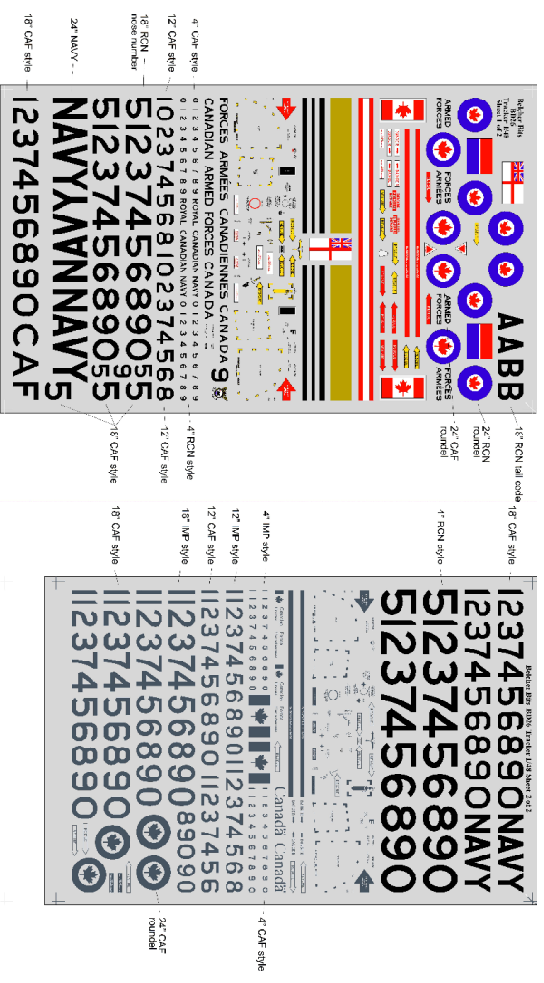


Belcher Bits Decal BD26: Canadian Trackers 1957-1990 1/48

The CS2F Tracker was manufactured by de Havilland Canada under license from Grumman. The first was delivered in 1956, and the last by 1960. They were to replace the Avenger in the ASW role, and would operate from the new carrier HMCS Bonaventure. Forty two CS2F-1s were delivered (s/n 1502-1543) followed by fifty seven CS2F-2 (s/n 1544-1600); the -2s are distinguishable externally by an antenna over the cockpit and wingtip EM cans for the UPD-501. Starting in 1964, 45 a/c were upgraded to CS2F-3 standard. Trackers continued to operate in the ASW role until 1970 (shortly after Bonnie was decommissioned) then switched to sovereignty patrol duties until 1990. This sheet provides markings for any Tracker from entry in service in 1957 until retirement in 1990.

references:

1. Royal Canadian Navy Aircraft Finish and Markings, Pat Martin, 2007.
2. Canadian Military Aircraft Finish and Markings 1968-2004, Pat Martin, 2004
3. RT Vol 9, IPMS Canada



