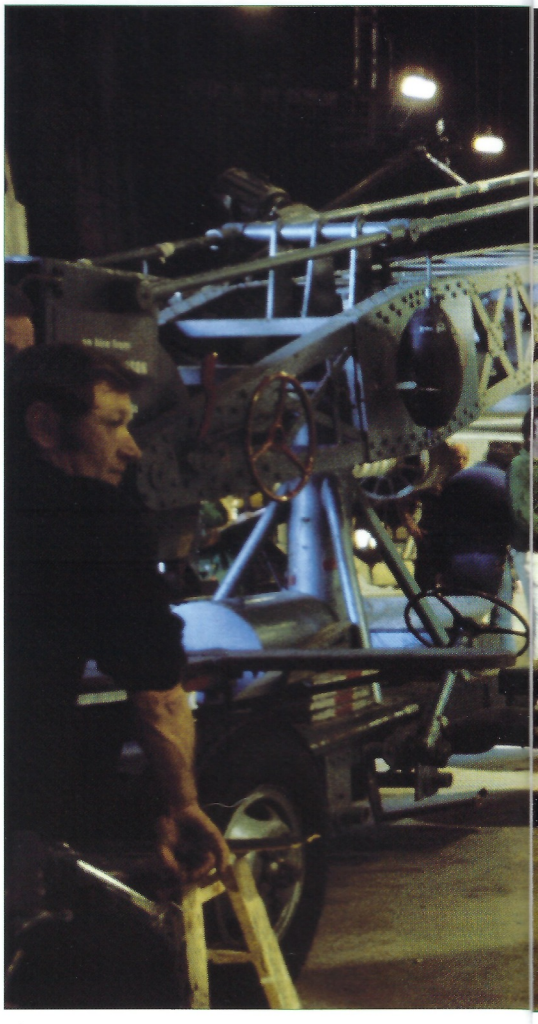
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With the facilities available at Elstree Studios too small to meet their needs, the production team had to look further afield for somewhere to film the rebels preparing to mount their attack on the giant Death Star. And on the plus side, a large soundstage would also be useful for other key scenes. Fortunately, there was a solution not too far away, just to the west of London.

CREATING THE REBEL HANGAR

Shepperton Studios had been built during the heyday of British film production in the London area, and was set in the grounds of Littleton Park, a country mansion dating from the 17th century. After opening in 1932, Shepperton steadily grew in size, until World War II interrupted the movie business, and a nearby aircraft factory made the area a target for German bombers.

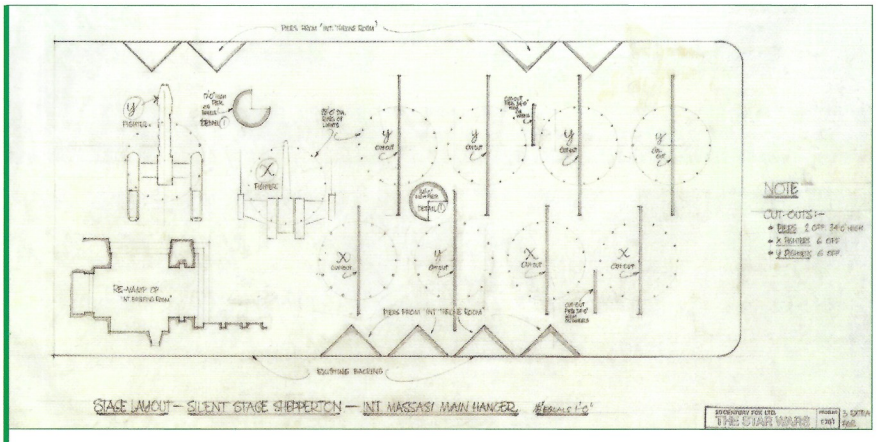
The studio buildings were requisitioned for storage, and later used to make decoy



SET-BUILDING
PART 2
FINDING A BIGGER STAGE

aircraft. But after Shepperton reopened in 1945, it was busier than ever, and soon acquired a vast building from the nearby Isleworth Studios – which was closing down. Refurbished and erected in the north-west corner of the site, this became H Stage. At 250 x 120 x 45ft (76 x 37 x 14m), it was the largest studio facility in Europe – but it was still much too small to represent the enormous rebel hangar in the Massassi temple on Yavin 4 without some optical trickery.

As it had been imagined, the rebel base would have filled the biggest real hangar in Britain – which was almost five times as long as the space the film crew had. But after the problem had been discussed by George Lucas and his director of photography Gilbert Taylor, John Barry designed the back half of the set to be painted in perspective, giving the illusion of it being much longer than the soundstage really was. In addition to the live-action sequences in which the practical ships appeared with Luke Skywalker and the other characters, they would be shot from many angles to be dropped into the scenes in post-production. Behind them, painted cut-out X-wings and Y-wings would stand in for the other rebel starfighters.

