

P-51A ACCURATE MINIATURES 1/48 SCALE #3402



By Paul Gasiowski

This will be the 1st Accurate Miniatures kit I will have assembled. This was another kit sitting on the shelf and to be built alongside the PV-1 Ventura. This was a good excuse to stay in my workshop. As usual I started by washing all the sprues with a few drops of dish washing liquid and let them air dry. I used the Squadron In Action P51 Mustang for a reference, but there were only a few pages in reference to the P-51A.

I started by attaching as many of the parts to the fuselage walls and cockpit tub before applying a coat of Zinc Chromate and Olive Drab where required. The instructions gave a good description of the parts that needed to be painted and what colors. A decal was supplied for the instrument panel and this was applied after painting it flat black. The seat assembly was pretty bland, so I used some photo etch seat belts from my spares box.

Some dry fitting was done before cementing the parts to the inside of the fuselage. This saved some time and frustration. Some of the pieces had to have the edges sanded down in order for the 2 halves to go together well. After this was finished the halves went together well, except for a gap between the left wing and the body. Some filling and sanding was necessary. Next step was to attach the nose to the rest of the body, so the fuselage came in 4 pieces. A little

gap was at the bottom where the nose met the body on both sides and a little filling and sanding took care of this.



Next was to attaché the wing to the body and I keep forgetting to try and fit the upper wing surfaces first. So the result was a gap on the left side at the wing and the body. The next instruction calls to attach all the small parts to the wings, landing gear, doors, wheels and door braces. These parts were left off till after painting and decaling was accomplished.

The canopy came in 4 pieces with an optional Malcom hood which I didn't use. So I spent an hour or so masking and painting, first applying a coat Green Chromate and followed by the Olive Drab. I suppose an EASY MASK would be better to give the frames a better definition, but I didn't think of that till I started writing this review.

The color scheme comprised of 2 colors Neutral Grey FS36270 and Olive Drab FS34087 and I used Model Master Acrylics. I wiped down the model with Plastic Prep to remove any oils that might have accumulated during assembly. I painted the whole model Neutral Grey and let it dry for a day. I masked the model with 3M Blue Tape, very low tack and painted the upper fuselage Olive Drab. The 3M tape I used is better than anything else I have tried. In the last couple of model I built nothing was pulled up when removing the masks.

The finishing touches included adding the auxiliary fuel tanks, the gun muzzles and the landing gear. At this time I finally attached the propeller and spinner which was painted yellow. I used a photo etch pitot tube instead of the one that came with the kit. The exhaust stack were added and painted a rust color. Finally I put the canopy in place, starting with the back side glass, then the front of the



canopy. At this point I elected to cut the center section of the canopy to show the door in the down position, other wise most of the detail of the cockpit area would be hidden. The inner wheel doors were glued in the up position as the instructions to show where the additional door actuators and door cables went were very vague. Besides that they were very small and fragile. There was a comment at the end of the instructions indicating that the doors went to the down position once the engine was shut off and the hydraulics bled off. There were several pictures in the Squadron in Action book showing the doors in the up position, being obvious that the engines being shut off for a period of time.

I put in about 10 hours on this kit. The only cons were the canopy being in 4 pieces. The decals went on without a problem. The markings for the pilot's name and aircraft name were the same as found in the In Action book.

