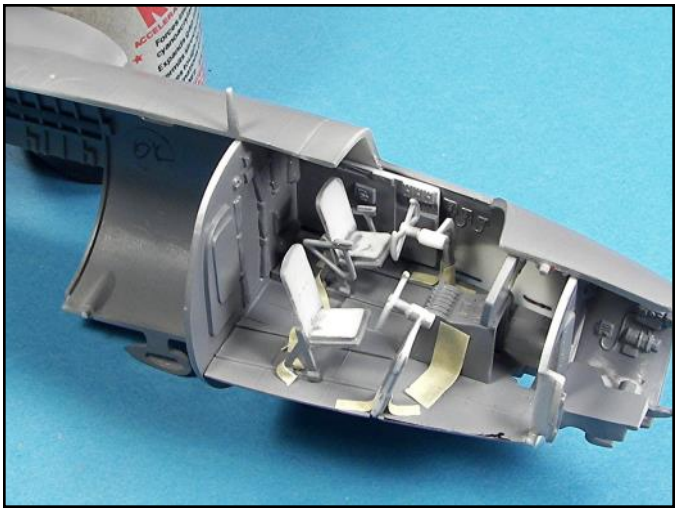
MIKE ASHEY PUBLISHING

COMPREHENSIVE SERIES SCALE MODEL AIRCRAFT MANUAL
NUMBER 2

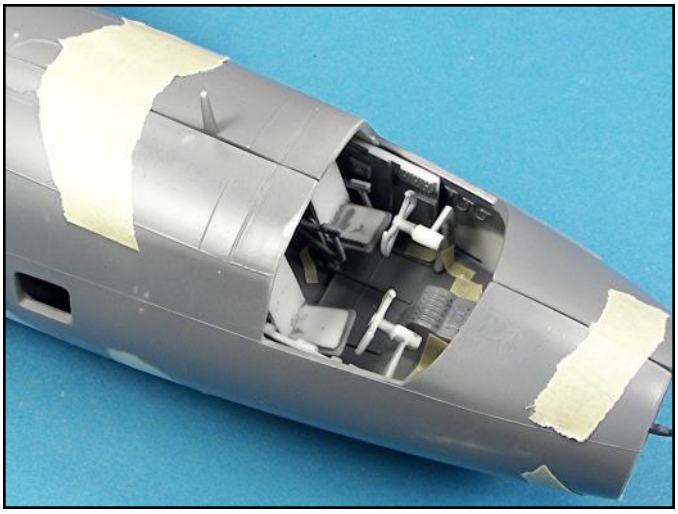
BUILDING & DETAILING THE AMT 1/48 SCALE B-26 MARAUDER

This kit was an AMT original issue that has been reissued by ESCI/ERTL. In comparing the AMT and Monogram kits there are some interesting differences. The fuselage, wings and tail overall dimensions are the same, but the AMT cockpit is slightly larger and so are the interior parts. The AMT engine nacelles, engines, and landing gear are noticeably larger than the Monogram kit. It appears that the Monogram kit dimensions are slightly smaller than they should be and the AMT kit dimensions are slightly larger than they should be. Consequently the two kit's detail parts are not interchangeable.

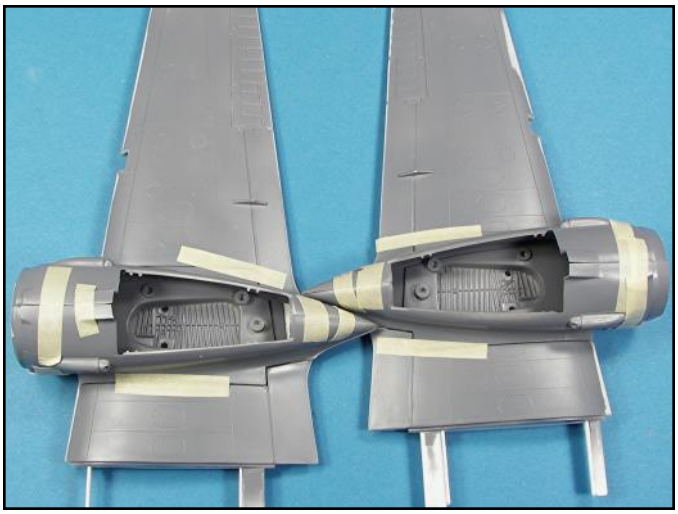
The AMT engines do not represent the R-2800 engines series that were used in the B-26 and since engines from other kits were too small I dressed up the AMT engines with some scratchbuilding. A lot of lead weight was added to the model to get it to sit correctly and I paid special attention to adding strength to the wing and fuselage assemblies so seams would not crack. The kit was molded in white plastic so I primed all the parts to make it easier to work with them. Much of the raised surface detail was damaged during construction so I decided to sand it all off and not rescribe any of it. For interior detailing I used the Eduard pre-painted cockpit set, which was designed for the Monogram kit and their pre-painted 50 caliber machine gun belts. I also used various sizes of Evergreen plastic strip. The model was painted with Testors enamels and the decals are from Microscale.



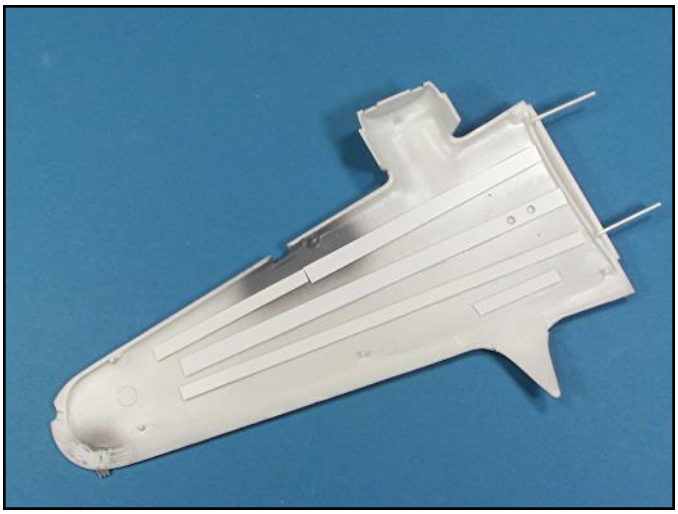
All the parts were cleaned up and then I carefully taped the interior parts in place to check the fit. I made notes on what details I wanted to add and changes that needed to be made, including removing interior flaws.



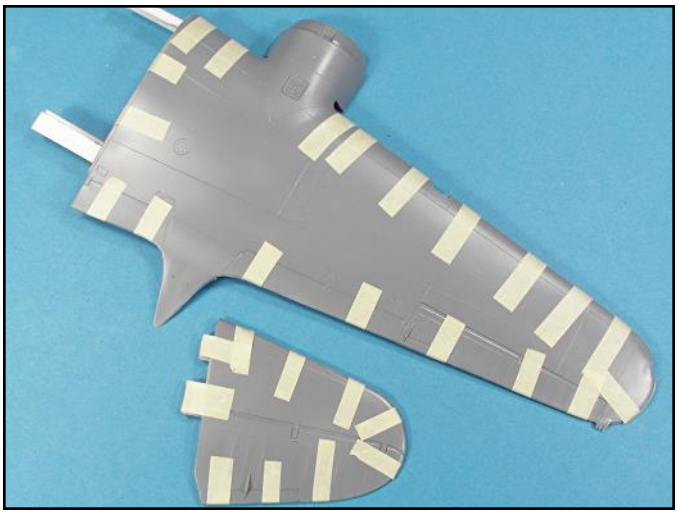
With the fuselage interior parts taped in place, I closed up the fuselage to ensure that the bulkheads and cockpit decking did not interfere with a tight fit of the fuselage halves. All the parts were primed to help identify surface flaws.



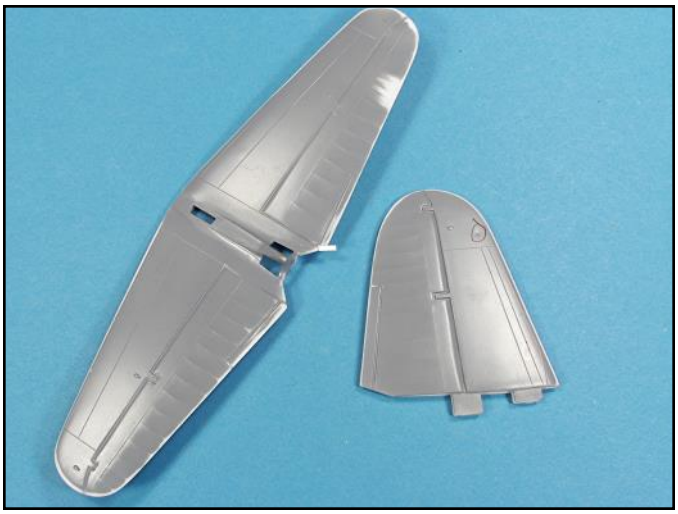
The wings and engine nacelles on both the AMT kit and the Monogram kit have fit challenges and test fitting the parts helped identify areas that needed attention.



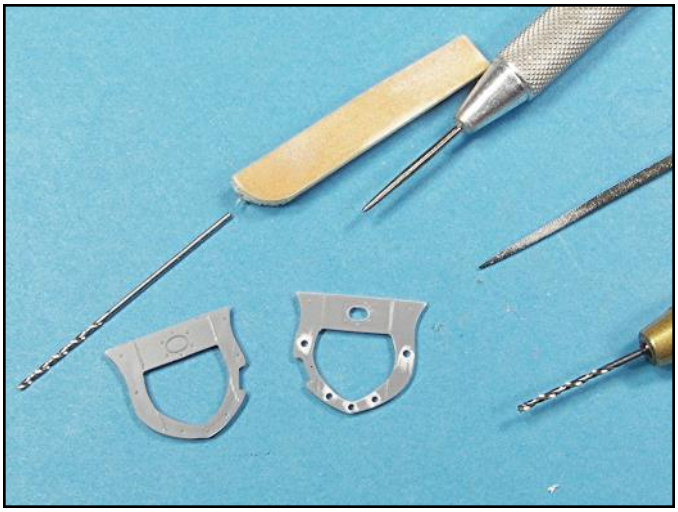
To add strength to the wings, I laminated .02 x .03 inch Evergreen plastic strips to stiffen the interior surfaces to prevent seam cracking after gluing and provide a stronger support for all the lead weight that would be needed.



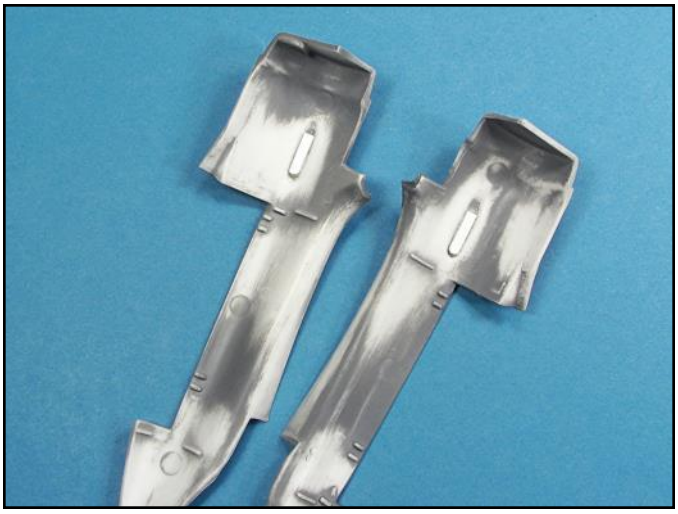
I flattened the gluing surfaces and used a lot of masking tape to secure the wing halves tightly together. I ran beads of super glue along the seam lines and the capillary action of the glue pulled it into the seams.



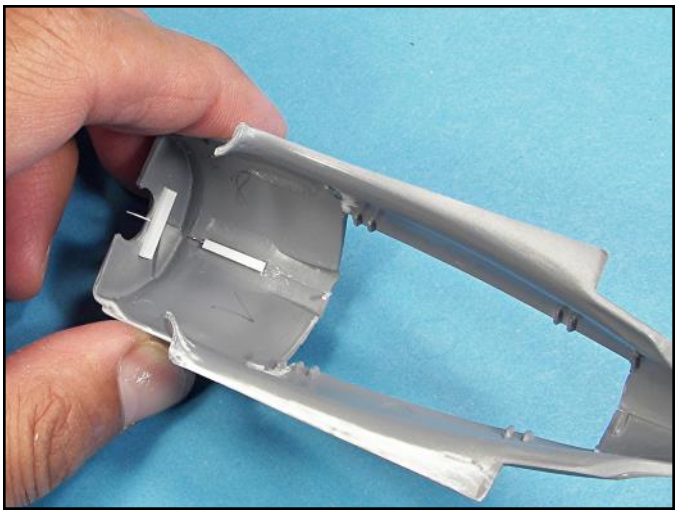
Each seam was scrapped, sanded and checked with Testors silver paint. Additional applications of super glue were applied in areas that needed attention. Once I was satisfied with the seam work, the silver paint was removed.



