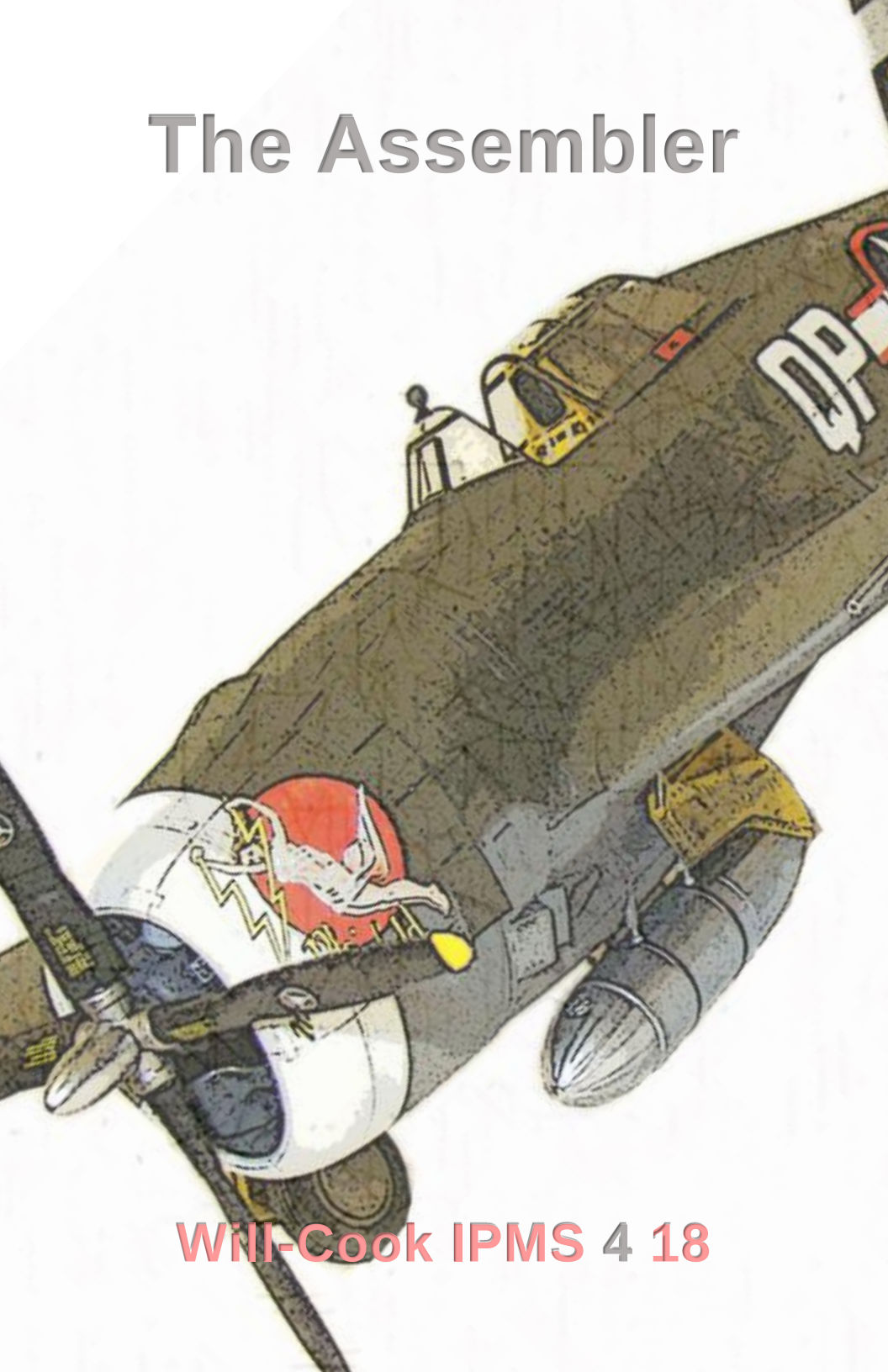
The Assembler



Will-Cook IPMS 4 18

i Assemblers

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1 Meeting Themes

04-20-18: Get Buggy! Anything related to a bug
05-18-18: Cold War
06-15-18: The Big Screen: Models from movies

Location: The Church

Meeting Time: 7:30 PM to 9:30 PM

Cover Image: 1/48 Tamiya P-47D by Ed Mate

2 Not Bill's Banter

Communication Breakdown and the Advent of Access

This isn't Bill's Banter this month, because Bill's PC decided not to compute for the time being. But, that also points to the ubiquitous nature of computing and leads to how the advent of the PC has changed modeling.

