

# P-38J 'European Theater'

## Technical Data

Scale: 1/72

Kit No: 12405

Status: Revised Tooling

Panel Lines: Recessed

Price: £10.99

Type: Injection Moulded Plastic

Parts: Plastic 109 Clear 13

Decal Options: 3

Manufacturer: Academy

UK Importer: Toyway



## The Kit

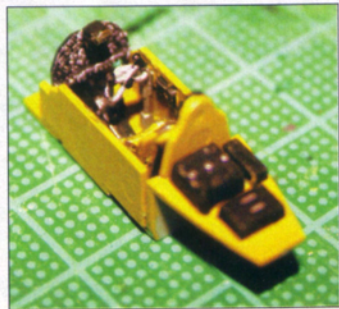
The 122 parts come on five sprues moulded in light grey plastic. The moulding is tidy, with crisp detail and recessed panel lines. The instructions are clear and concise with easy to follow construction steps, exploded views, and a close-up picture of the completed wheel wells which is helpful if the diagrams confuse you.

## Construction

The process starts with the cockpit, which requires ten parts, the detail on which is good. Assembly is straightforward, with an extremely good fit.

Next come the main gear wells. There are eight pieces to each side, including the landing gear. They are simple to construct as all the parts fit

easily into place inside the gear well tubs. The main legs can be added at later stage along with parts E28 and E29, which allows for more accurate alignment and prevents damage. The wheel tubs fit between the two boom halves with no gaps to fill and no join problems. The cockpit sandwiches between the two full-span moulded



wings onto two locating pins above the front wheel well. It is a snug fit and a little sanding is required on the joint lines. The nose section comes as a separate piece, which allows weight to be added (the instructions state that 10 grams will be sufficient) and glued into place before fitting the nose cone.

The canopy comes with a choice of open or closed, the open item consisting of five pieces and the closed of three. It goes together well, with a good fit and no gaps. Masking with tape could prove difficult due to the air vent at the front of the canopy.

## Colour Options

Two are provided. One is *California Cutie* in Olive Drab with Invasion markings. If building this option the Invasion stripes must be sprayed as they are not supplied as decals. The other option is *Arkansas Traveller* flown by Lt Owen Fincher of 392 FS/367 FG. I chose this and used Alclad aluminium sprayed in several thin coats over grey primer. At the same time the superchargers were sprayed using Alclad pale burnt metal followed by a light misting of Alclad jet exhaust. The paint guide comes on a separate sheet with detailed colours for some of the exterior fittings. The paint guide shows that, like the nosecone, the spinners had red tips, but a photo I found of the actual aircraft clearly shows that there were no red tips on the spinners. The decals have been printed to a high standard, in good



register, and conform well to the model's surface.

## Conclusion

A good kit that builds straight out of the box into a nice looking P-38 without need of additional detail to make it more accurate — a good companion for Academy's previously released P-38 Lightning 'Pacific Theater'.

*Samantha Scoles*