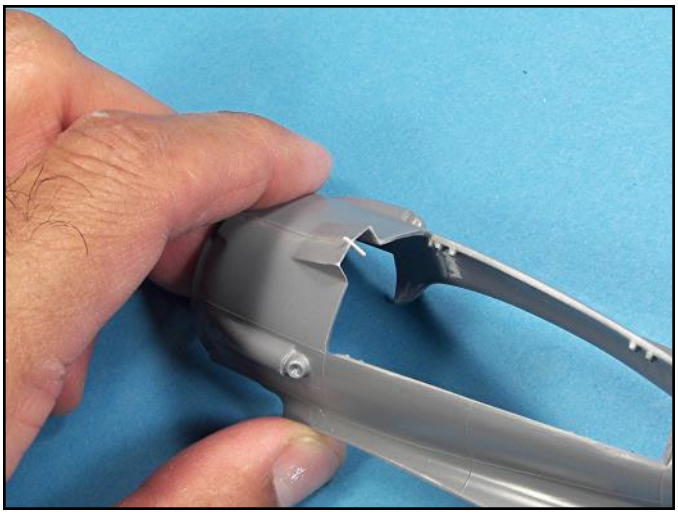
I drilled out the aft interior bulkhead framing for the engine nacelles to add a higher level of realism.



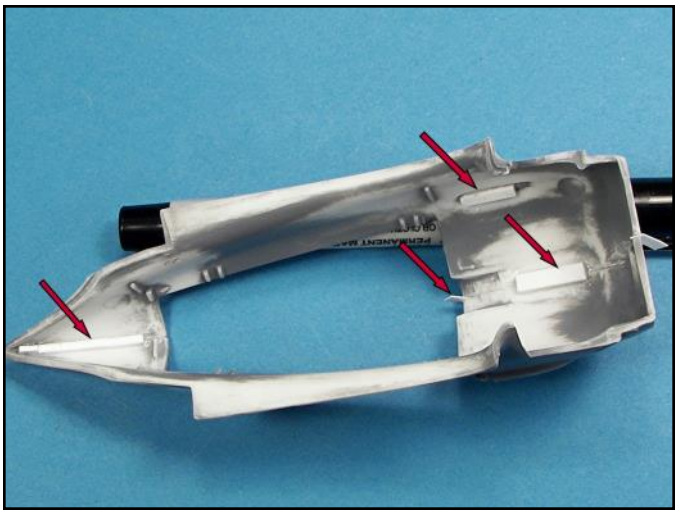
I added plastic strips to the backsides of the engine exhausts so that I could drill them out and make the exhaust ports deeper



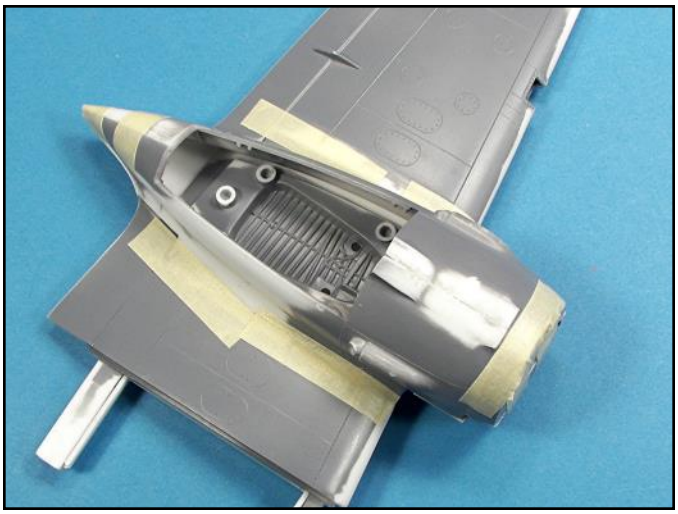
After gluing the engine nacelles together, I added lengths of plastic strip to the interior areas of the seams to strengthen them.



I also used plastic strips to fill voids along seam lines wherever possible. This also added strength to each glued seam line.

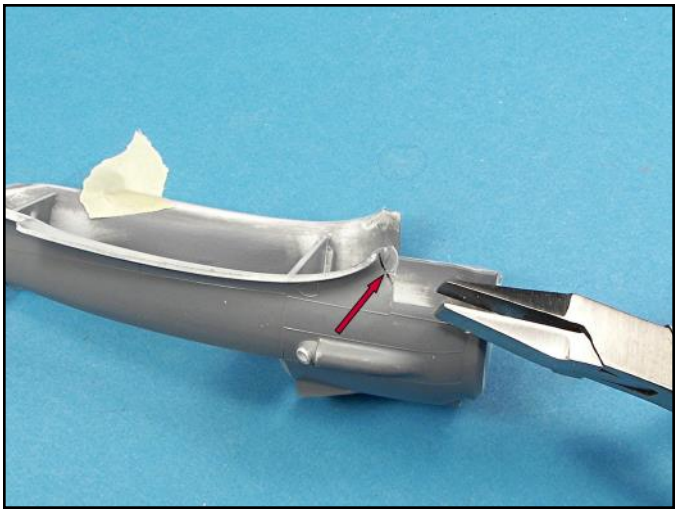


Here you can see the attention to assembly techniques necessary to ensure strong sub-assemblies.

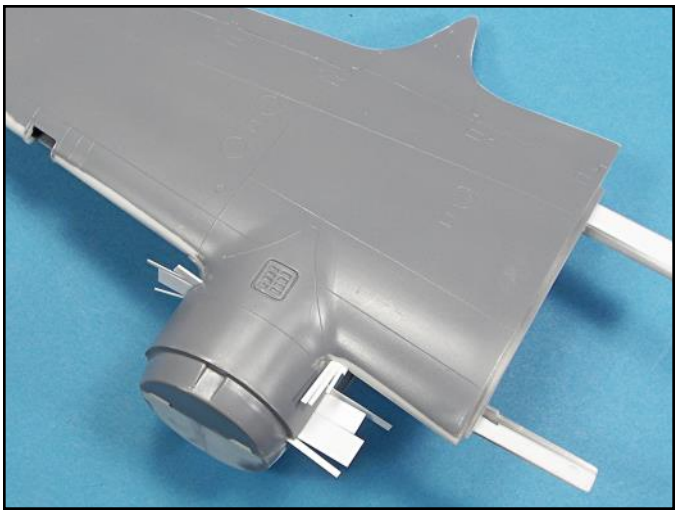


Fit checks are necessary as you finish sub-assemblies. I made notes on the instruction sheet on where the voids were and how best to fill them.

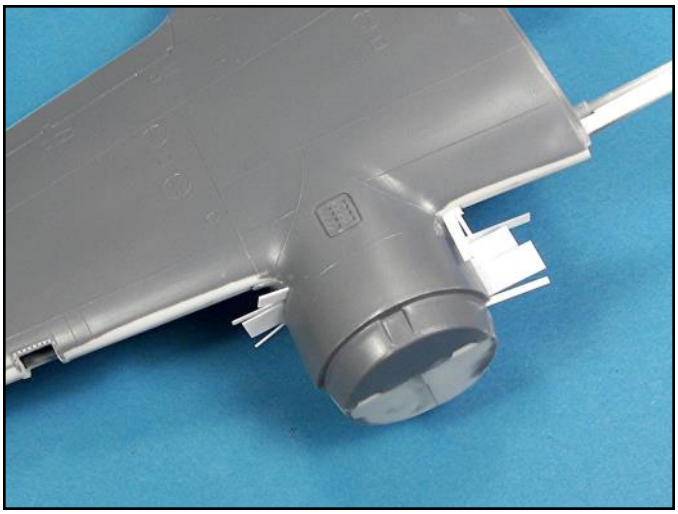
The engine nacelle sub-assemblies are now complete with the addition of the interior bulkheads.



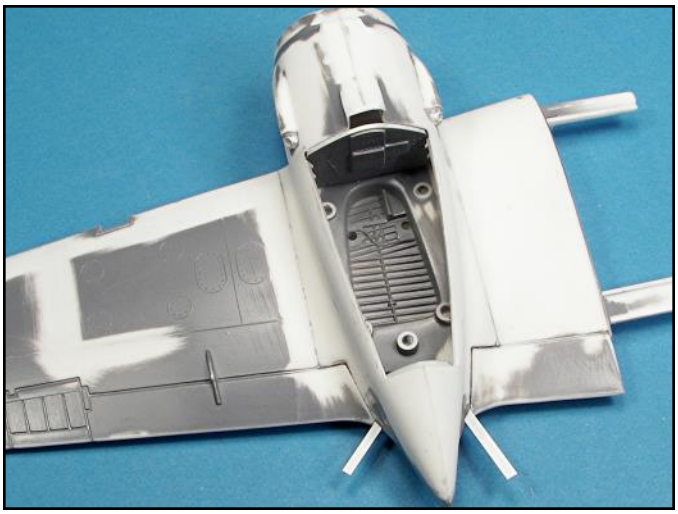
When I test fitted the engine nacelles, I noticed that the top front tips were molded to far inward. Using flat nosed pliers I carefully bent the tips slightly outward checking my work as I progressed and form fitted the bends into place.



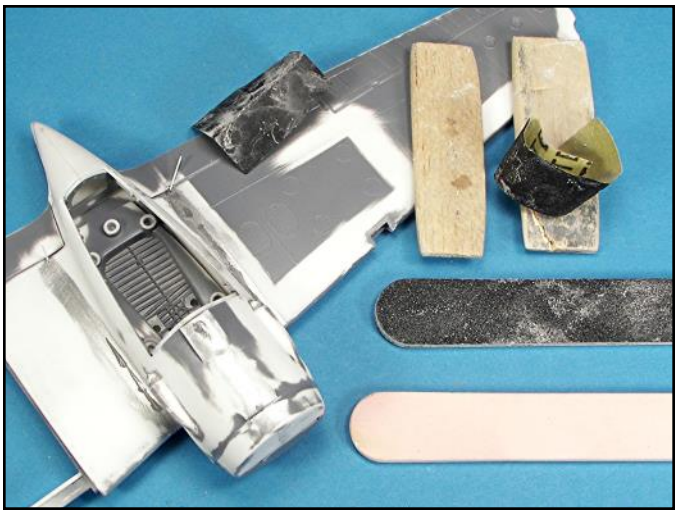
The starboard wing had a lot of voids to fill in between the engine nacelle and the wing. Various sizes of plastic strip were used. I positioned all the strips in place and then applied super glue to both sides of the strips.



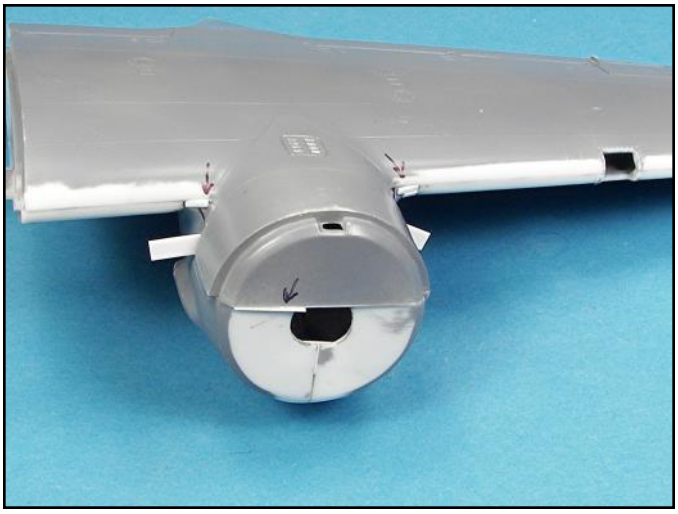
Both sides of the starboard engine nacelle had voids that needed to be filled. Once the super glue was dried the plastic strips were cut and sanded smooth.



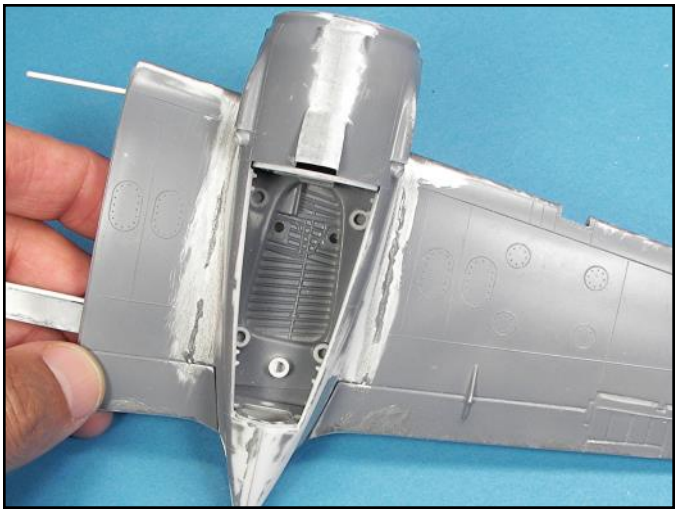
The backside of each nacelle also has some voids in difficult places and the best way to fill them was with plastic strips.