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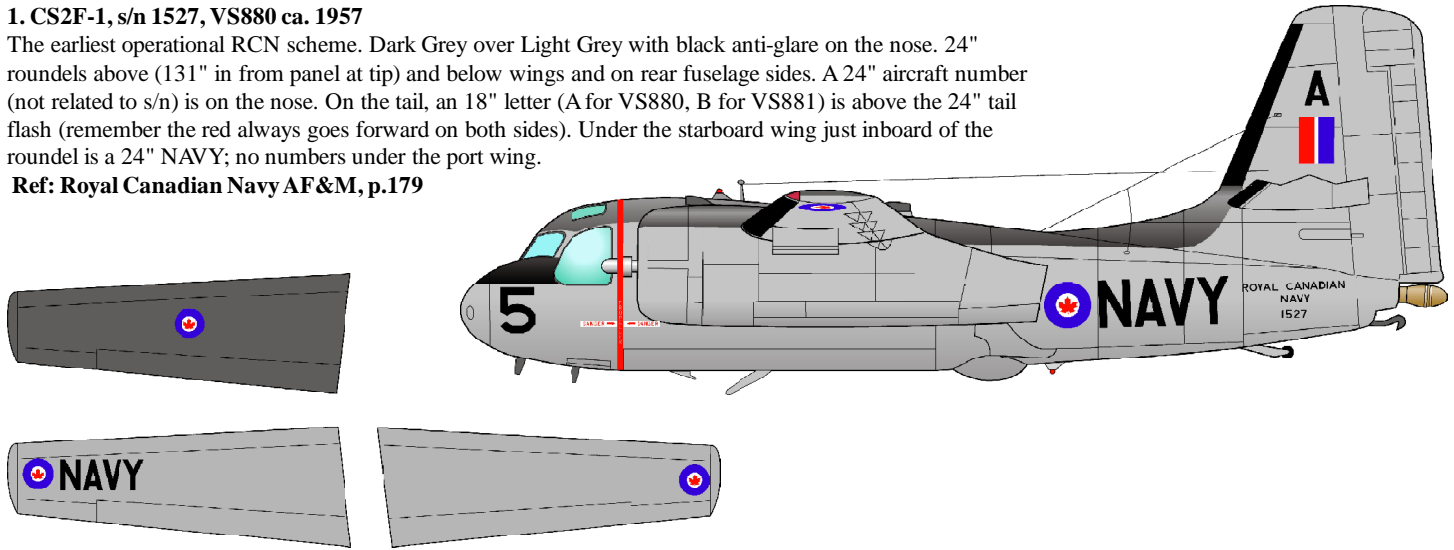
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1. CS2F-1, s/n 1527, VS880 ca. 1957

The earliest operational RCN scheme. Dark Grey over Light Grey with black anti-glare on the nose. 24" roundels above (131" in from panel at tip) and below wings and on rear fuselage sides. A 24" aircraft number (not related to s/n) is on the nose. On the tail, an 18" letter (A for VS880, B for VS881) is above the 24" tail flash (remember the red always goes forward on both sides). Under the starboard wing just inboard of the roundel is a 24" NAVY; no numbers under the port wing.

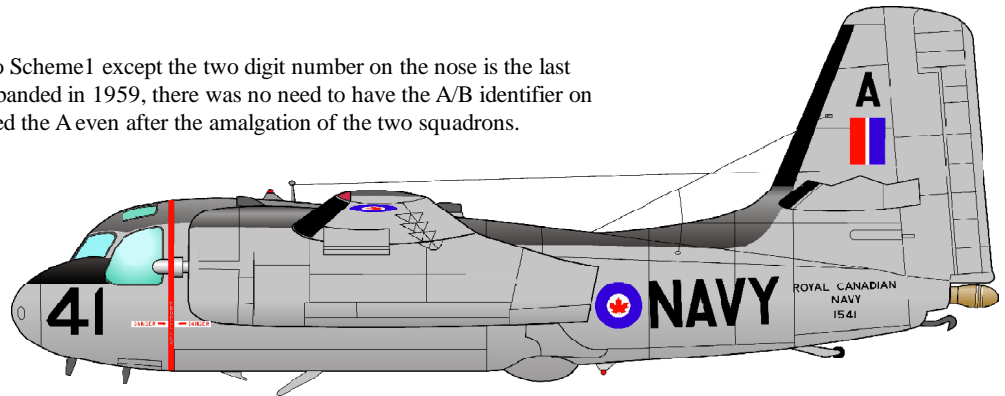
Ref: Royal Canadian Navy AF&M, p.179



2. CS2F-1, s/n 1541, VS880 ca. 1960

The next operational RCN scheme. Identical to Scheme 1 except the two digit number on the nose is the last two of the serial number. Since VS881 was disbanded in 1959, there was no need to have the A/B identifier on the tail, although VS880 machines often retained the A even after the amalgamation of the two squadrons.

