

CLASSIC AIRFRAMES

1/48 J4F-1/2 WIDGEON



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This kit was produced for the IPMS 2008 Nationals by Classic Airframes. This is the first Classic Airframes kit I have built and I picked it because of the subject matter. The kit consists of 3 sprues of gray plastics, 1 bag of resin parts (wheels, landing gear wells and misc. seats), plus 1 sprue of clear parts.

I started with the fuselage halves by cutting the wheel wells from the resin block and separating them. The instructions aren't very clear on how to place them. The instruction sheet gives a general idea on how to place them. After gluing them in place with CCA and I cleaned the inside to ready it for painting. The walls in front of the cockpit seats were painted with Interior Green Chromate and behind the seats with a Light Grey.

There was a lot of dry fitting and removing excess plastic of the floor to get the fuselage halves to fit correctly. Then I added the floor to right side of the fuselage. No locating pins of this kit, so I had to be careful when I glued the sides together. The instructions call for the seats and control column to be added, but I will wait till I'm ready to attach the wing. The seats are resin and can be easily broken. The seats were painted with light grey frames and green seat cushions. I then worked on the nacelles and engines which consisted of 6 parts and they went together pretty easily. I did use some MR Bose 1000 to fill in some gaps on the nacelles and sanded them out. The wing consisted of 1 upper wing and 2 lower halves and a clear piece for a landing light. This was any easy fit without any excess sanding or filling.

The vertical tail and horizontal stabilizers were the next challenge. I started with adding the horizontal stabilizers to the tail. The guides were 2 small dimples on either side of the tail and 2 pimples on the stabs. Since the guides are offset I drilled them out to give the pimples a place to really have something to grab on to. I used CCA to get them set, so it would harden quickly. There were some little gaps and I used Mr. Bose 100 again to fill in the gaps and sanded them out. The tail to fuselage is a flat fit, no pins. Here I drilled a hole in the fuselage and one in the tail. I glued a pin into the tail and the hole in the fuselage was a little bigger, so I would have some wiggle room to get it glued in the right position. I used CCA and some accelerator so it would set quickly. Needed a 3rd hand for this op and asked my wife to spread the accelerator around. I then used some more Mr. Bose 1000 to fill in the gaps and sanded them out.



The cockpit windshield comes in 2 pieces. It is split right down the middle (bad), but the good part is the upper part of it is to be painted. So I used a piece of sheet stock to add a little firmness to the piece. So if a little extra glue got on the clear part it wouldn't be seen after painting. I then masked it off and painted interior green, so the frames would show green from the inside.

I then added the small hinges to the bottom of the wing panels. I also add supports to the bottoms of the horizontal stabs. At this time the model was ready for painting. Since the dry fit of the wings to the fuselage looked like it was going to be easy, I decided to paint them separately, along with the floats. This seemed like the easiest way to go. I referred to some information on the WEB for painting ideas. The instruction sheet showed only the model to be painted in aluminum. I found several sources on the



web gave several different options. So I decided to go with USCG circa 1941, USN Intermediate Blue FS 35164 for upper surfaces and USN Light Gull Grey FS 36440 for the lower surfaces. I used Ambroid mask for the windows. I used Testors Acrylics straight from the bottle with a few drops of Testors Acryl thinner. I painted the lower surfaces first and let it dry for a few days. I then masked the fuselage and did the upper surfaces. I took off the masks immediately. I had to touch up some areas around the nacelles. I added some metallic paint around the exhaust pipes.

After it everything dried I added the landing gear. This consisted of 4 distinct pieces which took some time to get them set in place. After everything was set I painted them USN Light Grey. I then added red/green wing tip lights. I then added the wires to the floats, using a very thin guitar wire, which worked out well. The decal sheet that came with the kit was to be used



on aircraft with the USCG aluminum paint scheme. Since I painted the model Circa 1941 I had to use some National Insignia decals from Yellow Jacket instead, which matched the paint scheme I was using. The decal for the tail was oversized and had to be trimmed after drying. It did not fold over well, so I touched it up with some blue and red paint were appropriate.

At this time I attached the wings to the fuselage. I then added the antenna wires (nylon sewing line) darken with a black felt tip pen from the wing tips to the tail. For the antenna wire I used stretched sprue.

I then added the wind screen and wheels to the model.

The propellers were a little bit of a challenge, since they were wooden on the real thing. I painted them tan, followed by a coat of future.

Then I took a rough sanding stick to it and added some watered down acrylic ink and coated and again coated them with Future.

For the leading edges of the props I used a silver paint pen as stated in one of the reviews.

Overall it took about 30 hours to finish the kit. It was fun to put together and added some skills to my "How to Do things List".

References: Kit Review by Kevin Martin (HyperScale)
Kit Review by Gerry Niles (Internetmodeler)

