

P-47D Thunderbolt Razorback~ Tamiya 1/72 Scale



By Mike Hanlon

To date, I have built seven 1/48 Tamiya P-47 Razorbacks. I also built a 1/48 Bubbletop, but I had never considered building the Tamiya 1/72 kit. I bought four of them on sale at Hobby Lobby for \$12 each. I thought I would be able to resell them and make a killing. (I didn't.)

Last year, the club had a D-Day theme coming up for our meeting in June and over the Memorial Day weekend I was looking for a simple project. I also had a P-47 sheet released for the IPMS National in 1998. The sheet covered five aircraft from the 379th Fighter Squadron, 362nd Fighter Group, from the 9th Air Force in 1944. The sheet includes 1/72 and 1/48 markings.

My favorite aircraft was "Damon's Demon" a P-47D-11-RE in full invasion stripes. I had used the 1/48 decals on a Hasegawa P-47, shortly after that kit was released.

The Tamiya kit's level of detail is amazing, certainly on a par with the 1/48 scale kit. The interior has crisp detailing with decals used for the instrument panel and the seat belts. In 1/48 scale, decal seat belts usually don't look right, two dimensional and uninteresting. In 72nd scale they look great! Tamiya instrument panel decals always look good, certainly on a par with Eduard photo-etched panels.



Construction is very simple and quick. There are no snags, no problems, everything just fits. The aircraft was painted in Olive Drab over Neutral Gray with full invasion stripes. The trick in painting invasion stripes is to not be intimidated by them. Invasion stripes were applied in the field just prior to D-Day.





Application varied from neatly sprayed to being slapped on with brushes or brooms. After D-Day, many aircraft had the stripes tidied up. For the modeler this gives you wide latitude in application. What I do is apply them as neatly as I can, but I don't worry about being perfectly parallel or sized.



All the exterior paints were Tamiya acrylics. I start painting the model by applying the white areas first. This P-47 included white ID stripes in the tail planes, an eighteen-inch noseband and red trim tabs as well as the invasion stripes. After the white was applied, I masked off the areas around the trim tabs and painted them red. I then masked off the white areas and trim tabs and applied the Neutral Gray and OD. The Tamiya OD was lightened with Yellow Green sprayed randomly over the base color.

Before painting the black stripes, I copied the national insignias from the decal sheet. These were cut out and used as masks so that when the decals were applied, the demarcation line between the white and black would not show through the decal. The fuselage stripes were approximately 6mm and the wing stripes were roughly 7mm.



Once all the masking and painting and touching up were completed, I attached the landing gear, drop tank and bombs. The canopy was masked with E-Z Masks and sprayed with Alclad Aluminum over a black base coat.

The kit provides two propeller styles, both Curtiss Electrics. I used the later Curtiss Electric symmetrical propeller as I like the way it looks. The real aircraft could have used either of the Curtiss Electrics or a Hamilton Standard propeller. It was common practice to interchange them during that time period.

The P-47 was then glossed with Future Acrylic Floor Wax and given a wash with Windsor Newton Burnt Umber Oil paint. Another coat of Future was then sprayed on before the decals were applied. The model was given a coat of

Alclad Klear Kote Flat and weathered slightly with Tamiya Weathering Master pastels.

The Thunderbolt took only three weeks to complete, which is very fast for me. Along with Eduard's 1/72 scale Hellcat it was one of the most pleasant builds I have one in recent years. If you are looking for a change or just want a nice simple build., give this kit a try, but get your own, my other three are no longer for sale.

