

# C6N1 *Saiun* 'Myrt'

*by Mark Smith*



It's a recent Hasegawa kit (2003), so you know it's a silk purse to start with. One thing I love about this model is that its airfoil shapes are really carefully done – very thin, not only trailing edges but, where appropriate, the flying surfaces. The empennage, for instance, is correct in chord. (And this makes a notable difference. Look at a finished Hasegawa Tony, its toolmaking ten years older. The entire vertical and horizontal tail is too chunky). The cockpit areas of the fuselage halves are almost eggshell thin, for instance, so that tolerances for the cockpit walls and spacing of its myriad equipment are much closer to scale than would be allowable otherwise. And the floor meets the sidewalls perfectly, including the structural formers. I used the Eduard set to dress up the cockpit a bit. Should two small sheets of nickel plated brass cost more than the 1/48 kit it's made for? I am so weak.

The split Fowler flaps are beautifully molded (open) on their sliding rails; I have looked at the Maru Mechanic on the Myrt more than once wondering how that could be pulled off. The answer: buy this kit! Were these flaps ever in the down position with the aircraft on the ground and not under power? Admittedly, one of those joy-sucking questions to which most of us nevertheless want an answer. See pages 27 and 28 in the recent FAOW #108 on Saiun for two different down positions, and the back cover of the old series FAOW on Myrt (#82) for what looks like yet a third position. Is this variance due to hydraulic bleed-off after shutdown? Well, the important thing is “hey... it could happen.” If you want to close them up like almost all the photos indicate, it will probably be a pain to get them snug.



The leading edge slats are also offered in the open position, which looks cool on the model but... I found only one photo showing those slats deployed on grounded, unpowered aircraft. And it was 4803, a captured Allied example looking quite retired and listing to starboard on one flat tire. Page 60 of the older volume shows this detail apparently posed for either a TAIC or Japanese factory photo, with the negative numbered. Another showed a Myrt being run up, a ground crewman standing in front of one tire, slats fully deployed (page 24 of newer FAOW).



You get two sets of cowl flaps, for prototype and production examples. Having wanted to do a prototype, a pleasant surprise, although if you want closed cowl flaps it will be a lot of work. (The earliest prototype with a very different cowl and 4-bladed prop has been kitted since with resin replacement parts). The wheel wells are as deep as the prototype, again due to very thin plastic. If you recall how Hasegawa did their P-47 wheel wells, same method. Two different canopies for open and closed, including the little raised windshield section. The engine, unlike most of their other JNAF single engine bombers, is very, very nice, the finning and pushrods on the cylinders being extremely fine. It's the same Homare molding as used on the Ki-84 Hayate kit.

The cockpit is one of their better efforts, and the way they engineered the floor to be the right depth for all cockpit stations you'll just have to see – *very* thin plastic on the lower wing.

Only tradeoff for the fine tolerances is the need for a lot of knockout pins/ejector marks. These are mostly out of the limelight, but they result in some very subtle and small bumps in the otherwise mirror smooth surface finish. (They have to leave us something to do... or at least something to gripe about). The very fine panel lines are augmented by equally delicate rivet detail. (Oddly, the “supersize-it” fuel tank has much thicker panel lines which you'd probably be better off filling, as this unit had smooth joints). To be honest, this crisp surface detail isn't completely consistent, turning “soapy” at certain points, and there is something present that's hardly associated with new kits anymore – flash. Mine was not a pre-production kit, either.

Having removed all of the parts from the sprues, I was struck by how thick some of those attachment points were, especially on delicate parts like the wing slats. Even with a jeweler's saw with a fine blade, clean-up is tedious to do without ruining these parts.

This kit did not have the fit associated with Tamiya or, say, the Hasegawa Frank. But I suppose the complexity of the subject should be considered.

Markings for three a/c of the 762<sup>nd</sup> NAG as well as one from the 343<sup>rd</sup> are provided, nothing exotic – but with lines like this airplane, who needs markings? By the way, Japanese-to-English translation entertainment value is back... I give you the notes for the 343<sup>rd</sup> a/c: “A part of paint figure for this body is presumption.” No kidding.

