

Belcher Bits BL-24: Hwasong-15 ICBM 1/72

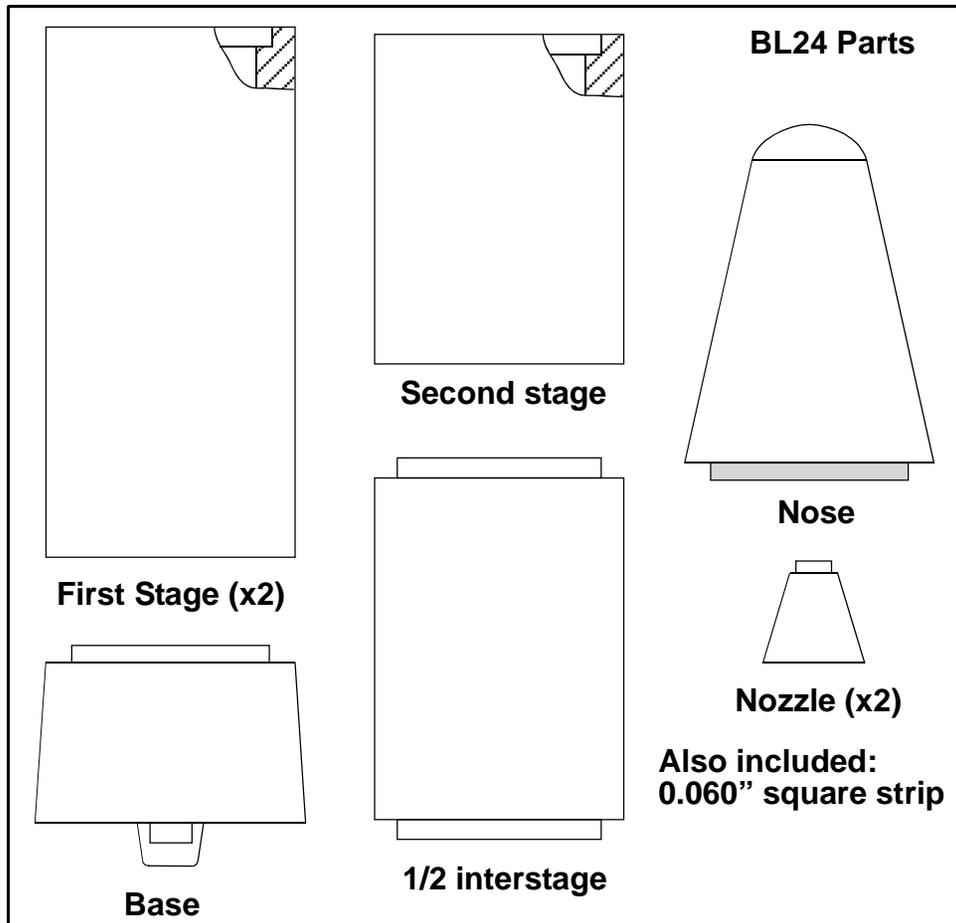
Background

First seen by the West in 2017, the Hwasong-15 is the latest ICBM fielded by North Korea, and the first which MAY be capable of reaching North America.

The range and payload capacity of the missile are the subject of much debate and even recent test firings are not indicative of operational capabilities. Even published dimensions are not fully defined; this model is built assuming a 94" diameter and an overall length of 70 feet. It is a mobile system and can be transported to a simple launch pad by its 9 axle TEL vehicle, making it difficult to counter. Suffice it to say that this missile, if it has the range to carry a nuclear warhead to the continental US, is a potent threat.

Assembly

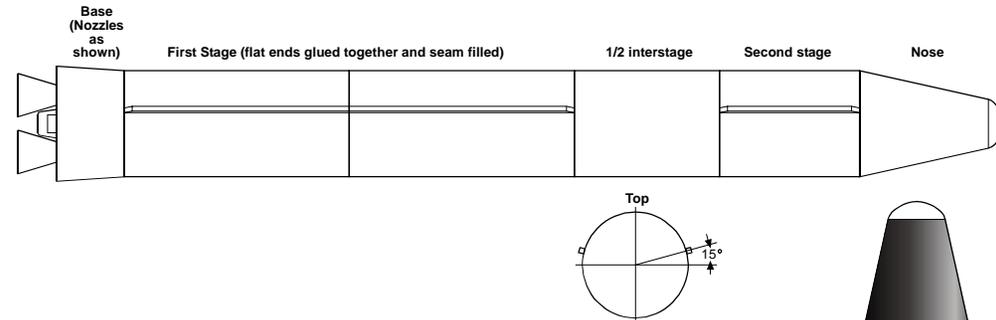
Like all resin kits, remove the parts from their bases / sprues and wash thoroughly to remove any release agents. The first stage halves have flat faces, while the rest are raised on cylindrical standoffs which are designed to fit inside the ends of the pieces below, so clean those ends up carefully and test fit everything. A word on fit: The masters are perfectly round and fit precisely. However, rubber moulds have a small amount of flex and resin has a small amount of shrinkage. As a result, I found I needed filler for the seams. It worked best to glue all the cylindrical



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sections together, then fill and sand to achieve a nice smooth appearance to the main body.

The missile has external cable runs which are not 180 degrees apart, so the first and second stage parts have scribed lines indicating where these will be installed. Match up the flat ends of the first stage halves and glue together; use a V-block if you have one, or against a straight edge on a flat surface. Fill the seam. Glue the 1/2 interstage part to the top of the first stage assembly. Glue the 2nd stage part on top of that, remembering to line the cable runs up with those on the first stage. Remove the standoff on bottom of the nose section, and glue in place.

On the bottom of the first stage, glue on the base by lining up nozzle holes so they bisect the two cable runs. It works better to glue on the nozzles after all other painting is completed. Cut two pieces of the 0.060" square strip to 5.56" long, and sand a 30 degree bevel on each end. Repeat with two pieces at 1.75" long. Glue these over the indicated lines on the first and second stages. Prime and get ready to paint the missile.

Painting

The basic missile is black with a white nose and white roll markings. These are 0.22" wide rings, with 8 blocks (0.25" wide x 0.22" long) evenly spaced around the body forward of the ring. The main ring has alternating blocks aft of the ring as well. There is a 0.06" wide ring at the top of the base. The bottom of the missile appears to be yellow zinc chromate with aluminum nozzles and vent tubes.

References

1. Various internet searches for photos and info.