In the olden times of yore, before many of us knew what a PC was, we learned about most of our modeling subjects through hobby shops, books, and magazines. Lots and lots of magazines. If you weren't part of a local IPMS group, you probably gathered most of your modeling information and know how from a relative who built models and the guys hanging out at the local hobby shop.

For many, it was a weekly trek to the hobby shop; to see what was being built, pick up that new kit that just showed up, and to maybe bring your latest build in during various stages of construction to discuss that one problem you were trying to overcome at the moment.

You also went to the book store to get the latest modeling magazines, if you didn't already have them from your hobby shop, and to pick up books and magazines that dealt with whatever subject you were modeling. You really had to work at getting all of that information and getting the answers to your questions. The advent of the PC and the World Wide Web specifically, has changed the nature of our research and how we learn about modeling now.

If we choose a specific subject to model now, even if it is in a genre we've never attempted before, we can go to the internet and, generally, find large amounts of information at our fingertips about it. Not only that, we can get reviews of the various subject offerings and go to the forums to get questions answered from the numerous like minded individuals at the modeling forums.

We know there aren't as many modelers as their used to be, partly because of the advent of video games and numerous other things to enjoy with our modern technology, but in many ways, it's never been a better time to be a modeler. Now let's all hope that bill can build or fix his PC as well as he can build or fix a model kit.

Go build something!

Not Bill

3 News

March Raffle Winners:
No raffle was held

Must Build Models 2018:

Max Bryant	
Sam Buonadonna	1/35 Italeri PT Boat
Steve Butt	1/48 Eduard F6F-5 Hellcat
Bob Ford	1/35 Amusing Hobby VK201(K)
Bill Hunoway	1/48 Airfix TSR.2
Don Klein	1/32 HK Models Do-335
Ken Kwilinski	Earth vs the Spider
Ed Mate	1/48 Italeri H-21C Shawnee
Jeremy Petersen	Open Hawker Hobbies
Ken Scott	1/72 Trumpeter J-31 Gyrfalcon
Dave Stukel	
John Truby	
Mike Valentine	1/35 Club Build Jeep
Ed Wahl	1/48 Hasegawa TF-104

IPMS/USA News:
IPMS USA membership dues are: $30 Adult 1 Yr., $58 Adult 2 yr., $86 Adult 3 Yr.

The IPMS/Region 5 web site is:
http://ipms-gateway.com/Region5coordinator.html

Any IPMS/USA member who recruits a new member will receive a two journal membership extension up to two full years.

IPMS Gallery Photos: Contact gallery@ipmsusa.org to post photos of your models on the web site.

4 Feature

Hasegawa P-40E 1/48

By Ed Mate

A classic WWII fighter that fittingly has been offered many times by many manufacturers in many versions; I think I have all of the 1/48 offerings. (Including the caricature Hobby Boss "Easy Build" kit that was given to me.) The Hasegawa kit is one of the more recent offerings and benefits from modern molding technology. Go out and buy some 0.005” thick plastic card if you don’t have any before building this kit – you’ll understand fully by the end of this article.

This is actually the second time I've built this kit. The first time around I read other build reviews, took the advice from others, and started by putting the fuselage halves together – not attaching the left to the right, but rather assembling the left half and then the right. There are 4 pieces to each half that make up the main fuselage halves. It would be a whole lot more modeler friendly to have molded these as one piece each, but I guess that is what it takes to get multiple versions offered to us at reasonable prices. I’m happy to have them; I’ll cuss every time I build one. I sure am glad Eduard doesn’t do this! Perhaps they were influential in making this practice less "in vogue".

I decided to put the fuselage together before completing the cockpit. The cockpit assembly can slip into the fuselage from underneath and I liked the idea of finishing the sanding before installing the cockpit, and consequently, keeping all of the sanding debris out of the cockpit. I needed a 0.005” thick shim to raise the right insert behind the cockpit – one of those parts that make the common P-40 fuselage into an E-model. I don't know why the left side fit better.

The 0.005" thick plastic was also handy for helping bridge the gaps between the nose plugs and fuselage parts (these parts are plugs on the E-model but vents on the N-model). I wish I had used a 0.005" shim under the forward part of the right nose plug as it took a bit more filler than the left side to become flush. I used another 0.005" shim under the right side of the upper forward piece that is the air scoop opening and top of the nose when it was added. I also used a 0.010” thick shim to

close the gap between the bottom of the rear fuselage halves when I joined them.

