

## Pan Am World Airways DC-4 Minicraft 1/144



By Paul Gasiorowski

In 1971 Douglas Aircraft put in service the DC-4 capable of carrying up to 44 passengers. An order for 60 planes was placed prior to Dec. 7, 1941 and then military then took over production of the new airliner and designated it the C-54 Skymaster. Several hundred were built and at the end of the war there was a surplus that could be bought cheaper than buying one new. Douglas only produces an additional 79 for commercial use. All of PanAm DC-4's were all converted from military C-54's.

This kit has 4 sprues of white plastic and a small sprue of clear plastic. I started with the fuselage halves first sanding out the seams. The wings then were assembled and any flaws were corrected. Since this is a small scale and a decal is supplied for the windscreen.

I decided that the cowlings and engines should be attached to the wing prior to painting. The propellers were mounted in the engines and the piece that holds the propeller shaft in place was cemented at this time. To aid in painting the props were removed and painted semi-gloss black separately.

The wing assembly and the fuselage offered a good fit and it was decided to paint them separately. Semi-gloss black was used on the wings as a base coat, since the wing would be aluminum. The kit came with decals for the de-icing boots, but since the wing

was already black, I masked the boots prior to painting the wing with Model Master Buffable Aluminum Plate from a spray can. I removed the masks and the boots came out great.

The windscreen was sanded and filled with wood filler to eliminate as much of the seam between the windscreen and fuselage. The PanAm paint scheme called for a white top and an aluminum bottom. I really don't like painting white and I made a mistake at this time by giving it a primer coat of grey. It took several coats of white to get it to look correct. The next step would be to use Future to give it the gloss that is required.



After letting the white dry for a few days, I applied a coat of semi- gloss black to the lower half of the fuselage. Again letting it dry for a day or too, I applied several coats of Model Master Buffable Aluminum Plate and buffed out the paint after each coat. I then removed the masking from the upper fuselage and the white paint lifted in a few places. These were in an area where the decals would cover them. I did hand brush some white paint on the spots where the paint was lifted.

I then added the decals in steps, letting them dry thoroughly before moving on to the final assembly.

The wheels and props where painted flat black and the hubs and spinners were then hand painted with flat aluminum. The wing was attached to the fuselage with a minimum

of glue, since it was a pretty tight. A few paint touch ups were required, such as painting the exhaust stacks and the landing gear assemblies.

The decals went out with very little silvering. There were decals for the leading edge boots on the wings and elevators. They were left off the leading edge of the wings, as I used the base black undercoat for the de-icing boots. I was going to use them on the elevators, but they were too hard to fold over and stay put, while the decals dried. So I painted the boots black. The decals for the windows and nose went on very nicely. The nose decals came in 2 pieces so it was easy to position them and not use a lot of setting solution.



This was an enjoyable build and I'm learning every time I need to paint a metal or white finish. A friend of mine asks me to build this for him and a few other models. He's decided to play with his large "O" scale layout, rather than get frustrated trying to build models since some of the techniques and ideas have passed him by.