

Airacobra P-39

Monogram 1/48 #5213



By Paul Gasiorowski

This was the model I selected for the Jan. 2014 theme night that was to be about cross-dressers. These planes were shipped to Russia under the Lend-Lease act in great numbers. The Soviets did not have a manufacturing capability at the beginning of the war. The U.S. supplied in excess of 4000 aircraft to be used as tank busters and for close air support.



The kit came with 3 dark green sprues and 1 clear sprue. As usual the sprues were rinsed in a soapy solution, then rinsed and let overnight to air dry. Construction started with the cockpit tub assembly. I wasn't going to leave the covers off to show the machine guns and other interior pieces. The interior was to be painted Interior Green (Model Master Acryl) 34151. I found some good pictures on the Internet of the cockpit and touched up the interior was various reds, yellows, green and some tan paints.



Also I assembled the external fuel tank and bomb and will be attached if research shows them to be used on the Russian front.

In the right fuselage half I inserted the cockpit tub and the armor shelf behind the pilot's seat. I dry fitted several times to insure the halves would go together without a problem. The front nose gear had to be installed at this point, because the attach points were on both sides of the part. The gear doors were left off at this point because handling would probably broken them off. They were left to the last things I would attach to the model. Some minor filling and sanding was required on the fuselage.

I then attached the lower wing to fuselage to make the upper wing halves to fit better. The wing guns were added to the lower wing.. I then attached the upper wing halves, a little filling was required. Minor sanding was required. Horizontal elevators were lined up and attached.

The propeller was painted flat black and the tips yellow. The nose cone was painted Insignia Red (Flat). The canopy was dipped in Future and let sit for a day to insure complete drying. I again used Micro-Mark Easy-mask solution to cover the canopy and leave the frames clean for painting. This work fairly well, rather than using tape or some other medium to separate the metal framing. The mask comes off pretty easy with a sharp tip No. 11 blade to lift up a corner.



The plane was painted with Olive Drab (MM 4728) on the upper fuselage and the lower half was painted Dark Ghost Grey (MM 4761). I taped off the upper fuselage and then painted the lower fuselage. Letting sit for a day or two, I then gave it a couple of coats of Future.

Waiting for it to completely dry, I then proceeded to attach the decals. For the wing walks at the cockpit I used some matte black decal sheet and cut them to size. The Red Stars were trimmed out of the decal sheet, to minimize any silvering. They came off the sheet fairly easy and put down in a puddle of Future to get into the right position. I then dabbed up the extra Future with a wet Q-tip.

After letting the model sit for a day I sprayed a light coat of flat clear to cut the sheen a little. I then attached the remaining small parts and wheel assemblies.

This adds another little model to add to my finished collection. It's time to retire some of them to a shoebox to make room for the new builds.

