

Computer Generated Decals

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We've all admired the decals that Jim Hanson of the Thermal Thumbers prepares. He uses a computer to generate the graphics and print the decals. There are other guys out there who use an ink jet printer to print right on the tissue, which is then put on the model. Since inkjet ink tends to run in the presence of nitrate dope, the high zoot guys print in mirror image on the back of the tissue---so you see the lettering and graphics through the tissue. That seems to be enough to stop the ink from running. Now getting a computer program to print in mirror image (PFFT Ed. Note, a piece of cake with a Macintosh) (and also getting the tissue to run through the printer without making a god awful mess) ain't easy. I know—I've tried and failed on both—but hope lives —I'm on a new computer with new software, and maybe it will do the mirror image trick.) But, if you use your computer to print on the face of decal paper, you don't have the mirror image problem. And, if you spray fixative on the face of the decal, and then air brush dope on the decal once it's affixed to the covering, you're probably home free on the smearing issue. Art Swift called me to tell me that Micromark (1-800-225-1066, www.micromark.com) is selling ink jet printer decal paper. You can get five sheets of clear decal film Part #82272 for \$6.95. You need some fixative spray Part # 82858 at \$3.95. (Ed note: Micromark also sells decal paper for laser and color copiers. If you want to have decals which provide more saturated colors, this may be the way to go — take your image to your friendly copy shop together with a sheet of decal paper and let them do the trick for you — that is unless you are affluent enough to own a color laser printer.)