

CONVAIR F-106A- Hasegawa 1/72nd scale



By Dick Smith

The pilots that flew the Convair F-106 called it “the ultimate interceptor.” Yet it achieved this accolade while being built in fewer numbers than any of the other “Century Series” fighters. (Only 277 “A” models and 63 two-seat “B” models were built.) The

F-106’s only reason for existence was to shoot down enemy aircraft. It had no ground attack capabilities.

The “Delta Dart” served with the regular Air Force and National Guard from 1959 until retired in 1988. Only two model manufacturers have produced kits of this remarkable fighter. Monogram has just re-released their 1/48th scale version of the “106” which is the best choice to build. However, if you’re a “small modeler” you’ll have to use the old Hasegawa’s 1/72nd scale kit that’s been around for more than 20 years.

Construction starts on this “old timer” with painting the cockpit medium gray, FS-16440. There are decals for the instrument panels. The ejection seat cushion is painted “faded” olive drab, FS-34086. Don’t forget to paint the headrest and arm rests flat red which will add the only color to the dull cockpit color scheme. A pair of dark green paper seatbelts will complete work in the “front office.” You might want to try your hand at scratchbuilding the unique “U” shaped control stick since it is missing from the kit.

Before trapping the cockpit into one of the fuselage sides, paint the Pratt and Whitney J-75 engine cone “dark metallic gray” and glue it in place. The engine

inlet parts can be fitted at this time but hold off attaching the nose cone and air brake housing as directed in the instructions.

The F-106 carried all its weapons in an internal bay. This part of construction is complicated so follow the instructions closely. When you have completed the “trapeze-style” launching rails and attached them to the roof of the missile bay, paint it “interior green,” FS-34151. Paint the main body of the four AIM-4 Falcon missiles gloss white, FS-17875, and the fins, insignia red, FS-11136.



Glue the missiles to the launchers and set aside to dry. Assemble the wings and attach them to the fuselage. Filler is required at the wing-to-fuselage joint and on the vertical tail. Sand the entire airframe carefully to remove the rivet patterns and raised panel lines to achieve an overall smooth finish.

Stuff some wet facial tissue into the cockpit opening and apply a coat of a primer. Sand the primer lightly and then spray the entire aircraft gloss “Air Defense Command gray,” FS-16473. To hold the model during painting, slip a piece of brass or plastic tubing into the jet pipe. After you have assembled the underwing tanks, grasp the tank attachment pylon with a spring clothespin to hold them while painting.

Delta Darts served with many active USAF as well as Air Guard squadrons. The markings were extremely colorful during the Cold War years, especially with the ANG groups. I had planned on using some decals from the 102nd Fighter Interceptor Wing, 101st Fighter Interceptor Squadron of the Massachusetts Air National Guard. However these markings “shattered” when I placed them in water. Decals, when properly stored in an airtight plastic envelope, should last for many years.

These decals were about 15 years old and the film on which the markings were printed had apparently dried out. When the decal was placed in water, the

artwork had no backing and broke into many pieces. To save the project, I used a new sheet of Experts-Choice decals, #72-1, from Bare Metal Foil Co. It contains markings for three aircraft from the 191st Fighter Group of the Michigan Air National Guard based at Selfridge AFB. A photo of a flight of these F-106's can be found on page 37 of *"The Colors and Markings of the F-106 Delta Dart"* by Bert Kinsey.

Before applying the decals, it is necessary to paint a few extra details on the aircraft. The lips of the air intakes are sprayed "natural metal." Using the drawings from the instruction sheet, paint the exhaust ring in the aft of the fuselage "dark titanium gray." The leading edges of the underwing tanks can be "dipped" into bright silver to simulate polished metal. The radome should be painted gloss black, FS-17038.



All of these details, along with the colorful ANG markings, will add interest to the otherwise drab "ADC gray" aircraft. Paint the landing gear legs flat aluminum and attach them to the underside of the fuselage. Finish your model by painting and attaching the wheels, gear doors, missile bay, and air brake doors, along with the canopy as indicated in the instructions. Dip the nose boom in silver and glue it to the nose of the radome. The Hasegawa offering shows its age with raised panel lines and rivet detail. The Monogram "106" is a much better choice...if you have the space to display it.

