

Contents

- Introduction**—*Aaron Skinner* 4
- 1 Righting a wrong**—*Luke Easter* 6
The recovery of the USS *Oklahoma* BB-37
- 2 An early war SB2U Vindicator**—*Frank Cuden* 13
Special Hobby's 1/72 scale kit helped fit this Midway bomber into a crowded showcase
- 3 A Matilda for the jungle**—*Andy Cooper* 18
Australian forces found modified British Matilda tanks were effective against the Japanese in the Pacific
- 4 Resin upgrades for a Wildcat**—*Vladimir Kafka* ...26
The 1/72 Hasagawa kit benefits from Quickboost and True Details sets
- 5 Mission: Resupply!**—*Tim Reynaga*.....33
Building Fujimi's pint-sized cargo sub in a realistic diorama setting
- 6 Painting a Pacific pilot**—*Joe Hudson*36
A few tricks can go a long way toward making your figures more realistic
- 7 Lightning strikes**—*Albert Tureczek*.....44
Tamiya's new 1/48 scale P-38 builds well right from the box. Painted roundels aided in the weathering plan
- 8 Getting his feet wet with IJN Tone**—
Chuck Davis52
Tamiya's 1/350 scale model of the cruiser proved to be a perfect intro to ship modeling for an airplane guy
- 9 A Canadian in the RAF**—*John Mahar*66
Tamiya's 1/32 Spitfire makes an excellent starting point for this South East Asia Command fighter
- 10 Weathering a strafers**—*Aaron Skinner* ... 76
Painting Italeri's B-25G Mitchell for the southwest Pacific
- 11 Hairspray on a Peggy**—*Chuck Davis* 84
Hasagawa's 1/72 scale bomber gets an old-school chipping treatment
- 12 Tico ready for launch**—*Aaron Skinner* 94
Camouflaging Trumpeter's small-scale *Essex*-class carrier
- 13 Building an LVT-4 for Okinawa**—
Andy Cooper103
AFV Club's 1/35 scale LVT-4 just needs judicious finishing to make it a standout model
- 14 Sands of Iwo Jima**—*John Bonann*..... 111
A photo of a Sherman tank disabled in the black sands inspired this vignette
- 15 Fade to black**—*Chuck Davis*.....120
Techniques to keep an all-black P-61 night fighter from looking like a toy
- 16 Building a unique Zero**—
Anders Isaksson..... 126
Tamiya's new 1/72 kit meant it was time to tackle the subject again
- 17 'Hello again!'**—*Darren Roberts*.....132
Monogram's 1/48 scale Devastator was the basis of a scene set 6,500 feet below the ocean's surface



Wake Wildcats were brand new, delivered just a couple of days before the Japanese attack and actually were freshly repainted during the deployment, to comply with the latest camouflage directive. Engines and propellers were masked with tarps, which overlapped the cowlings a bit, leading to a non-standard camouflage line typical for this squadron.

I chose the old Hasegawa model over the Airfix kit for its more delicate panel lines and surface details, and a more accurate shape of fuselage top behind the cockpit.

One thing I don't like about the Hasegawa kit

is its canopy, which is visibly small, and flush with the fuselage, which would make it impossible to slide backward. I solved this issue with a small aftermarket item of my own making.

Given the bland camo and no weathering, I had to focus solely on a clean build and nice details to have a remote chance to impress anyone with this model. While the Hasegawa kit itself is excellent and would be trivial to assemble on its own, properly incorporating all the aftermarket parts—mainly the resin wheel wells and cockpit—took some effort. I think the result has been worth it and I like it, simple as it is.



Wildcats at Wake Island were brand-new, and on top of that were freshly painted to comply with recent camouflage directives. Vladimir shows that a simple paint scheme can still build an interesting model, especially with the addition of a few detail sets.

Painting a Pacific pilot

A few tricks can go a long way toward making your figures more realistic

JOE HUDSON

This is a 120mm resin figure from Verlinden Productions. Verlinden, which has been out of business a few years now, was ahead of its time when it came to resin kits and the now popular 120mm scale.

Beautifully cast with minimal cleanup and easy assembly, this figure is a good representation of the U.S. Navy pilots who served during the Pacific war.

While researching this figure, I saw that the box art was taken from a picture in the book *U.S. Navy Uniforms In World War II Series Volume 2: US Naval Aviation Flying Clothing and Gear* by Jeff Warner (2007 Schiffer Military Books).