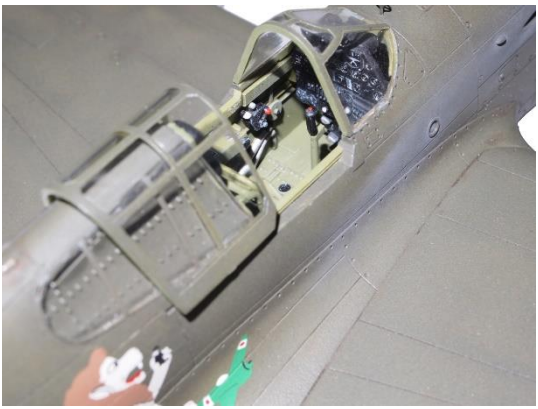
I couldn't find anything definitive on the inside color of the nose intake splitters so I painted the whole area chromate green. The radiators are painted silver. All of this was painted at the same time as the cockpit. I am now a regular practitioner of Steve Butt's technique -- brass prop shaft that slips inside a tube in the fuselage rather than the silly poly caps that Hasegawa provides. The problem with the poly caps is that it is almost impossible to get a tight joint because the "poly" in the cap acts as a spring in the interference fit and pushes the shaft out a bit. One needs to push the shaft in too far so when it springs back it is in the correct position; however, this is impossible to do with these assemblies. The end result is often a sagging prop shaft and, consequently, a misaligned prop. Steve's technique is superior and also allows disassembly for transportation (less broken prop blades in transit).

The challenge is how to support the tube inside the fuselage so that it is perpendicular to spinner (from both the top and the sides). The intake splitter and radiator assembly has a molded in notch on top that I used to get an interior support parallel to the nose. I cut a piece of 0.020" (thickness doesn't matter much) plastic card 0.550" wide and about as tall. The 0.550" dimension is the interior space between the exhaust stacks. I drilled a hole for my 3/32" brass tube on the centerline and 0.240" up from the bottom. The bottom fits inside the notch in the intake splitter and radiator assembly. I installed the intake splitter and radiator assembly to the left fuselage half and my interior support at the same time. I taped the fuselage halves together to make sure the pins for the intake splitter and radiator assembly lined up. I now installed the front of the intake but glued it only to the left fuselage half. The last time I built the kit, the intake front did not line up with the splitter assembly so I trimmed a little bit off of the bottoms of the front pins so the splitter sits lower inside the fuselage. It wasn't as bad this time, but I could have improved the fit a bit if I used the technique again. After allowing the parts to dry overnight, I separated the fuselage halves again. The hole in the front intake part (allows for the plastic prop shaft to pass through the poly cap) was drilled out to allow for the 3/32" brass tube. The tube was

installed through the hole in the intake part and the hole in the support piece flush with the front. 5-minute epoxy was used to secure the tube.

Now the fuselage halves were glued together and upper nose/ air scoop part was installed. All seams were addressed with sanding and Mr. Surfacer used as a filler. Panel lines were restored using a scribing tool and a final sanding with a 4000 grit sanding pad cleaned things up for inspection. I eventually installed a piece of plastic sprue to span between the insides of the fuselage, behind the radiator assembly near the leading edge of the wing, to spread the fuselage 0.005" to 0.007" to eliminate a step between the fuselage and the lower wing part. This was found when test fitting the two assemblies.

I built this kit almost straight out of the box, with just enough additional details to not qualify for OOB at a contest. The cockpit detail is nice and a nice paint job will yield very nice results. I haven't sprayed green chromate primer in a long time, but from various references, this appears to be the correct color. The Model Master paint for this color is ridiculously bright so I've secured a supply of Humbrol tins that I think are a better representation of the color. The kit seat looks a bit chunky, so I ended up replacing it with an Ultracast resin substitute with photoetch seat belts. Once again, I used an Eduard Zoom offering. The instrument panel Eduard provides looks great. I used the throttle control and most other cockpit details. The completed cockpit assembly was glued into the fuselage assembly using tube glue on the mounting pins and a little liquid glue behind the back plate. The parts were held with rubber bands while the glue dried.

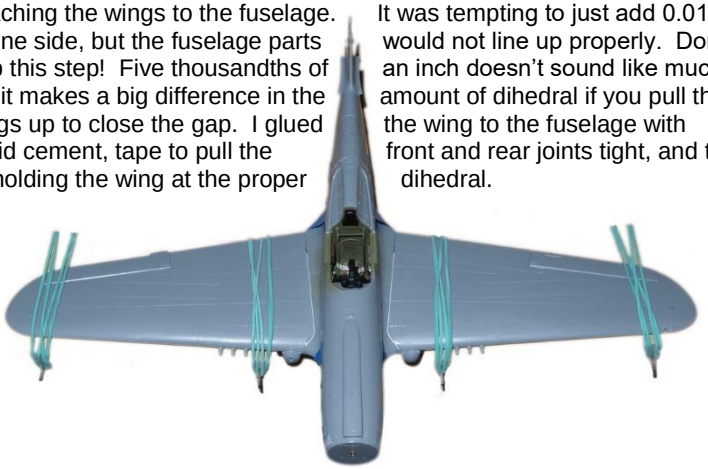


I learned a lesson long ago while building my P-40N wing so I filed all sides of the lower wing inserts so they don't fit so snuggly before adding glue. The lesson was that tight-fitting inserts created stress that was pushing the pocket in the lower wing apart; when liquid glue was added, a crack

