

# Japanese Jaguar

by Samantha Scoles

The Mitsubishi F-1 is Japan's first domestically developed jet fighter, and was the first fighter to enter production in Japan since the end of World War II. Mitsubishi and Fuji Heavy Industries jointly developed the F-1, which evolved from the earlier Mitsubishi T-2 supersonic jet trainer. To create the F-1, engineers simply removed the rear seat and faired over the canopy, using the empty space for avionics. At first glance, it resembles the French/Anglo SEPECAT Jaguar, but was a completely independent Japanese effort.

## Construction

On opening the box you are greeted by fourteen grey sprues, two clear, four poly caps, a comprehensive decal sheet and foldout instructions. Construction is split up into eleven stages and stage one starts with the pilot, ejector seat and cockpit. All of the cockpit and seat parts were painted Tamiya XF-53 and the instrument decals were used. Small details were picked out on the seat and then the entire cockpit was subtly weathered. One point to note is that you need to decide if you are having the canopy up or down as the hydraulic arm is part of the seat assembly. Due to the cockpit and seat being a little sparse I decided to use the pilot figure (a first for me) and opted for a closed canopy.

Stages two and three deal with the mating of the fuselage halves. This also involves sandwiching the cockpit and poly caps for the tailplane and attaching the engine intakes and the part for the spine that blanks off the second seat area. Construction and the fit of parts here is excellent except for the nose cone which comes in two halves, and the tip of the fin (part J1), which has no location pins, so care should be taken to ensure correct alignment. Stages four and five concentrate on the attachment of the wing halves and the underside of



## TECHNICAL DATA

### Mitsubishi F-1

Scale: 1/48 Price: £24.46

Kit No: 09790

Type: Injection Moulded Plastic

Manufacturer: Hasegawa

Kit Supplied by HobbyLink Japan

the fuselage, and again the fit is outstanding and I only had to use a small amount of filler on one corner edge of the rear fuselage.

I have to applaud Hasegawa's design for the aerials here. Pieces are provided with a base area that locates into a larger than normal hole. This gives a much stronger bond to the fuselage and despite my sometimes ham-fisted approach to modelling I didn't lose any aerials (another first for me).

The rest of the build stages deal with the undercarriage and armament so I'll deal with these after painting. The last stage (eleven) is attaching the canopy

and this was duly done and masked ready for painting.

## Painting

Once the canopy was masked I primed the model with Halford's Grey Primer and checked for any flaws. Once I was happy the natural metal areas near the exhausts were sprayed with Alclad II Steel. The undercarriage and airbrake bays were sprayed with Halfords White Primer followed by their Gloss Appliance White (both decanted and then airbrushed). I also sprayed any other white parts, the undercarriage legs for example, while I had the paint loaded.

Next was the camouflage scheme, and this is where I hit a snag as the colours called out are only available from the Mr Color range and after hours of researching on the net I could not find a suitable conversion. I opted to use the custom SEA Scheme that I used on an A-1 Skyraider last year. These seem to match the box art closely but



bays. Finally a coat of Testors Dull Coat followed to matt everything down.

### Finishing Touches

Stages six through eight concentrate on the airbrakes, undercarriage and exhausts, which were painted accordingly and attached. Stages nine and ten are for the armament, and all Hasegawa provide are two drop tanks, two Sidewinders and a CBLS-200 Dispenser for the centreline. They do suggest that you 'combine this model with abundant weapons, support vehicles and figures available from 1/48 Aircraft in Action Series to make realistic dioramas' and they also include a chart of what weapon can be carried on each pylon. The items

not the picture of the built kit on the side. First I sprayed a base coat of Tamiya XF-52 mixed with Tamiya Flesh XF-15 and Tamiya White XF-2. This was followed with the light green which was a custom mix of Tamiya Olive Green XF-58 mixed again with Tamiya Flesh XF-15 and Tamiya White XF-2. Finally the Dark Green was Tamiya XF-61 Dark Green.

Once these had dried I masked the camouflage off and sprayed the underside with Tamiya XF-19 Sky Grey. All the masking (except for the canopy) was removed and three coats of Johnson Klear/Future followed to allow a solid gloss base for the decals.



Decals are provided for pretty much any serial of the 77 aircraft that are in service. The main decals give options for five aircraft from 8th SQ 3rd AW JASDF. at the ACM Meet in 1995, while the other options are for 6th SQ 8th AW Tsuiki AB and 3rd SQ 3rd AW Misawa AB.

The decals settled down really well with only a small amount of setting solutions needed for curved areas. After drying overnight they were sealed with another coat of Klear/Future ready for weathering, and for this I used Pro Modellers Dark Wash for the exterior of the kit and a thinned wash of Paynes Grey oil paint for the undercarriage

provided were all painted their respective colours and attached as well.

### Conclusion

I thoroughly enjoyed building this kit, it looks good out of the box, but I would suggest if you want the canopy open you may want to invest in the Eduard Etch set or a Resin Seat. I like the way of attaching the aerials and hope Hasegawa continue with this method. The colours required can be offputting but I'm happy with my custom paint scheme and would highly recommend it if you fancy doing a 'Japanese Jaguar.'

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