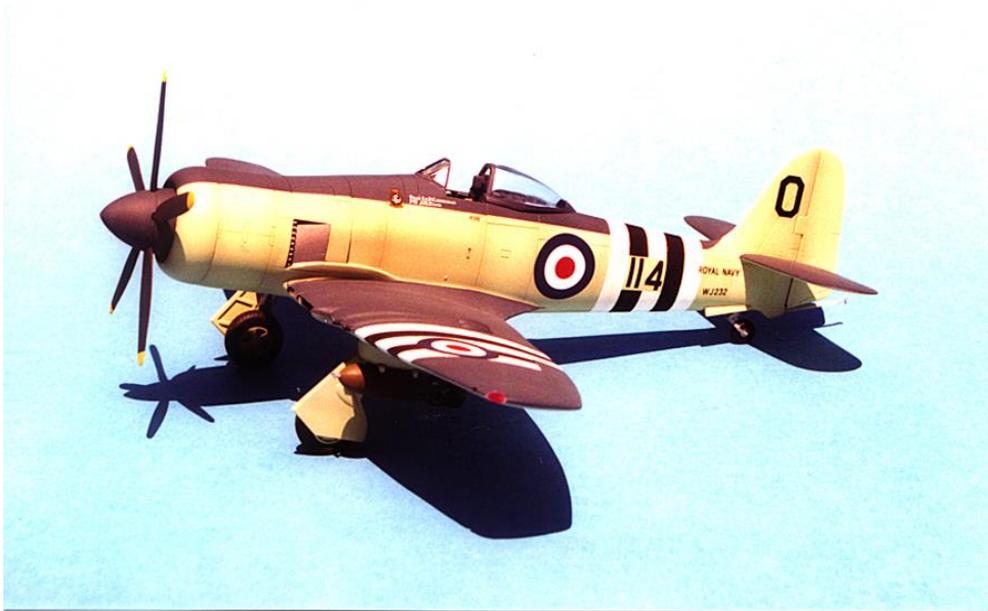


Hawker Sea Fury Hobby Craft - 1/48th Scale

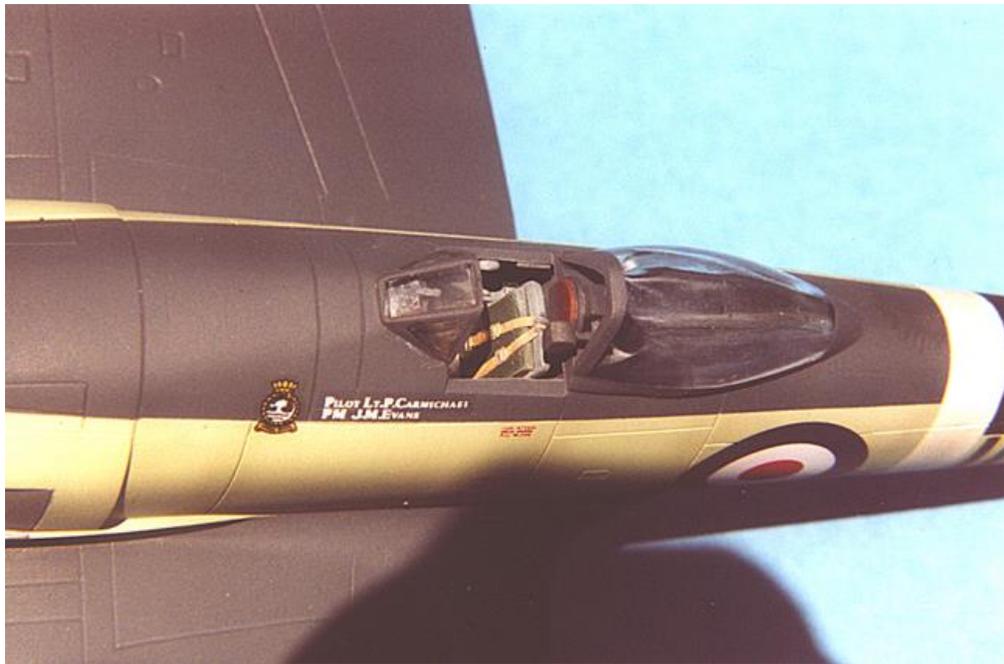


By Dick Smith

The Hawker Sea Fury came too late to see action in World War II, but was ready in time to distinguish itself in several post war hot spots, including Korea. The Sea Fury's role in the Korean War began shortly after North Korean forces crossed the 38th parallel and attacked troops in the south. Royal Navy ships, operating in and around Japan, were called to serve in a combined British and American Task Force under the flag of the United Nations. The aircraft carrier HMS Triumph was among the first to see action with a dozen Seafire FR.47's and another 12 Firefly FR.1's. Admittedly these aircraft were nearing the end of their service life. With maintenance problems and battle losses mounting, it was evident a more modern fighter was needed to support UN forces.

In May of 1952, the carrier HMS Ocean arrived on station near the Korean peninsula. She carried 802 Squadron's 21 Sea Fury FB.11's, and 825 Squadron's 12 Firefly FR.5's. It was at this time; the Russian-built MiG-15 began to make its presence felt. On August 9, 1952, four Sea Furies were attacked by a flight of MiG's. In the battle that ensued, Lieutenant Peter Carmichael, flying WJ 232: 114-O, shot down one of the attacking MiG-15's. Reportedly, this was the first time a British propeller driven fighter had shot down a North Korean jet aircraft. Hobbycraft's 1/48th scale Sea Fury FB.11, is a "basic" kit with plenty of room for detailing. Kit HC-1531 is the beginning of my recreation of Peter Carmichael's "MiG killer." Airwaves came to the rescue with an etched brass detail set AEC-48001. This set provides a pair of realistic vent grills that are located below the engine compartment along with a number of parts to enhance the

cockpit. The instrument panel is particularly well done. Squadron/Signal has two vacuformed canopies to replace the thick kit offerings. True Details provides a pair of "weighted" resin wheels. Several aftermarket decal sheets are also available.



