

"Tex" Hill and the Salween River Gorge Raid

By early 1942, American Volunteer Group (AVG/Flying Tigers) losses due to air-to-air combat, training losses, operational losses and Japanese attacks had risen to the point where replacement aircraft for their dwindling number of Curtiss P-40B Tomahawks were desperately needed. Six of the then-new, more powerful P-40E's were taken from USAAF stocks and flown to Africa via the US-Brazil-Azores-West Africa ferry route and were picked up by AVG pilots and ferried to China.

Delivered in standard USAAF camouflage and markings of the time (OD/NG, cocardes in six positions with the red center and U.S. ARMY on the wing undersides), the aircraft were quickly repainted. The cocardes were overpainted in Dark Green (most likely a U.S. British equivalent), and the markings of 3rd Squadron AVG and Chinese national insignia were added. Sharkmouths lacking the black interior were also painted on. According to a former AVG mechanic, in order to fool the Japanese into thinking the AVG had received more new P-40E's than they actually had, the aircraft were painted in new even-numbered ID numbers from 100 to 110!

In China, Burma had been conquered and the

Japanese threatened to conquer the remainder of China. The single largest obstacle to their plans was the steep and treacherous Salween River Gorge. The single suspension bridge was all that stood between the Japanese moving into both China and India. The bridge had to be taken out. Only the P-40E's of 3rd Squadron were capable of carrying external bombs and were chosen for the raid, with the older Tomahawks flying top cover.

Four former U.S. Navy pilots primarily from 2nd Squadron AVG (Hill, Lawlor, Jones and Rector) were chosen to carry out the actual bombing due to their training and experience in dive bombing while with the Navy. Olson, Schilling, Haywood and Smith flew top cover in Tomahawks.

From May 7 to 11, 1942, the AVG attacked and destroyed the Salween River Gorge Bridge, then attacked and destroyed Japanese troops and equipment backed up along the steep mountain road leading to what remained of the bridge.

When they were done, the face of the war in China had changed forever.

This paint guide is provided to complete this kit as shown throughout the instructions.

U.S. Olive Drab OD41

Neutral Gray

Interior Green

Aluminum

Red

Black

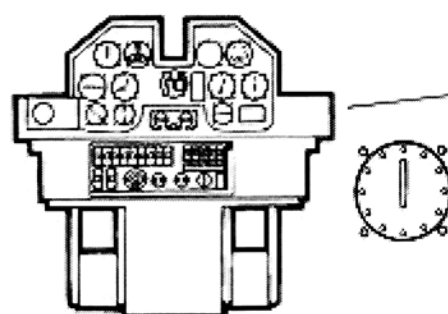
Burnt Metal

Steel

Rubber

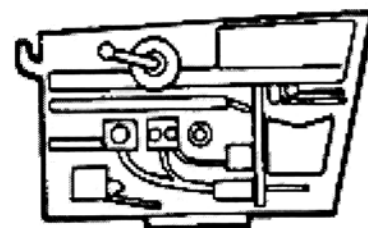
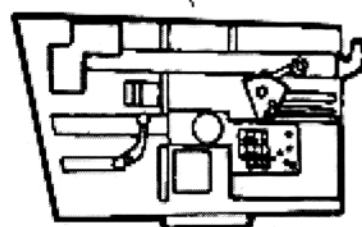
Flat Black

Step 1 - Cockpit Painting



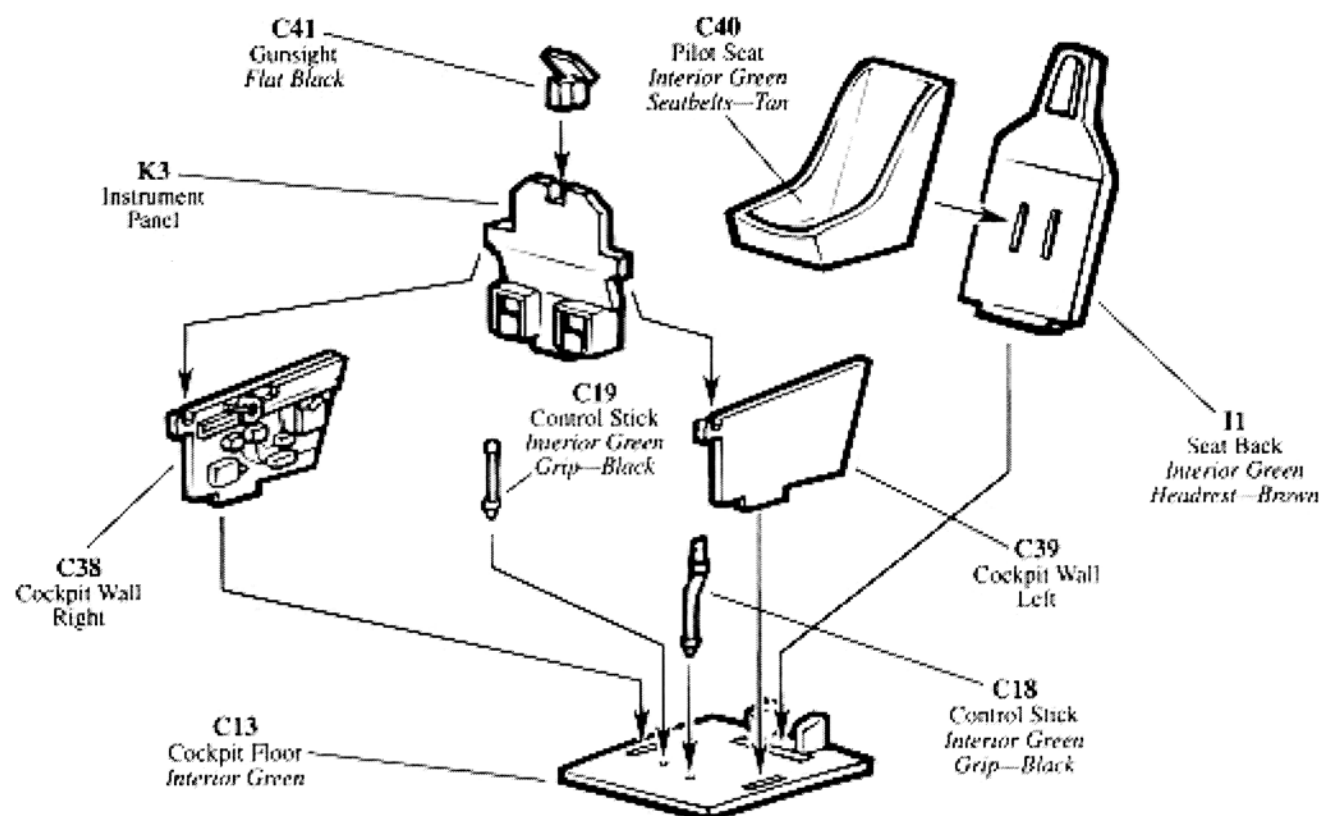
K3
Instrument Panel
Interior Green
Raised Detail—Black
with White Details