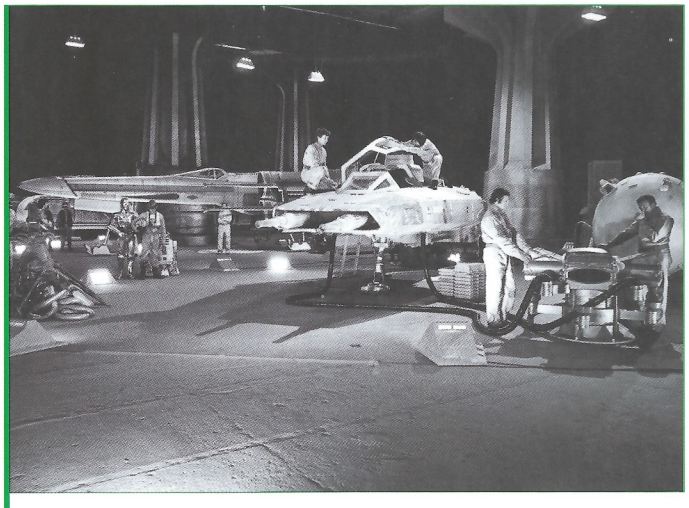


A plan of the rebel hangar set, showing (far left), a practical Y-wing with the practical X-wing to its right. Further right still, the vertical lines represent the positions of X-wing and Y-wing cut-outs.

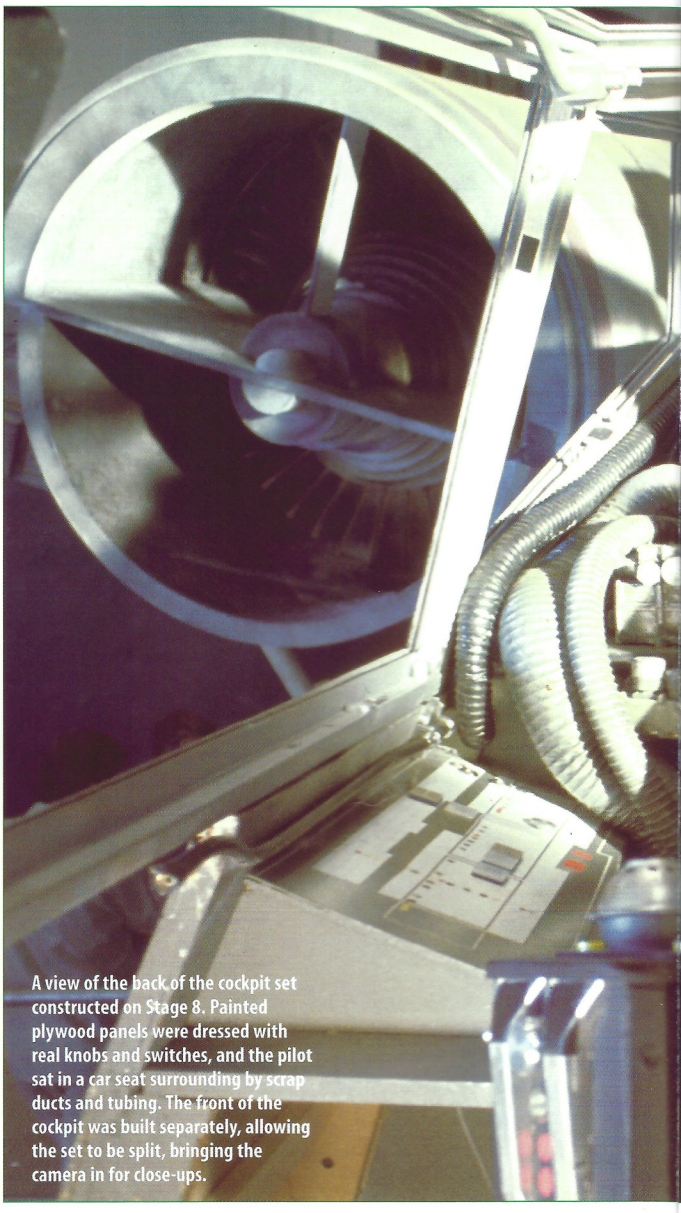
The rest of the scenery would be filled in with backdrops and matte paintings. This limited the director to certain



Following the blueprints for the hangar, the interior was dressed with details including columns recycled from the throne room. The practical X-wing was rigged with a cable that went through the roof to a crane that lifted it from outside the soundstage.



The two physical props of the ships were surrounded with props and ground crew. This would draw attention away from the background, which was created using optical trickery and flat cut-outs of the starfighters.



A view of the back of the cockpit set constructed on Stage 8. Painted plywood panels were dressed with real knobs and switches, and the pilot sat in a car seat surrounding by scrap ducts and tubing. The front of the cockpit was built separately, allowing the set to be split, bringing the camera in for close-ups.

camera angles, but that couldn't be helped. Only two ships (a single X-wing and Y-wing) were built as full-size props, and were transported the 30 miles from Elstree to Shepperton to be finished and dressed.

SHIP-BUILDING

The two ships' main structure had been built from metal tubing, clad with flat panels cut from plywood. But using a technique pioneered by John Barry and Roger Christian, lifelike detailing was added by using pieces of real aircraft, bought cheaply from scrapyards around England. These added the air of reality that George Lucas craved. And in keeping with his desire to create what he called a 'used' universe, the set painters gave the ships an authentically battle-scarred, scruffy appearance.

Next, the production team had to solve the problem of how to make the X-wing appear to take off and fly towards the hangar entrance. There was no room to get a crane into the soundstage, so John Barry came up with a pragmatic solution: 'We hacked a little hole in the roof'. A huge crane was hired and parked alongside H Stage with its jib extended so that the full-size X-wing could be lifted up on a cable.

INSIDE THE X-WING

Meanwhile, another, much smaller set was built on Shepperton's Stage 8. This was a full-size cockpit to allow for the actors playing the pilots to be shot in close-up. The set-builders only created as much of the cockpit as would be seen on screen, and the structure came apart to allow for different camera angles.

