

Urbanowicz Hurricane Hasegawa 1/48th scale



By Dick Smith

In the early days of World War II, the Hawker Hurricane Mk.Is that fought the German Messerschmitt Bf-109 Emils were considered technically inferior. Many of these British fighters had fabric covered wings, wooden two-bladed Watts propellers, no cockpit armor and ring and bead gunsights.

Hawker rectified most these shortcomings by the time the Battle of Britain began by producing Hurricanes with all metal wings, cockpit armor and three-bladed, variable pitch deHavilland or Rotol propellers. These improved Mk.Is were the aircraft that the Polish pilots from 303 Squadron used to fight off the attacks from the superior German forces from across the channel.

Hasagawa's Mk.I in 1/48th scale is an excellent replica of the fighter used by Polish ace, Flying Officer Witold Urbanowicz. A color profile of his aircraft is on page 65 of Osprey's publication "Hurricane Aces 1939-40" by Tony Holmes.

The cockpit of the Hurricane is constructed from a tubular framework which is painted RAF interior green, FS-34226. The instrument panel is flat black with a drybrushing of light gray to bring out the dials. A drop of glaze will simulate the glass covers on the instruments. The rest of the cockpit is picked out in various colors to highlight the many electrical boxes, levers and knobs.

For added realism, I used Cutting Edge Modelworks "RAF Sutton Harness" (CEC-48337) seat belts. These belts are made from a flexible material that paints easily and drapes realistically over the seat.

This kit is the basis of several Hurricane versions. As a result, there are different forward and aft portions of the fuselage that will have to be assembled. Be sure that these parts are squarely fitted before cementing the completed cockpit into place and closing the fuselage halves.



Glue the wheel wells and radiator parts into the lower portion of the wing and set it aside to dry. The wing-to-fuselage joint is one of the most difficult parts of assembling any model kit. To eliminate most of this problem, carefully align and glue the top portions of the wing to the fuselage first. When these joints have set, attach the bottom wing assembly to the top sections. If done correctly, there will be little need for filling and sanding this seam.

The wings have several cutouts to accommodate the various Hurricane versions. Follow the instructions and make sure you use the eight Browning .303 machine gun inserts used on the Mk.I fighter.

Flt.Off. Ubanowicz's Hurricane was fitted with a Rotol, three bladed prop and spinner. The kit also provides a de Havilland spinner so be sure to use the rounded Rotol version. The prop blades are flat black and the Rotol spinner and backing plate are gloss black.

Hurricane Mk.IIs were camouflaged with Sky, type S undersides (FS-34424) and the topsides in a pattern of dark earth (FS-30118) and RAF dark green (FS-34079). (Federal standard color numbers are used here due to the fact that most model paints use these figures on bottle labels.) Indications are that Urbanowicz's aircraft was painted in the British "B scheme" camouflage pattern. This pattern and all of the markings needed to duplicate his fighter, as it appeared in September 1940 at Northolt, are included on the Sky Models decal sheet "Hawker Hurricane Pt. 1," 48-051.



With the basic painting of the model complete, mask and spray the wheel wells with RAF interior green and the areas around the gun muzzles insignia red. (The red duplicates the fabric coverings used by ground crews to keep dirt and debris out of the gun barrels that was thrown up from the grass fields used by the fighters.)

A more realistic stance to the Hurricane can be achieved by using a True Details Hawker Hurricane resin wheel set, 48-027. These wheels are slightly bulged on the bottom and give the model the appearance of "weight on wheels." After painting the tires Gunze Sangyo "tire black," drybrush them with a little light brown to indicate splashed mud.

The clear windscreen and canopy in the kit is molded in the closed position and hides all the detail in the cockpit. Squadron Products produces a vacuformed canopy (#9509) that is very thin and slightly larger than the one in the kit. This part can be easily cut apart using sharp scissors and the canopy can then be displayed open.

To finish the model, I used E-Z Masks #57 pre-cut vinyl cutouts to cover the clear panels during painting. Remove the masks, attach the clear parts with white glue and your model of a Polish 303 Squadron Hurricane is complete.