C39
Cockpit Wall Left
Interior Green
Raised Detail—Black

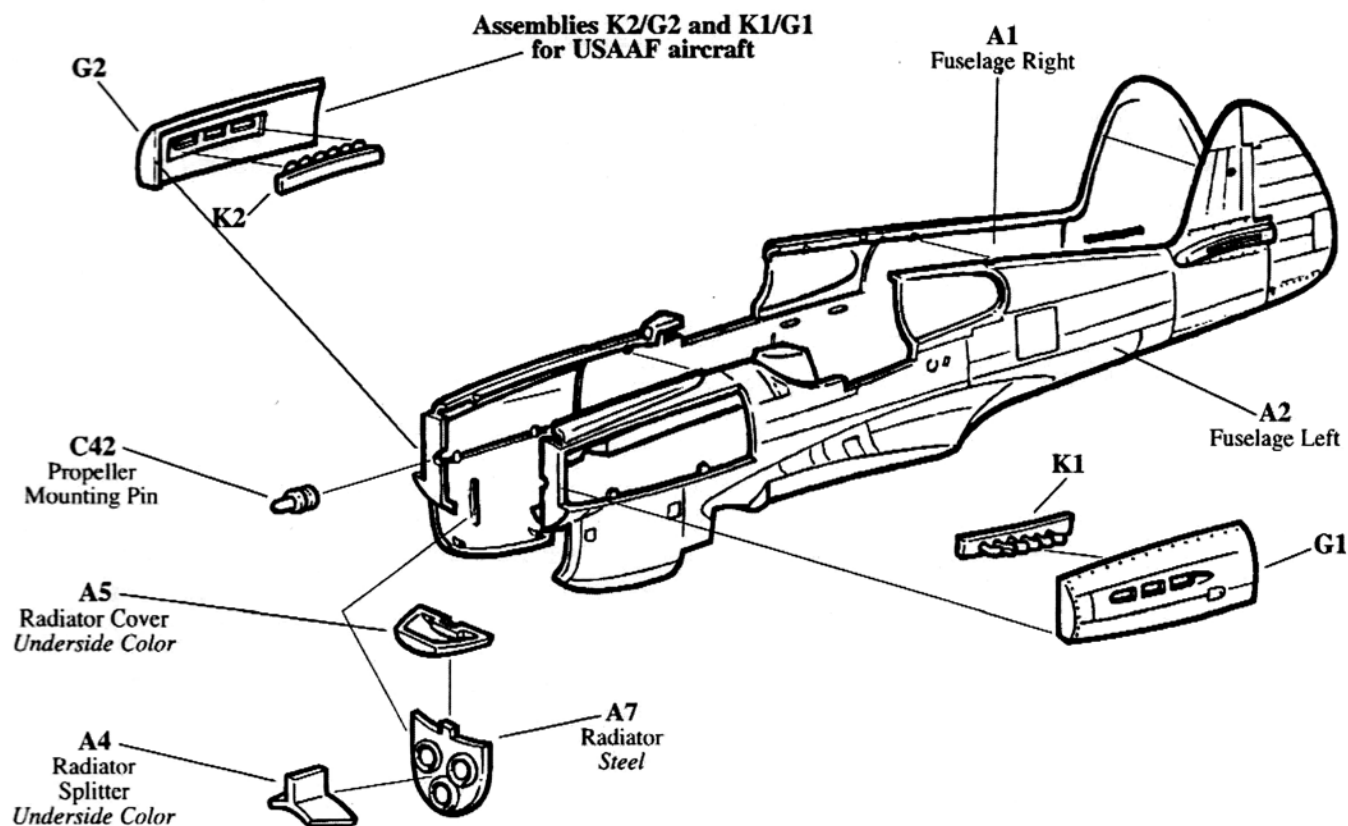


C38
Cockpit Wall Right
Interior Green
Raised Detail—Black

Step 1a - Cockpit Assembly