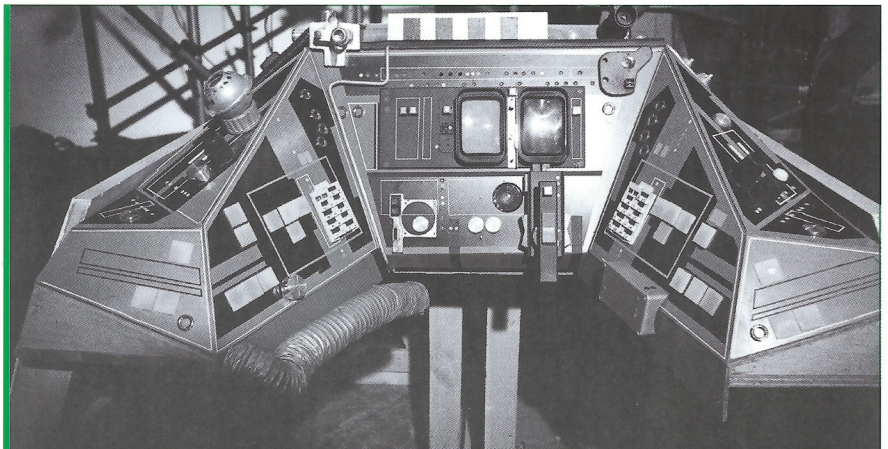
Only the roots of the wings and the engines would be visible behind the pilot, and it was decided to show the S-foils fixed in the open position – which caused a continuity problem in the movie. During the roll-call as the pilots report in, it's clear that the S-foils



"I'll tell you what: Get one of those gigantic cranes..." *John Barry*

are already open *before* the order is given to lock them in attack position.

The pilot was given a Huntmaster car seat (the same as in the *Millennium Falcon*), and their instruments and controls included various scrap parts, ducts and piping. Details of the cockpit interior were drawn up and dressed by Ted Ambrose and Harry Lange (a former NASA designer recruited to the film industry to work on *2001: A Space Odyssey*). With the deadline pressing, the two worked through the night, based in a caravan inside the enormous soundstage, to get ready for the shoot that would take place next morning...



Like the rear of the cockpit, the front was made from angular plywood panels, with the instruments drawn up and dressed by Ted Ambrose and Harry Lange, who worked through the night to stay on schedule.

ANAKIN SKYWALKER

THE PODRACING FIGHTER PILOT

When Jedi Master Qui-Gon Jinn ordered Anakin Skywalker, then still a child, to hide somewhere and avoid the blaster fire tearing up the Theed Palace hangar, he had no idea of the chain of events that would begin.

"Someday I'm going to fly away from this place."

Anakin Skywalker

It was R2-D2 who had the idea to hide in an N-1 Royal Naboo starfighter. The astromech used the droid lift to slot into the socket behind the cockpit, and immediately called out to Anakin, who had been trying to hide behind some crates. The fighter offered a safe retreat, as its armour was strong enough to survive hits from stray laser blasts. The ship also gave the boy and droid a good view of the hangar so they would know when it was safe to come out. However, this birds-eye perspective was what got Anakin and R2-D2 into trouble.



The armoured N-1 starfighter seemed – at first – to be a safe place in which to take shelter from the blaster fire.

OOPS...

Ordered to stay in the cockpit even after the initial wave of battle droids had been defeated, Anakin spotted a squad of shielded

KEEPING CALM



Anakin's prowess in a podracer set him up perfectly to take on any situation, or craft, he might find himself in.

CARRYING ON

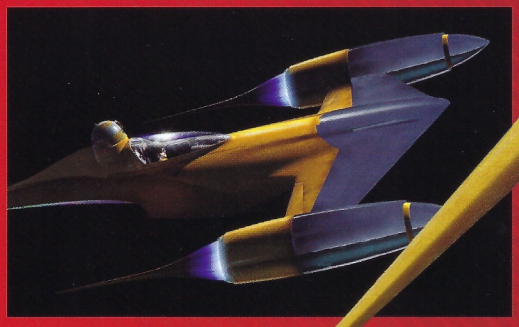
Anakin Skywalker had seen a lot in his short life. As a slave on Tatooine, he had learned to keep a cool head simply to survive. With R2-D2 there to help him, Anakin's positive outlook, innate affinity with machines, and his experience as a podracer pilot meant that he was ready for whatever challenge was ahead of him.

