

Hasegawa 1/72 Scale Focke-Wulf Fw190D-9 "Yellow Tail"



It goes without saying that the Focke-Wulf Fw190 will always remain a hallmark aircraft in aviation history. With that said I wish to delve into the particulars of Hasagawa's execution of this aircraft and my build experience and save the historical fact for the historians.

To begin, before opening the box the artwork on the cover is a rather striking representation of the aircraft which, in my opinion, says "Buy me" all over it. Once opened you are greeted with deceptively simple but well detailed kit. There are four main sprues incorporating the bulk of the model. Two smaller sprues are also provided for either of the two canopies, the "straight and "blown" type that was utilized on Fw190s during WWII.

The instructions are typical of Hasegawa. In this case they came in the form of two separate sheets. The first is the standard four panel construction sheet. As is often the case with Hasegawa they issue multiple kits with different decals but the plastic and construction generally remain the same. This is the case with this model as the paint and decal information on the back of the four panel sheet differs with what the box depicts. This explains the second instruction sheet which addresses the exterior painting and decals that correspond with kit box art and model description. Three paint scheme options are provided, all of which have a "Yellow Tail" theme.

Upon further evaluation of the primary kit parts I noticed that the recessed panel lines and detail are consistent with Hasegawa's high standards. Dry fitting of the parts proved to demonstrate further high quality of the kit as the fuselage halves and the wings matched up perfectly. The wings fit to the fuselage so tight you almost don't need to glue them on. I can't speak to overall accuracy of scale and

shape but it looked correct to me when the model was finished. I would say Hasegawa did their homework on this one.



As a result of this evaluation I decided to build this model right out of the box. I felt it would make a great build to enter in the “Out of the box” category in some up coming model shows. On that basis construction started with the cockpit area. Again this model is typical of many Hasegawa 1/72 models in which the cockpit detail comes in the form of decals to be used on flat surfaces within the cockpit area. To be fair in the case of the Fw190 it is a rather nondescript cockpit in real life and difficult to see into (in 1/72 scale) with the instrument panel recessed deep underneath the shroud. For those that want some added detail an Eduard photo etch set would be an impressive addition, but again you really have to look to see it.

I shot the cockpit RLM 66 Grey and then applied some future floor wax to gloss it up. The purpose of this was to prevent the decals from “silvering” once applied. Once the decals were on I then brushed a touch of flat base to each of the surfaces to flat them back down. After that I dry brushed some floquil Bright Silver to weather the cockpit and bring some life to it.

As for the cockpit seat, it provided no detail with regard to seat belts. Per IPMS rules masking tape seatbelts are permissible within the out of box category rules. I made a couple of shoulder straps and lap belts accordingly out of masking tape. Painting was a simple affair using Model Master Enamel Camouflage Grey for the straps and a dot of silver paint for the buckles. In the end, the belts overlapped each other in the bucket of the seat that there was no need for much

more detail regarding the buckles and such. I felt the effect was pretty successful without a whole lot of effort.



Continuing with construction, once the cockpit was finished the fuselage halves came together. One nice thing about this model is you can glue the fuselage halves together then install the cockpit from underneath. The wings are in three parts, one lower part for the entire span and two for the top surfaces. They came together nicely and were attached to the fuselage. As I mentioned earlier the overall fit was excellent and only a couple of places required the use of putty and a bit of sanding. One area in particular that did need addressing was at the wing fuselage interface along the leading edge of the wing. With three main parts coming together at that spot it stands to reason there might be a slight issue but with a little putty and clean up it looked good.

After the wing was in place the horizontal stabilizers were put on. I'm very particular about getting these on right as they tend to be a model killer when it comes to judging models in a show. There have been countless times I have seen beautifully executed models with impressive paint schemes only to be let down by asymmetrical horizontal stabilizers. It's a basic modeling skill and if they are off, it knocks the model out of the running for an award right there. In the case of the Fw190 the horizontal stabilizers are simple to attach but there is a little play where they interface so it is best to take time to get them on right.

At this point it is best to address subassemblies such as the landing gear and propeller and spinner and the beginning steps to integrate them into the rest of the model. Before painting the various colors as called out in the instructions I do my preshading. Preshading is meant to be a very subtle effect that combined

with post shading will provide a very convincing effect with regard to overall weathering. I charge my airbrush with gloss black paint and shoot very fine lines into the panel lines of the model. I will also address any raised detail on the model as that is likely a place to collect dirt in real life. Once the main aircraft is completed I address the finer components such as the landing gear, gear doors and such. Once this step is completed I can start work on the appropriate interior colors, such as the wheel well and landing gear. In the case of the Fw190 Model Master RLM 02 Grey was used. I shot with very thin coats so as to allow some of the preshading to show through. Next I masked these areas to include the windscreen and canopy parts to protect them while I continued with the overall paint scheme of the aircraft.