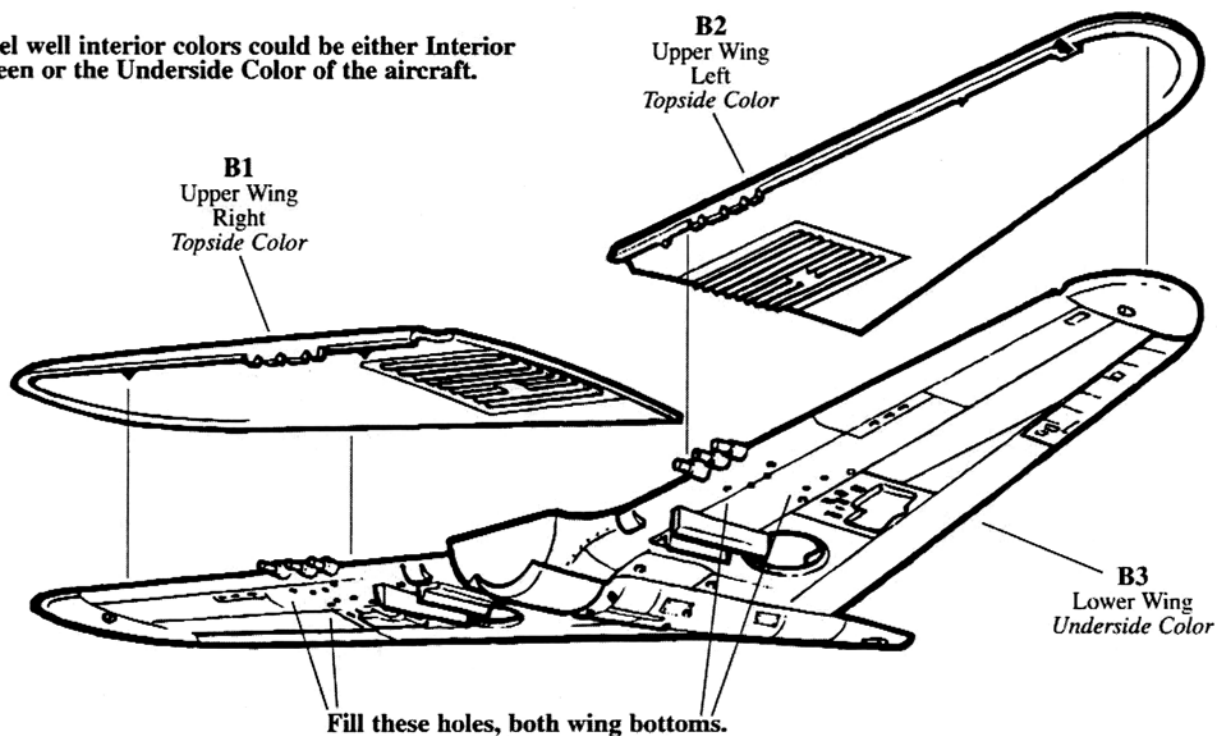


Step 2 - Fuselage Assembly

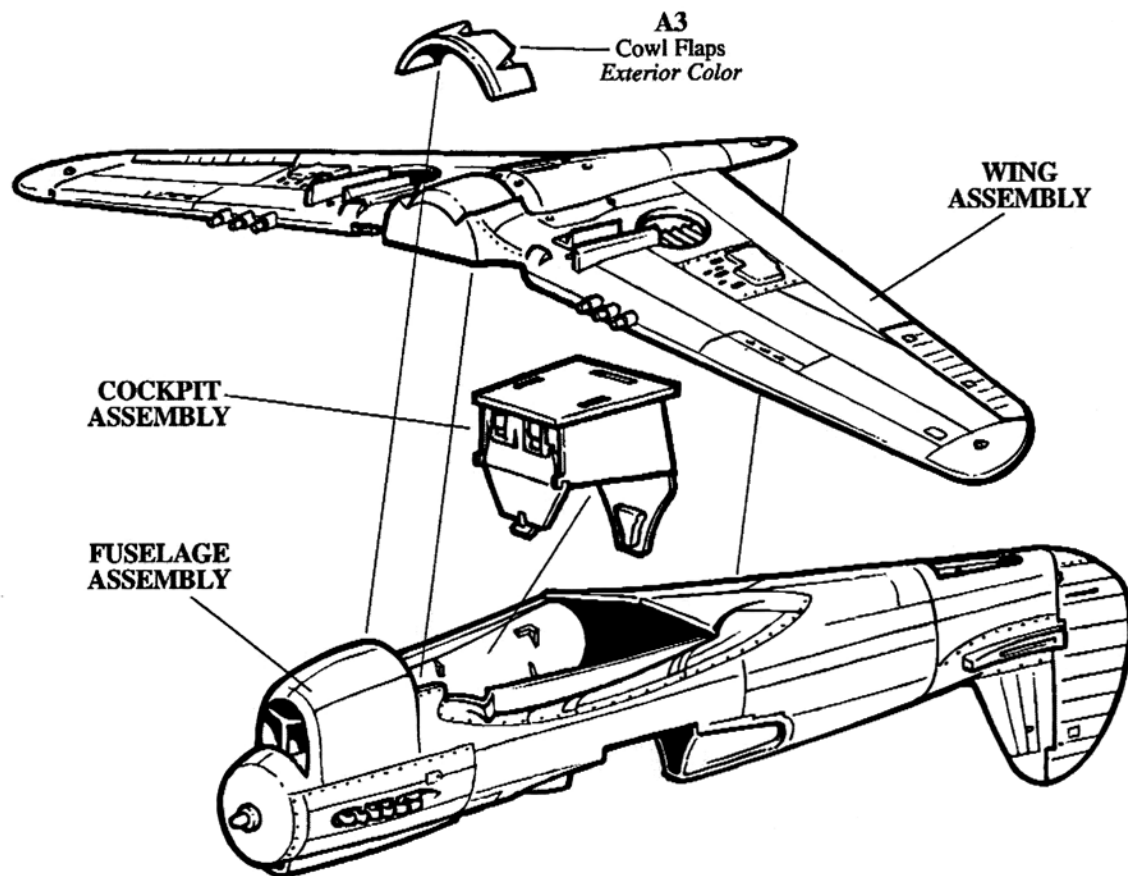


Step 3 - Wing Assembly

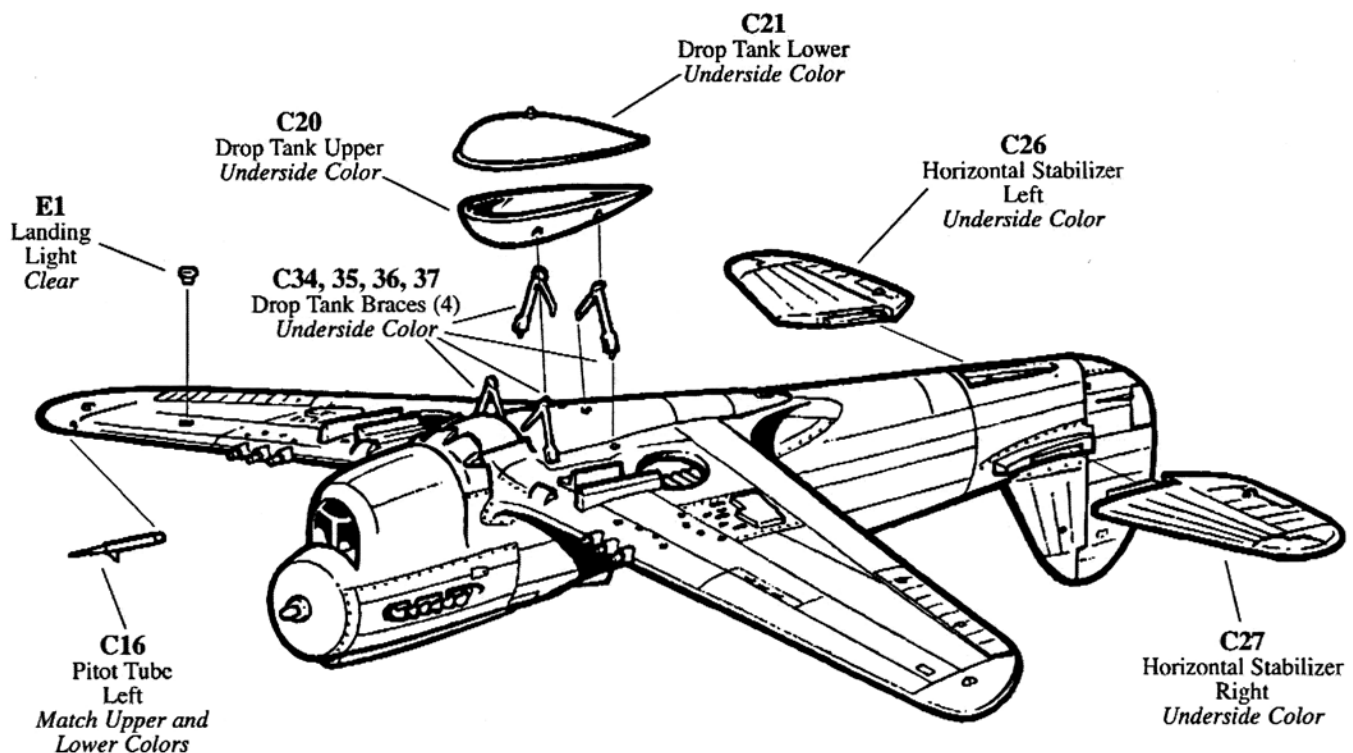