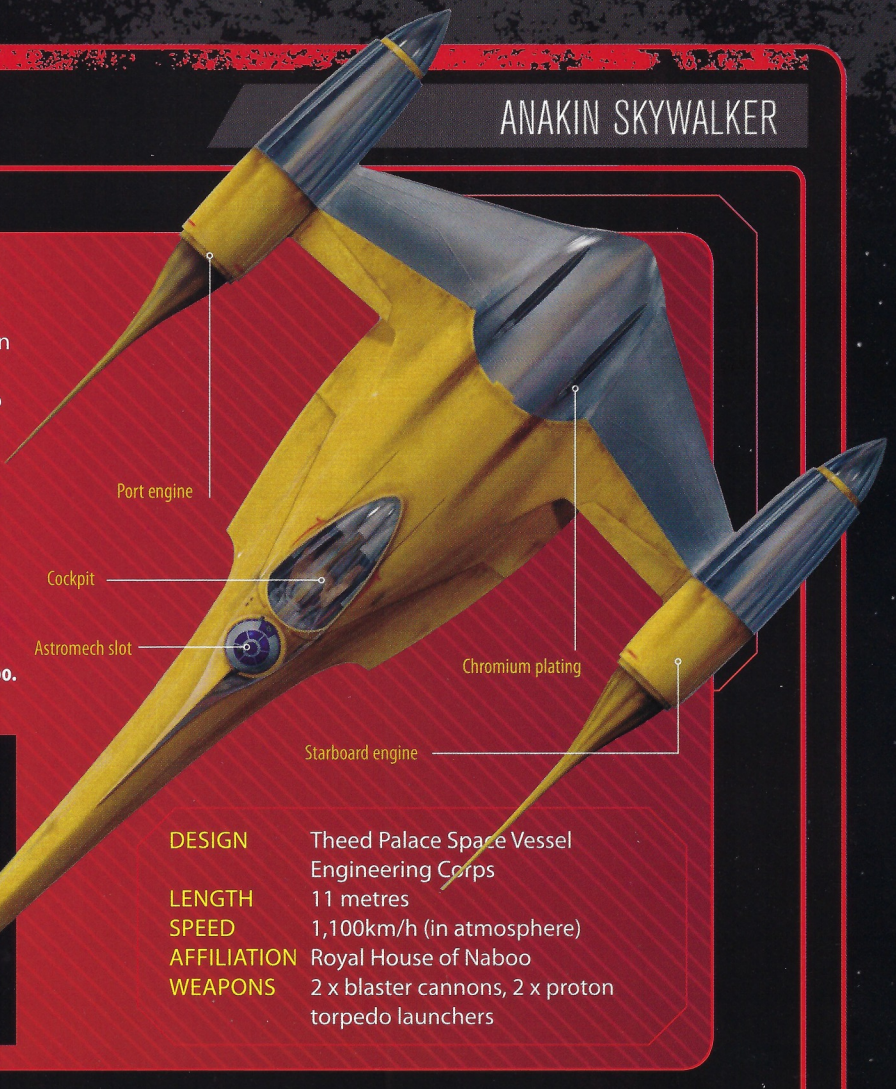
FLIGHT TRAINING

THE NABOO N-1 STARFIGHTER

Designed and built on Naboo, the N-1 starfighter was an elegant ship with a single pilot aided by an astromech. Hyperdrive-capable, the fighter was used to escort the unarmed Royal Starship and to patrol the Chommell sector to deal with pirates and smugglers. The ship's controls were quite simple, as the volunteer starfighter pilots often had little flying experience. This helped Anakin Skywalker when he accidentally flew an N-1 at the Battle of Naboo.

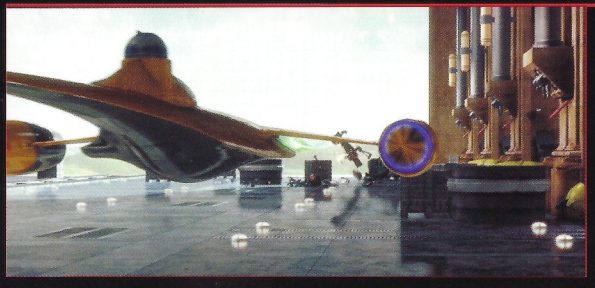
The speed and agility of the N-1, with its simple but responsive controls, certainly saved Anakin's life – and helped defeat the Trade Federation – at the Battle of Naboo. Having R2-D2 with him in flight was a huge help, too.



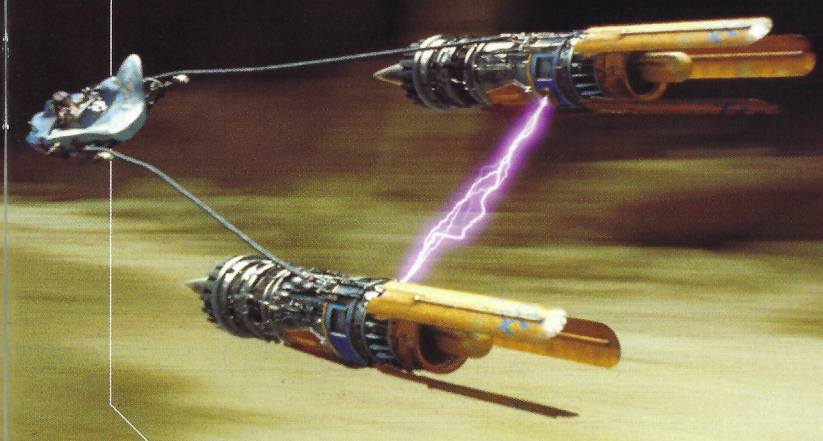


DESIGN	Theed Palace Space Vessel Engineering Corps
LENGTH	11 metres
SPEED	1,100km/h (in atmosphere)
AFFILIATION	Royal House of Naboo
WEAPONS	2 x blaster cannons, 2 x proton torpedo launchers

droideka arriving to destroy Queen Amidala and her retinue. Seeking to use his armed starfighter to help, and with R2-D2 cheering him on from the droid socket, Anakin fired up the ship's systems and shot down the droideka. Unfortunately, the starfighter kept going. It was locked into automatic pilot and headed into space.



When Anakin fired up the N-1 starfighter's weapons, he also started the craft's autopilot – which launched the craft straight into space to join the rest of its squadron in the battle.



