

1/48 Tamiya F4U-1D Corsair



By Mike Hanlon

The definitive Marine Corps fighter bomber of World War II the -1D model incorporated all of the lessons learned from three years of development and combat . Internal changes first made in service to the F4U-1 and 1A were finalized as well as the incorporation of factory hard points for additional fuel, bombs and rockets. The -1D was the first US operated Corsair approved for carrier operations.

First released in 1996, the Tamiya F4U-1 Birdcage and F4U-1A Corsair kits were part of the 1990's golden age of 1/48 kits produced by Tamiya, Hasegawa., ProModeler and Accurate Miniatures. The -1D was re-released in 2002 with improved decals and the inclusion of a "Moto Tug" tow vehicle. The second release addressed the only major shortcoming of the original release, the lack of instrument panel detail. The instrument panel is molded with blank dial faces but no raised details. The second release includes an instrument panel decal to fill this void.

Construction begins with the interior. Tamiya includes a great deal of detail which cannot be seen once the fuselage has been assembled, but you'll know it's there. As stated earlier the most recent release includes an instrument panel decal (all clear except for the gauge detail in white) and a seat harness decal. For my kit I used the seat harness and color instrument panel from an Eduard Zoom set for the -1D. The interior of the -1D was Interior Green below the side consoles and seat back and flat black above the consoles. A full breakdown of US Navy and Marine Aircraft interior colors can be found at:

http://www.ipmsstockholm.org/magazine/2004/05/stuff_eng_interior_colours_us_part3.htm



Tamiya designed the Corsair kits to be built with the wings folded or unfolded. The wings assemble easily if folded. When assembled unfolded, the outer wing panels ride high and are difficult to align. One way around this is to assemble the upper and lower sections of the wings together using styrene strips as tabs and omitting the interior wing parts. I was afraid the assembled wing would be too fragile, but it turned out to

be sturdy enough for normal handling during assembly and painting.

The remainder of the assembly was simple and straight forward. For nitpickers, Tamiya molded the flaps in the down position, but included a hole that served as a mounting step in one that was an postwar modification. I filled the step with scrap styrene and superglue.



Painting was simple, Gloss Sea Blue and lots of it! I used Xtracrylix Gloss Sea Blue. I liked the coverage, but the paint was prone to chipping. Fortunately the paint self-levels nicely when I re-sprayed these areas.



There are a number of decal sheets available from SuperScale, Aeromaster, Eagle Strike and Cutting Edge and as usual I have a bunch of them. I actually hadn't finalized which scheme I was going with until I actually began decaling. I used Cutting Edge 48-124 choosing an aircraft from VMF-511 stationed on USS Block Island in July, 1945.

This is the first model I have completed in quite some time. With a little modeling skill, it can be a stunner. Highly recommended.