Construction starts with the cockpit. Throw it away! At a recent IPMS swap meet, I was fortunate to come across a full resin cockpit for my Sea Fury produced by Little Fokkers. (This company specializes in cast details for many World War I aircraft.) I used the Airwaves etched brass instrument panel and film instrument sheet. I saved the kit seat and used it with the addition of some cushions made from sculpted putty. Seat belts were made from typing paper with brass Airwaves British WWII style buckles. The seat is painted a medium gray with dark green cushions. The belts are tan with dull aluminum hardware.

Several sources indicate the cockpits of the FB.II's were painted flat black. I opted to paint my cockpit a dark gray, Model Master, FS-36081, so as not to lose all of the detail from the resin parts. I highlighted areas with a dry brushing of a lighter gray and dots of red, green and yellow to indicate switches and control levers.

Before trapping the cockpit inside the fuselage halves, slip the right and left exhaust stubs into the slots in the side of the fuselage. Place the prop shaft into the hole in the nose and the top portion of the tail wheel well into its slots at the rear of the fuselage. With the fuselage closed and cemented together, set it aside to dry. Locate the two scribed plastic grills on the forward portion of the bottom section of the wing. These molded plastic grills must be carefully removed and are replaced with the tiny brass

etchings from the Airwaves set. These fittings are delicate and add much to the finished model. With the grills attached with superglue, cement the main gear wells into place. Be sure to drill out the holes you'll need in the bottom of the wing to mount the long-range tanks and/or the bomb mounting racks. Complete the wing construction by gluing the right and left top parts in place.

The wings are then attached to the fuselage. The fit is not good and you will need some filling and sanding in order to get a seamless joint. This part of the construction gave me the most problems. The compound curves where the wing meets the fuselage are troublesome.

The engine cowling, minus the five-bladed prop and spinner, goes together next. Attach this assembly to the fuselage. This cowl seam runs along a panel line and will require careful gluing so as not to damage the scribed area. The cylinders are difficult to see when located behind the huge spinner. I painted them flat silver to make them stand out and to give the illusion of an engine behind the spinner.