THIS IS PODRACING

On Tatooine, Anakin's Force-enhanced reactions had led to his owner – the junk dealer Watto – forcing him to pilot a podracer. Little more than a repulsorlift seat strapped to a pair of huge engines, podracers flew at incredible speeds through the twisting, dangerous courses around the canyons of the desert planet. Accidents were common, almost always fatal, and merciless cheating was a fact of life. Before he had come to Naboo, Anakin had raced in a podracer he had built, and had won his own freedom in the Boonta Eve Classic. Above Naboo, dodging droid starfighters, flying around the Trade Federation ship and hurtling through its hangars, Anakin drew on all his experience as a podracer to get through the battle and emerge victorious.

BATTLE OF NABOO

THE DROID CONTROL SHIP

When the Trade Federation invaded Naboo, they did so using a droid army. Its soldiers and even its starfighters were droids, all controlled from a single ship in orbit over the planet. It was that ship – a converted *Lucrehulk*-class LH-3210 cargo freighter – that the Naboo starfighter pilots were tasked with destroying. Unfortunately, its shields were too strong for the blasters and torpedoes carried on the N-1 craft. Ultimately, the ship was destroyed from within thanks to a happy accident – or the will of the Force…

AUTOPILOT

The N-1 starfighters had an autopilot that slaved the individual members of a squadron together, bringing them quickly as one unit to a designated spot, or simply kept them with the squadron leader. If pilots didn't wish to use the autopilot, a simple security code could be entered to deactivate it. Anakin didn't have the code, so R2-D2 had to slice the fighter's systems while in combat to keep Anakin and himself alive.

With the autopilot disabled, Anakin was able to use his Force-augmented flying skills to see the craft (more or less) safely through the blaster fire.

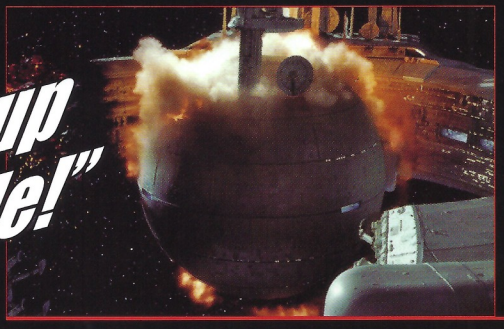


The little Naboo ship was attacked by swarms of droid starfighters, but Anakin got R2-D2 to hack the autopilot so he could use manual control and fly the craft himself.

MISS-HIT

When a blast from a droid starfighter sent Anakin's ship spiralling into the droid control craft, he ended up at the end of the hangar surrounded by hostile droids and sitting in an overheated ship with no power, shields or weapons. When his systems restarted, Anakin blasted the droids around him, then fired two torpedoes which missed the advancing droids – but hit the exposed reactor. Anakin had to race his starfighter out of the Trade Federation ship before it exploded.





To the astonishment of the battle droids on board the mighty Trade Federation control ship, Anakin's starfighter penetrated its shields and hurtled into the hangar.

When his overheated starfighter came back to life, Anakin had the presence of mind to blast the droids and launch two torpedoes that destroyed the control ship.

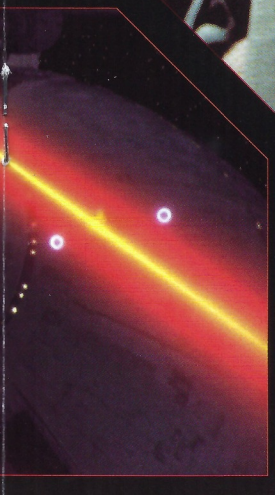
"It's blowing up from the inside!"

Dineé Ellberger (Bravo Five)

TECH / EQUIPMENT



Anakin was more accustomed to his homemade podracing helmet than the more formal Naboo Space Fighter Corps headpiece he picked up, but he didn't let that get in the way of flying the craft with unexpected ability.



