

HASEGAWA HURRICANE MK.I

By Paul Hackmann

Background

After the retirement of Sir Hugh Trenchard (RAF Chief of Staff) in 1929, a review of the British Air Defense policies was done by his successor. Sir Trenchard was a proponent of bombers and during his command very little budget was spent on air defense, most of the funds went towards the development of the strategic air arm. The RAF Fighter Command was forced to make due with WWI-style fabric bi-plane fighters. The first of the specifications for a new fighter were announced in September 1930. Out of this design requirement came 2 monoplane fighters, both losing out to the Gloster Gladiator, such was the state of fighter development in the UK.

By 1934 events on the European Continent solidified the need to update the equipment of the air defense command. So a new specification was announced for a mono-wing airplane that could hold 8 Colt-designed .303 machineguns in the wings. Hawker put together a design that was accepted for prototyping in February 1935. The prototype flew its first flight seven months later, several months before the first Spitfire and after the first Bf 109. The RAF placed an order for 600 of the Hawker aircraft in June 1936. Hawker officially adopted the name Hurricane later in the same month.

Initial production models had fabric covered wings and a 2-bladed fixed-pitch Watts propeller. By 1939 over 490 Hurricane I's had delivered to the Fighter Command. The majority of Hurricanes participating in the battle for France were of this model. Just coming off of the production line was the latest version of the Hurricane. This model had all-metal wings, pilot armor and either a deHavilland Hamilton 2-speed 3-bladed propeller or a Rotol constant speed 3-bladed propeller. During the period between the fall of France and the start of the Battle of Britain, RAF squadrons were re-equipped with newer Hurricanes had replaced most all of the initial models in squadron service. So that by July 1940 the older production model had been regulated to a noncombatant role.

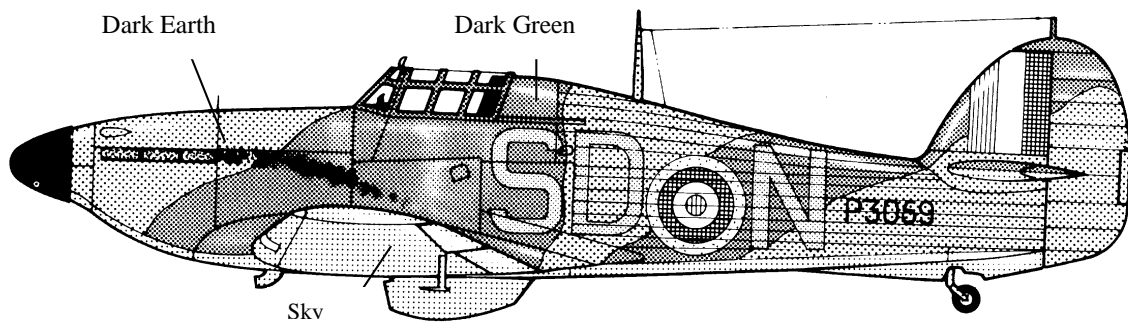
The Hurricane saw most of its success from July through September 1940 during the Battle of Britain. Experience gathered fighting earlier on the continent showed that above 18,000 the Hurricane was outclassed by the Bf 109 but could hold its own against the Bf 110. Thus the primary mission of Hurricane pilots became attacking the bombers of the Luftwaffe. Tactics were set so that the Spitfires attacked and drew off the fighter cover, remember that the Bf 109 had approximately 20 minutes of combat flying over England before it had to head for home. Once the German fighter cover were locked in engaging the Spitfires and either out of fuel or ammunition, the Hurricanes could attack the lightly defended bombers. These tactics were highly successful with over 130 Hurricane pilots becoming aces during this period.

