

## 1/48 Hasegawa Spitfire Mk. IXc



By Mike Hanlon

I have always suffered from First Kid on the Block Syndrome. If there is a new kit is being released that I am interested in, I want it now. This kit was released in 2001 and after looking high and low (the Internet wasn't quite as friendly back then) I found one. Twelve years later I finally built it.



This kit was actually built concurrently with the Airfix Mark 22 Spitfire that I bought in 1998 so you can see I am rocketing along and my stash is down to around 200 kits or so. Did I mention I just got the new Airfix Spitfire PR. XIX☺



The Hasegawa Mark IX has been controversial because the fuselage is short by about 3 millimeters and if you are a dedicated Spitfire maven, this is a deal breaker. I decided to suffer through it.



As released the kit is a mid to late model Mark 9, with the long carburetor intake and small streamlined blisters for the 20mm cannon. I wanted an earlier Mark 9 so I substituted a short resin carburetor intake and the larger 20mm tear drop

blisters from Ultracast. I also replaced the propeller blades and spinner with Ultracast parts.

Construction of the kit is straightforward with no surprises; the level of detail is up to modern standards. The cockpit is nicely detailed; I used Tamiya's British Interior Green predominately. The seat was painted with a Reddish Brown color, the instrument panel was painted with a dark gray and the dials were painted black with and silver colored pencils. Eduard colored British seatbelts were used.



The fuselage and wings fit together with just a minor amount of cleanup. The resin cannon blisters were a drop-fit; the carburetor intake was a bit short so I adjusted the fit as best I could. I would have switched to kit parts, but my kit didn't have these parts. The resin spinner and propeller blades were a snap and only required white glue to fix and adjust the pitch of the blades.

The Spitfire had the standard RAF camouflage scheme for the time the "A" Scheme. This pattern is was standard for all Spitfires produced from 1941 through the end of the war. The Tamiya Spitfire Mark Vb kit includes this scheme printed to scale so I copied it and used it as a paper mask. I used Tamiya's new colors RAF Dark Green, Ocean Grey and Medium Sea Grey. The colors were lightened with white and randomly sprayed over the base colors. I used a Dark Brown wash from Mig to accentuate the panel lines. The spinner and fuselage band painted with a lightened version of Tamiya Sky and the leading edge ID strips were painted with Gunze Sangyo RLM 04 Yellow.

The decals are from Eaglecalcs printed by Microscale. Because of the various raised features on the kit, the decals did not lay down as well as I had hoped. I used Solvaset to soften them and it actually dissolved some of the red areas of the roundels. I had no choice but to strip and try again. I eventually replaced the fuselage roundels twice and had to switch to an Eagle Strike sheet for the roundels. If I had been more careful, I probably wouldn't have had these problems.



The completed model looks very nice, the decal problems were probably self-inflicted. As I write this Eduard is displaying drawings of their new 1/48 Spitfire IX series. I will probably be the first kid on my block to get that one too.