NABOO FLIGHT HELMET

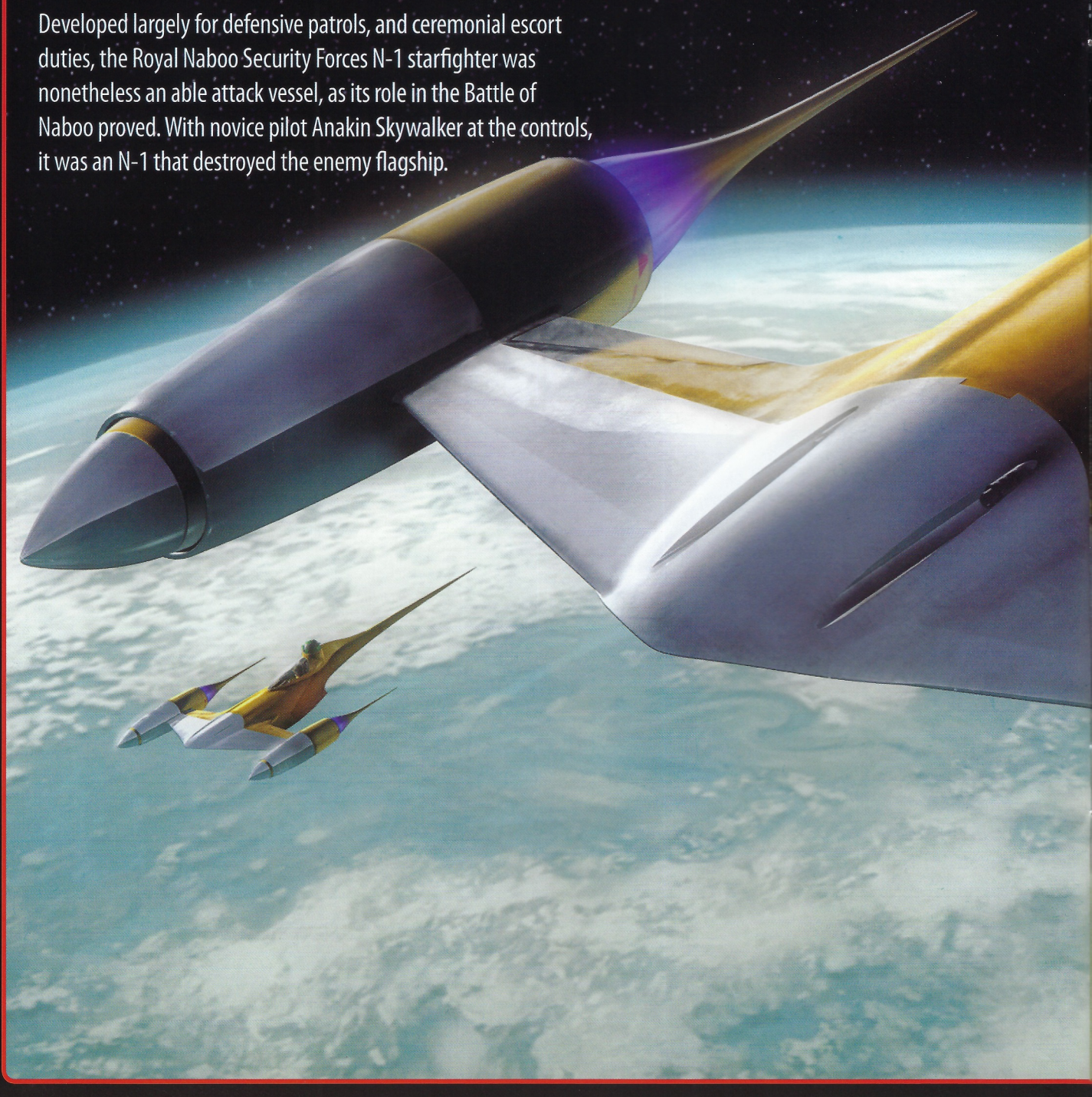
The Naboo Royal Space Fighter Corps – a division of the Royal Naboo Security Forces – wore a very traditional uniform that included a helmet that harked back to those worn by the early pioneers of aviation. The stout, armoured helmet was finished with leather, and included external audio headphones and polarised flight goggles. Later versions used around the time of the Clone Wars included a protective faceplate.



THE NABOO STARFIGHTER

SINGLE-SEAT PATROL CRAFT

Developed largely for defensive patrols, and ceremonial escort duties, the Royal Naboo Security Forces N-1 starfighter was nonetheless an able attack vessel, as its role in the Battle of Naboo proved. With novice pilot Anakin Skywalker at the controls, it was an N-1 that destroyed the enemy flagship.







X-wing pilot instruments

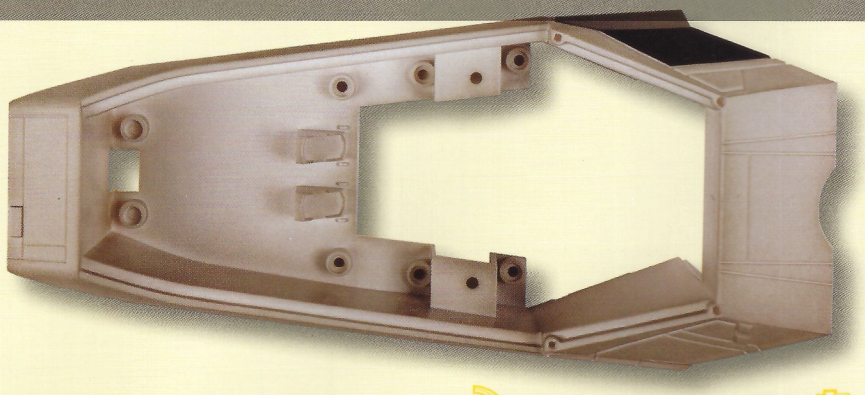
The X-wing's cockpit is packed with instrument panels that provide the pilot with data about the speed, attitude and direction of the ship, which are vital when it is impossible to fly using external reference points. Other areas of the panels include read-outs and warning lights to monitor the status of all internal systems, external hazards and hostile craft.



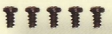
Cockpit shell

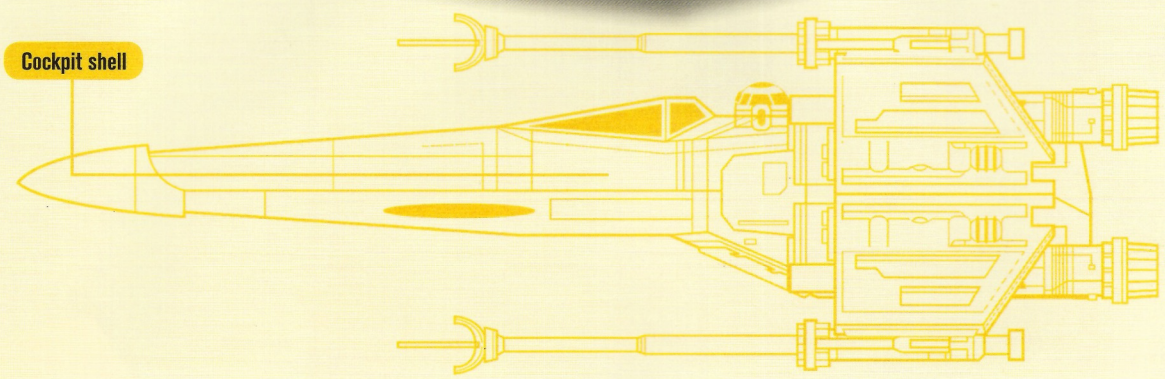
This issue includes the exterior panelling that surrounds the cockpit area, to which you can fit the instrument panels from Stage 5.