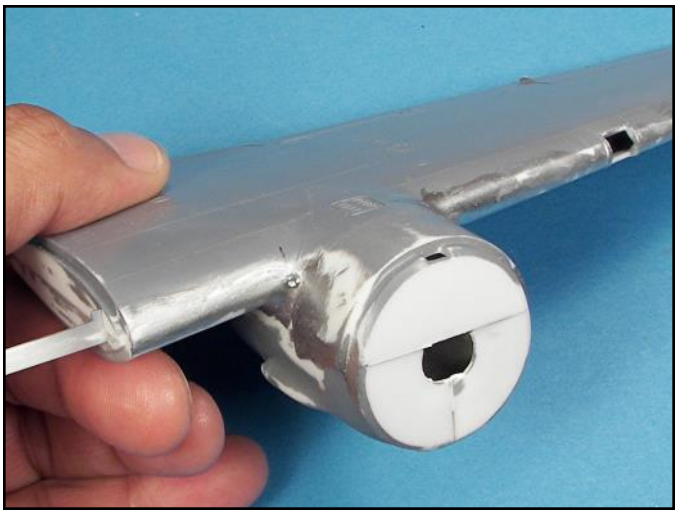
Filling and sanding the engine nacelle voids on the underside of the wings required using sandpaper wrapped around balsa strips. I also wet sanded to help reduce the surface indentations along the seam lines.



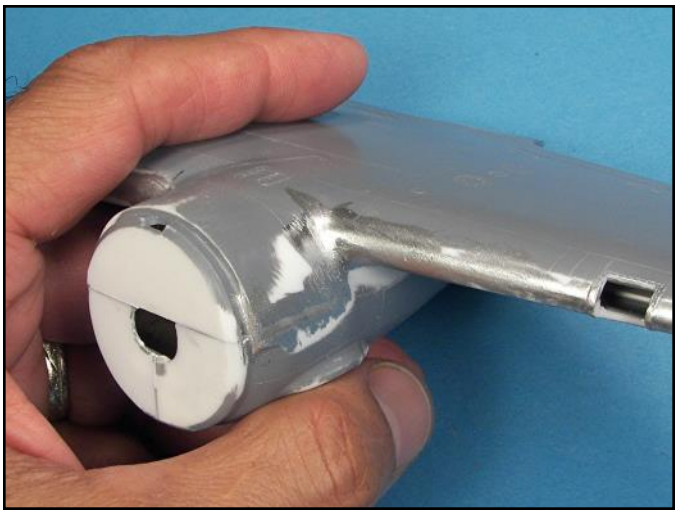
The port side nacelle had fewer voids but the upper and lower surfaces were different diameters. This required careful sanding so that the plastic did not get to thin.



Checking the seams with silver paint and then applying more super glue to areas that needed attention was the best way to get the seams to disappear. It took several iterations to complete the seam work.

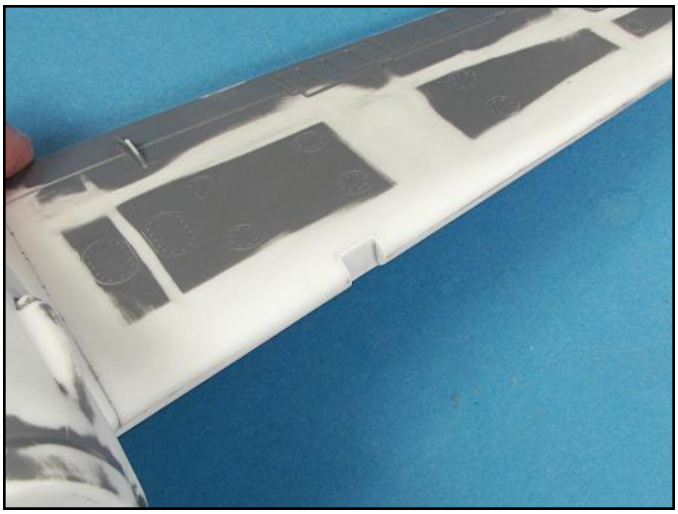


The seam work and fit issues on each side of each engine nacelle were different, however bending out the upper outer areas of each nacelle greatly helped the fit issues at these compound curve areas.

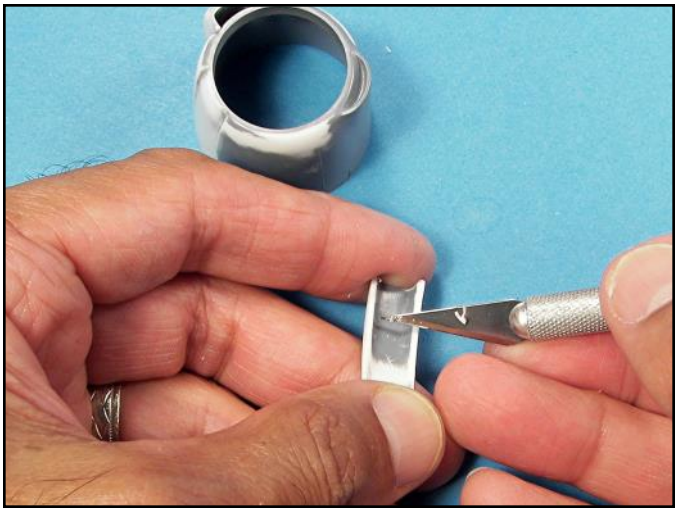


Here you can see the smooth transition area between the engine nacelle and the wing.

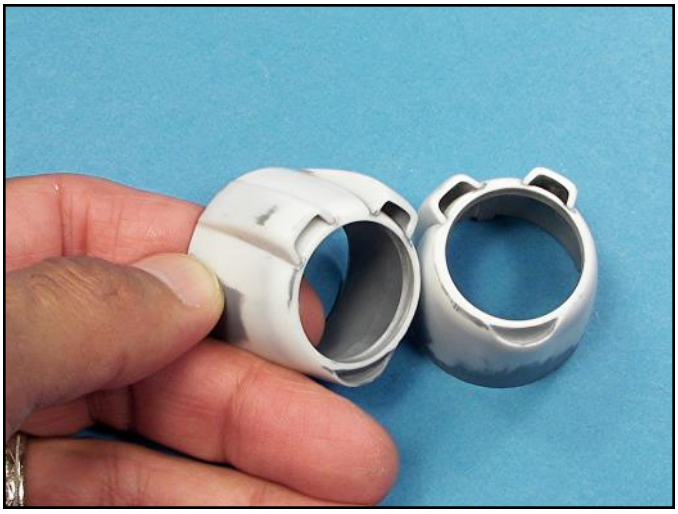
The wing lights on both wings were just holes so I boxed them in with plastic strip.



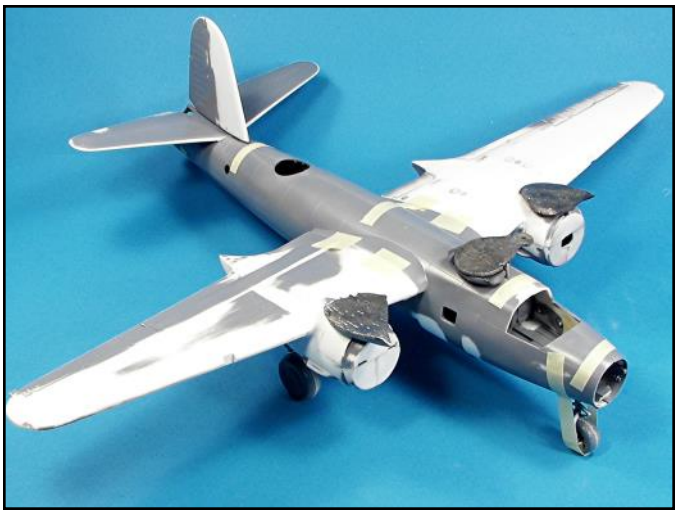
I trimmed the plastic and then sanded the sides down until they were flush with the wings surface.



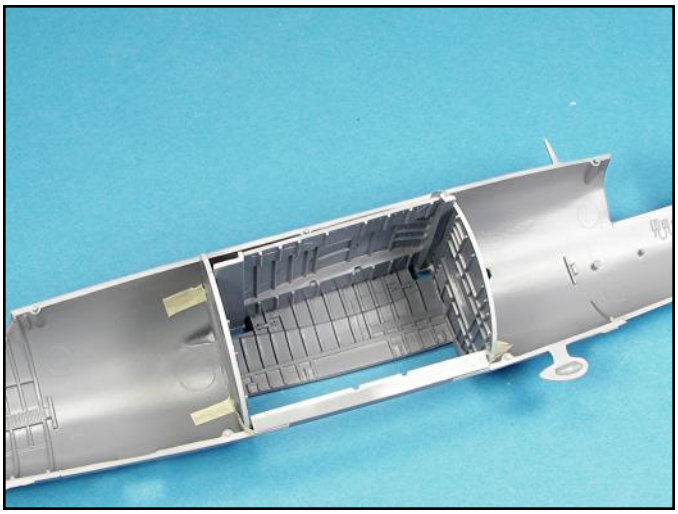
Next, I worked on the engine cowlings. I shaved the gluing surfaces layers at a time and form fitted them into place so that there would not be any voids.



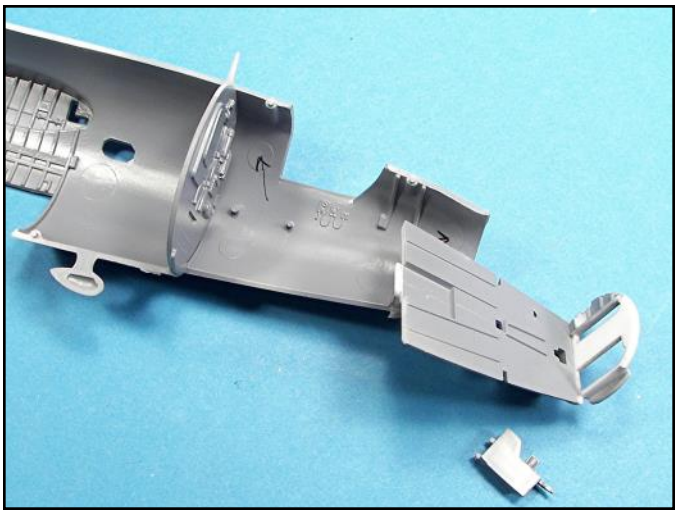
I ran tiny beads of super glue along the seam lines between the engine cowling air scoops and the cowling. I also reduced the thickness of the air scoop openings so that they looked more in scale and realistic.



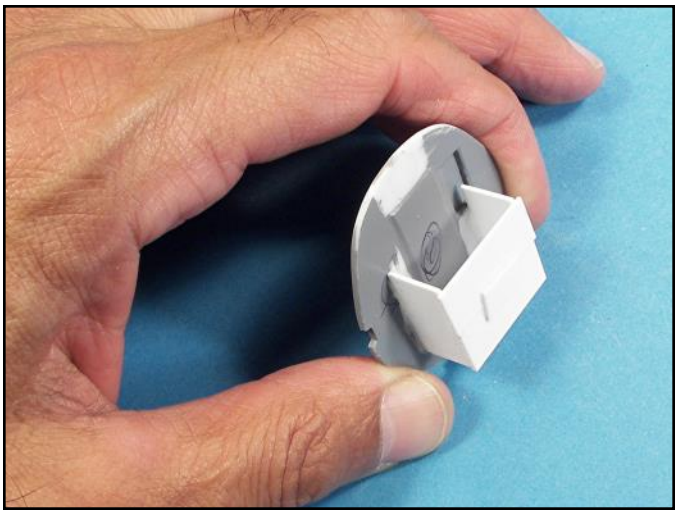
Next, I taped the wings and tail assemblies and the landing gear in place to determine how much weight I would need to add to get the model to sit correctly.



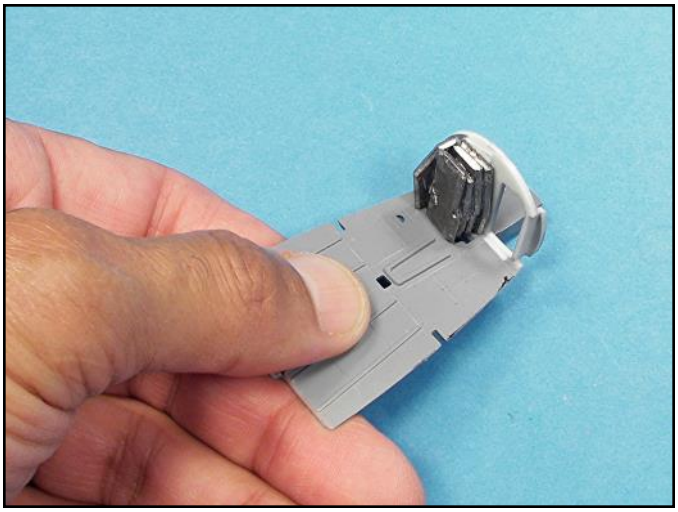
The bomb bay bulkheads and framing were taped into place and then I added tiny beads of super glue to the attachment points. I was also careful not to glue the assembly to the fuselage.



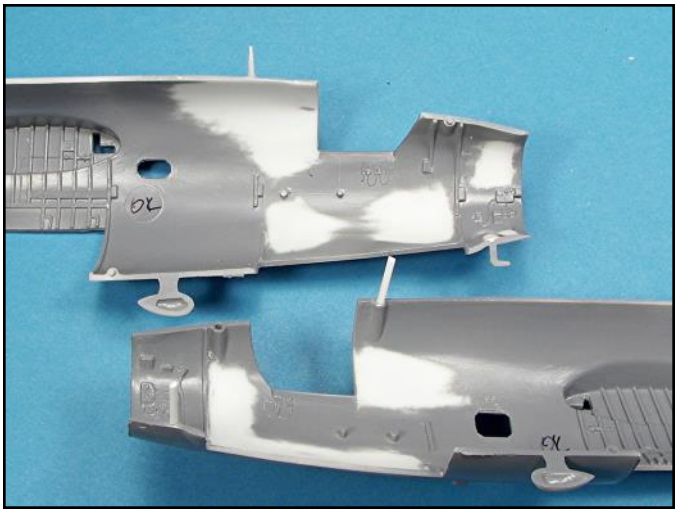
Next, I started working on the cockpit area by test fitting all the parts once again. I started making notes on the instructions on what details I wanted to add and what modifications to the parts would be needed.



