

1/48 Tamiya P-51B



By Mike Hanlon

Released in 1995, the Tamiya P-51B Mustang is a simple kit that builds into an exceptional model. Very little is necessary from the aftermarket to improve it.

One area that can be improved is the cockpit. The instrument panel has only blank gauges, the cockpit sidewalls are simplified and the cockpit floor is curved rather than straight. If you want to go to town there are several resin cockpit sets available. If chiseling off the sidewalls doesn't appeal to you, Eduard makes a Zoom set with an instrument panel, sidewall details and seat belts. If you leave the canopy closed careful painting of the interior is all that is really necessary.



Assembly of the Mustang is pain free and the fit is excellent, there are no problem areas to speak of. If you want to improve the looks of your model, Ultracast makes a number of simple resin replacement parts including propeller blades, seats, shrouded and unshrouded exhaust stacks, and three wheels with different tread patterns.



I added 75-gallon drop tanks and racks to my model. These were sourced from a Tamiya P-51D kit and fit without any modifications. The B model comes with 108-gallon paper tanks and bombs.



The only truly bad thing about the kit is the decals. They are labeled “Invisiclear” by Scalemaster. They have a tendency to shatter when dipped into water. Fortunately, there are a large variety of decals for the B model Mustangs from Superscale, Aeromaster and Eagle Strike.

For my Mustang I used a newly released Eagle Strike sheet for the Fourth Fighter Group. I chose Capt. Nicholas Megura’s “Ill Wind”. The aircraft is in standard Olive Drab over Neutral Gray. With white identification stripes and a red spinner and noseband. I usually use acrylics for my models, but just to try something different I used Model Master enamels. I used several shades of Olive Drab and also misted portions of the model with British Dark Green.

Overall a straightforward and enjoyable build the kit is highly recommended.