COMPONENTS CHECKLIST Use this guide to check what parts you have received and where they fit on the model



XW02 screws (x 5)

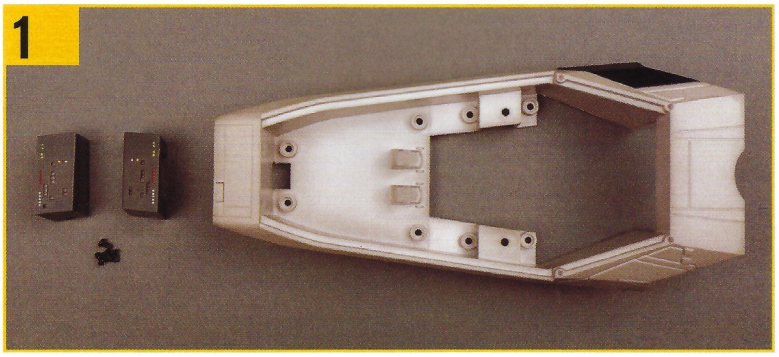




FITTING THE INSTRUMENT PANELS

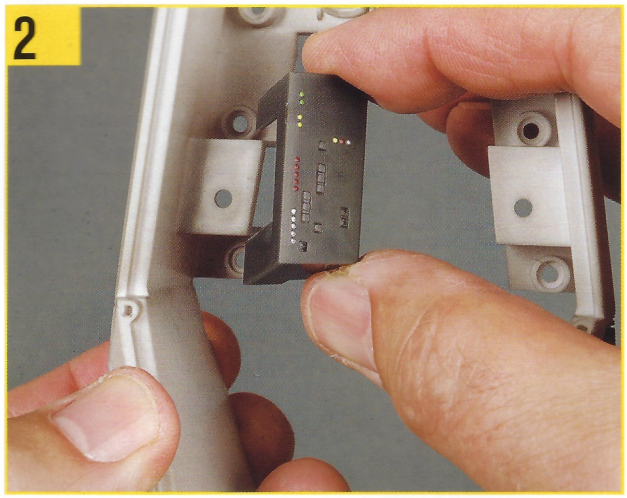
The left and right cockpit panels and the lenses that make the instruments light up are installed at this stage – but keep the forward console base until later on.

1



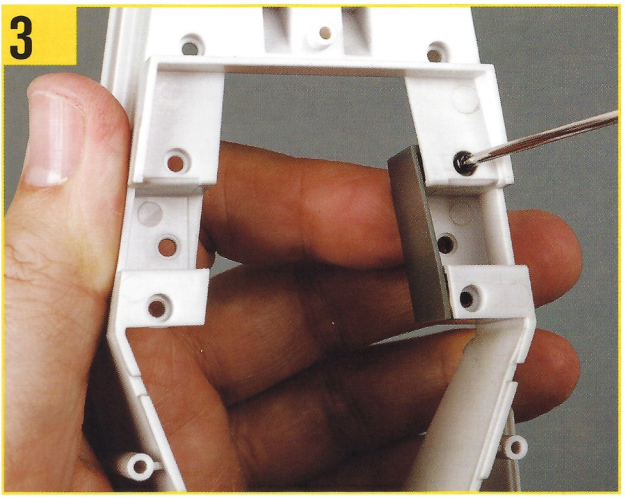
Take the two completed panels and position them next to the cockpit shell, together with four of the XW02 screws supplied (the other is a spare).

2



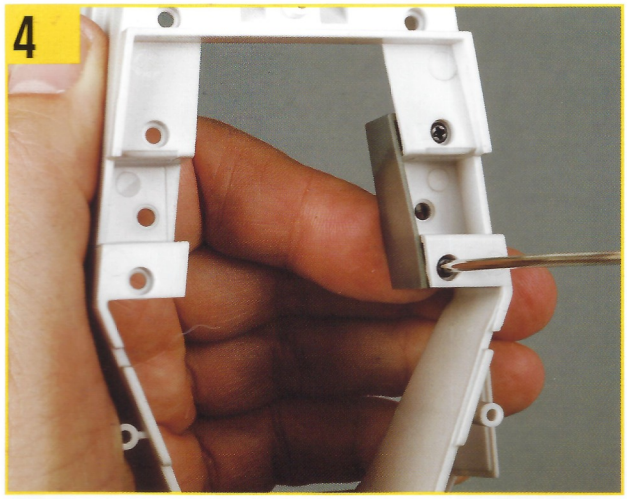
Fit the left-hand panel over this moulding on the left of the cockpit shell, pressing it down all the way.