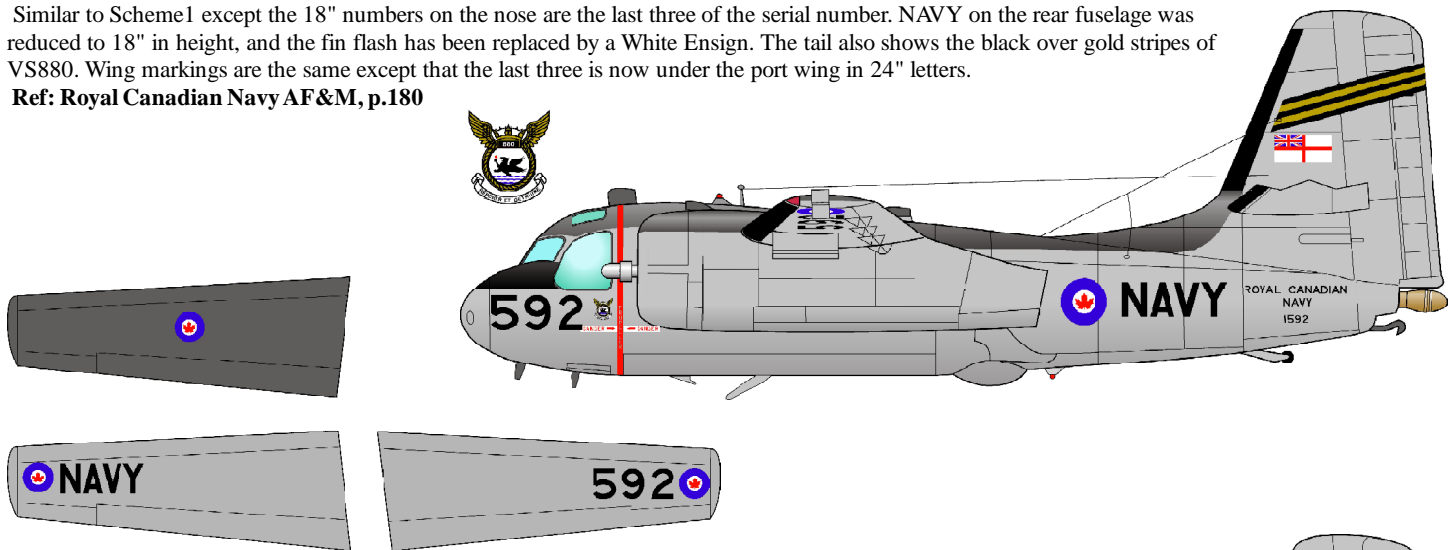
Ref: Royal Canadian Navy AF&M, p.179



3. CS2F-2, s/n 1592, VS880 ca. 1965

Similar to Scheme 1 except the 18" numbers on the nose are the last three of the serial number. NAVY on the rear fuselage was reduced to 18" in height, and the fin flash has been replaced by a White Ensign. The tail also shows the black over gold stripes of VS880. Wing markings are the same except that the last three is now under the port wing in 24" letters.

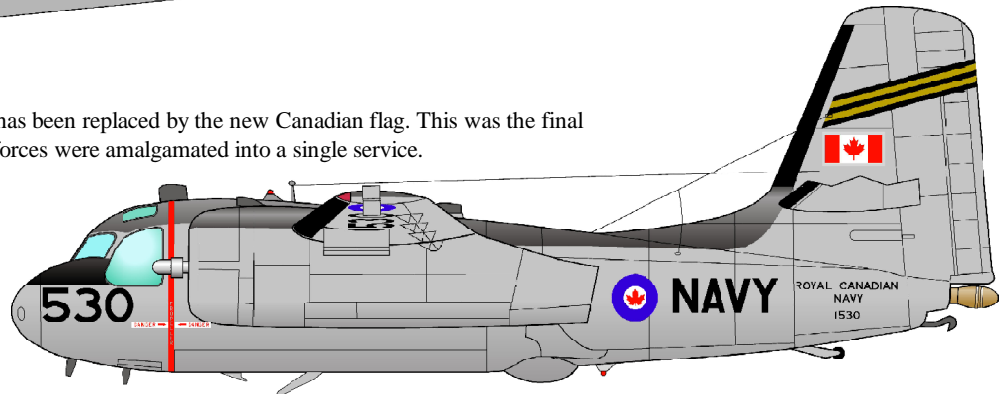
Ref: Royal Canadian Navy AF&M, p.180



4. CS2F-2, s/n 1530, VS880 ca. 1966

Identical to Scheme 3 except the White Ensign has been replaced by the new Canadian flag. This was the final RCN scheme, as in 1968 the Canadian armed forces were amalgamated into a single service.

