

Pz. Kpfw. IV Ausf. F1

Hasegawa Kit #: 31141 1/72 Scale

MSRP: \$15.16 bought on-line from Michigan Discount Hobbies

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Why?

I know what you are thinking. Why build a kit that is nice but is outdated? In asking this question, you already know the answer. We all do it. It is in our closet full of models. I enjoy building kits from this manufacturer. I like this particular vehicle. I want to build all kits and marques of this particular vehicle.

And then there is me. All of the above are my reasons. Why an older kit? There is a guy in my model club who loves to build older kits. He loves aircraft from Testors that happen to be “repops” from manufacturers that last built kits before I was born. He simply remembers when these kits were the state-of-the-art...and he loves great box art.

The Build:

I started this kit a few months ago with the intensions of building this kit for review with a mild addition of details. Browsing through the Squadron/Signal book “PzKpfw IV In Action” by Bruce Culver, I found the IV F1 that I wanted to build. For this build, I would be modeling a 5th Panzer Division F1 in green over gray camouflage. To build this tank, I would have to add a spare wheel rack and wheels to the left fender. I would also have to manufacture a few decals.

I was well on the way to making these decals when Dragon Models Ltd. introduced a new Panzer IV F1 kit. For the IPMSUSA.org website, I accepted this particular kit for review. It just so happens that the new Dragon kit has the exact markings that I wanted to use in the box. Heck, they were on the box art!

I started the kit and had the turret and upper hull built after 1 hour. I realized that the turret cupola wasn't well represented in the directions, and that I put it on upside down. Since this is the 3rd Panzer IV from Hasegawa that I've built, I was 3 for 3 for putting cupolas on the turret upside down. Fortunately, the glue wasn't fully dried, so I flipped the cupola over, and all was well after a little clean-up.



After 2 more hours of work, the lower hull and scratch built wheel rack were added to the kit. The wheels from the wheel rack came from an Italeri Brummbar kit that I have no intentions of building. The rack came from an unused chunk of brass from a Dragon T-34 kit that I recently finished. I carefully measured the wheels and the kit a few times and fashioned the rack from one piece of brass. I think it looks really nice on the side of the kit. I could have borrowed this whole assembly from the Mirage Panzer IV C kit, but I still want to build that kit.



There wasn't much left to do on this kit build wise, but there was a little bit more adjusting that needed to be done. The kit comes with an antenna holder, but it doesn't come with an antenna or an antenna mount. The antenna was made from stretched sprue, and the mount was a chunk of sprue that looked nice enough.

To finish the build, all the kit needed were road wheels and return rollers. It was now time for my favorite part of building: paint and weathering.

Paint:

Everything on this kit was primed with gray automotive rattle can primer. The road wheels and return rollers were painted Tamiya matte black lacquer from a can.

The base coat for the tank is $\frac{3}{4}$ panzer gray and $\frac{1}{4}$ dark sea blue. The second coat is panzer gray out of the bottle to mottle the paint a bit. The road wheels and return rollers are painted this color also. There is a third coat of $\frac{1}{4}$ white and $\frac{3}{4}$ panzer gray. If the paint on the tank doesn't look horrible at this point, you are not doing your job.

The camouflage is panzer green out of the bottle. I painted it on with a fine brush, and I wanted it to look brushed on.

At this point it was time to do all of the decaling and detail painting prior to weathering. The decals from Dragon which come from Cartograf were superb over a coat of Future Floor Polish and Micro Set.

I hit the kit with a mixture of Tamiya flat base and Future Floor Polish (1:5) prior to weathering.

To weather this kit, I airbrushed two diluted coats of Tamiya buff mixed with isopropyl alcohol (1:12). Where the buff color was either ugly or heavy, I removed it sloppily with a cue tip and some alcohol. This buff color is good for evening out a camouflage scheme and making decals look dirty.

I added two enamel washes of burnt sienna and raw sienna to lighten up the recessed details and to add a dirty and rusty look.

I dry brushed the kit using an artist oil mixture of white and yellow.

The muffler had a base coat of dark sea blue, but it ended up not looking blue at all. Priming the muffler with a Rustall wash, I added many different colors of pastel chalk as if I was painting them on like water color paint. It gives a nice fresh rust color.

The tracks were hand painted dark sea blue and then dry brushed a darkened silver color. The tracks were washed with raw sienna to give a rusted look.

Conclusion:

It took me 12 hours to build and paint this little kit including decal development (for decals that I didn't use) and placement of the wheels and wheel rack.

Hasegawa kits are where I got my start at armor modeling. I couldn't afford the 35th scale kits in college, so I went with an army of small stuff. Why do I build these old Hasegawa kits? I love them.

If you've never built armor, start with a Hasegawa kit. You won't be sorry.









