

Aoshima 1/144th Scale Mitsubishi Ki-46-III Dinah

by Chris Banyai-Riepl

In December 1937, Mitsubishi received an order to develop a scout aircraft. The result was the Ki-46, which first flew in 1939. While an impressive aircraft, boasting a top speed of 540 km/h, the rapid advancement of technology throughout the wartime years forced Mitsubishi to update the plane repeatedly. In March 1941, new engines and other refinements resulted in the Ki-46-II, which had a top speed of 604 km/h. Not able to rest on that, Mitsubishi further improved the aircraft, with the Ki-46-III arriving in 1943. This variant boasted a top speed of 630 km/h and much better performance at 8-10,000m. This variant was produced through to the end of the war and remained a popular reconnaissance aircraft in Japanese service.

This is a kit that has been around for quite a few years, but it remains the only choice for those who want a 1/144th Ki-46 kit. The model comes molded in a green plastic, and in addition to the aircraft kit, you also get a nice injection-molded sandbag revetment that can be used for just about any aircraft. This is a 2-in-1 kit, so you get two full Ki-46 kits in the box.

Construction is very straightforward. There is no interior provided, although the cockpit is opened up in the fuselage halves. The clear canopy parts are a bit thick, though, so not much would be visible here anyway. The more masochistic modeler might go that extra step, though, and scratch an interior. The rest of us will simply glue the fuselage halves together and add the front and rear canopy sections.

The remaining construction will take all of about ten minutes. The one-piece stabilizers fit up against the fuselage with small pegs for location. The wings are split into upper and lower halves, with the engine cowlings molded separately. The propellers are separate and molded with the spinners in place. The landing gear has a separate strut, separate wheel, and separate gear doors. With that, the kit is complete.

Painting instructions are non-existent, although the decal sheet provides two styles of roundels and two different tail markings.

While an older kit, this is still a pretty decent model and the added benefit of providing the revetment with the aircraft makes it a nice one to pick up. My thanks to Dragon USA for the review sample.