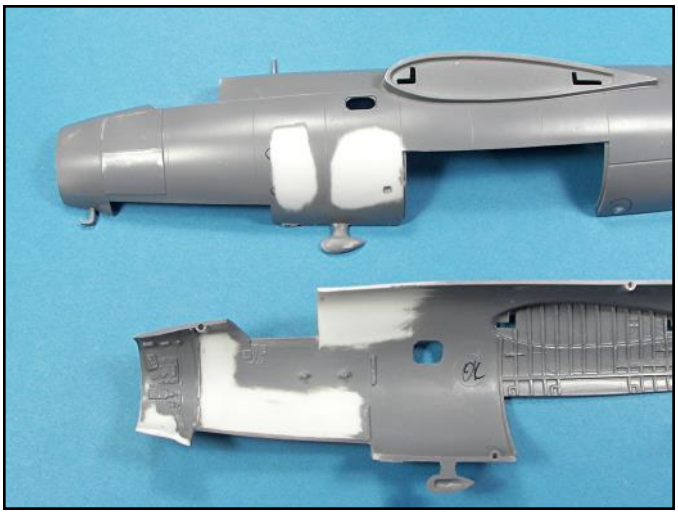
I made a box on the backside of the cockpit bulkhead to hold the weights I need to add.



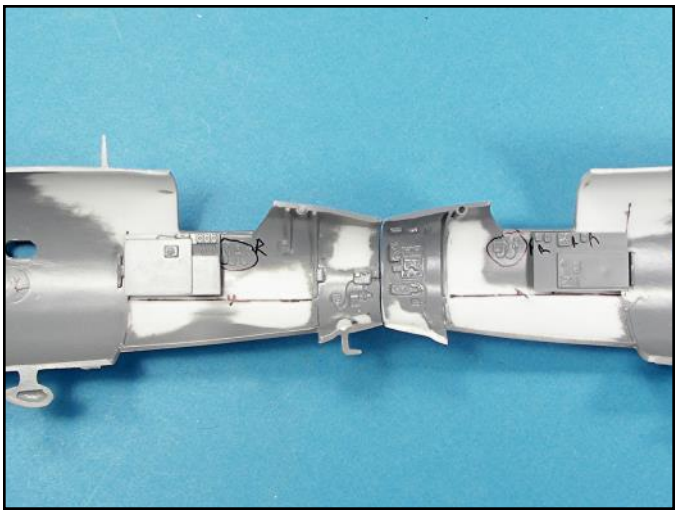
I also super glued weight to the cockpit bulkhead areas that would not be seen once the cockpit was assembled and the fuselage halves glued together. Notice how I cut and shaped the lead weights.



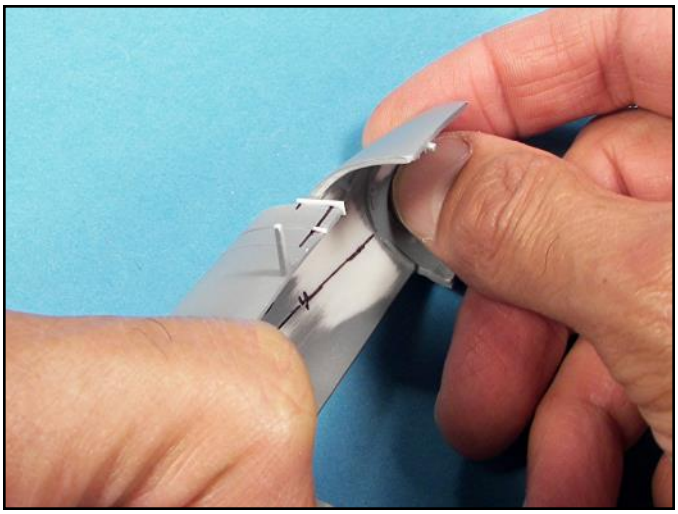
There were surface imperfections on the interior of the walls of the cockpit and careful wet sanding removed them.



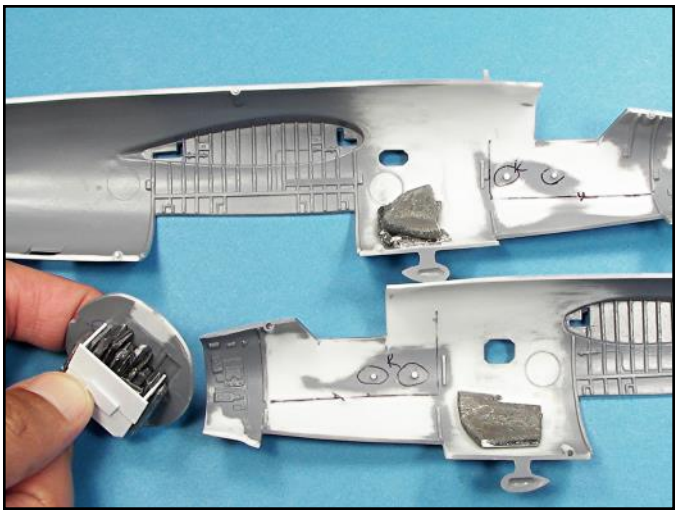
There were also some imperfections on the outer surfaces of the fuselage around the cockpit area that also need to be removed.



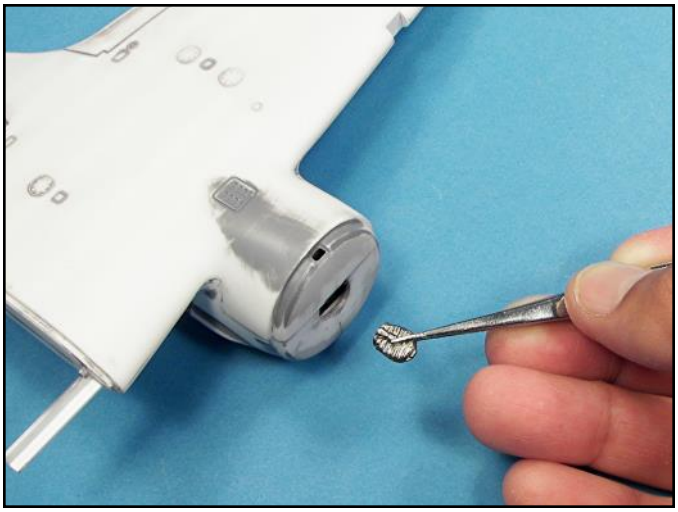
I also rechecked the fit and location of the cockpit sidewall details. This also helped me identify areas along the fuselage surface where I could add additional lead weight.



When I checked the fit of the cockpit canopy, I noticed a void on the left fuselage half. I filled it with a small length of plastic strip that I sanded and contoured into place while repeatedly checking the fit of the canopy.

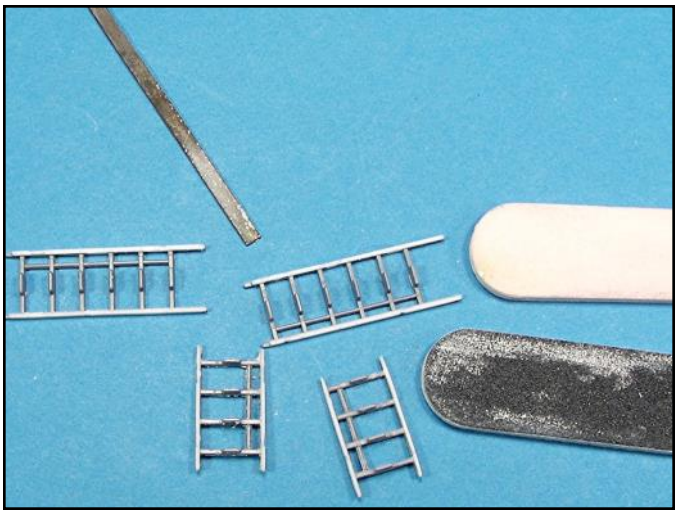


The additional led weight has been glued into place and thanks to fit checking, their locations will not interfere with interior detail parts.

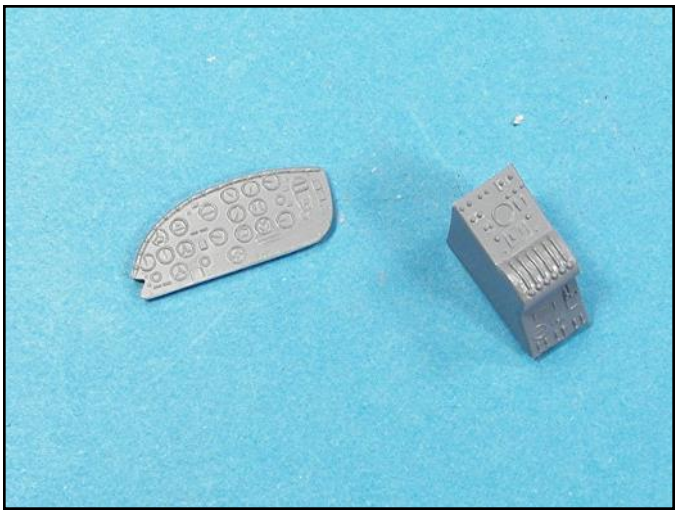


I added all the weights to the cockpit area that I could insert into hidden locations and then added the remaining weight to the inside areas of the engine nacelles. I secured them in place with white glue.

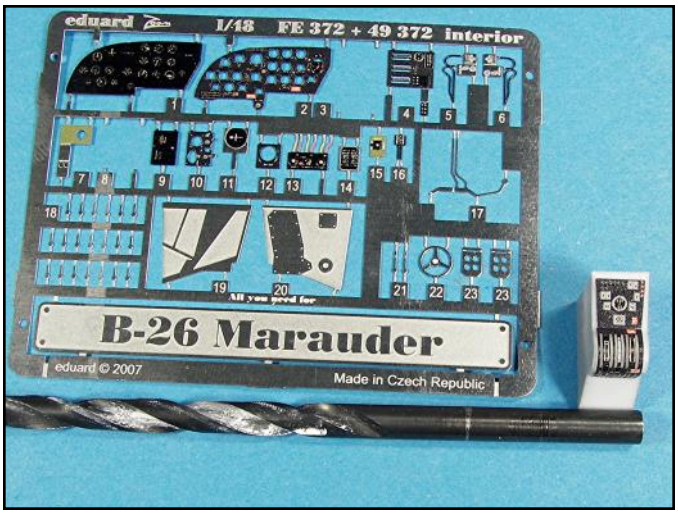
The bomb bay sub-assembly is now ready for painting and drybrushing to make the surface details stand out.



The bomb racks had a lot of flash and indentations along the edges that need to be sanded out.

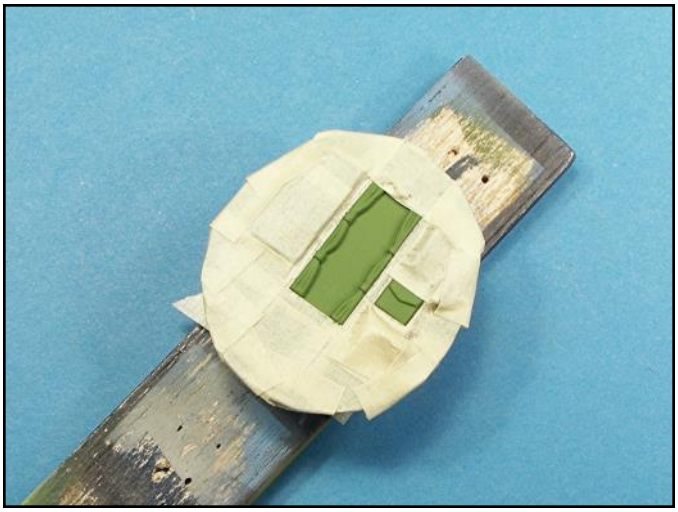


The cockpit instrument console and the engine control console had its surface details sanded off so that the Eduard pre-painted placards would sit correctly.

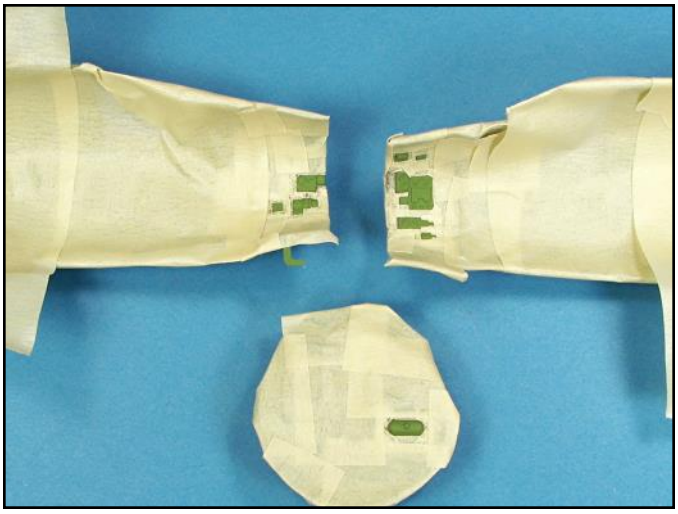


To get the engine control console placard to sit correctly, I curved it around the smooth end of a drill bit. I matched the drill bits diameter to the curve of the plastic part.