* Wheel well interior colors could be either Interior Green or the Underside Color of the aircraft.



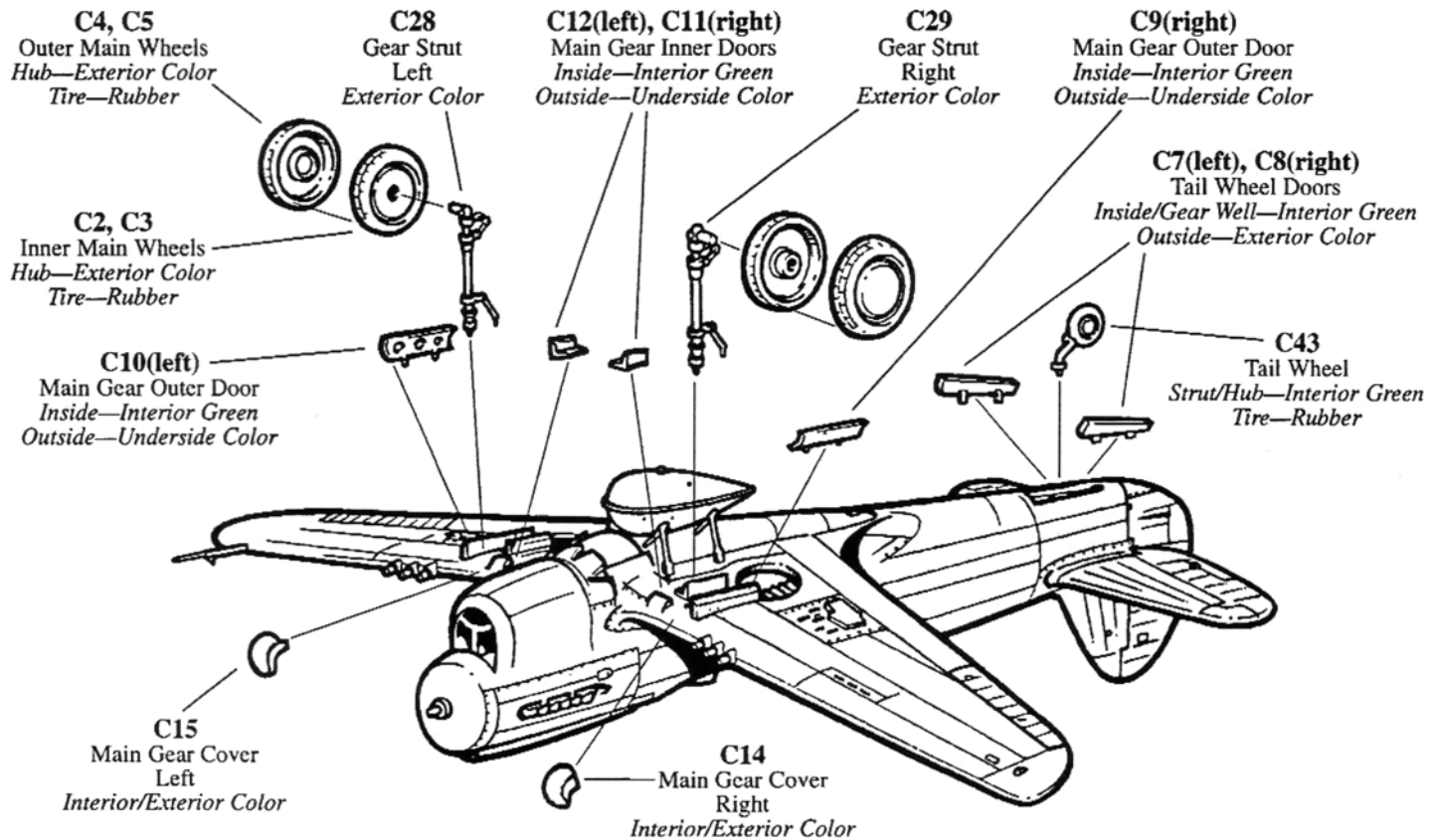
Step 4 - Cockpit, Wings, Etc. Attachment