I was thankful for the E-Z Masks made for this kit canopy. I used the kit’s national insignia. Mike Grant was kind enough to make and send tail codes for ‘Ko’-C6-4. Kana info markings were stolen from some other sources. Squadron’s vac canopy was used for the pilot’s hood. A Tamiya mix was made for the light gray-green overall color, mixed on a best-guess basis from the emerging data good folks on the j-aircraft site have brought to light over the last few years. Polly-S paints were the main ones used.



After all the agonizing over what color the airplane was, I’m glad I took the Rob Graham approach and didn’t let it stop me from having a finished model. It was hard not to do that one with the Zulu flag marking from the 762<sup>nd</sup>, but it’s nice to have a non-green Myrt, too! I took these photos on my deck at about 3:30 EST on a bright day.

When Tamiya released their 1/48 Seiran, it proved to be a better “reference” than all of the previously available printed material. Much the same might be said of Hasegawa’s 1/48 Myrt. The only example remaining, stored by the NASM in Maryland, is a disassembled (and TAIC “Americanized”) night fighter example; so whether or not Hasegawa had access to it or not, this model is a real labor of love. If you like Japanese WWII aircraft – or just exotic ones – you’ll have to have it.



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All right, end of kit review. Beginning of suppositions! Color Polizei with queasy stomachs should turn away at this point. It’s easier quoting directly from an e-mail to my old friend Ed Esposito on Feb. 28, 2005:

*Hello guy,*

*Hope all is well with you.*

*Well, Mr. Elephtheriou gifted me with the new FAOW on Saiun, and it spurred me to send you these attachments.*

You notice in the one that's in color that we have a "new paradigm" ("Your new para-dime / ain't worth an old plugged nickel" – how do you say that in Japanese?) for my grail-ish prototype: Orange upper wings and upper tail surfaces with gray fuselage and lowers (the orange is clearer on the original than in the scan, no doubt). I enclose two different versions of the same print that show a lot of variation, as well as the best of several versions of the side view, found in MM#15. I have other versions of the same shot that are even poorer and darker.

Please look at these and tell me, as Slim Pickens would say, just what in the \*hell\* is goin' on here?? What's the deal, for instance, with the fillet area at the tail section? In one photo it's undoubtedly darker. In another, undoubtedly lighter. Look, judge, I know what I saw...

How about the strange horizontal tonal gradation of the fuselage in the side view... NOT borne out in the 3/4 rear view? Which is the very reason I am suspicious of the same type of difference (\*apparently\*) between the wing surface and the fuselage in that very same 3/4 rear view. I would imagine this is responsible for the new interpretation of orange upper wings and tail in the new FAOW...

Believe it or not, I actually considered the possibility of the two color scheme myself but discounted it as either the vagaries of black and white photography, a trick of the light, or the photo being taken "in between" painting or repainting.

I know – I should have written Dear Abby with all this. If you wish, you can call me "Bub" in your response.

Ed's response:

I see what you mean about the tail fillet... in the sideview photo, it looks lighter underneath the tailplane, and in the 3/4 rear view it looks darker. And in both 3/4 rear views, the wings do appear darker. However, on close inspection of the spatial relationships among the various parts of the a/c (and between the a/c and the features on the ground and in the background) in those two pics, it appears that they may be the same exact photo,



printed at two different exposure levels. And I wonder... if the lighter of the two were printed at a still higher exposure, would the wings and fuselage appear the same color? And, if so, would that simply be an artifact of overexposing the print?

One thing I \*can\* explain with some measure of confidence is the apparent darker shade on the lower half of the fuselage in the sideview. The darker shade, I'm convinced, is the reflection of the ground in the fuselage. Since it's a pure side elevation, the upper half of the fuselage (above the line where a horizontal plane through the fuselage centerline intersects the fuselage side) is going to reflect the sky into the camera lens, while the lower half is going to reflect the (darker) ground. (Basically, the semigloss fuselage is reflecting the light/dark features of the scene behind the camera.) So I wouldn't be concerned about that one... "Fize you" (as we say here in Texas), I'd go with the overall semigloss hairyokushoku, or maybe even overall orange (not too dark).

You pays yer money, you takes yer guesses. In my case: *Hairyokushoku*. If I'm wrong about the color of the airframe, I like to think it's Ed's fault. I've even got documentation. But one thing is for *sure* about this airplane's finish – it's *smooth*. Like the aircraft itself. I dig it the most.