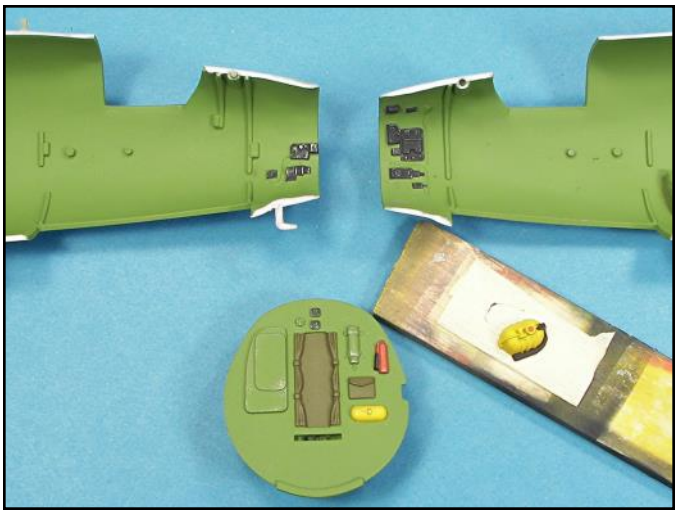
I wanted to use some of the Monogram interior details so I cut them out and then sanded the remaining plastic off by running the parts across sandpaper. Now it is time to start painting the interior.



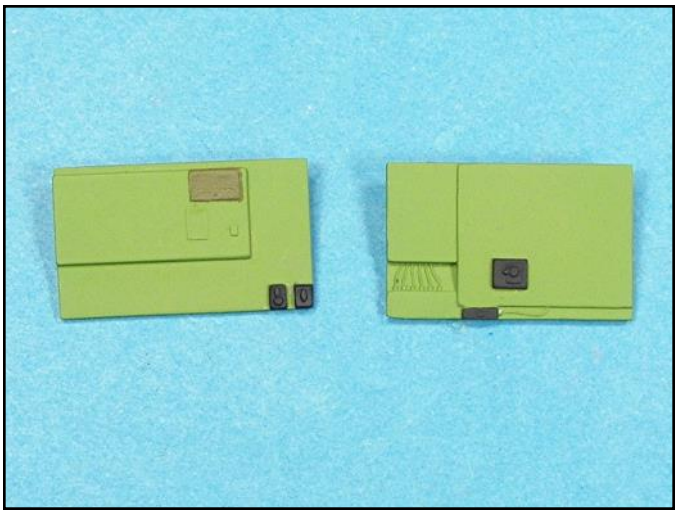
I like airbrushing as many surface details as possible, so I do a lot of layered masking and painting. Once the olive drab color is applied to the canvas areas they will be covered with masking tape.



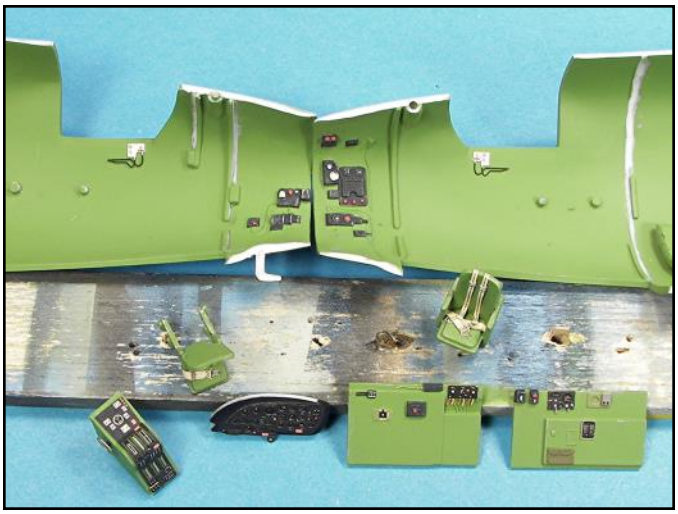
Here the molded on cockpit details are masked off as well as the molded on oxygen cylinder. I use small lengths of masking tape to mask around the surface details.



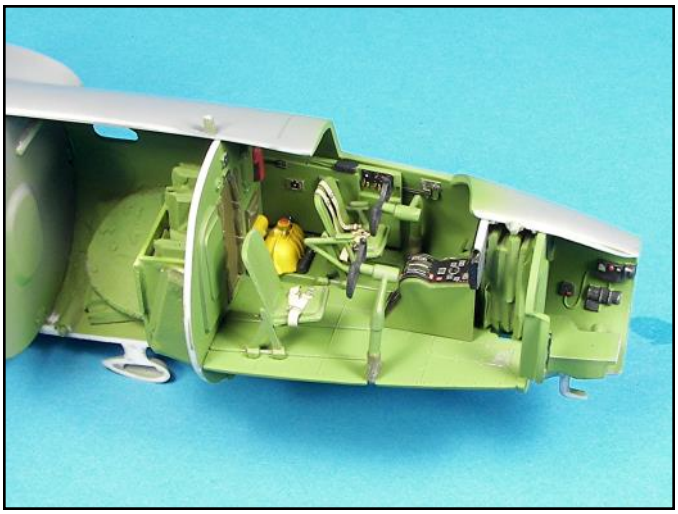
Note how sharp and clean the details are. After masking and before airbrushing, I run the tip of a sharp lead pencil around the surface details to ensure the masking tape is flat. This prevents paint bleeding under the masking tape.



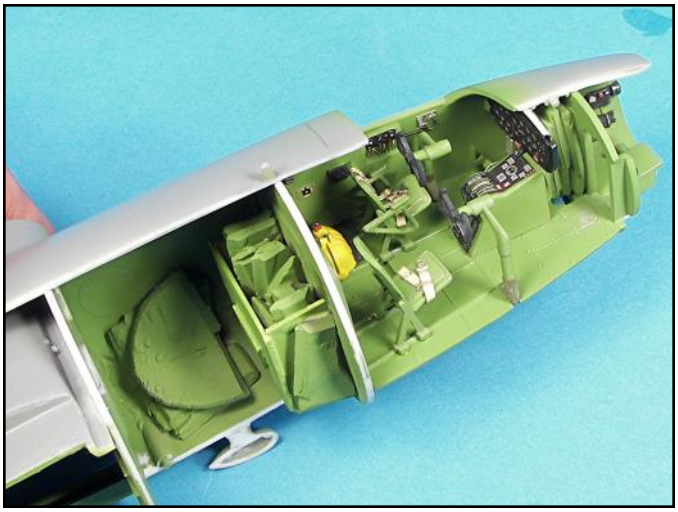
The next step was to mask and paint the cockpit side wall panel details and then add the Eduard pre-painted placards.



All the interior parts have been painted and detailed. I picked out the tiny details with paint by dipping the end of a sharp toothpick into the paint bottle cap to apply tiny amounts at a time.



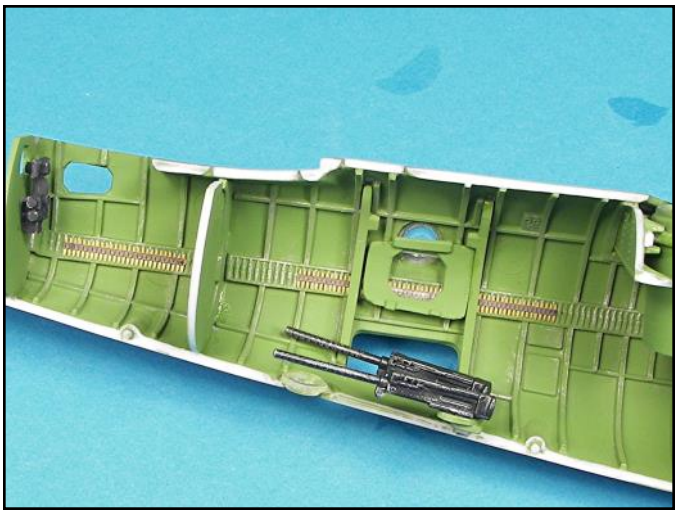
The cockpit has now been assembled and the Eduard pre-painted seat and shoulder harness belts really help add an additional layer of accuracy and realism to the cockpit.



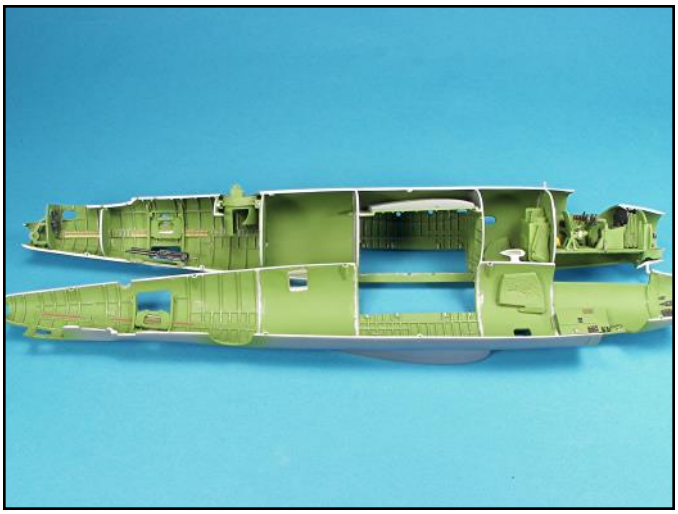
Here you can see how well the Eduard pre-painted placards stand out.

I cleaned up the 50 caliber guns and carefully scrapped off the mold lines.

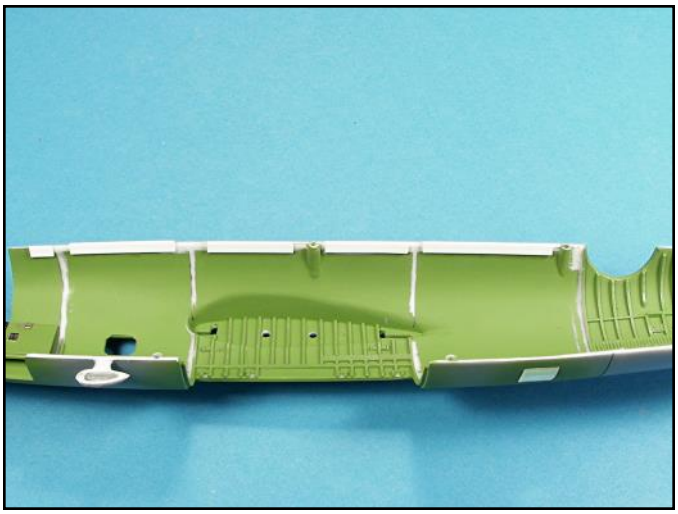
Before attaching the bomb bay assembly, I drilled holes through the fuselage so that after I attached the wings, I could slide and glue thick plastic rod into place to add strength to the fuselage wing attachment points.



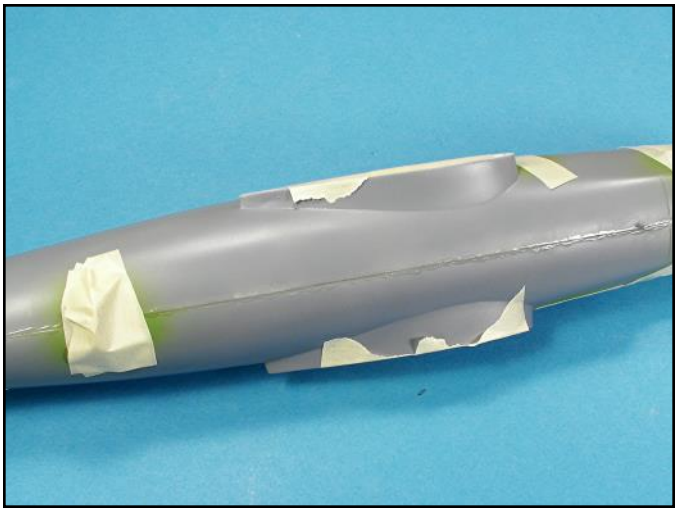
The aft area was drybrushed with silver paint, Eduard pre-painted ammo belts were added in areas where they could be seen and the remaining bulkheads and details were glued into place.



All the interior details have now been added and the fuselage halves are almost ready to be glued together.



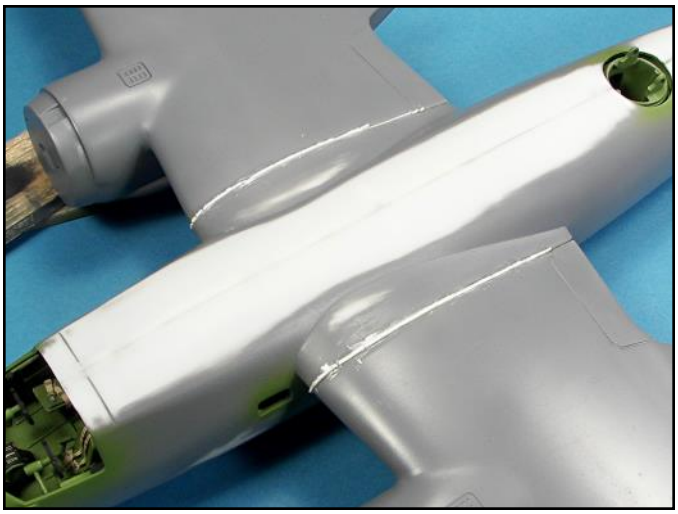
To add strength to the upper fuselage seam, I added some lengths of plastic strip. This added strength will help ensure the seam will not crack because of all the added lead weight.