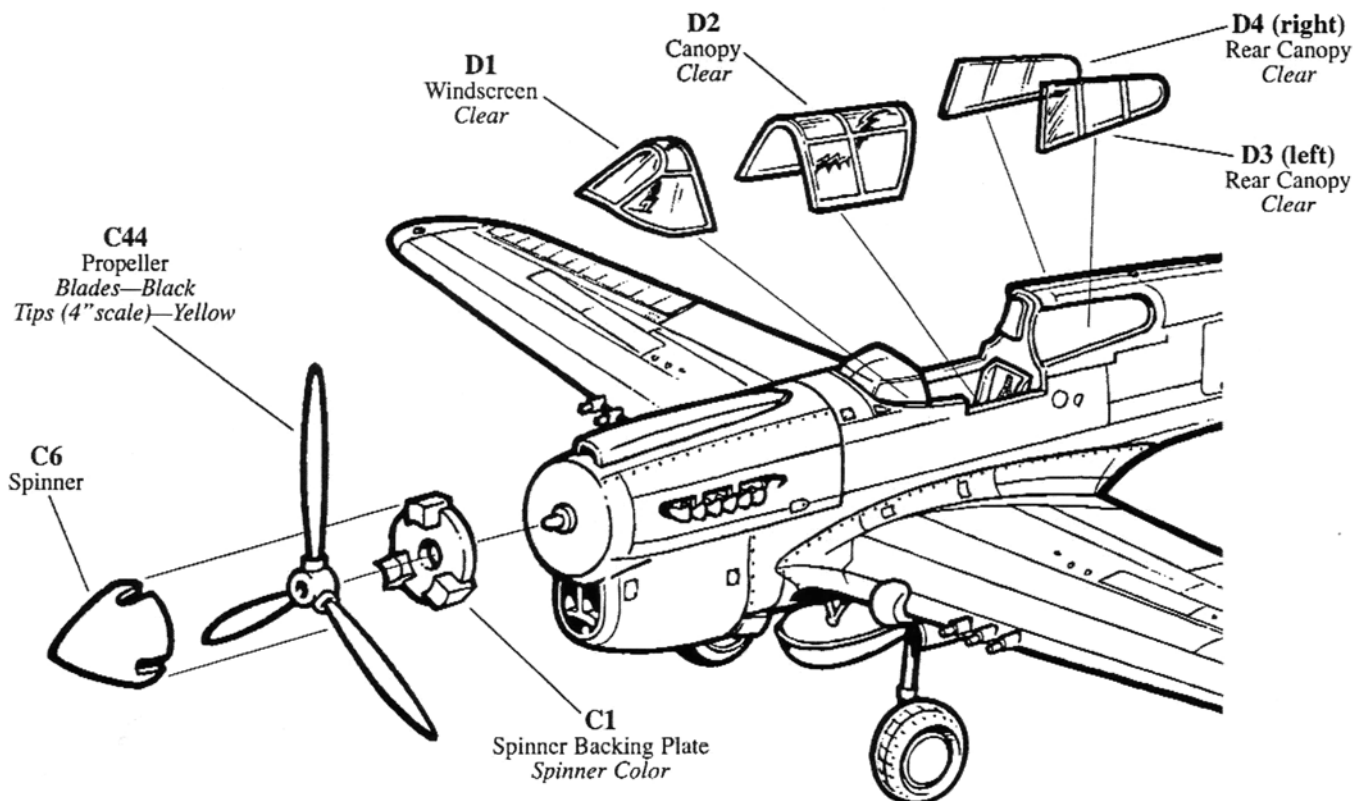
Step 5 - Drop Tank, Stabilizers, Etc.



Step 6 - Landing Gear, Etc.