In the case of the Fw190D-9 “Yellow Tail” I used RLM 76 Light Blue for the lower portion of the fuselage and the underside of the wing. On the top surfaces of the fuselage and wings I used a combination of RLM 74 Grey and RLM 82 Green. One of the most challenging aspects to WWII German camouflage is the “mottled” effect on either side of the fuselage. I’ve come up with a technique that I think successfully addresses that issue.

When doing a “mottled” scheme it is best to start with the lightest color, in this case the RLM 76 Light Blue. Then change over to the darker colors for the top

surfaces. In the area where all the colors meet (roughly a third down the side of the fuselage) this is where various shapes and tails from the upper surface should be shot. Shooting very minute amounts of paint under low PSI this can be accomplished. Have some shapes stand alone while others overlap each other. Once that is accomplished the model probably still doesn't look quite right. The darker colors contrast too much for the RLM 76 they are sprayed over. So to correct that, recharge the airbrush with RLM 76 and just dust the model with it. This will tone down the overall effect and provide an appropriate mottled effect. If too much RLM 76 is dusted on, just repeat the process and it will likely create an even better effect with stronger and lighter colors showing through each other.



After the general camo scheme was established I now addressed the yellow portion of the tail. The only challenge in this area was to mask a perfect square on either side of the tail to account for the swastika decal (applied later) as the field behind it was RLM 76. With the masks in place I first shot the area white as yellow paint tends to be translucent. With an opaque white background I shot the yellow to get the right effect.

As for the propeller, this was a simple process. The propeller blades are separate pieces and shot with RLM 71 Dark Green as per the instructions. The spinner was shot with flat black. Once dry I glossed the spinner with a shot of Future Floor Wax so I could address the white spinner decal. This is a very tricky decal to apply but I found that if I apply a lot of Microscale Decal Set it will gradually conform to the rounded surface of the spinner. With a little time and patience it will settle down and look good. Returning to the rest of the model it too received a full coat of Future Floor Wax to gloss it up prior to decals and post weathering.

Once dry I applied the decals according to the instructions with little issue and completed mating of the landing gear to the aircraft.

Now came the final weathering. I prefer to make a slurry of pastel chalk in water. I apply it generously over the model. Working in sections I apply the slurry then with a damp paper towel I wipe the excess chalk away always wiping in the direction of how air would flow over the aircraft. After this set I will address a couple of areas with dry pastels. In the case of the Fw190 I used some dry pastels around the exhaust stacks and along the wings corresponding with the aircraft's cannons.



When applying dry pastels they have to go on with an over done look. The reason for this is I will finish the model with a coat of dull coat, in this case I used Testors Dull Coat and it in turn absorbed much of the pastel chalk. The final bit of weathering was to dry brush some silver, again Floquil Bright Silver to various appropriate places such as the leading edges of the wings and around the exterior of the cockpit area. At this point I could have called the model finished but per IMPS rules I could add antenna's and still be eligible for the out of box category.

I had chosen to go with an Fw190 that had the "blown" canopy which presented an interesting challenge. In the case of the Fw190s with the blown canopy, there was no up take for the antenna that ran from the vertical stabilizer to the canopy itself. As a result the antenna would go slack and lay across the fuselage once when ever the canopy was open. After thinking about what material to use for the

antenna I came up with the idea to use a copper wire strand out of the cord to a single earpiece headphone, like that used to listen to baseball games on a transistor radio. One strand of wire was the perfect gauge for my project. Now the trick was to get it to lay right and look realistic on the model.

I found that I could press it against the model and got it to accept the basic shape and curvature of the fuselage. This in turn allowed me to apply a slight amount of Emler's Wood Glue to the underside of the wire where ever it came in contact with the model. It's a very weak bond but the effect was very convincing to me. All had to do was touch the wire with a bit of silver paint using a fine brush and I was done.

I'm really happy with the way this model came together have to say it exceeded expectations. It's also the quickest build I have ever done. I completed the project in two, two day stretches (four days total). As I originally stated it is deceptively simple but in the end it makes into a very nice model. As far as models go I would say this model is about as shake and bake as they say, as it gets. So if you want to challenge yourself in attempting a "mottled" camo scheme I would recommend this kit as the rest of it falls together nicely.