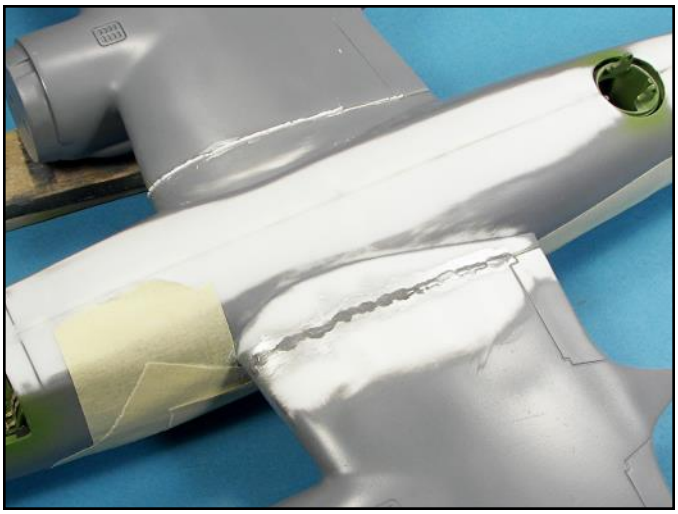
The fuselage halves have been taped and glued together with super glue applied along the seam lines. Once the glue dried I removed the tape and finished the gluing. Several applications were necessary to fill the seam areas.

To add more gluing surface area to the wing attachment points, I added .020 inch thick strips to the inside area. This thickness made them level with the gluing attachment area along the edge.

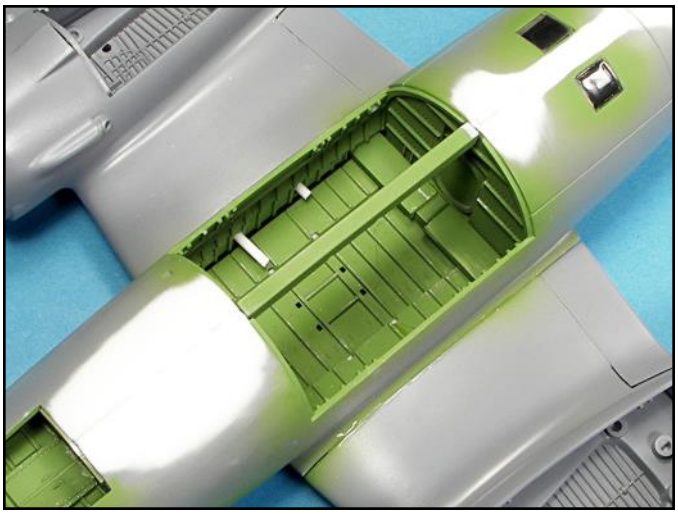
The wings were glued into place and then plastic strips of various thickness was inserted into the voids and glued on both sides with super glue. The plastic strips added yet another layer of strength to the wing fuselage connection.



With the fuselage seam complete and the plastic strips trimmed down, it was time to start sanding.

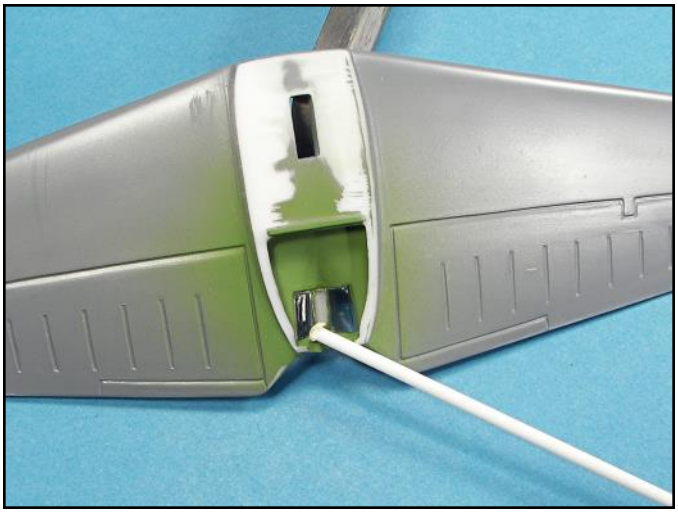


Careful wet sanding and additional applications of super glue after checking the seams with silver paint took time to complete, but it was well worth it, as the wing and fuselage attachments were very strong.

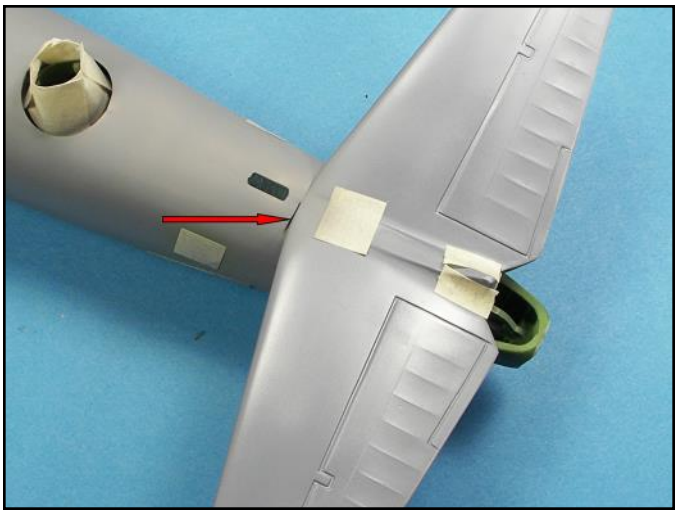


Next I inserted the thick plastic rods into place, trimmed them down and then painted them the interior color with a hand brush.

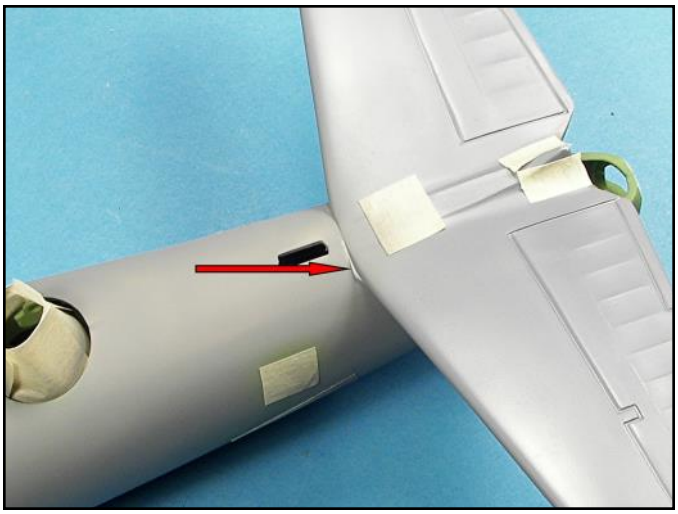
The elevator assembly sat at an angle so I added some shims to the gluing surface to level it.



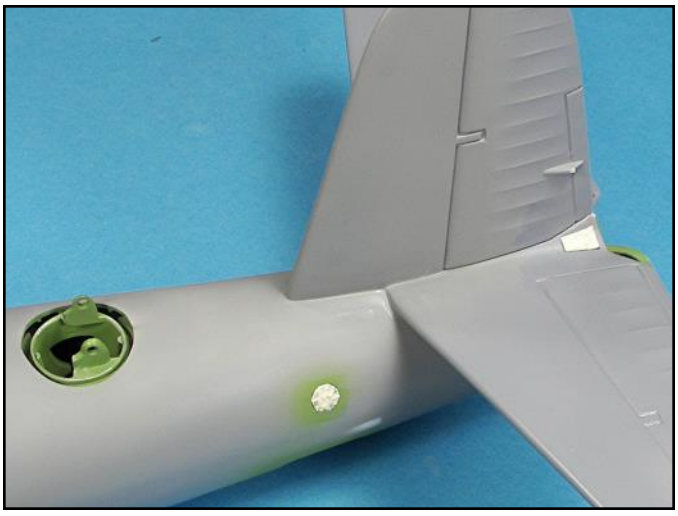
I positioned the clear part with a toothpick, which had a small piece of masking tape on its tip. Once the clear part was positioned I secured it with some white glue. All the clear parts received a coat of Future floor finish.



There was also a void at the front area of the attachment point of the elevator and the fuselage.



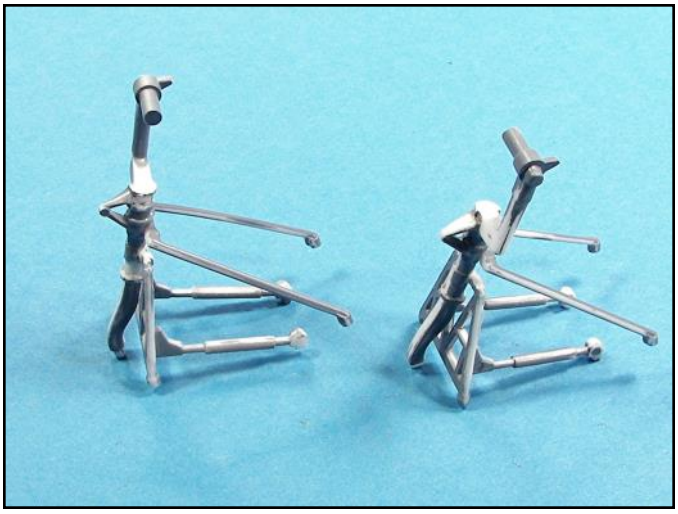
I filled the void with several applications of white glue. I applied the glue with a small diameter wire and the final application was contoured with the tip of a damp Q-tip. I then primed the dried glue.



The rudder was then glued into place and the voids between at the fuselage attachment point and along the top of the elevator was filled with tiny beads of white glue.

The completed assembly is now ready for masking and a final coat of primer.

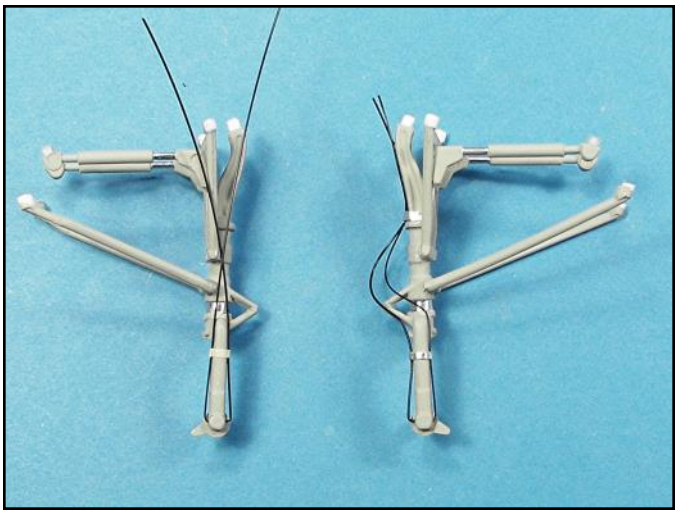
The landing gear parts were primed and then the mold lines were carefully scraped off.



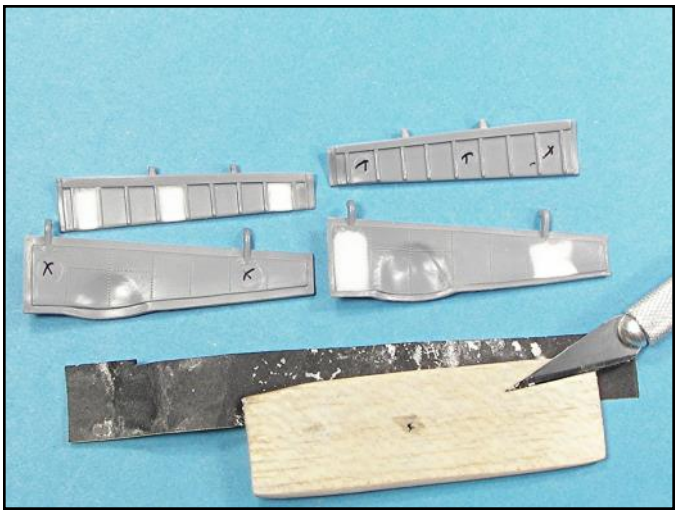
I positioned the landing gear inside the engine nacelles, taped the parts together and then added tiny drops of super glue to secure everything together. I also noticed that the forward legs were too long for the locator pins inside the nacelles.

On the starboard landing gear I cut out a small section from each leg and spliced them back together so that they would sit into the locator holes.