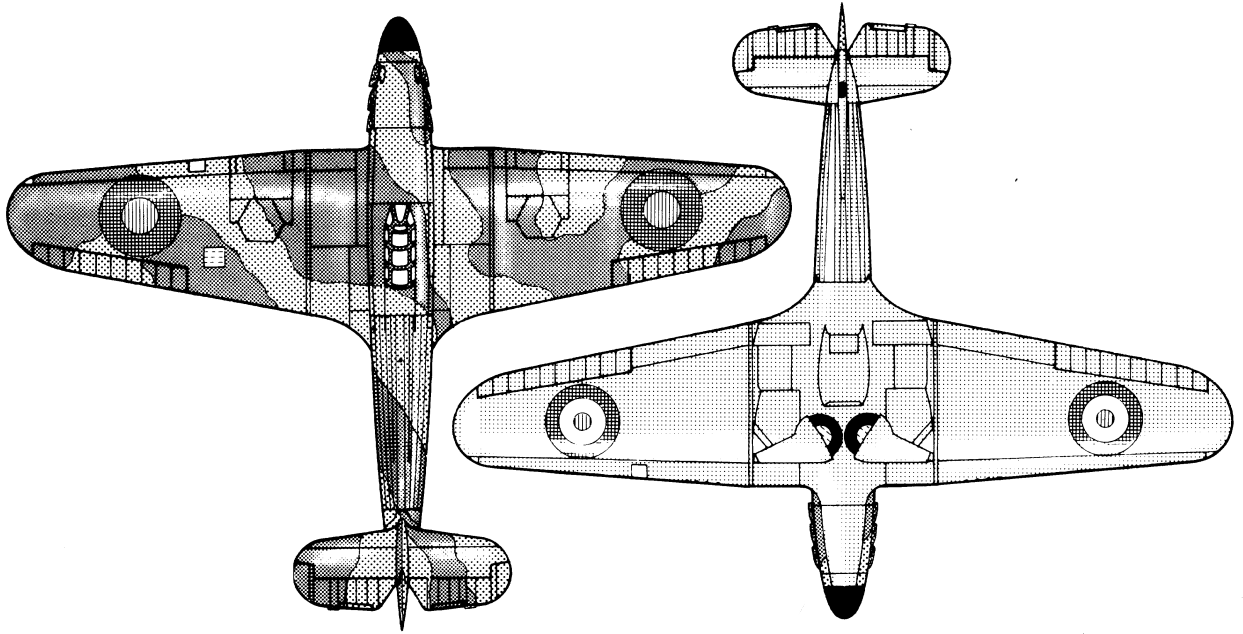
Several more variants of the Hurricane were developed from the Mk.I, each improving a shortcoming of the airframe, powerplant or armament. FAA versions were also developed, serving on both fleet and escort carriers in the North Atlantic. By 1941 the Hurricane was being surpassed by newly developed airplanes and by 1942 was relegated to Coastal Command service.

Markings

The markings I selected were for a Hurricane flown by Sgt. James Lacey and contained on SuperScale sheet #72-294 Hawker Hurricane Aces – Mk.I and Mk.II. Sgt. Lacey was the highest scoring RAF pilot during the Battle of Britain. He achieved ace status while fighting with 501 Squadron in France with 5 victories, 3 of which were scored in a single day; May 13, 1940. Ten more victories were added between July 1940 and September. From September to October during the London Blitz, he added 8 more to his tally for a total of 23. At the close of the battle, Lacey was not only the top scorer during the battle, but was the RAF's top ace.

The camouflage scheme was the typical Day Scheme for fighters of the period, Dark Green/Dark Earth and Sky. The code letters for Lacey's plane were SD \odot L and were in Medium Sea Gray. SuperScale indicates that the L was chalked on due to Lacey's refusal to have it permanently applied. *I found several different artist conceptions for aircraft flown by Lacey, none of which corresponded to the markings supplied by SuperScale. So, putting my faith in the hope that the person who researched the markings was as dedicated as Norris, I used them as indicated.* Aircraft identification letters V7357 were in black (Note: on the right side this was partially obscured by the letters SD). Other markings were as depicted in the drawings below of another 501 Sqdn. aircraft.





Building the Kit

The Hasegawa Hurricane Mk.I kit is made up of 9 trees containing 42 parts. All the main sprues are molded in gray styrene and feature engraved panel lines. The fuselage features a separate nosepiece to allow for the production of the Mk.II variant at a later time. While I was at the National's this year Kendall Model Company was unloading their 1/72-scale resin sets, including the Mk.I update set. This set includes a complete cockpit, flaps, ailerons, rudder and elevators. The price was right, so I purchased a set. Both the kit and this update set were used to complete my Hurricane.

Some of my reference photographs show parked Hurricanes with the flaps dropped, the rudder slightly askew and elevators in a slight nose down position. So construction begins with removing the kit flaps, rudder and elevators. This is a simple task, but it does seem sacrilegious to cut up a Hasegawa kit. Once everything has been removed, the saw cuts on each stabilizer have to be shaped with a round file to facilitate attaching the resin elevators. A flat file and some sandpaper clean up the rest of the cuts.

The next task was to fit the resin cockpit onto the fuselage sides. While this looks pretty good, I had some trouble getting it to fit into the Hasegawa kit. Each sidewall had to be trimmed in height and length for the cockpit floor to fit. Once I got everything in place, the cockpit was painted with a base coat of RAF Interior Green, with instruments picked out in black and drybrushed white. I recommend attaching each side of the fuselage cowling to its respective fuselage side, instead of doing it as described in the instruction sheet. In this case, attach E2 (Right Cowl) to A10 (Right Fuselage side) and E5 to A13. This ensures that you don't end up with the nose and fuselage being different cross-section widths. Once this has been done, it is now easy to insert the completed cockpit and put the two completed halves together. Then attach the lower cowl to the fuselage. This completes the basic fuselage assembly.

