

1/48 Hasegawa P-40N



By Mike Hanlon

The definitive US Army Air Corps fighter in the eighteen months following Pearl Harbor, the P-40 fought in the Pacific, China, North Africa, Italy and the Aleutians. The final model to see combat, the P-40N saw service with the US, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, Brazil, France, and New Zealand.

Several manufacturers have molded the P-40 in the past, but no kit has been considered definitive. Enter Hasegawa with their newly released P-40E/K/M/N. While certainly the most accurate and detailed kit produced, the Hasegawa molds are designed to accommodate the Allison powered P-40 variants and as such the assembly of the kit is more complicated than previous manufacturers' efforts.

Assembly starts with the fuselage parts. Each "half" is assembled from four parts. The tail is a separate piece, to allow replacement with a shorter tailpiece for the P-40E. The P-40N has a set of inserts to allow for its later style canopy. The E/K/M kits rear cockpit glazing has inserts to allow for the earlier individual glass panels. Hasegawa's instructions would have you add these parts after the forward fuselage and cockpit area have been assembled, but it makes more sense to assemble each "half" to ensure a minimum of filling. I used Mr. Surfacer and the filling took repeated steps to get an acceptable finish. The last two inserts are on the forward fuselage and are for the later air filter holes used on the P-40M/N. On the subsequent P-40N fuselage I followed a suggestion made on Hyperscale to use white glue to attach these pieces. I used Microscale Crystal Clear and sank the piece in place, wiping the excess with a wet paper towel. This has the added advantage of minimizing the seams around the

inserts.



After the fuselage halves had been filled I turned to the cockpit interior. Curtiss used a variation of interior green, which has been cleverly dubbed Curtiss interior green. The few photographs show that this color is not that different from interior green so I just went with Gunze Sangyo's interior green with a dark wash and drybrushing. I then added Eduard colored photo-etched seat belts. The instrument panel can be painted or Hasegawa provides three separate decals. I used the main panel decal and painted lower panels myself. Forward of the cockpit is the trunking for the oil coolers. Once assembled the interior takes a little fiddling to get into the fuselage, but once set in place fits well and the fuselage can be assembled without difficulty. The final pieces added were the oil cooler intake lip and the carburetor intake lip. Both these pieces require minor filling and sanding to blend in.

Turning to the wings you are once again faced with inserts. P-40D's, L's and early N models had two guns in each wings instead of four. Unless Hasegawa intends to make Merlin engined P-40L's this makes little sense. Only fifty D models were made and none saw combat. The early four gun N models also never saw combat and retained panels and fittings for all six guns. The lower ejection chute inserts fit perfectly with no filling necessary. After the wings have been assembled the inserts for the machine guns can be added. These require careful fitting and will still require some filling and sanding. From here the rest of the kit assembles easily with no real problems.

For markings I chose an Australian "N in Olive Drab over Neutral Gray with White ID markings. The paints were Xtracrylix Olive Drab and Faded OD over Xtracrylix Neutral

Gray. The decals are from Aeromaster.



While not the simplest kits, the Hasegawa P-40 series does give a choice of all major Allison P-40's. I currently have a "K" and an "M" in the works.