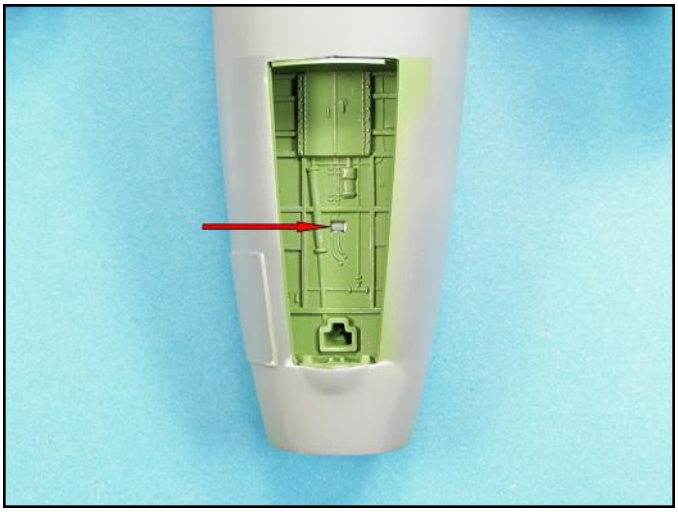
I didn't like the way the starboard splice job looked so I decided to glue the legs in place and cover the locator holes with small disks punched out with my handy Waldron punch tool.



The brake lines were made from black stretched sprue and the brake line clamps were tiny strips of masking tape.

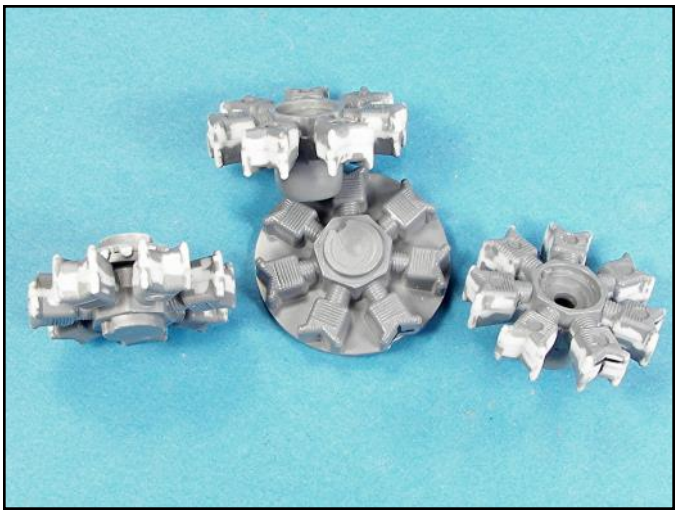


The interior areas of the landing gear doors had imperfections that I carefully wet sanded using a small length of sandpaper wrapped around a length of balsa wood.

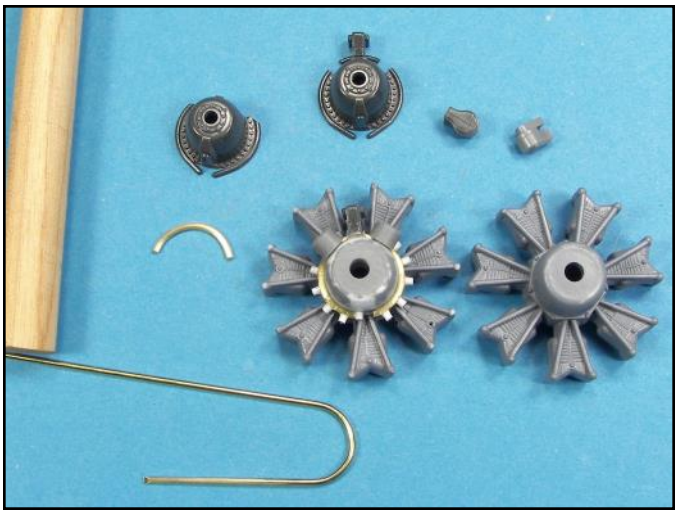


The small opening on the inside of the forward landing gear bay was covered with a length of plastic and then brush painted.

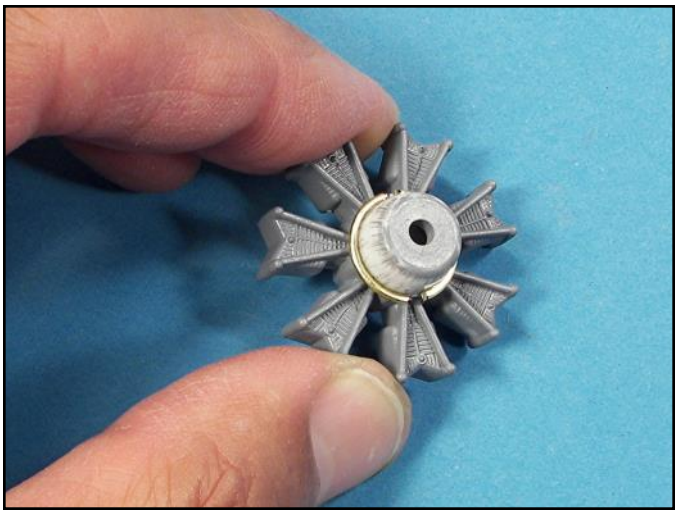
Here you can see the difference in size of the AMT engine nacelle and the Monogram nacelle. The AMT engine (gray) are also larger and not an R-2800 engine.



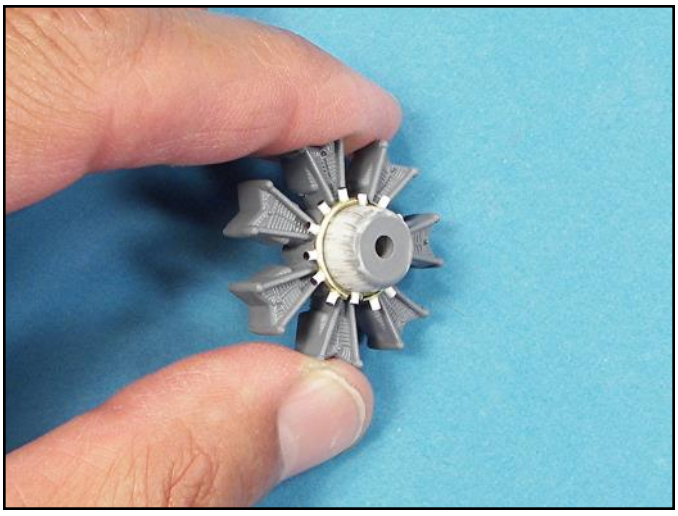
The first step in making the kits engines look like R-2800 engines is to remove the seam and mold lines.



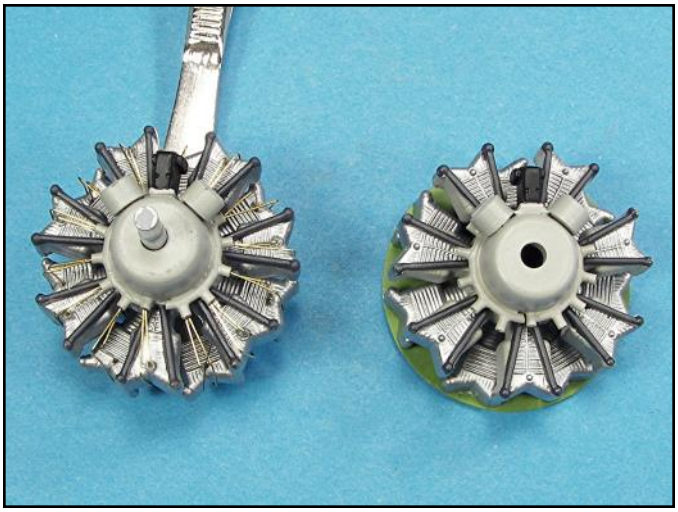
Next, I carefully bent a length of brass wire around a wood dowel the approximate diameter of the engine face to make a wiring harness.



The two curved brass wire rings are glued into place and now it is time to add the engine wiring stubs.

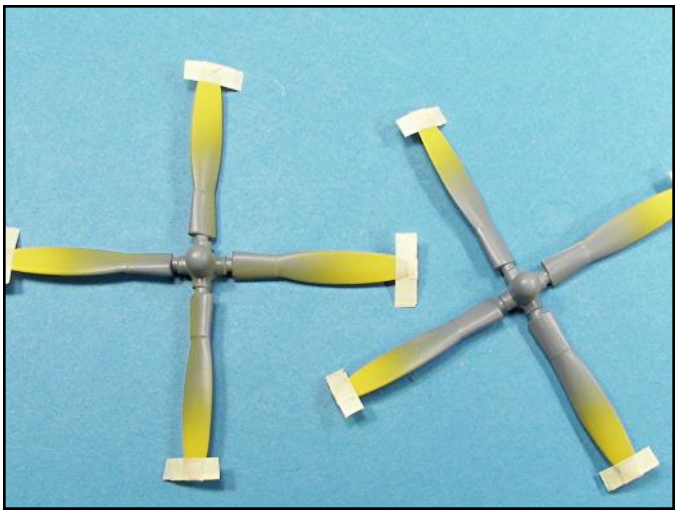


The wiring stubs were cut to lengths with my trusty Northwest Shortline chopper. The ends were painted black with an indelible marker to make it easier to drill them out to accept the wiring.

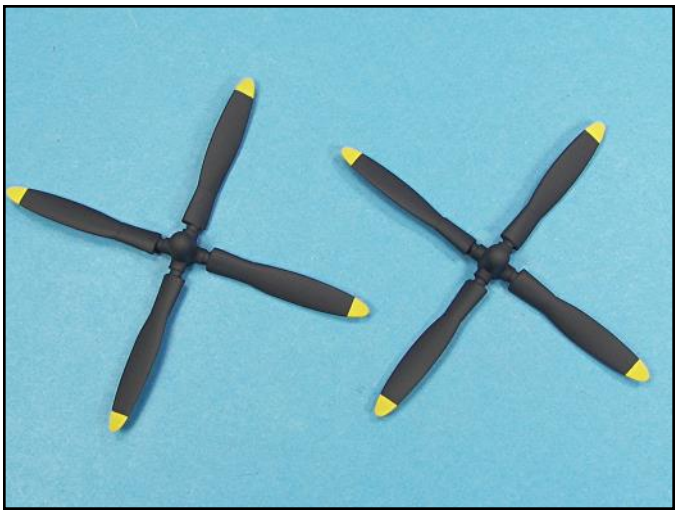


The engine on the left has its wiring added along with the piston rods. I also added magnetos from my parts scrap box.

Both engines are now complete, and while they are not accurate R-2800 engines, their appearance is much improved and will look good once they are installed and covered by the engine cowlings.



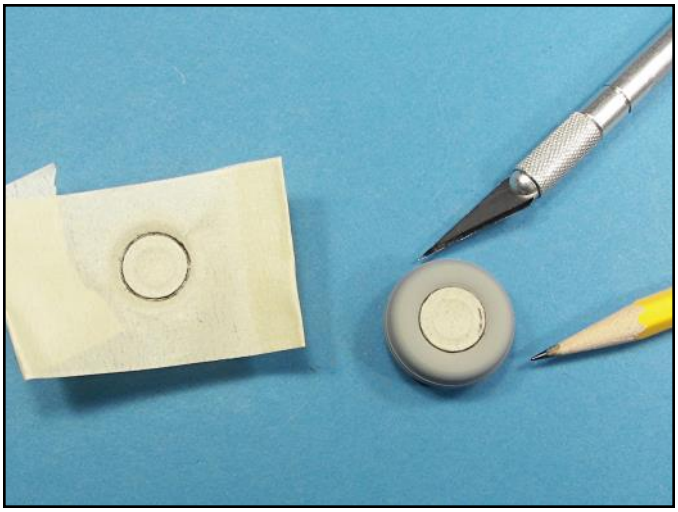
The propellers were cleaned up, the tips were airbrushed yellow and then masked off for the flat black color.



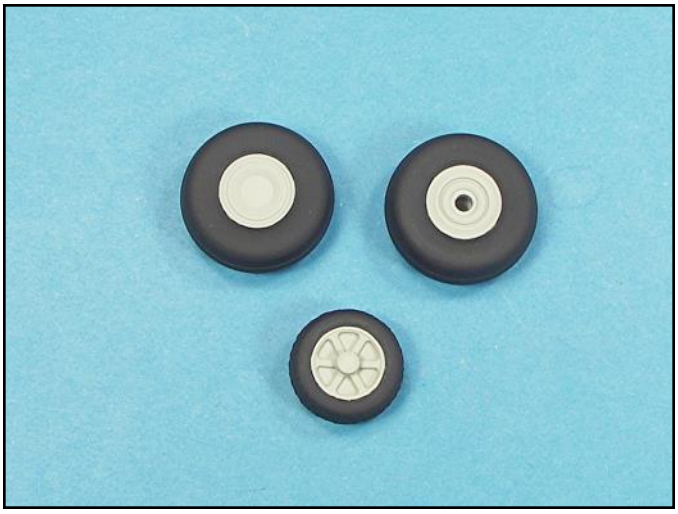
The propellers are now complete. Notice that there is no bleeding of the flat black paint onto the yellow tips.

The bombs were assembled and the seams scraped and sanded smooth. The bombs were airbrushed yellow and then the stripes were carefully masked. The tape was pressed down to ensure that there would be no paint bleeding.

Note the sharp demarcation lines between the yellow, black and olive drab colors.

