



Tamiya Focke Wulf 190D-9

By Mike Hanlon

Arguably the best piston-engined fighter in the Luftwaffe, the FW 190D-9 entered service in the summer of 1944. Released in the mid 90's, Tamiya's rendition of this aircraft has often been cited as being somewhat less accurate than the Trimaster/Italeri/Revell of Germany/ Hasegawa/ whoever has the molds now version, but infinitely simpler to build. The areas most often cited are the landing gear bays through which the engine and firewall should be visible and the wing scribing which more closely resembles the D-11 wings. I decided I could live with the deficiencies.

Whenever a Tamiya kit is reviewed, the reviewer invariably states something like: "It's a Tamiya kit." So as not to break tradition, it's a Tamiya kit, have a ball.

That said, assembly starts with the six piece interior and pilot figure. A number of aftermarket companies make replacement interiors, the cheapest being the True Details interior. All makers of resin interiors start with the kit parts as a master and then add detail which cannot be duplicated by injection molding, breaking with this tradition, True Details glued the interior together and added a couple of vertical bars behind the rudder pedals. The seam line from the assembled Tamiya cockpit tub and separate consoles are clearly visible in the resin tub, the instrument panel is markedly inferior to the kit supplied one. Tamiya even included needle detail in the instrument gauges, which is much better than the resin replacement. After painting both the True Details panel and the Tamiya panel, I went with the Tamiya panel. Trying to salvage something from my \$5 expenditure, I did use the True Details seat. Unfortunately, the molded on shoulder harnesses and seat belts are very soft and indistinct. Next time I'll either use the kit seat with photo-etched belts or a different resin seat.

The interior was painted RLM 66 from PollyScale acrylic, the seat harnesses were light tan or gray for which I used FS 36662 with a brown oil wash. The instrument panel details were picked out with Prismacolor pencils and the gauges sealed with Future. The pilot figure was jettisoned.

The remaining assembly was straightforward. Care should be taken when attaching the wings, as the wing wants to rise above the fuselage line. Keep an eye on it while the glue sets up and you shouldn't have any problems. Seams are almost nonexistent.

There is one tricky area in assembly and that is the landing gear. I always attach the landing gear after I have painted the model, but I will describe it here. Tamiya landing gear usually fit so well and so snugly, that you often don't need glue. The landing gear on the 190 cants inward at a steep angle. The kit instructions tell you to assemble the landing gear struts and wheels and then add the landing gear doors before attaching to the model. I left the doors off and added the landing gear, which had a significant amount of play in it. Later when I added the gear doors, I had trouble getting them to fit. It turns out that the gear doors act as spacers and help set the landing gear angle. I guess sometimes you are actually supposed to follow the instructions.

There are literally dozens of decal sheets of the FW 190D so finding a scheme you like should be no problem. I used EagleCals sheet EC #1 which depicts Brown 31 an aircraft of 7./JG 26 (II./Gruppe) in February 1945 stationed in Nordhorn, Germany. The aircraft was repainted in RLM 82/82 over RLM 76 (probably) with a black and white RVD band and black spinner with a white spiral. I used Gunze Sangyo's new Luftwaffe colors for this scheme and liked them a great deal. The bright green 82 really stands out. Fuselage mottling was done freehand. One advantage of doing fuselage mottling is that if you think you've done it too heavily, you can simply overspray with the underside color and fade the mottle out as much as you wish. I used the patterns supplied in the kit for the camouflage patterns on the wings and fuselage.

The finished model is a stunner; with the variety of markings and camouflage schemes available it would be easy to build several.

TAMIYA FW 190-D9

