

## Belcher Bits BL-16: Trident II D5 SLBM 1/72

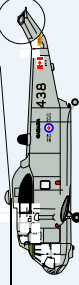
### Belcher Bits

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### Background

The Trident II D5 (UGM-133) is the latest USN SLBM, following Polaris, Poseidon and Trident I. The missile is much more capable than these earlier SLBMs, each missile carrying 10 MIRV (Multiple Independently targeted Re-entry Vehicle) warheads which can be carried to a range of 7000 miles.

Dwarfing the earlier missiles, the D5 became operational in the USN in 1990, each Ohio class SSBN carrying up to 24 missiles. Since 1996, the Royal Navy has operated four Vanguard class with 16 Tridents each.

### Assembly

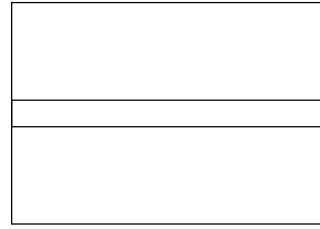
Like all resin kits, remove the parts from their bases / sprues and wash thoroughly to remove any release agents. The first stage halves have a flat base, while the rest are raised on cylindrical standoffs which are designed to fit inside the ends of the piece below, so clean those ends up carefully and test fit everything.

Match up the cable fairing of the two first stage halves and glue together; use a V-block if you have one, or against a straight edge on a flat surface. It is important to get these two parts correctly aligned since there are no positive guides. Line up the cable fairing end on the top of the base with the cable fairing on the first stage and glue in place. On the other end of the first stage, glue on the 1/2 interstage then glue on the second stage with their cable fairings in line. Glue on the 2/3 interstage, then the warhead. That is the basic missile. The nozzle is sanded on its base, then glued into the hole in the base.

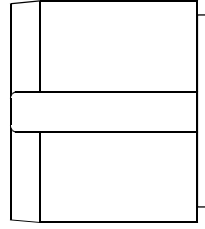
### Painting and Decalling

The first and second stages as well as the nose cone are some form of filament-wound FRP (not your garage-style fibreglass!) These sections of the missile are not painted, only those metal sections of the missile being painted gloss white for corrosion protection.

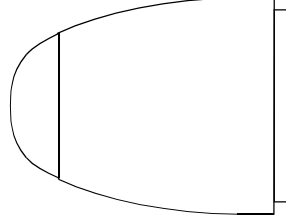
### BL16 Parts



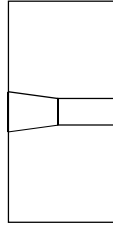
First Stage (x2)



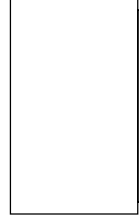
Second stage



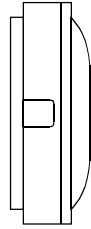
Warhead



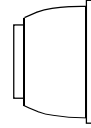
1/2 Interstage



2/3 Interstage



Base

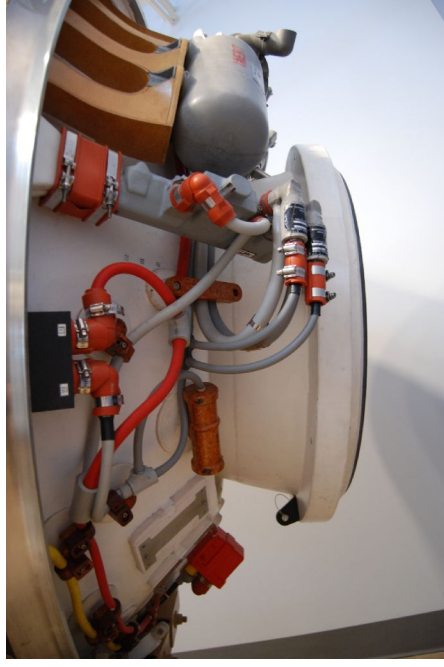


Nozzle

Painting the FRP sections to represent the filament wound fibres is a lot of work but really makes the model stand out when finished. I painted the tubes RAF Dark Earth, then roughly drybrushed a Desert Sand yellow circumferentially around the tubes. Then a number of coats of Tamiya Transparent Orange to sort of blend everything together. The cable fairings are white. Some of the wiring around the base is red or silver; I used photos of a Trident I as a guide.

### References

1. Various internet searches for photos and info
2. American Missiles by B. Nicklas, Frontline Books, 2012
3. US Guided Missiles by Bill Yenne, Crecy Publishing, 2012



Some details of the wiring and hydraulic steering rams clustered around the nozzle.



Shown slightly less than full-sized.