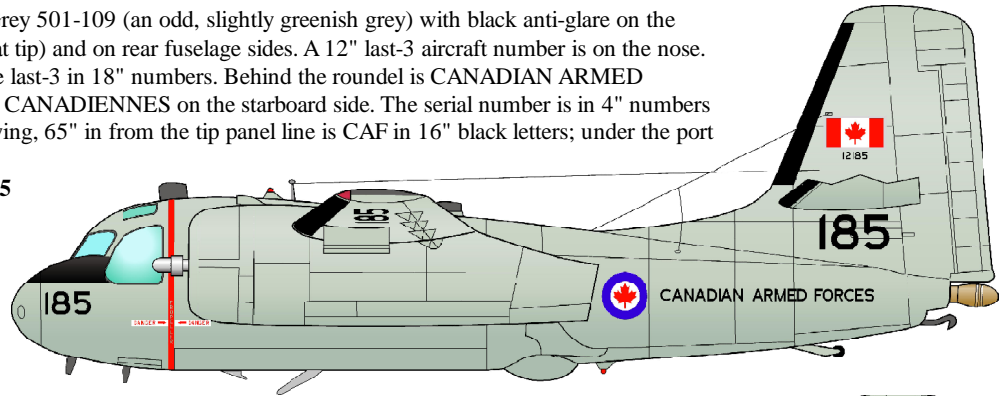
Ref: Royal Canadian Navy AF&M, p.180



5. CS2F-3, s/n 12185, VU33 ca. 1968

The first post-amalgamation scheme. Overall Grey 501-109 (an odd, slightly greenish grey) with black anti-glare on the nose. 24" roundels above (131" in from panel at tip) and on rear fuselage sides. A 12" last-3 aircraft number is on the nose. On the rear fuselage under the tailplanes are the last-3 in 18" numbers. Behind the roundel is CANADIAN ARMED FORCES on the port side; FORCES ARMEES CANADIENNES on the starboard side. The serial number is in 4" numbers under the flag on the tail. Under the starboard wing, 65" in from the tip panel line is CAF in 16" black letters; under the port wing are the last-3 again in 16" numbers.

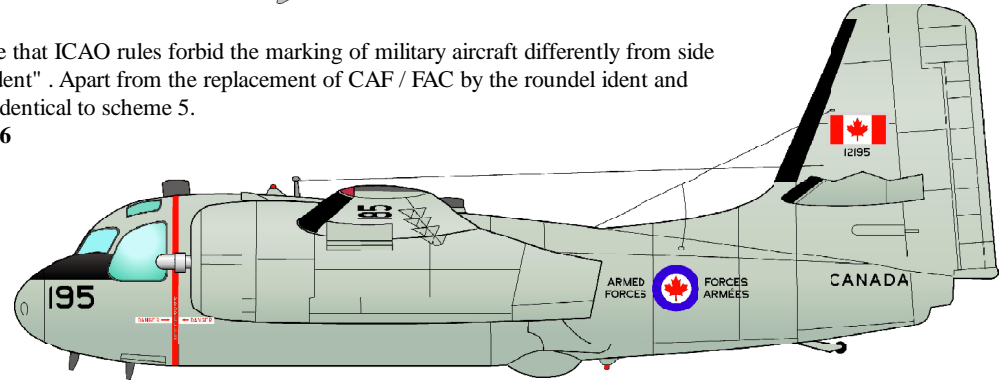
Ref: Canadian Military Aircraft F&M, p.255



6. CS2F-3, s/n 12195, VU33 ca. 1984

It took until 1973 for the CAF to become aware that ICAO rules forbid the marking of military aircraft differently from side to side. Thus was born the bilingual "roundel ident". Apart from the replacement of CAF / FAC by the roundel ident and the word CANADA, the marking scheme was identical to scheme 5.

