

Introduction

by Paul Boyer, *FineScale Modeler* magazine4

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Mosquito AMERICAN STYLE

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A green modeler turns a 1/48 scale Mosquito PRU Blue BY STEVE RICHARDS



Kitbashing Airfix and Monogram Mosquitos with Paragon resin two-stage engines makes this colorful USAAF Mosquito P.R. Mk.XVI.

A few years ago, watching a short clip of black and white World War II footage inspired me to build a model of an 8th Air Force Mosquito. After research, I found photos – some in color – of the Mosquito P.R. Mk.XVIs in service with the 25th Bomb Group (Recon).

No straight-from-the-box, 1/48 scale Mosquito kit will yield this version, so I

decided to make one of these colorful “Mossies” for my first conversion. Paragon had resin engines to fit the Airfix kit, but the Monogram kit had the glass nose necessary for this version. I decided to use the Monogram fuselage and tail and the Airfix wings. (If I were to do this conversion today, I would use the Paragon engines and accessories on the recent Tamiya B. Mk. IV kit instead of kitbashing.)

Here is my shopping list:

- Paragon two-stage Merlin engines (resin set No. 4842)
- Paragon 100-gallon external wing fuel tanks (No. 4878)
- Paragon PR-type canopy (No. 4873)
- AeroMaster decal sheet (No. 48-082)



1 The Paragon engines, designed to fit the Airfix wings, are mounted to the top surface. The remaining Airfix nacelle (right) awaits attachment.



2 Sanding the epoxy-putty-filled seams on the assembled nacelle is next.

Engine change. The major difference between the kit Mossies and the P.R. Mk.XVI was the shape of the Rolls-Royce Merlin 72 two-stage engines. The Merlin 72 nacelles were slightly longer and shaped differently. The Paragon engine nacelles capture this shape, but you have to remove much of the Airfix nacelles to fit the new ones.

First, I glued the Airfix engine nacelle halves (part Nos. 51, 55, 59, and 63) and allowed them to dry. I positioned masking tape as a cutting guide 33mm from the front of the engine. This cut leaves the forward section of the wheel well intact, but a bit fragile!

I carefully sawed down the line starting at the underside of the nacelle. A razor saw is ideal here. Next, I cleaned the rough-cut edges with sandpaper.

My plan was to glue the resin engines to the top surface of the cowl, which is part of the top wing half, **1**. Then the assembled rear portion of the nacelle (with the wheel well) is added underneath the wing. First, I had to remove the resin pour stub at the rear of each engine. The engines are marked R (right) and L (left); don't mix them up.

Plastic cements have no effect on resin parts, so you must use super glue, epoxy, or epoxy putty to bond resin to plastic. I used super glue, then filled the seams with Milliput, a two-part, fine-grained epoxy putty. It sets hard, but with progressively finer grits of sandpaper it sands easily to



3 A coping saw was used to remove the wing mounts from the Monogram fuselage halves before attaching the Airfix wings.

a velvet-smooth finish. Plastic-to-plastic joints were made with liquid cement.

Adding the landing gear was tricky, as it was designed to be trapped between the nacelle halves as you assemble them. Since I had already assembled the nacelles, I had to modify the mounting system so I could anchor the struts. I figured this would be better than trying to cut the nacelles with the gear in place!

As the two-stage Merlin was longer than the kit's engine, Paragon provides a resin half-moon extension for the top of the cowling. This was added last, **2**. Paragon also provides photoetched grilles for

the intakes, and these were fastened with super glue.

Fuselage surgery. At this stage, my morale was riding high; the hardest part of the conversion had gone better than I expected. However, it was immediately clear that the Airfix wings could not mate to the Monogram fuselage because of different assembly methods. I was faced with cutting out Monogram's wing mounts with a coping saw, **3**. This tool allows detaching the blade from the bow so you can run it through a pilot hole and reattach it for cutting.

Modeling a MARAUDER

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Easy techniques turn Monogram's 1/48 scale diamond in the rough into a real gem BY RAFE MORRISSEY

PHOTOS BY RAFE MORRISSEY AND FLOYD WERNER JR.

Just as pilots were at first reluctant to fly the B-26 Marauder, so too have many modelers been hesitant to build the 1/48 scale Monogram kit. Even though it is eagerly sought by collectors and usually commands top dollar at swap meets and on eBay, assembled models are rarely seen on contest tables or in modeling magazines.

Monogram kits of the 1970s have earned the reputation of being well-detailed but ill-fitting – and the B-26 qualifies in both areas. However, most of the kit's problems are easily fixed, and with some skill and perseverance, you can make it into a model worthy of inclusion in any World War II collection.

The good, the bad, and the ugly. The first step in building the B-26 (or any airplane model) should be to remove the major airframe components from the sprues and tape them together, **1**. This dry-fitting helps identify warped parts and areas where filler will be needed. To fix a warped part, place it under a stream of hot tap water while bending it against the warp. Heating the part allows you to bend it without breaking it. Holding the part slightly past straight while it cools will usually compensate for the plastic's "memory" of its warped condition.

My kit was warp-free, but still had plenty of fit "issues." I made a list of everything that needed to be fixed and noted them on the instructions so nothing would be forgotten later.

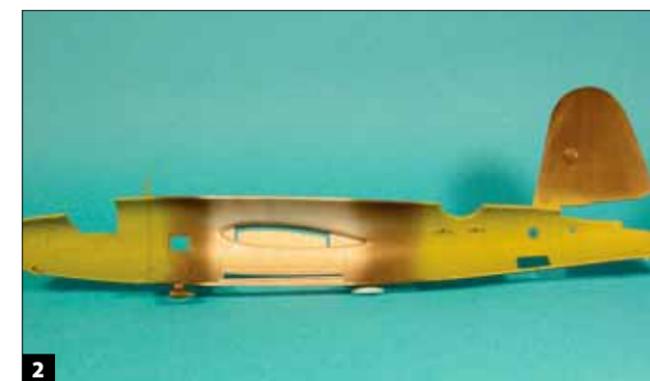
Accentuate the positive. One of the best things about Monogram kits from this period is the interior detail. The proper combination of painting and weathering techniques can make this kit sparkle. The first step is to lay down a good base coat. I airbrushed Testor Acryl interior green (FS 34151) for the cockpit and fuselage interior. My research indicated that the bomb bay was painted aluminum or was unpainted. I sprayed a 50/50 mixture of Polly Scale flat aluminum and clear gloss in this area, **2**.

I like to use pastel chalks to apply a "dry wash" to darken recesses – it's quicker than a paint wash. Equal piles of burnt umber and black dust were scraped from the chalk sticks with a knife and mixed together with an old paintbrush. I use an

Modelers shouldn't be afraid to tackle Monogram's Marauder. It's a well-detailed kit once you get it together.



1 Taping the major pieces together reveals potential fit problems that will have to be corrected.



2 The right fuselage half cabin and bomb bay interiors have been painted.