propagated out of a corner. The trailing edges are quite thick; the next time I'll spend some time thinning them down for a more scale appearance. (I had that note from almost 10 years ago – next time I'll read it!) The wing tip is very hard to keep closed so a bit of filler was needed in the seam. I have completely mixed feelings about the gun inserts. The fit is OK but still requires clean up and some tedious sanding; however, not having to clean seams on the gun barrels so the cross section remains round and with the holes already drilled out to boot is great. I assured almost no filler was needed to blend into the wing by cutting slots in the webs on the insides of the gun inserts – my saw cuts about 0.005" wide. Then I inserted 0.010" plastic wedges in the slots to force the top and bottom of the inserts apart.

I filled the gaps on the sides of the inserts with some stretched sprue glued in place with liquid cement. Filing and sanding eliminated the seams with only a small amount of Mr. Surfacer needed. The fronts of the wheel bays must also be attached. I used some more 0.005" shims between fronts and the lower wing on the outboard sides of the bays to improve the fit. I used some Apoxie Sculpt to fill some resulting holes and blend the fronts into the leading edge of the wing.

Dry fitting the wings to the fuselage created a bunch of worry. It seemed like the wings would need a lot of dihedral to close the wing root gaps. I started looking at photos and drawings and found that the P-40 has a lot of dihedral; but if the gaps were closed, would it be too much? I measured some of the drawings I had and found that 6.5 to 6.75 degrees of dihedral (as measured by the lower wing surface; not mid-thickness) is correct. I made a jig out of wood with this amount of dihedral and used it to attach the wings properly. Attaching the wing assembly is the second most difficult part of the kit. Using my jig, I determined that each upper wing needed about 0.005" of plastic added in the seam between the wing and the fuselage. I added this, then cut and sanded it to blend in before attaching the wings to the fuselage. It was tempting to just add 0.010" to one side, but the fuselage parts would not line up properly. Don't skip this step! Five thousandths of an inch doesn't sound like much, but it makes a big difference in the amount of dihedral if you pull the wings up to close the gap. I glued the wing to the fuselage with liquid cement, tape to pull the front and rear joints tight, and the jig holding the wing at the proper dihedral.



The wing includes a large part of the lower fuselage. The rear underside seam is on a panel line. I filled this, sanded smooth and then rescribed the panel line. The forward fuselage joint lines up pretty well. Trial fit, followed by inserting a shim between the radiator ramp and the fuselage (to act as a spreader), lined up the joint very well. A little final work with sandpaper and Mr. Surfacer cleaned up the joints OK. With a small brush, I applied a couple of coats of Mr. Surfacer and carefully sanded to make any remaining wing gaps disappear. The stabilizer parts were added using liquid glue and didn't need any filler. I cut off the bumps for the lights on the wing tips and fin per the instructions and drilled holes for the clear parts supplied in the kit.

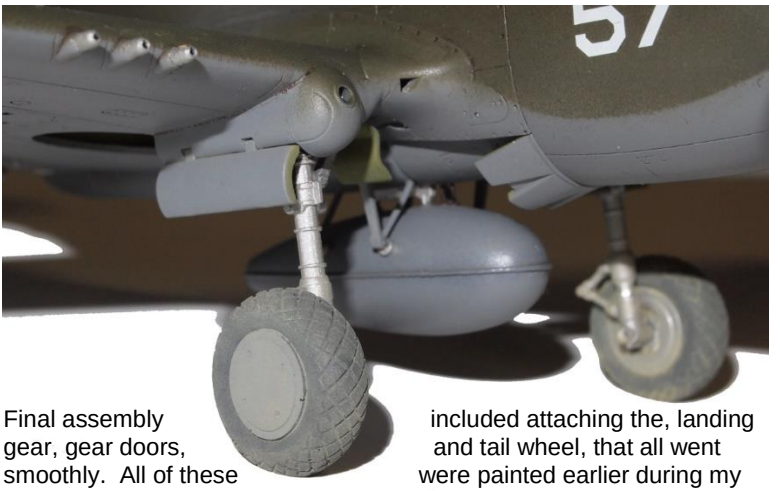
After cutting the propeller off of the sprue and cleaning up the mold parting lines, I sanded the edges to make sure they were smooth. I also sanded off the raised molded in demarcation line for the yellow tip. After that, the propeller tips were painted white, then yellow. The tips were masked off and the remainder was painted black. I can't tell you how many months had passed that this job was completed as I did this while pooling similar work for multiple kits.

