

## HobbyBoss 1/48th Scale Focke-Wulf Fw 190D-9

by Hal Marshman Sr

I just received this kit today, and would like to relate some of the high points of the kit, as well as a couple of low points. As a prelude to my commentary, let me advise you that I've built at least three of the Hobby Boss Ta 152C kits. There are many similarities between the "Tanks" and the Doras, as well as a few differences as regards parts and assemblies.

HobbyBoss has packaged this kit beautifully with a sturdy box. The parts sprues are all bagged in plastic, with the clear parts sprue wrapped in foam before it was bagged. In addition to the plastic, there's a several-page instruction leaflet, a full color rendering with color call-outs and upper and side views of the two aircraft catered to on the nicely presented decal sheet. On the decal sheet, swastikas are provided, but presented in two halves. There's a complete selection of stencils, as well as the national markings, and tail stripes for the JG 301 example.

The castings are beautifully rendered, with smooth outer surfaces, and no dimples or press marks. Surface detail is restrained. Fabric surfaces reveal the underneath structure, but is also restrained. There's no unrealistic fabric texture. Simulated fabric texture may have seemed like a good idea at one time, but if you examine a real fabric covered airplane, you'll quickly notice that the fabric received sufficient coats of paint (dope) to render them very smooth.



The clear parts tree contains the windscreen, one blown canopy, a gun sight, and very wee navigation lights for the wing tips. The instructions erroneously advise you that the port light is green and the starboard is red. Reverse those - the port light should be red, and the starboard green, to be correct. The framework on the windscreen and canopy are dulled so that they are easier to see for masking purposes. Good idea, HobbyBoss. Unfortunately, they did not provide the earlier straight topped canopy that many D-9s wore. (For the low price HobbyBoss asks for this kit, I suppose that would have been like gilding the lily)

Like the Ta 152 kits before it, HobbyBoss includes a small etched brass fret. It contains the shelf behind the seat, the exhaust blocker so that exhaust doesn't enter the super-charger, the manual canopy opener, and a couple of filter screens. They are all well-executed.

One of the places where the earlier Ta 152 kits were deficient was in not providing a firewall between the cockpit, and the open engine rear compartment. I had to make one from sheet styrene for my models. HobbyBoss has seen fit to provide one in this kit, so no need for a scratchbuilt one. Another difference between this kit and its predecessors is in the exhaust stacks. The Ta 152 kits had their stacks in two halves, divided longitudinally, while this kit has them as one-piece entities. This kit provides both the open and closed cooling gills, with each attached to its own cowl ring. The cowl ring face is detailed, whereas the rear is not. The rear detailing would generally only be viewable to the "Flashlight Nazis" in any event. There is an error in the cooling gills, however. The flap in front of the super-charger intake was kept shut on the original airplanes, thus when the flaps were in the open position, that one would still be closed. Hobby Boss shows it open. They also show the area between flaps as filled, when they should be open.

There is a separate sprue with drop tank, 250k Bomb, and four 100k bombs, all with sway braces and racks. I've seen no pictures of a Dora fitted with the wing racks for the 100k bombs, so the jury is still out on that one. The racks provided for the bomb/drop tanks are somewhat shallow in comparison to the real article, and although they provide two of them, they do not give you the alternative of long or short racks. Fw 190Ds did carry the two different styles.

The interior is complete with seat with cushion, rudder pedals, joy stick, seat rails, and instrument panel. The panel is a one-piece casting, although nicely staggered, and displays raised detail. The decal sheet provides instrument and console decals.

The landing gear looks quite decent; however someone on the net suggested the gear covers might be a wee mite short. Wheels with treaded tires are given, but quite a few Doras operated with smooth tires.

This brings me to the engine. The inline powered Fw 190s displayed the rear of the engine, (mostly the supercharger) through open wheel wells. HobbyBoss does indeed give you that engine rump, and the wheel wells are appropriately open to view same. It's a beautifully done representation, but much simplified over shall we say the Eduard example. Plus side, it's nowhere near as finicky to assemble. No one says you can't add more detail.

Okay, there's the kit, and I've detailed as many of the drawbacks as I was able to spot without taking out the calipers, and digging out the specs of the airplane. I do believe it stacks up well with the competition, in particular as pertains to ease of construction. I'm basing that opinion on having done the earlier Tank versions. (Kurt Tank was the designer of these birds, and when the Ta 152 came out, the designation honored him with the use of Ta, the first two letters of his last name, rather than the manufacturer Focke-Wulf. The pilots of those planes referred to them as "Tanks"). When you consider the retail price of 27 bucks, I think it's a good buy, and the few drawbacks should be easily dealt with. Bottom line, I do recommend this kit, and can't wait to dig into mine.

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