

F4F-1 Wildcat Hobby Boss, 1/72nd scale



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I chose to do this particular kit of the 1/72 scale F4F-1 by Hobby Boss because of how important this aircraft really was when the war in the pacific started.

We did not yet have the army's P-38 or P-51, and the navy's F6F and F4U which started to appear in early 1943. All we really had as far as the navy was concerned was the F2A Buffalo and the F4F Wildcat.

The wildcat of course was the better of the 2 aircraft. Grumman made a very sturdy plane that could absorb a great deal of punishment and had a relatively fast speed of 300 mph.

This being said, it was not as maneuverable and could not climb as fast as its counterpart, the Mitsubishi A6M "Zero" or "Zeke" as it was called by the allies. This fighter truly was the best in the pacific until well into 1943. The Wildcat still held its own when we needed it the most.

About the kit itself, I was pleasantly surprised that despite the fact it had very few parts, they all went together very well. In particular, there is very little filling on the lower

Fuselage . Afterwards, all I needed to do was sand a little bit. The rest of the parts: canopy glass, wings (they were actually attached to the fuselage), horizontal stabilizers and landing gear fit perfectly.



The kit also had very detailed recessed panel lines which I thought wouldn't be found on an aircraft built by Hobby Boss. I had the mindset that Hobby Boss was just an inexpensive kit with really no detail to speak of.....I was very wrong about that!



The only part of this kit that I really did not like was the cockpit interior. There are no instrumentation dials to speak of. There are no floor rudder panels and the control stick lacks fine details like an engraved line handle. Other kits that I have worked on in the past such as Hasegawa, Accurate Miniatures and Tamiya had details like this in both 1/48 and 1/72 scale. I think Hobby Boss could improve just a tad on these things.

The paints I used on this kit were a lacquer based product called SNJ made by a company called Hawkeye and purchased from my good friend Al Jones.

I used this product on the lower wings and fuselage which applied very easily and I didn't have to mix this paint with any lacquer thinner. The product is already thinned. (Yep, my kind of paint.) I used Tamiya acrylic flat yellow for the upper wing surfaces and Tamiya flat green for the horizontal and vertical stabilizers. I used Tamiya flat white for the cowling trim. I thinned the Tamiya paint using 91% isopropyl alcohol which allows it to flow out of the airbrush more evenly.

I chose these colors because the paint scheme came from the time just before the war in the pacific started. I loved the colors the navy chose to identify each of its first 7 fleet carriers: CV-2,3,4,5,6,7 and 8. CV-4(U.S.S. Ranger) was given the I.D. color of green. The fuselage was a bare metal so I thought the SNJ product would work the best. It really looks like bare metal.

I would like to say to anyone looking to build a 1/72 or 1/48 aircraft to definitely give Hobby Boss a try, especially people who are novice at the hobby.

I first had a negative attitude about this particular company, but please don't let "first impressions" fool you! I was pleasantly surprised when I built this aircraft and received many compliments from my model building peers.



I would highly recommend this kit to both the experienced and novice model builder alike. It offers the simplicity of a model whose parts fit together well and detailed recessed panel lines and other really detailed parts such as the canopy, landing gear, Propeller and horizontal stabilizers that the more experienced model builders look for.

A special thanks goes to my good friend, Mike Kellner for giving me and encouraging me to build this kit.

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