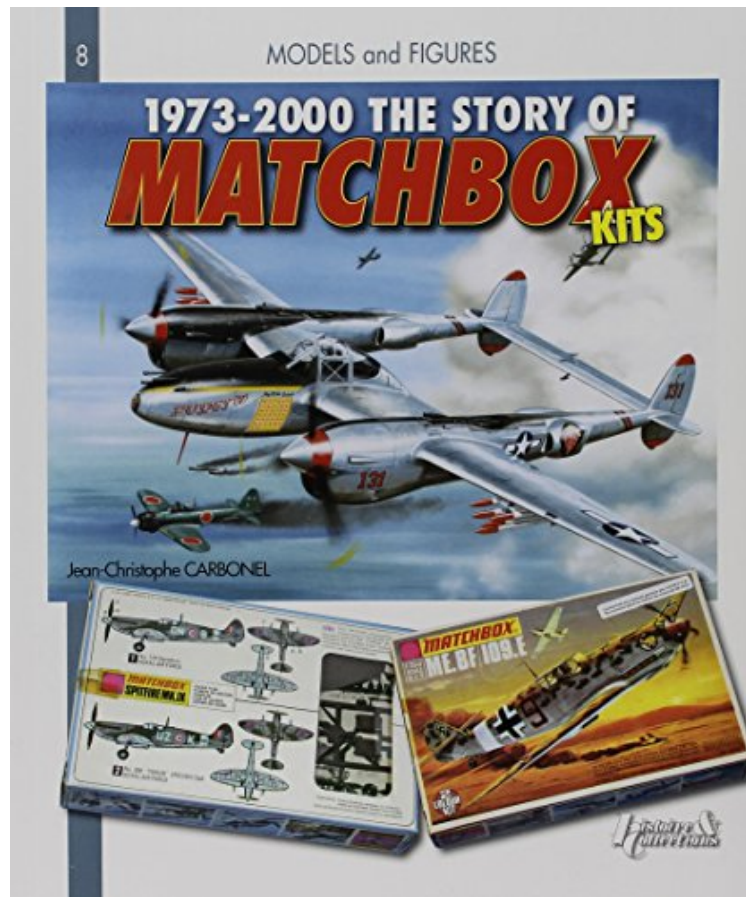


1973 - 2010 The Story of Matchbox Kits

Jean-Christophe Carbonel

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Jean-Christophe Carbonel : 1973 - 2010 The Story of Matchbox Kits before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 1973 - 2010 The Story of Matchbox Kits:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Celebrating an Innovative Manufacturer By dorfdarb Exactly as the title states, this volume covers the history of Matchbox; not their famous die-cast cars, but their important contribution to plastic model kit manufacturing. Starting at the beginning, the book details, through interviews and referenced articles, the kit-by-kit history of the company, from its enthusiastic entrance into the competitive market, to its eventual purchase and dissolution. Matchbox always had their sights aimed at the young "non-professional" modeller. Their colorful plastic and simplified assembly left many older modellers cold, and in the book one is constantly encountering negative reviews from the model press of the time, even though few good modellers ever failed to totally paint their models anyway. But through the book we learn (or are reminded) that as time went by, Matchbox's work became more and more sophisticated; their huge 1/72 scale Flower Class Corvette being the prime example. And it reveals how Matchbox was never afraid to release kits of lesser known subjects: Supermarine Stranraer Flying boat and Handley-Page Heyford to name only two. Noted model kit historian JC Carbonel covers the company history year