My choice of markings is the aircraft Capt. Kiser flew. Superscale provided the decals. Squardron/Signal's 49th Fighter Group by McDowell has a photo that shows the custom markings of the lion and Kiser's kills. Superscale didn't pay attention to these photos as the lion is about twice as big as needed - it may even be too large if used on a 1/32 scale kit. ...I should have looked for a 1/72 sheet with the markings. I thought the aircraft number "57" was too big also so I replaced them with some numbers on a Techmod sheet. There is a photo in 49th Fighter Group showing Bob's Robin with Kiser's airplane in the background. Photos support the OD & grey scheme. I started the painting process with a dark brown pre-shade on all of the upper panel lines and dark grey on the underside panel lines. The OD and grey followed. When I sprayed the OD on top, it was thin enough for the brown pre-shade to show through. I did a bit more to break up the overall OD by painting a scribble of OD that had a bit more yellow in it. I masked off the fabric flying surfaces and misted on a very thin coat of lighter olive paint. The difference was too stark so I sprayed a highly thinned original OD paint coat over it. This darkened the overall color and provided a faded look on the flying

surfaces. With painting done, I sprayed Future to prep for the decals. I sanded the Future in the areas of the decals and applied a second coat. The decals went on OK and another coat of Future sealed them. I sanded again to help hide the edges of the decals and sprayed another coat. The panel lines were given a dark brown oil wash and the final coat is Testors dull coat.

The formation lights are both molded on and supplied as clear parts that need to be tinted. I tinted the clear wing lights with red and green translucent paint. The canopy for this kit is easy to work with but there are a bunch of braces to paint. I used masking tape to mask the clear areas. I created my own shaped pieces by trial and error. The sliding portion fits in both the open and closed position, but I think it sits a bit high in the open position, so if you want a better display, find a vacuform replacement.

I don't care for the kit wheels. They appear too wide and have very faint circumferential tread grooves. The outside wheel hubs are molded separately (for choice of spokes or solid) which makes painting these easy. But the size bothered me, so the last time I built one of these kits I did a little research. To the bottom line, I don't have a P-40 reference that provides verification of Ultracast's 27 inch diameter specification, but clearly based on hub size, Hasegawa has provided wheels that are out of proportion. If twenty-seven inches is the correct size, the Hasegawa parts are a full 1/16" too big in diameter (or a scale 4 inches too big in diameter). I assume the corresponding hole in the bottom of the wing is too big as well. I used some Ultracast diamond tread wheels for this model.



Final assembly included attaching the, landing gear, gear doors, and tail wheel, that all went smoothly. All of these were painted earlier during my painting sessions. I added some plumbing lines to the drop tank and added it with super glue. I now faced adding the clear parts for the lights. I started with the clear parts on the fin. The first one that I cut from the sprue flew into oblivion despite the razor blade being on one side of the

part and my finger on the other. At this point I was really happy I was lazy last time and did not use the clear parts. I found them in my parts stash. Extreme care separated the rest of the lights from the sprue. The two for the right wing were painted clear green before removing from the sprue, the two for the left wing clear red. The lights were attached with a little super glue placed in the drilled holes with a pin, the light picked up with a moist finger tip, and model placed onto light. Do not tempt fate by turning your finger upside down to place the part on the model.

A little trimming slightly improved the fit of the rear canopy glass on the fuselage sides. The edges as well as the framing were painted OD then attached to the model with white glue. The sliding canopy part was attached in the open position using white glue. The last parts to go on the model were the photo etch ring & bead gun sight and the pitot probe. The propeller and spinner are removable because of the brass tube installed earlier. Pastel chalk was used for some dust and exhaust stains.

There are a lot of great marking choices for this kit, I could build many more. It is a subject for many aces and has good molding detail. It does not assemble easily! Some serious demerits for all of the inserts and modular pieces that make assembly and clean up much tougher than a kit needs to be; some more demerits for the oversize wheels. I still rate the kit a 5.0 out of 10 on the Mate meter. Even with that low rating, for me, it is still the kit to build for a 1/48 P-40E! …and that truly is a shame.

5 March 2018 Meet Model

1/48 Tamiya P-47D by Ed Mate

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