

Arado AR 96B Special Hobby 1/72 SH72409



By Paul Gasiorowski

In 1935 the Luftwaffe called for a new metal monoplane, low wing for use in Advanced Pilot Training. Arado was awarded the contract in 1937. They were produced by Avia and Letov companies in Moravia and Bohemia. They were produced in both trainer and ground attack versions. After the war they were used in both Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Max speed was 350 Km and a ceiling of 21000 ft.

The kit consisted of 2 gray sprues, 1 clear sprues, 1 Photo-etch fret, 1 film for the instrument panels, 1 bag of resin parts, includes props, wheels, bombs and a decal sheet. The booklet was 12 pages of color instructions. Four different color schemes shown, a French version used during the war, US Army Air Force repainted after being captured and used post

war at Mannheim-Sandhofen in the summer of 1945.

One repainted in RAF colors by the Air Ministry Unit 120 after the war. Again used for testing and training. Then a Swedish company, AB Norlandsflyg used them in a Blue and White scheme. This plane was flown to Sweden by a defecting German pilot. I started with washing the parts in a soapy solution and rinsing them off with clear water. The cockpit was the first thing to be assembled; it was comprised of 8 plastic parts, and 20 tiny PE parts. Even handles for the throttles on the instrument panels, there were also 2 pieces of film to be put behind the PE instrument panels. The cockpit tub was painted RLM 66 and the side walls were painted the same color.



The remaining parts were primed with Tamiya White Surface Primer. The fuselage and cockpit were assembled. Then the tail and elevators were added. Some more PE needed to be added to the wings and elevators, these were hinges between the ailerons/wings and the horizontal stabilizer/elevators. Before adding the canopy to the fuselage, I masked off the frame. The wings were assembled; there was a spar for the middle of the wing assembly, which took a lot of fitting and sanding to get it to fit to the fuselage.



The struts for the landing gear had no place in the wing to be glued to. I had to use some Evergreen polystyrene tubing cut to size and fitted to the landing gear bays. Also added were exhaust stacks to the side of the nose of the plane.

I opted to use the RAF color scheme. The cockpit was already secured with Testors Clear Parts cement and the frames were masked off with Tamiya Masking tape. Two light coats of Dark Green were applied. I let it dry for a day and then used Tamiya Masking tape to apply the camouflage pattern. Then Olive Drab was applied with 2 light coats and set it aside for a day. Prior to applying the decals, the plane was given two coats of Future to have a base for the decals. There were not a lot of decals to apply, about 10. They took awhile to let loose, but using luke warm water helped speed up the process.



Overall not a bad kit, but a lot of tiny photo etch made it a little more difficult. It fits in the display cabinet quite nicely nestled under the wing of any 1/48 scale airplane. The wife keeps asking what am I going to do with all these built models, I told her they would probably fly into the nearest dumpster. Yes at some point in time that's where they will end up. But we will build because it gives us something to do and appreciate the history behind the models.