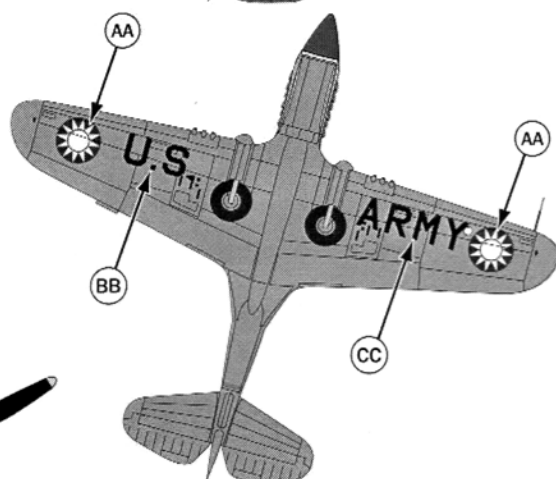
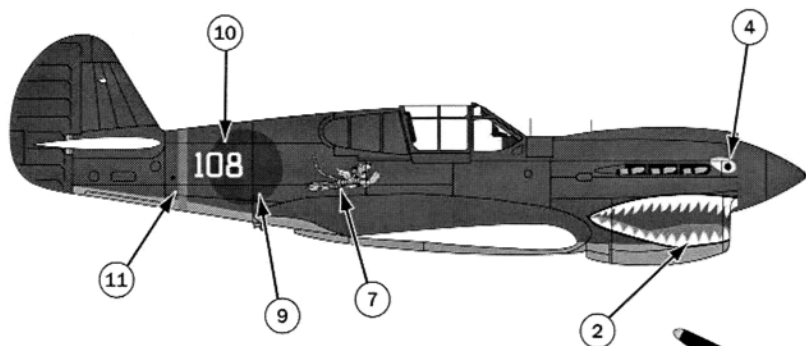
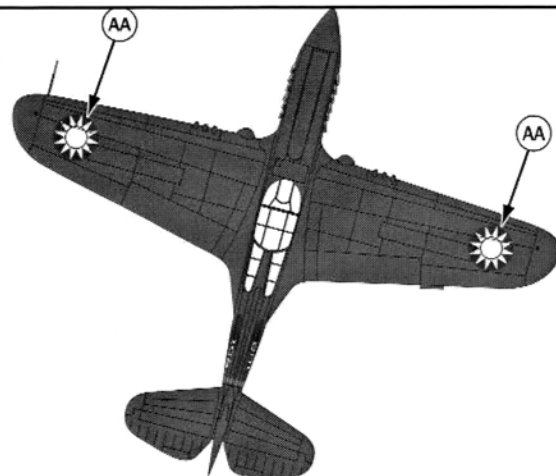
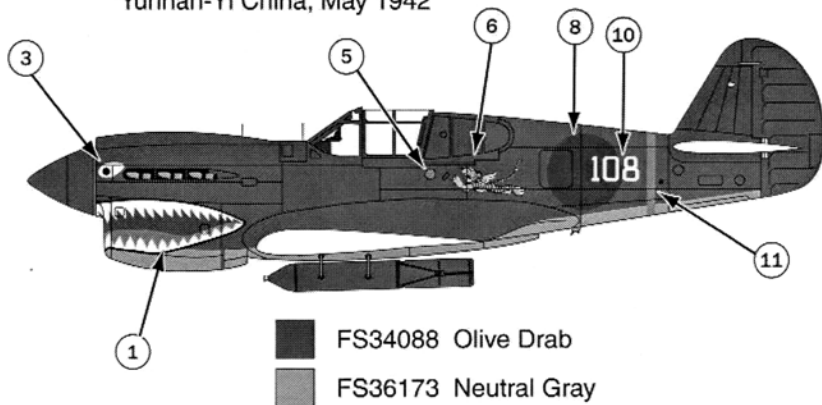


Step 7 - Propeller & Canopy

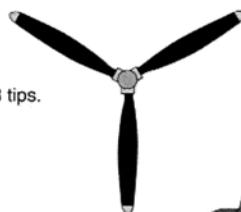


1

P-40E, 3rd Pursuit Squadron, AVG
S/Ldr David "Tex" Hill, 2nd Pursuit Sqdn
Yunnan-Yi China, May 1942