The wing marker light areas are cut out with a razor saw. Sections of red and blue transparent plastic pegs are glued into the notches. (The blue color of the transparent plastic pegs I used closely matches the "green" wing marker lights.) File and sand the pieces to conform to the shape of the wing. Polish the clear plastic with fine grit. Mask these areas until all painting is finished.

The basic construction is now complete. After an checking the seams, I sprayed a mist coat of lacquer-based automobile primer over the entire model. A heavier coat of the primer can be applied after the initial application dries. (This is nasty smelling stuff and I recommend using a painter's mask while spraying it.) The benefit of the primer is it seals putty and does not allow it to shrink with age. It also fills small flaws in construction joints. When the primer is dry, I wet sand it with 600-grade wet and dry paper. When sanding is complete, wash the model thoroughly. Use an old toothbrush to remove sanding debris from panel lines.



The Sea Furies used in the Korean War were painted Sky and Extra Dark Sea Gray. I used the decal sheet from War Eagle, sheet #WE4D021, which has complete painting directions. The decals and painting instructions were prepared with assistance from the curator of the Fleet Air Arm Museum and correspondence with Lt. Carmichael. I used Model Master Sky and Extra Dark Sea Gray for the basic colors. When they were dry, mask and paint the black and white Korean theater identification markings. Each stripe is $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide "in scale." Using the decal instruction sheet, I masked an area one and one quarter inches wide on the top and bottom of the wings and around the aft portion of the fuselage. This area was sprayed white. When dry, I masked off three white stripes and sprayed the two black areas. This is tricky and must be done with care in order to get sharp demarcation lines. Korean War I.D. stripes were different in size from the familiar invasion stripes of World War II. When the stripes are dry, mask and paint an area of "Sky" to match the size of the space required for the "114" that is inserted into the fuselage stripes. The inboard section of the control surfaces of the top and bottom of the wings did not have the black and white striping. Mask and spray the proper colors in these areas. The engine exhaust area is masked and painted flat aluminum. I used streaks of medium gray to simulate exhaust strains in this area. The blades of the propeller are sprayed flat black with yellow tips. The spinner is extra dark sea gray. Gloss the entire aircraft with Future or Testor's Glosscoat to give a smooth, glossy surface for the decals to adhere.

War Eagle provides all of the marking necessary to duplicate Lieutenant Carmichael's Sea Fury except the British national roundels. These are available from several decal makers. I took mine from Super Scale sheet #72-18. The red, white and blue roundels are quite thin and conform well to the panel lines. But they are somewhat transparent over the black and white I.D. bands. I had to apply three individual roundels to the top

of the wings in order to get a complete covering of the stripes. Some decal sheets show Lt. Carmichael's aircraft with a "MiG kill marking." According to the now retired Commander Carmichael, WJ-232 never had a "kill marking" applied. All aircraft in a battle zone accumulate dirt on painted surfaces. I used a thin mixture of Tamiya's "smoke" to show grime on the lighter areas and light gray in streaks on the darker surfaces. As with all weathering techniques, go lightly and build up slowly. The True Details weighted tires were painted Gunze Sangyo "tire black." The landing gear is flat aluminum with a dark gray wash to bring out details. Gear doors are painted the same color as the undersides of the aircraft. The kit supplied wing cannons were discarded and replaced with micro tubing cut to the proper length. The protruding barrels were brushed with Testor's "gunmetal." Carefully trim the Squadron/Signal canopy and windscreen from the vacuform sheet. Mask and paint the frames Extra Dark Sea Gray. Coat the clear portions with Future to make them sparkle. A final coat of Testor's Dullcoat is applied over the entire aircraft to give a uniform finish. When dry, use white glue to attach the clear parts. Unmask the wing marker lights and brush on a coat of Future to make them shine. I found building this kit to be a bit of a challenge especially in dealing with the seam where the underside of the wing meets the fuselage. However, the use of the aftermarket products takes an ordinary kit to a higher level. This is an example of the aftermarket parts exceeding the price of the kit itself.

