

Belcher Bits BL-32: Jupiter IRBM 1/72

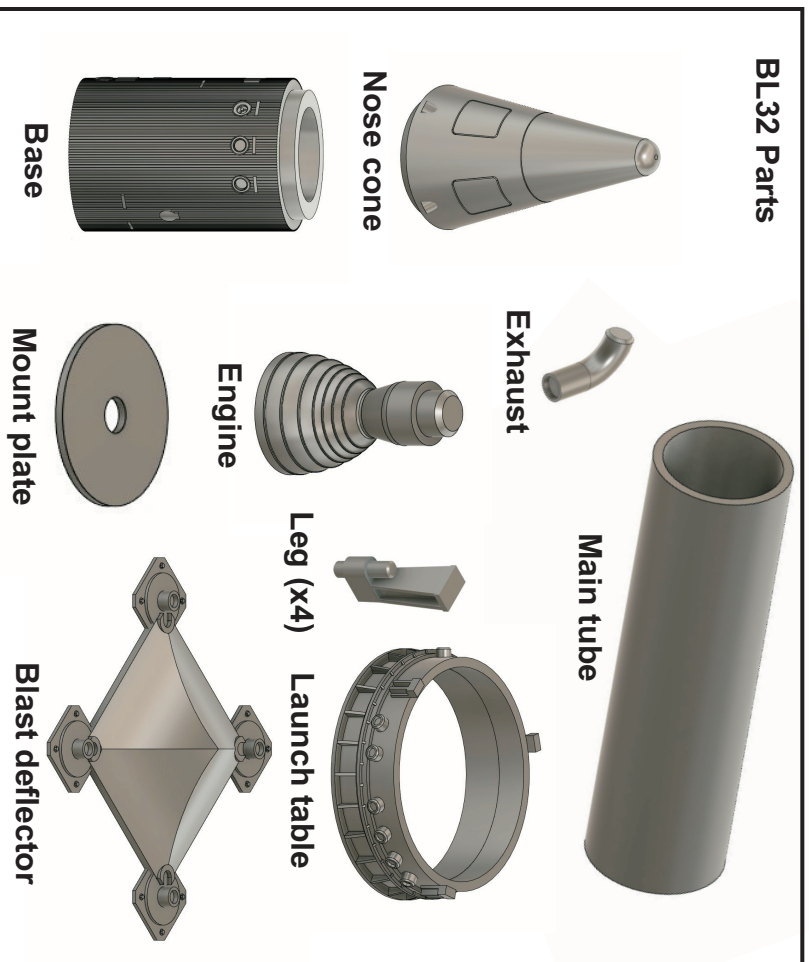
Background

In 1955, the US Army Redstone Arsenal proposed a new Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM) capable of sending a one ton warhead 1500 miles. This project, named Jupiter, was originally jointly sponsored by the US Army and Navy, who planned to launch these from ships. However, technological advances meant H bombs which could be carried by smaller solid fuelled missiles such as Polaris, and the Navy dropped out. In 1956, it was decided that the USAF would have responsibility for missiles with more than 200 mile range. The USAF preferred their own Thor design so the future of Jupiter became uncertain even before the first successful flight in 1957. There was some use as a space launcher, by combining the Jupiter main stage with solid-fuel upper stages as the Juno II.

In the end, just 45 Jupiters were deployed in Italy and Turkey (to bring them within range of Moscow). The presence of these missiles was a contributing factor to the Soviet counter-deployment of R-12 and R-14 IRBMs to Cuba and the subsequent Cuban missile crisis in 1962. Although the story at the time was that the US naval blockade of Cuba was responsible for the Soviet decision to remove the missiles from Cuba, it was later revealed that the US also agreed to quietly remove all the Jupiters from their forward deployment in Turkey.

Missile Assembly

Insert the nose cone into one end of the tube and fill the seam. Set aside for painting white. Insert the mount plate in the bottom of the base, and insert the engine into the hole of the mount plate. The exhaust pipe is glued into the socket



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in the bottom side of the base. This can now be set aside for painting aluminum.

Launch table Assembly

Glue the bottom cylinders of the legs into the round sockets on the blast deflector, making sure the leg cylinders are vertical and the tops of the legs are arrayed around the base. It may help to fit one leg in place and glue on the launch table, then inserting and gluing in the rest of the legs in order to ensure the legs all end up directly under the bottom ring of the launch table. The launch table sits on the top of the legs and is glued in place.

Final Assembly

After the three main components are painted, the base section can be glued to the main tube, and the completed missile can then sit on the launch table. Glue it in position if you wish.

Painting

The basic missile is white with a natural metal base section. U.S.AIR FORCE in dark blue text and a large Star and Bar were carried on two sides of the missile in USAF service. In the photo, the text and star read as if the missile was top side on the left. The other side reads with the missile in the same topside orientation. Note the text should be in line with the vents on the nose cone, but I dropped the model just prior to photographing it and popped off the nose cone. It didn't get put back together exactly right :(The launch table and blast deflector may have been olive drab or Air Force blue; examples on display at the Huntsville Space and Missile Museum and National Museum of Nuclear Energy are blue.

References

1. Rockets of the World, Peter Alway, Saturn Press 1995.
2. Fourteen US Army Missiles of the Cold War, P. Alway and C. Timm, NARTS, 1999
3. Various internet searches for photos and info.