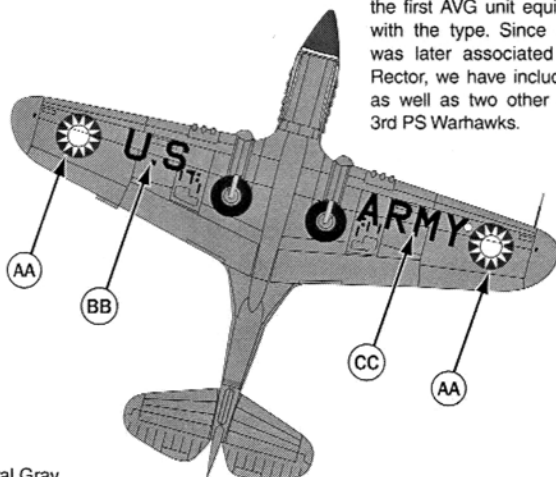
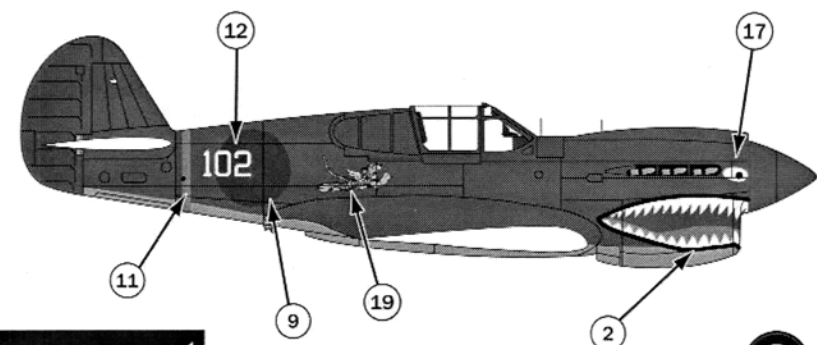
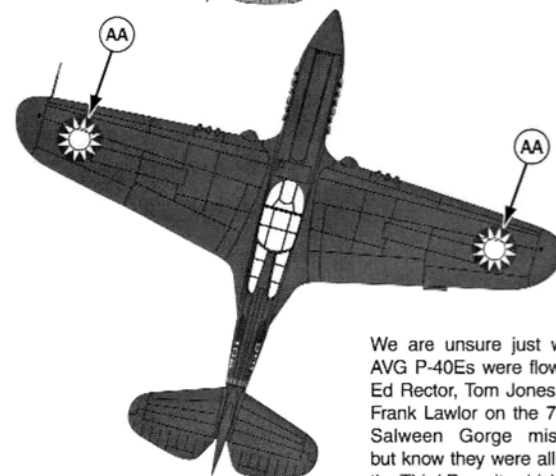
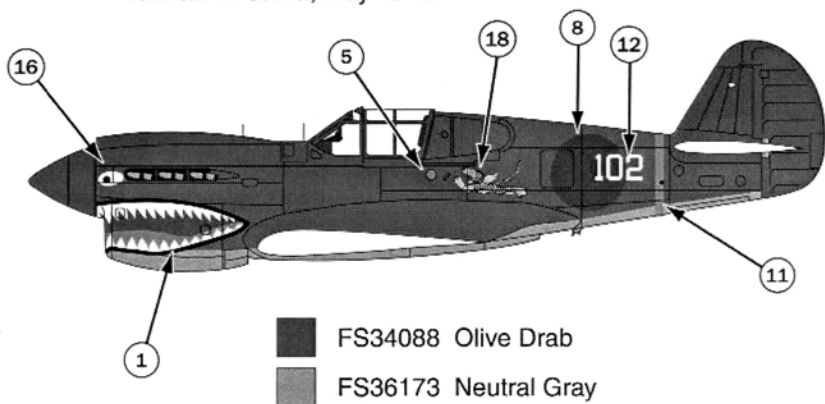


Paint propellers Flat Black FS37038 with Orange Yellow FS13538 tips.



2

P-40E, 3rd Pursuit Squadron, AVG
Ed Rector, 2nd Pursuit Squadron
Yunnan-Yi China, May 1942



We are unsure just which AVG P-40Es were flown by Ed Rector, Tom Jones, and Frank Lawlor on the 7 May Salween Gorge mission, but know they were all from the Third Pursuit, which was the first AVG unit equipped with the type. Since #102 was later associated with Rector, we have included it as well as two other early 3rd PS Warhawks.



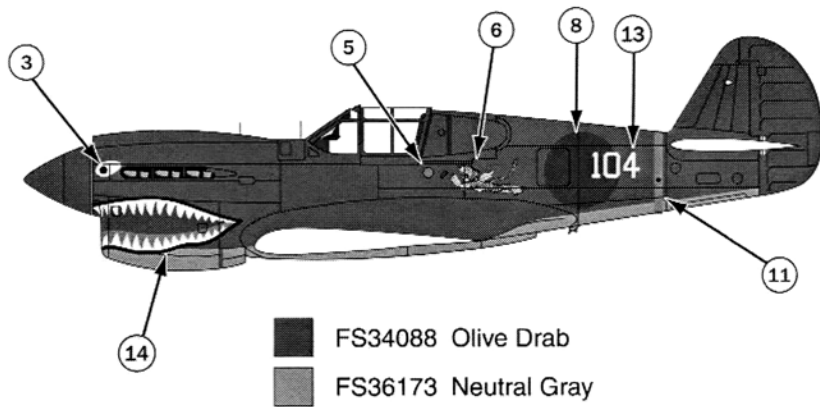
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Main Wheel Covers Neutral Gray

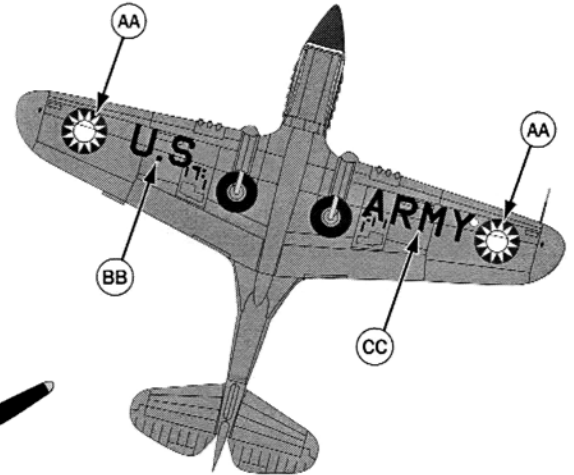
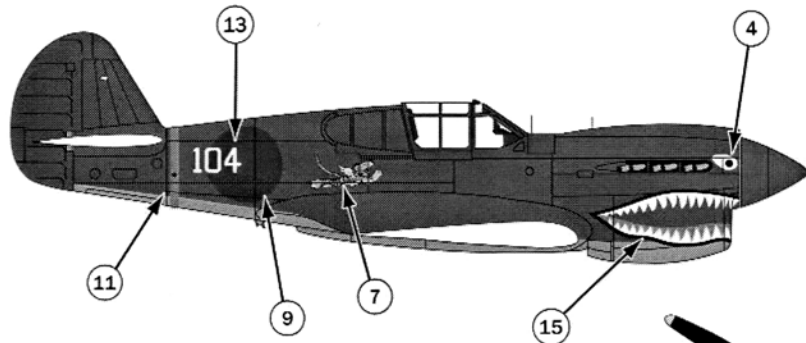
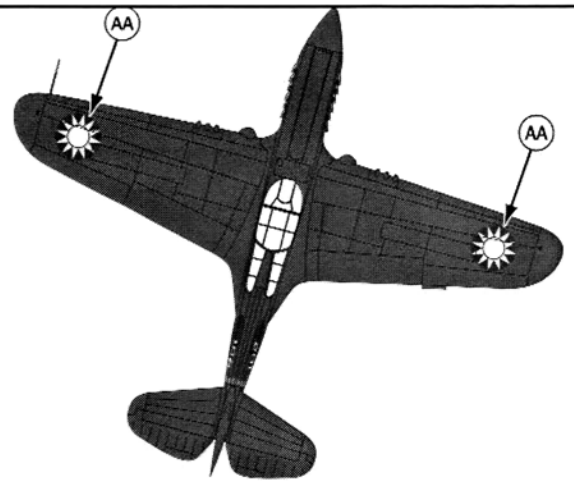
487701