Now comes the wing assembly. I began by marking the location of the eight .303 machineguns on the lower wing (C1). Since the wing is set up for the later mark with the 2 cannons, there are 2 shell ejection ports just aft of the landing light on each wing that must be filled. Attaching the two upper wing halves (B1 & B2) and drilling out the 8 machinegun openings completes the assembly. The leading edges need some cleaning up and when this was done, the wing was attached to the fuselage. The fit is quite good, except for one spot where the molding meets a two 90° angles. The wing portion doesn't quite meet the fuselage and leaves a small hole. This happens on both sides and some filler is needed. To finish up the fuselage, I attached the fixed portions of the horizontal stabilizers and the oil cooler and carburetor intake. A little clean up on the glue lines and its ready for painting.

I tried something different this time in painting the model that I picked up from one of the latest Scale Aviation Modeler magazines. I oversprayed each panel line with narrow band

of flat black, leaving the area between the lines alone. The undersurface was then sprayed with just enough Sky to partially obscure the black undercoat. This gives the color around the perimeter of each panel a slightly darker hue and gives a nice representation of a weathered surface. This technique worked very well on the single under-surface color, but was not as effective on the upper surface. The Dark Earth and Dark Green were too opaque and covered the black too well. Once the primary colors had been completed, the fuselage was given a couple light coats of Future for protection. The model was completed with Superscale decals and finished with light coats of Future and Floquil Flat Coat.

This was a fun project that allowed me to stretch my skills a little. I had not worked with resin aftermarket parts before as they are usually too expensive, but at a couple of dollars I couldn't pass them up. I did regret slicing up the kit initially, because I didn't have the confidence I could complete it. Fortunately, the Hasegawa kit is very well engineered and goes together without any fussiness. This gave me a great basis for experimentation, since I didn't really have to correct anything on the kit. In all, I'm pleased with the way it turned out and you'll get a chance to see it in January's meeting. I'll bring it along with the earlier Academy Mk.II for comparison.

Some Aftermarket Parts for the Hurricane Mk 1

<u>Manufacturer</u>	Description	Category	<u>Cost</u>
Aeromaster Products	72003 Battle of Britain	Decals	\$5.00
Aeromaster Products	72005 Battle of Britain Set	Decals	\$5.00
Aeromaster Products	72024 Foreign Hurricanes	Decals	\$5.00
Aeromaster Products	72029 British Hurricane Aces	Decals	\$5.00
Aeromaster Products	72050 Spitfire/ Hurricane Roundels	Decals	\$5.00
Aeromaster Products	72051 Spitfire/ Hurricane Roundels	Decals	\$5.00
Aeromaster Products	72118 Hurricanes at War Pt.2	Decals	\$5.00
Aeromaster Products	72119 Hurricanes at War Pt.3	Decals	\$5.00
Aeromaster Products	72134 Hurricanes at War Pt.1	Decals	\$5.00
Aeromaster Products	72137 Battle of Britain Hurricanes	Decals	\$5.00
Aires	72015 Packard-Merlin V-1650 Engine	Resin	\$7.00
Airwaves	2065 Hawker Hurricane Mk.I Detail Set	Photoetch	\$7.00

Eduard	72059 Hawker Hurricane Detail Set	Photoetch	\$10.00
Eduard	72207 Hurricane Mk.I Detail Set	Photoetch	\$10.00
InScale	Finnish Hurricanes	Decals	\$11.00
Jaguar	7202 Hawker Hurricane Detail Set	Photoetch	\$14.00
KMC	727010 Hurricane Mk.1 Update Set	Resin	\$8.00
Magna Models	Hurricane Fabric Wing	Resin	\$21.00
Parts Accessories	72063 Hurricane Mk.I Detail Set	Photoetch	\$9.19
PD Models	721101 Hurricane Mk I Propeller	Metal	\$3.00
Propagteam	Hurricane Mk I - D. Bader	Decals	\$3.00
Propagteam	Hurricane Mk I – S. Tuck	Decals	\$3.00
Squadron Products	9109 Hawker Hurricane Canopy Set	Vacuform	\$3.00
SuperScale	Hurricane MkI Battle of Britain	Decals	\$6.00
True Details	72041 Hawker Hurricane Wheel Set	Resin	\$2.50

References

HAWKER HURRICANE; Scale Aircraft Modeling; Vol. 12 No. 11, Aug. 1990; Alan W. Hall

HURRICANE IN ACTION; 1986; Squadron/Signal Publications; Carrollton, TX; Jerry Scutts

HAWKER HURRICANE VARIANT BRIEFING; Wings of Fame; Vol. 2, 1996; Fancis K. Mason

Hurricane Aces: 1939-40; 1998; OSPREY PUBLISHING; GREAT BRITAIN; TONY HOLMES