

Junkers Ju 87B-2 Stuka

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Company: Trumpeter

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The Ju 87B Series was to be the first massproduced variant of the Stuka. A total of six pre-production Ju 87B-0 aircraft were produced, built from Ju 87A airframes. Test flights began in the summer of 1937. A small number were converted into Cs and Ds as potential naval variants.

The first production version was the Ju 87B-1, with a considerably larger engine, its Junkers Jumo 211D generating 1,184 hp, and completely redesigned fuselage and landing gear. The new design was again tested in Spain, and after proving its abilities there, production was ramped up to 60 per month. As a result, by the outbreak of World War II, the Luftwaffe had 366 Ju 87B-1s on hand. The B-1 was also fitted with "Jericho Trumpets", essentially propeller driven sirens with a diameter of a little over two feet mounted on the wing's leading edge directly forward of the landing gear, or on the front edge of the fixed



main gear fairing. These were used to weaken enemy morale and enhance the intimidation of dive-bombing. After the enemy became used to it, some bombs were fitted with whistles on the fin to produce the noise after release.

The B-2 version was distinguished by the use of the uprated 1,200 hp Jumo 211Da engine. The major external difference from the B-1 was that the ejector exhausts and radiator bath cooling flaps were redesigned.

The mouth of the radiator bath was enlarged to help cool the more powerful engine.

When the big Trumpeter box landed on my desk, the first thing I thought of was the last Trumpeter aircraft I built, their 1/32nd scale TBF Avenger.

The big, deep sturdy box will stay with me a while as I use it to transport other projects in after getting through this Stuka.

Nine sprues of soft, grey plastic are in one section of the box. Panel lines are very light-handed throughout – I'm not complaining, for in the past they have been a little too deep. But how they will hold up after primer, paint and weathering waits to be seen. The second section of the box holds the foam-wrapped canopy pieces, a single small PE sheet and two rubber main gear tires. The greenhouse-canopy comes in four sections, with a round piece that fits into the rear gun opening. The canopy plastic is reminiscent of what was in the Avenger kit; thin, yet sturdy enough to accept

a mask set (which I would recommend). There is also eight additional clear plastic parts that fit into other areas on the aircraft, including a second (nearly) identical large, rear section that is not used – puzzling.

The photo-etch sheet contains nicely designed engine intake covers, gun and bomb sights, and a thin ring for the hole in the rear canopy section, among other odds and ends. What is not included, thankfully, are connectors or trim tabs for the various ailerons and dive brakes – Trumpeter has wisely made these out of thin-yet-sturdy plastic parts.

Rounding out the contents of the box is a well-illustrated 16-page instruction booklet, a promotional flyer, and a beautiful, two-sided color sheet showing painting instructions, and decal placement. Two different three-view drawings are displayed on one side (Green splinter pattern Ju 87B-2, 10./LG 1, Tramecourt, France July 1940 and a winter Ju 87B-2, Stab II./St.G 1. Russian Front, December 1941). On the flip side is a four view displaying a yellow-nose, green splinter pattern Ju 87B-2,2./St.G 2, 'Immelmann', Russian Front, September 1941.

The single, large sheet of decals come in their own plastic bag. Trumpeter loves to do engines. This one contains no less than 48 parts, including the firewall and bomb release cradle. And like most of their other kits, there is no way to expose this beauty once the fuselage halves are glued together. The entire section (engine, firewall, cowl, intake, and bomb cradle) are assembled as a single section however, and attached to the main fuselage near the end of the build – nice.

All eyes will focus on the cockpit of a Stuka, and there is a lot to see here. Unfortunately, most of the detail is a little heavy-handed. Everything looks a little too thick and clunky, as opposed to the 1/32nd Hasegawa Ju 87G offering. There are no seat belts provided for the empty, plain seat, the sidewalls and floor lack the definition needed in this scale, even the rear seat and gun area look a little toy-like.

If you plan to open up the canopy (and it appears that this is an option), then you might want to think about adding something to bring the cockpit up to speed. Trumpeter provides a decal for the main instrument panel, which is molded in slight relief in case you would rather paint it.



One nice design feature is that the entire cockpit, like the forward engine area, is built as a single, separate piece which is then fitted into the fuselage halves. This will prevent problems associated with cockpit sides not aligning with the floor, etc., when gluing the fuselage together.

Trumpeter seems to experiment a lot with the wing design in their kits. Based on the instructions I think they've arrived at a winner here and I applaud their continued effort to improve their kits. The wings in this kit have two major improvements. The first is in the use of two large, sturdy wing spars that hold the five wing sections together at the proper 'Stuka' angles. The second is how the flaps and ailerons are connected to the rear of the wings, which is all done with sturdy plastic parts. Anyone who has built a Stuka knows how prominent these parts are in a dive bomber. Having suffered through the fiddly-PE approach with the

TBF Avenger, I once again congratulate Trumpeter for going this route.

The wing-gun bays are each built up from ten pieces into a single assembly before being attached to the underside of each top wing – nice, but unless you leave open the two-part access hatch on the upper wing, none of that detail can be seen.

Unlike Hasagawa's G-6, the prominent Stuka wheel covers are unfortunately designed in such a way that the wheel must be attached in between the two sides of the pant before they are glued together, which complicates painting and weathering.

Stores are where Trumpeter shines like no other company. It it's a Trumpeter kit, you're

going to get a lot of cool stuff for under the wings, and this Stuka is no exception. The kit includes stores for three hard-points; a centerline location for the huge 1,102lb bomb and four options for each of the two outer wing locations. These include (for each wing) a drop tank, two clusters of 4x110lb bombs, a single cluster of 2x250lb bombs, or a weapon container housing six MG81 machine guns each. Whew! You go Trumpeter!

Every collection of German World War II aircraft will have to have the ubiquitous Stuka in it. If you like to build'em big, you have two choices, the one with guns (Hasagawa Ju 87G) or the one with bombs (this one). Everything else is either too old (Revell) or just too weird (20 Century Toys). Trumpeter's offering provides a

reasonably well-executed rendition of this powerful dive bomber, with enough under wing stores to suit any imagination. With a little extra work in the cockpit you will have a beautiful facsimile of this 'ugly' airplane.

I recommend this kit to anyone who likes to build and finish large German aircraft. The brutish look and gull-wing recognition of the venerable Stuka translate well in Trumpeter's release.

I would like to thank Stevens International for providing this kit for review, and to Internet Modeler for giving me the opportunity to review it.