

AH-64D Longbow Apache

Hobby Boss No. 82719 1/72



By Paul Gasiorowski

The Apache was developed as *Model 77* by Hughes Helicopters for the United States Army's Advanced Attack Helicopter program to replace the AH-1 Cobra. First flown on 30 September 1975, the AH-64 features a nose-mounted sensor suite for target acquisition and night vision systems. The U.S. Army selected the AH-64 over the Bell YAH-63 in 1976, awarding Hughes Helicopters a pre-production contract for two more aircraft. In 1982, the Army approved full production. McDonnell Douglas continued production and development after purchasing Hughes Helicopters from Summa Corporation in 1984. The first production **AH-64D Apache Longbow**, a greatly-upgraded version of the original Apache, was delivered to the Army in March 1997. AH-64 production is continued by the Boeing Defense, Space & Security division; over one thousand AH-64s have been produced to date.

This kit consists of 2 light gray plastic sprues and 1 clear piece for the cockpit. As usual I washed the sprues in some soapy water to remove any remaining production oils. To add some detail to the cockpit I purchased an Eduard self adhesive detail set.

Starting with the cockpit I painted the seats flat black. I then applied the self adhesive seat belts. These are in a light blue color, which makes them stand out. The cockpit tub is painted a blue grey color. While the cockpit tub was drying I assembled many of the other assemblies, IE, mini rocket pods, the Hellfire missiles and the two engine assemblies. I also assembled the main rotor and tail assemblies.



The cockpit tub was then glued to the right side of the fuselage. Also I put in place the pieces for the front rotor shaft and the shaft for the mini gun. Also I didn't want to attach the rear rotor assembly, because it was a little delicate. I did cement the holding piece for rear rotor in place, so the rotor could be removed as needed. The fuselage halves were then cemented and put aside to dry. After letting the assembly dry, I attached all the little pieces, the engine pods, the rear stabilizer, the hand holds, etc. The stub wings were attached, which holds the Hellfire missiles and mini missile pods.

Before painting the canopy I dipped it in Future and put it aside to dry for a day or two.

There is a lot of photo etch to put on the seats, also control panels. Some of these were self adhesive, but I used some Elmer's glue to hold them in place. The photo etch adds a lot of detail than can be seen thru the canopy. Some exterior photo etch is used for the targeting assembly and a piece at the rear of the fuselage.

The cockpit was filled with wet tissue while I painted the fuselage with Model Master Olive Drab, to represent the colors of the 3rd Infantry Division Apaches based in Southern Iraq in 2002. The rotor assemblies and blades were painted Flat Black. After the paint dried, I touched up the mechanical parts of the rotor with some steel paint.



The cockpit glass had some photo etch detail to be added. Very tiny pieces like the outside handles. These should be added after everything is glued down to keep them from popping off.



It's not worth the trouble of adding them, it seems like they like to disappear. It took some extra sanding to get the cockpit to sit correctly on the fuselage. The cockpit glass was added after all the decals have been added. Some touch up was required around the cockpit area.