by year, and discusses minutia like packaging variations, advertising and such, as well as explaining the ultimate fate of the company when it was bought up, and leased to other manufacturers like AMT and Revell. He also was able to obtain interviews from many of the behind-the-scenes people who are so often forgotten. The book was originally published in French, and this translation has a few clumsy moments, but nothing that isn't immediately understandable. It's fully illustrated with, I think, every box illustrated in color. It also includes a long interview with one of their major artists. Matchbox boxart is striking and appealing, with the kind of evocative images that send a young mind on imaginary missions. Some of us older men, too! There are also detailed lists of the kits, with kit numbers etc. All in all, a most entertaining and informative book about a somewhat unfairly maligned and neglected company. If you are a fan of old models, or model kit history in general, you would do well to buy this book. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Part of a French series entitled "Histoire and Collections" By W. Bender I was (and still am) a big fan of Matchbox plastic model kits, even though they have been taken to task over the years by critics in the modeling fraternity. I was waiting for a book about Matchbox products, along the lines of the classics by American author Thomas Graham on the kit manufacturers Revell, Monogram and Aurora. This French offering was not it. As a colorful compendium and guide to Matchbox products this book is excellent and will help me fill out my collection of this defunct manufacturer via EBay. The text however, is not especially informative nor is it easy, as an American, to read. Jean-Christopher Carbonel's original text was in French. Aside from the usual knee slappers one gets in translation, there is a distinct anti American bias. When, for example, the author refers to the exclusion of accurate markings in the German Bf109 kit, he ponders, "Was it because of a "politically correct" American influence?" Actually, Jean, swastika representations have been outlawed in France since the end of World War 2. As a further irritation, most of the text is quoted period reviews of the kits, generally from a French magazine, with lesser representation of other periodicals. I sure do enjoy looking at those colorful kit box illustrations, though! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good Account of Matchbox Model Kits By Bomb Man 58 Matchbox model kits came onto the market a little later than some of their rival kit manufacturers, making a modest 10 kit entrance at a toy fair in 1973. A division of the famed 'Matchbox' die cast toy and truck company, the initial rationale of the company was in a similar theme to the original Matchbox idea of quality, but cheaply priced model kits. Author Jean-Christophe Carbonel has written a very interesting account of how the Matchbox model kit company evolved from its initial 10 kit start through the steady rise of the Matchbox line over the years. From the outset, Matchbox had set out to do things a little differently than their rivals, kits were boxed in a unique way and were moulded in at least two different coloured plastic. The company expanded its range through the years through cars, trucks, armour, space and sci-fi stuff and ships. The author has delivered a good account of how the Matchbox model range expanded over the years and the various kits are well portrayed through the numerous colour photographs that abound in this book. I enjoyed this book as it is a very interesting account of the company, its people and the range of kits that made up Matchbox model kits. Perhaps Matchbox's crowning achievement was its 1/72nd scale model of a Corvette ship, with over 1,000 parts in the kit. The huge selection of colour photographs of the various kits in the Matchbox range bring back memories of building some of these kits some forty years ago. In summary, a well written and illustrated book on one of the famous model kit manufacturers, those of us who are model and nostalgia buffs will be drawn to this book; the book also contains a complete list of every Matchbox model kit produced along with kits numbers. Well done, Jean-Christophe Carbonel!

Who can ever forget the aircraft kits with the multicolored plastic parts? Unlike other makes, Matchbox just didn't suddenly appear one day on the plastic scale models scene. Matchbox came from the well-known range of die-cast vehicles of the same name. The Lesney company which used the brand name "Matchbox" was founded in 1953 by Mr Leslie Smith (who remained on the board of the company throughout his career - he died in 2005) and Mr Rodney Smith. It was this company that thought up these little "pocket money" vehicles and the ingenious packaging which gave them their name. The name came from the box which was the shape, size and color of a match box. The firm brought out scale models of planes, tanks, boats, motorbikes and cars but also little soldiers which all brightened the childhood days of today's forty-year olds... This book retraces the forty glorious years of a firm, of a brand of kits intended for beginners just as much as it was for the most demanding buffs. More than just a kit, a state of mind. Jean-Christophe Carbonel is a world renowned specialist of French model kits. His 20-years of experience with the European and Japanese model kit markets has enabled him to deal in depth with the French "model craze."

"The story of Matchbox is one that has an important place in the history of modelling and this new book offers a really good insight into their story from an author who was at the time involved in the marketing of the kits in France. Just a really good read and it sparked some great memories." Military Modeling, 08/2011