The figure came in eight parts, and the only issue was the cast-on cigar had broken off. It was not in the kit, so once all the parts were removed from the resin carrier blocks, my first step was to create a replacement.

I assembled the kit using superglue, then primed it with Tamiya sky gray (XF-19) applied with an airbrush.





10

In order to keep the nose wheel on the ground, I filled the front gear bay, lower part of the nose, and the forward part of each engine nacelle with fishing sinkers held in place with JB Weld.



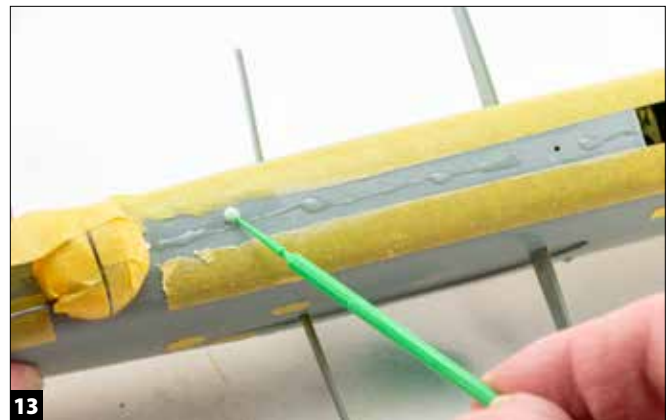
11

I painted the engine cylinders Tamiya metallic gray (XF-56) and crankcase dark gray (XF-24) with details picked out with flat black (XF-1) and flat aluminum (XF-16). Tamiya black panel line color highlighted detail.



12

After protecting surrounding detail with strips of tape, I sanded the fuselage seam. Poor fits produced gaps and steps in a couple of places.



13

Superglue set with accelerator and sanded smooth took care of gaps that sanding alone failed to eliminate.



14

A fine razor saw guided by tape engraved panel lines lost to sanding. It takes only a light touch and a few strokes to replace this kinds of lost detail.



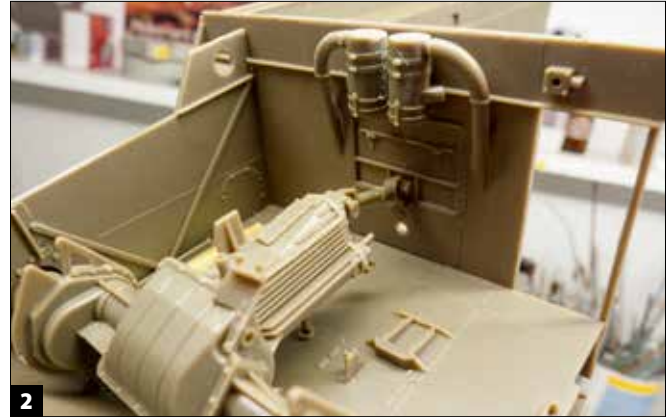
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The wings fit pretty tightly into recesses in the fuselage. I squeezed a little Vallejo Plastic Putty, an acrylic filler, along the seams for a clean finish.



1

I kicked off by making the wheel assemblies. With 20 units required, each consisting of four parts each, this was a tedious task, but there were no issues here. Just be aware that one wheel on each side fits straight into the hull part and does not need to be assembled as a complete bogie. The drive and idler sprockets were also completed at this stage and put aside for later.



2

The supplied interior parts for the driver compartment are detailed and well molded, with a transmission, steering levers, seats, instrument panel, fuse boxes, air filters, and more all included in the kit. Hardly any of this can be seen when the compartment is closed up, but in order to populate the inside, it is worth doing, especially if you intend to pose the hatches open.



3

To make fitting and painting the driver compartment easier, I glued the floor to the lower hull. A little weight helped keep the load compartment floor and rear wall in the correct location while the glue set.



4

The internal side walls of the driver compartment need to be painted before final assembly. These are the forward portions of the hull (parts C11 and C12). I masked off the relevant areas, sprayed them with Tamiya gray primer, and later airbrushed the parts flat white.



5

I prepped the individual interior components with Tamiya primer using an airbrush.



6

I sprayed the interior parts white. To add variation, I used Hobby Color off white (H21) on some components such as the transmission. Once dry, the major subassemblies were attached. The compartment floor (B43) is not white, but the same color as the remainder of the vehicle. I used lightened olive drab.