3

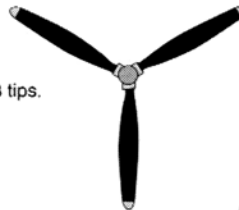
P-40E, 3rd Pursuit Squadron, AVG
Yunnan-Yi China, May 1942



FS34088 Olive Drab
FS36173 Neutral Gray

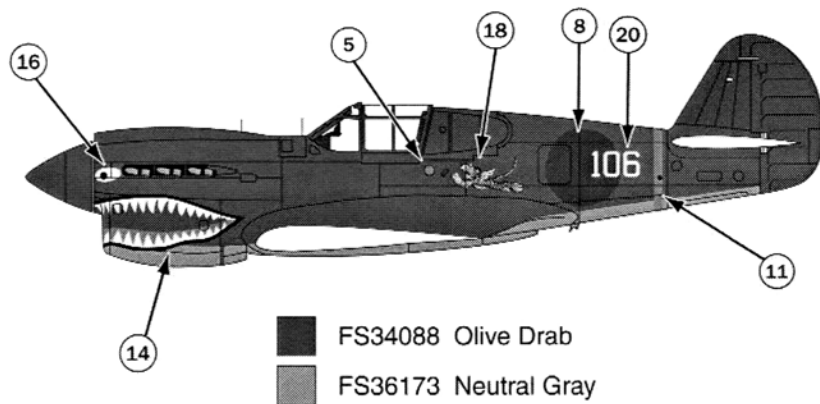


Paint propellers Flat Black FS37038 with Orange Yellow FS13538 tips.

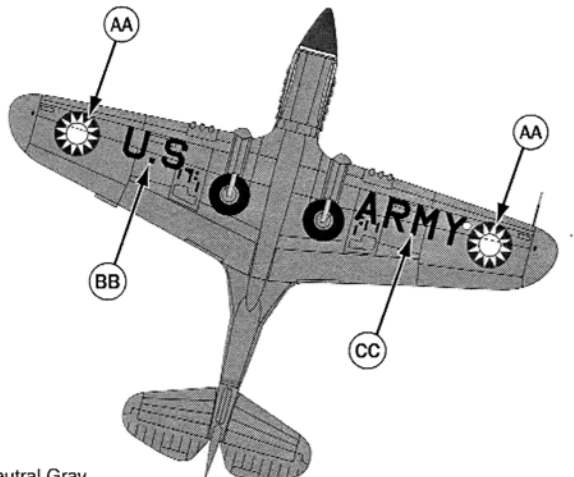
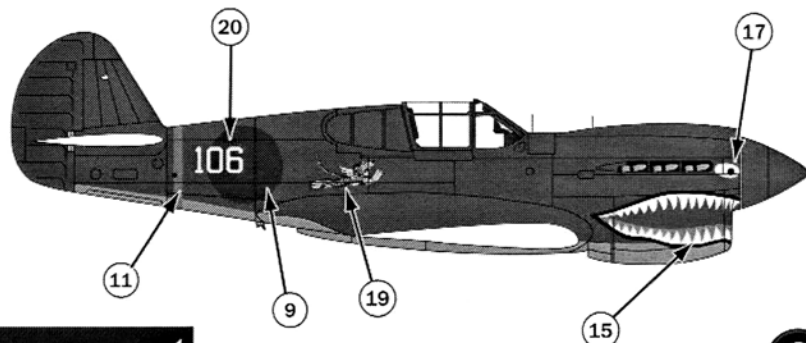
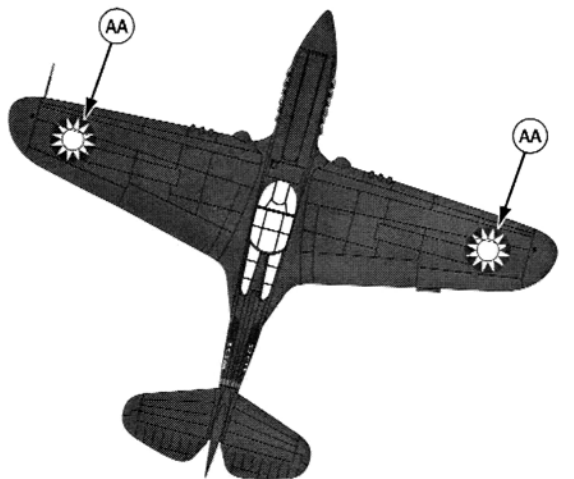


4

P-40E, 3rd Pursuit Squadron, AVG
Yunnan-Yi China, May 1942



FS34088 Olive Drab
FS36173 Neutral Gray



Main Wheel Covers Neutral Gray



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487701



Signature Series

"Tex" Hill Special, Ltd. Ed.