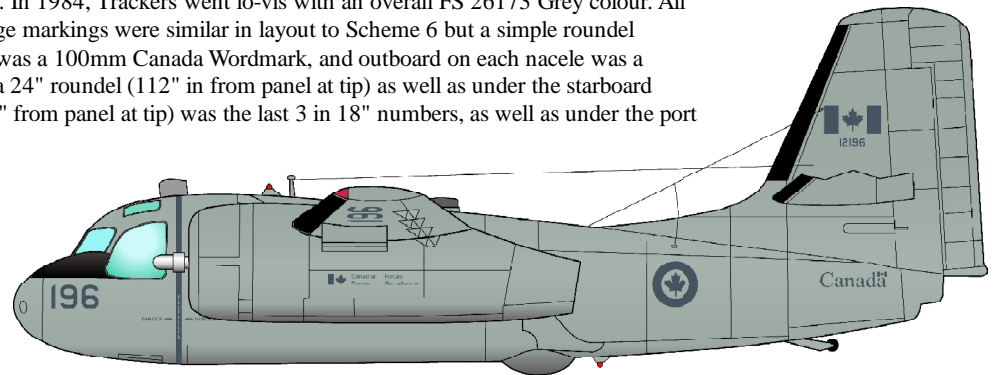
Ref: Canadian Military Aircraft F&M, p.256



7. CS2F-3, s/n 12196, ca. 1986

In the early 1980s, the government developed the Federal Identity Program (FIP) so people wouldn't confuse federal government military aircraft with those operated by municipalities or private companies (I guess!). The roundel ident disappeared, replaced by the Canada Wordmark (the word Canada with a small leaf over the last a) and the Signature (a half flag with Canadian Forces / Forces Armees). In 1984, Trackers went lo-vis with an overall FS 26173 Grey colour. All markings were FS 26118 Dark Grey. The fuselage markings were similar in layout to Scheme 6 but a simple roundel replaced the roundel ident. On the rear fuselage was a 100mm Canada Wordmark, and outboard on each nacelle was a 100mm Signature. On the port upper wing was a 24" roundel (112" in from panel at tip) as well as under the starboard wing. On the starboard upper wing (centred 131" from panel at tip) was the last 3 in 18" numbers, as well as under the port wing (at 112" from tip)

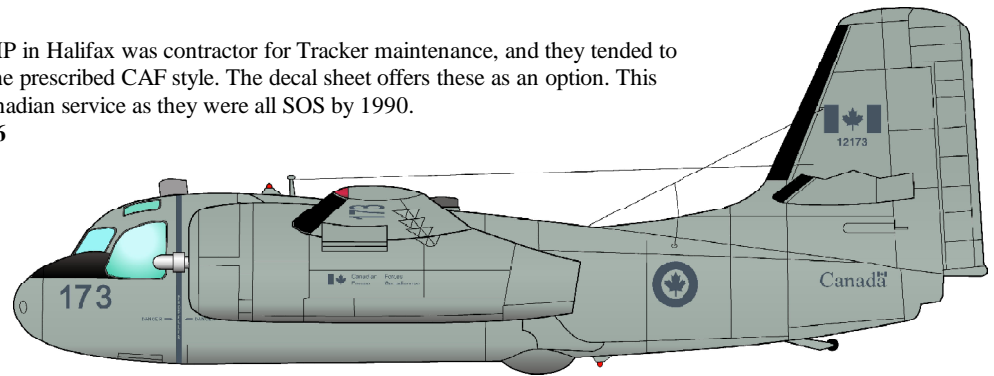
Ref: Canadian Military Aircraft F&M, p.256



8. CS2F-3, s/n 12173, ca. 1989

Not really a different scheme, but a variation. IMP in Halifax was contractor for Tracker maintenance, and they tended to use Helvetica fonts for the numbers instead of the prescribed CAF style. The decal sheet offers these as an option. This represents the final scheme of the Tracker in Canadian service as they were all SOS by 1990.

Ref: Canadian Military Aircraft F&M, p.256



Notes on the Kinetic / Italeri kit

This welcome kit has a couple issues if you want to do a Canadian Tracker. It represents the longer fuselage S-2E variant, which has a short stretch between wing and cabin and also in the rear fuselage. In fact, it is too long even for the S-2E but correcting the length may be a big job. If you want to do so, instructions are provided on my blog (belcherbitsblog.blogspot.com). Some other mods to do are the nacelle ends which should end at the sonobuoy launcher and have a flat top. The tailplanes should also be slightly shorter in span. Canadian Trackers had squared-off wingtips, not the rounded ones of the later S-2E. All those mods will be available shortly from Belcher Bits. As for the fuselage, Kinetic has promised a short fuselage variant soon. We'll see.

