

J2M3 Type 21 Raiden

by Steve Gallacci

Scale: 1/32

Company: Hasegawa

Price: \$74.95

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Website: Hasegawa

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Hasegawa's release of the Mitsubishi J2M family of fighters is particularly welcome after so many years of only the long out- of- production Revell kit. I got to build the J2M3 Type 21 version, and found it a pleasant little project. Like with their other recent releases, Hasegawa gives you a straight-forward kit with minimal bells- and- whistles; under 150 parts for a complete and nicely detailed subject. Because the core model will be used for other versions, three so far at the time of this writing, the accommodations for the different details do slightly compromise the otherwise clean and tight fit.

This is a very straight-forward build with very cleanly molded parts and an easy-to- follow instruction set made for a particu- larly quick and simple assembly. That being said, there were some little trouble spots and disappointments. The cockpit area has all kinds of nice detail, yet, aside from a



few instrument panel decals, there were no painting instructions for those details, just the overall color. I had to just best guess on them. The kit provides a very nice seated pilot figure that can be posed in several ways and even has decals for various rank insignia.

The fuselage and wing has a rather substantial set of reinforcing elements inside and are intended to interlock for a solid assembly. In my haste, I didn't pay enough attention to how well I had fitted those parts and then how it all went together, which left a bit of a fit gap in the lower fuselage to wing area. In building a second kit, I was more careful and that problem didn't come up. A bit of care and test fitting make all the difference. There are

two plugs to fill in the cowl gun ports on this version, which don't fit at all well and need sanding and putty to clean up.

Lastly, there are insert panels on the wings for this variant of the model, and as is all too common, they don't fit very tightly. There are problems all around, with both edge gaps and seating depth to deal with. A little oversight on my part was not noticing the optional clear wing tip navigation lights until the model was already painted, but I was able to graft them in without any real difficulty.

The decals, which worked very well, are for two machines, though I instead chose to do it in a basic anonymous plane. Though the decals may look a bit thick on the sheet and seem

a bit lumpy when still wet on the model, they did settle down very nicely once they fully dried, which took more than a full day for me.

The overall paints I used were Tamiya acrylics, thinned with lacquer thinner and airbrushed. A gloss coat of Model Master Gloss Coat Lacquer followed to set the decals on and then Model Master Flat Coat Lacquer to finish it all off.

All in all, a very nice model, easily done with minimal effort.

My thanks to Hasegawa USA for the review sample.

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