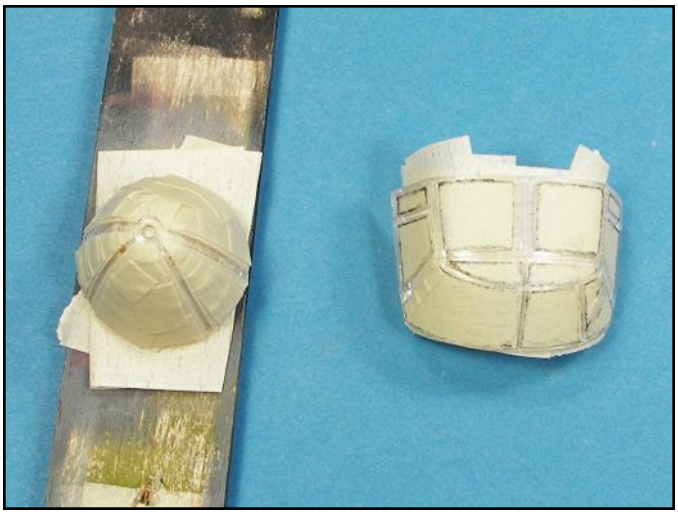


The tires were glued together and the seams scraped, sanded and then primed. The outlines of the hubs were traced onto the masking tape and then carefully cut using a sharp number 11 X-Acto blade.



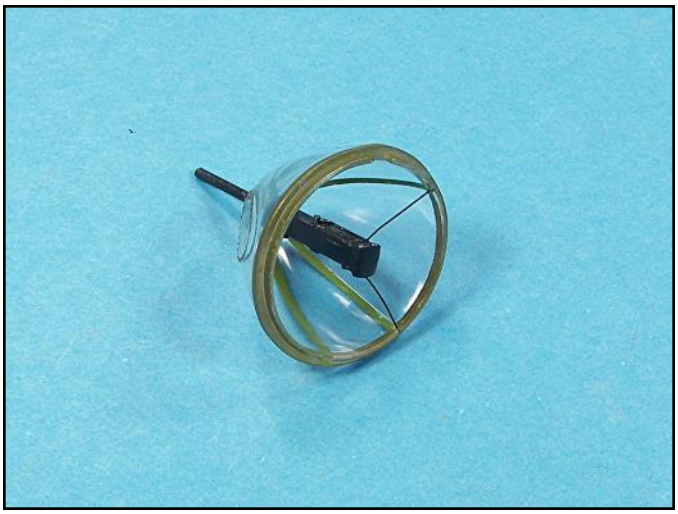
The wheels are now complete and the black and gray have very sharp demarcation lines between the colors.

The radio antennas were removed from the fuselage, cleaned up and had plastic rod attached to them for positive positioning and gluing.

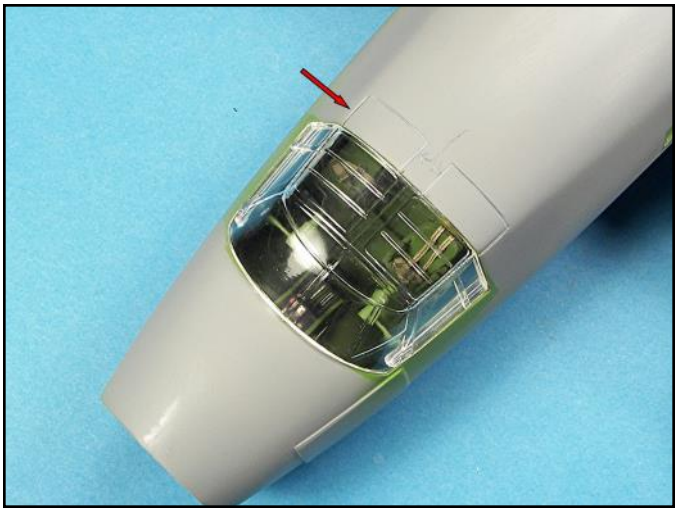


Prior to masking, all the clear parts were cleaned up and dipped in Future Floor Finish which hides any surface scratches and gives the clear parts a clear, transparent appearance.

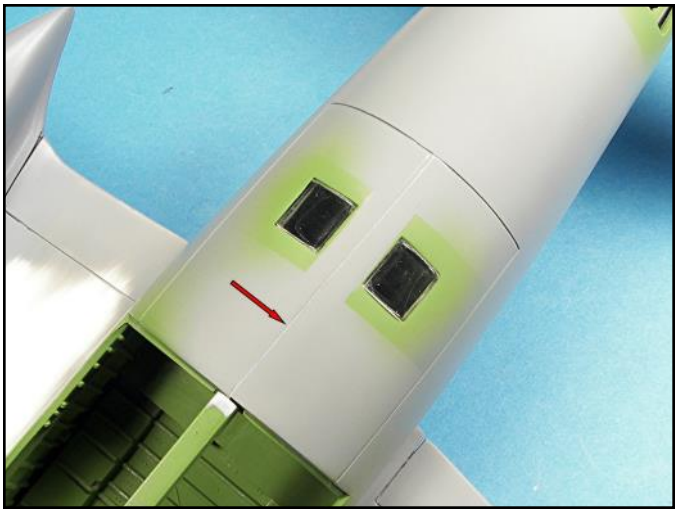
Small strips of masking tape were used to cover the clear parts and the masking tape was pushed down with a toothpick to ensure there would be no paint bleeding under the tape.



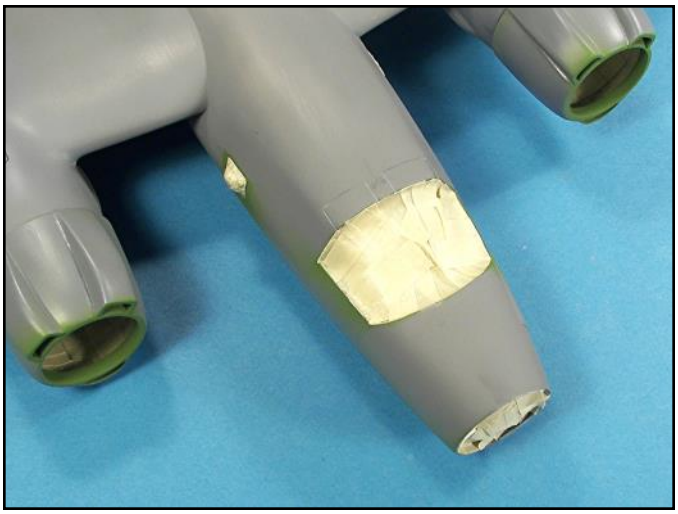
The nose 50 caliber gun was held in place with bungee cords, so I simulated them with stretched black sprue.



The canopy tops had hatches that were part clear glass and part fuselage. I re-scribed the lines to represent the fuselage hatch areas.



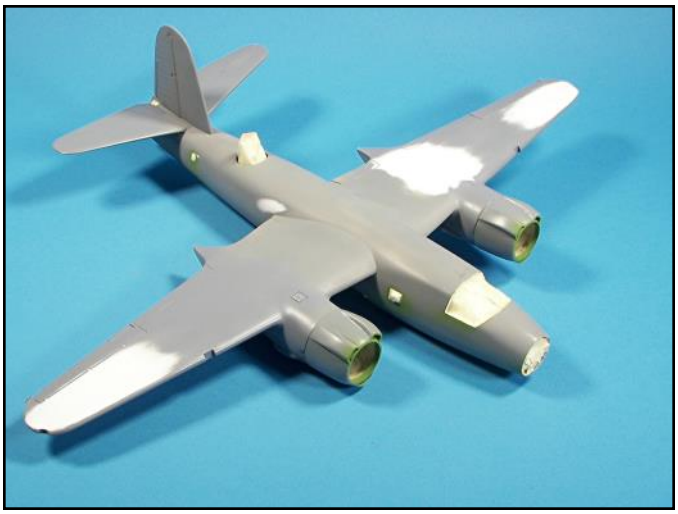
The aft bomb bay doors also needed to be re-scribed.



The cockpit area and the windows were carefully masked.

The aft areas were also masked off with small strips of masking tape. I also stuffed the opening with tissue paper so that the masking tape would have a surface to attach too.

The insides of the engine cowling were airbrushed. I then carefully attached the cowlings in place so that the lower light gray and upper olive drab color lines would match between the nacelles and the cowlings.



The model is now ready for priming and painting.

After priming, the lower half was airbrushed with Testors dark gull gray color.

The dark gull gray was masked off and the olive drab color was applied to the upper surfaces.

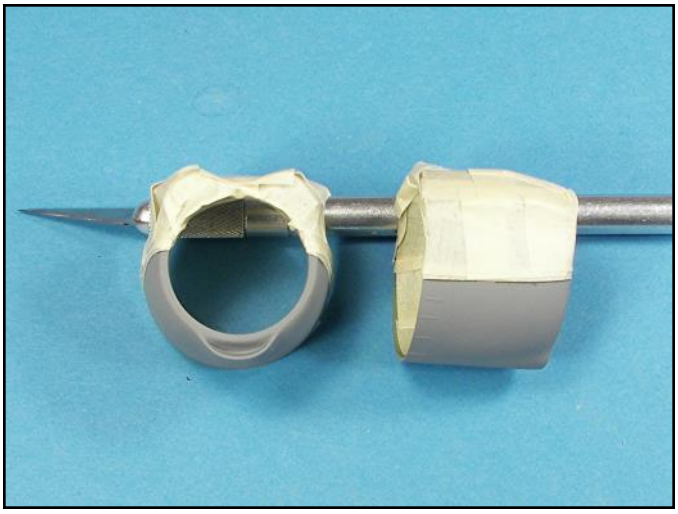
With both base colors applied, the next step was to paint the landing gear bays.

The engine cowlings were removed and the entire bottom area was masked off. The landing gear bays were then airbrushed interior green.

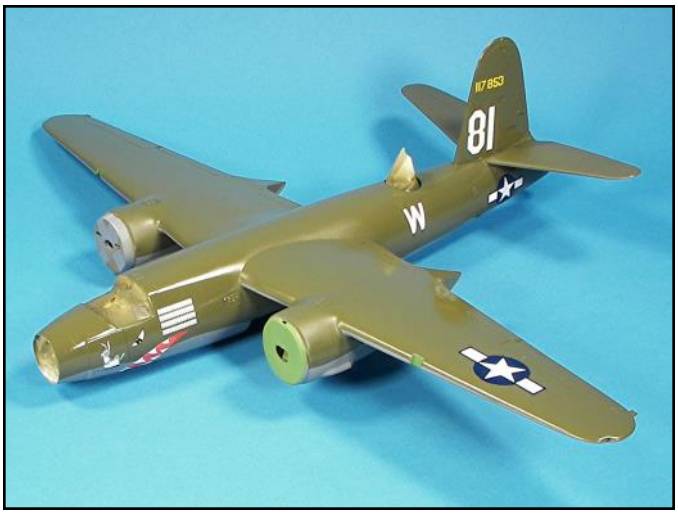
Now the model is starting to look like a B-26!

To paint the engine exhausts, I started to mask off the areas around them so that there would be no chance of the paint ruining the surface colors.

The exhaust ports were airbrushed with Testors Metalizer burnt iron color.



There was some paint bleeding along the demarcation line between the gray and the olive drab so I masked off the olive drab color and airbrushed the gray color again to get a sharp demarcation line.



The model was airbrushed with two coats of clear gloss paint for decaling. Each decal had as much of its clear film cut off to minimize silvering. The letters and numbers were cut out and applied individually.

I then masked off areas around the fuselage and nacelles and airbrushed exhaust streaks along the engine nacelles and the landing gear doors.

The exhaust streaks look good. I did not want to overdue the weathering on this model, as I wanted to represent a new aircraft at the beginning of its combat career.

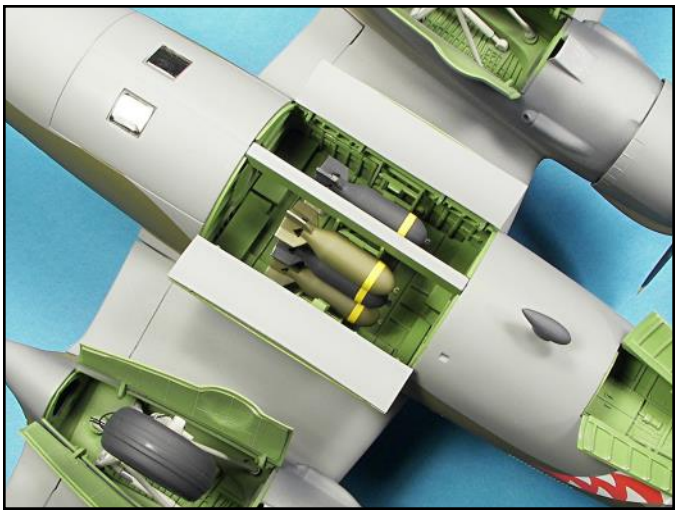
The model received a few light coats of Testors Dullcoat to restore the flat appearance of the paint. Now it is time to finish assembling the model.

The landing gear were attached and then I added the guns.

Next, I attached the clear parts with white glue, the bomb racks, the bombs, the bomb bay doors and the landing gear doors.

The engines were glued into place and then the engine cowlings. Finally, I added the antenna wire from the rudder to the antenna.

The formation lights were painted on the backside of the clear parts and then attached with white glue.



The different colored bombs add some color dimension to the bomb bays. Note how clean and sharp the overall colors are. Assembly techniques, careful masking and painting and decal application all pay off when the model is finished.

The canopy fit was better than I expected and adding tiny amounts of white glue as a filler helped blend the canopy edges into the cockpit fuselage opening.


117853
81
CINDY


117853
81


117853
81
W


117853
81
CINDY