3



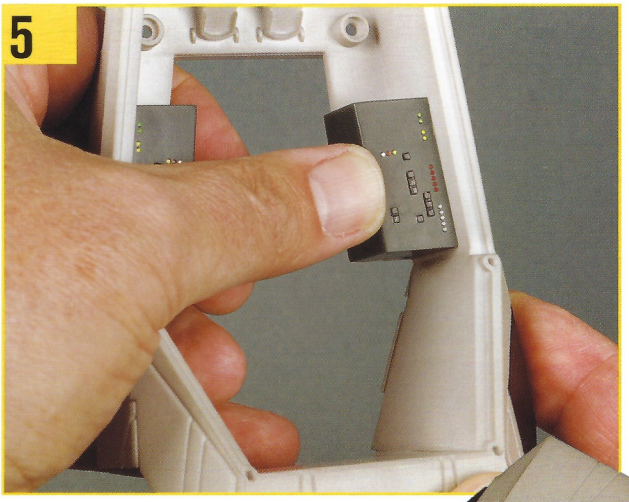
Hold the parts together and turn the assembly over so you can drive an XW02 screw through this hole to secure the panel.

4



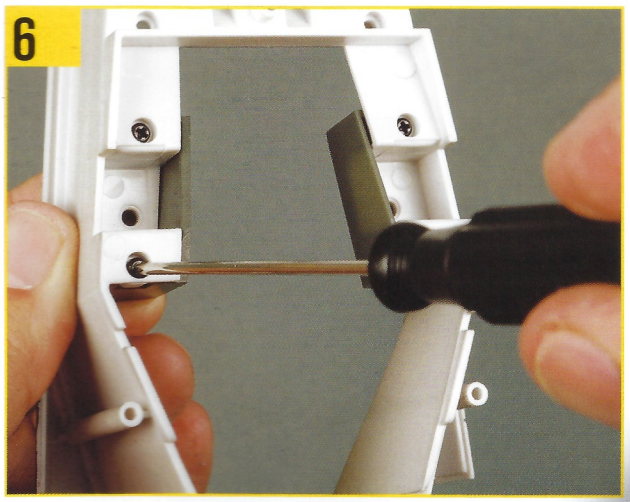
Add a second screw through this hole.

5



Fit the right-hand panel in the same way…

6



… and secure it with two more screws.

The completed assembly looks like this. It's possible to test-fit the canopy from Stage 1 and the console base from this stage, but don't be tempted to try installing them permanently yet.



DON'T MISS OUT!

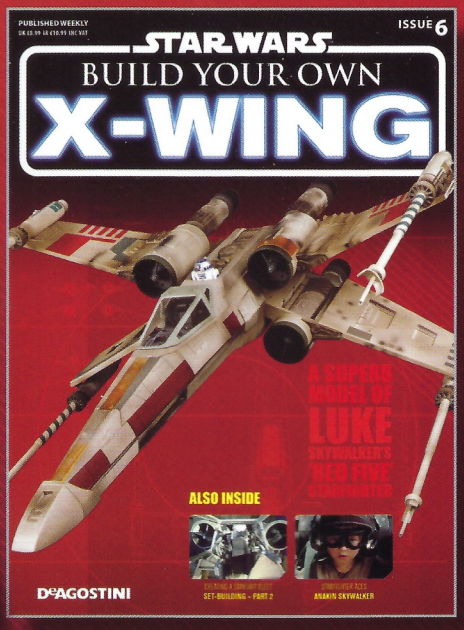
ISSUE 6

Creating a Starship Fleet
Set-Building – Part 2

Starfighter Aces
Anakin Skywalker

Cockpit shell
and screws



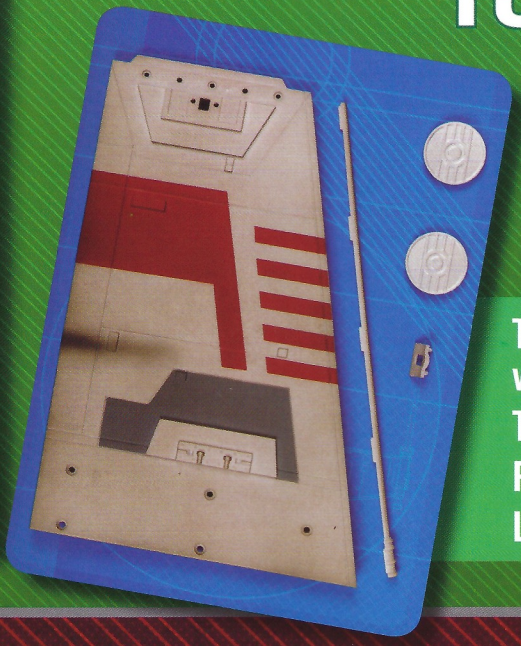


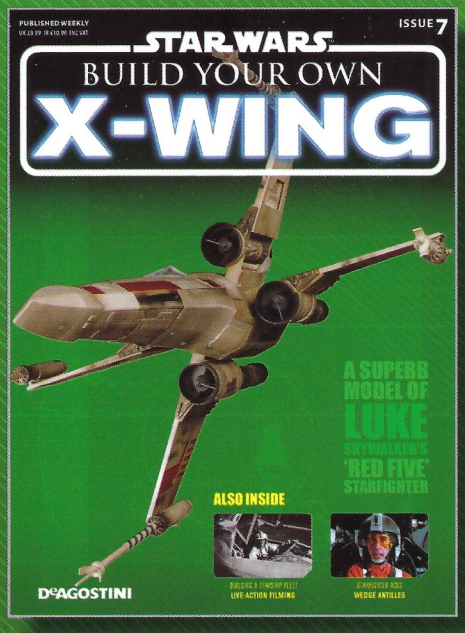
ISSUE 7

Creating a Starship Fleet
Live-Action Filming

Starfighter Aces
Wedge Antilles

Top Starboard
wing Outer skin
Trailing-edge detail
Power couplings x 2
Laser cannon brace





Items may differ from those shown.

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