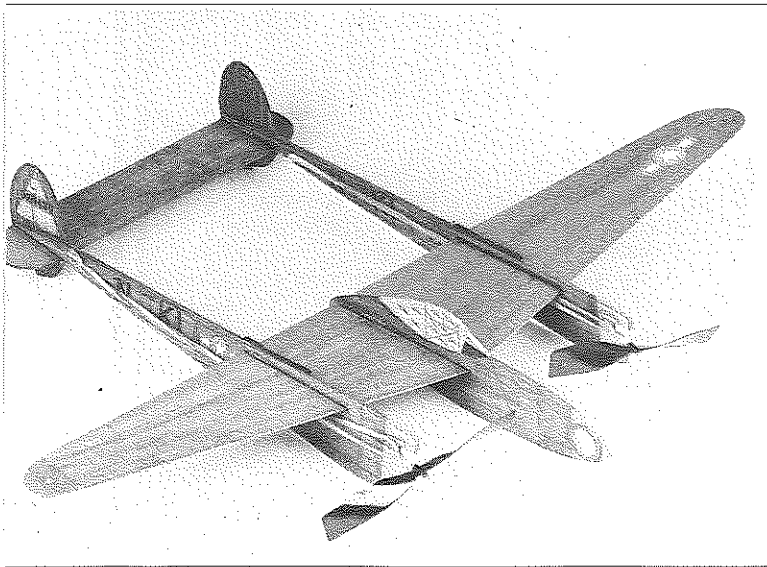


THE LOCKHEED P-38 FOR PROFILE RUBBER

Keep the kids busy for an afternoon or two with this simple, all-balsa, twin-engine warbird. Step-by-step building instructions are included right on the plans.

BY THOMAS HERR

The author has built P-38s both with and without landing gear; the gear-up version is of course the longer and higher flying of the two, but sacrifices the enjoyment of ROG takeoffs. The solution? Build one of each! Note the three-blade props on the wheeled model; they're each made from three red North Pacific props with one blade cut off and the hub trimmed such that one blade has the forward third of the hub, another blade the middle third and the last blade the rear third. Then they're put together on a wire shaft, the blades spaced 120 degrees apart and the hub sections epoxied together, forming a one-piece unit. Tom credits Bill Hannan with this idea and reports that while you can't beat the three-bladers for appearance, the model actually flies best with the stock two-blade props.



The Lockheed P-38 was one of the most graceful aircraft to fly for the Allied powers during WWII. During early 1937, a time when biplanes were still commonplace and airplanes like the DC-3 were still cutting their teeth, the Army Air Corps laid down specifications for a new aircraft that would be used for "the tactical mission of interception and attack of hostile aircraft at high altitude."

Lockheed Aircraft, under the direction of Clarence L. "Kelly" Johnson, developed the P-38 to meet these requirements. First flown in January 1939, the P-38 evolved into one of the great aircraft of the war, and of all time. Today, the P-38 survives in museums and in the hands of a few collectors. A very small number still are flown occasionally at airshows.

The P-38 is a good candidate for a rubber model. Its twin booms and rudders allow for long motors and good stability. The model has a wingspan of 24 inches. The illustrations on the plan pretty much explain the building of the model. Select your wood carefully. Keep the tail as light as possible to minimize the need to add nose weight. Make sure that all of your wood is free of warps. Warps can be removed by holding the wood in front of a hair dryer while twisting the warp out. Hold the wood straight while allowing it to cool.

Take your time to decorate your model carefully and I am sure you will be pleased with the results. A quick and easy

way to decorate the model is to use waterproof felt-tip markers. When using the markers on balsa, you must be careful not to let the colors bleed together or into an area you wish to leave uncolored, so practice on some scrap pieces until you have developed the proper technique.

Use the following sequence to decorate the model. First, using a black ballpoint pen, draw the panel lines and markings that separate areas of different colors. Then, using permanent markers (not water-based), color the model using any colors you chose. Last, using the ballpoint pen again, add the rest of the panel lines and any other details you like.

To fly your model, first test glide it with no power. This should be done in a field of tall grass, free of obstructions and spectators. Trim the model so it has a shallow flat glide. When you get the glide close to where you want it, you can start winding the rubber motors. Slowly increase the number of winds while continuing the trimming process, until you are flying with full power.

The North Pacific nylon prop mounts can be bent with your fingers to adjust the thrustlines. Count the turns as you wind the rubber motors, so that you're sure the model has equal power in both motors. Both of my P-38s climb in a right-hand circle and glide in a left-hand circle. The P-38 is very solid and stable, and provides a very satisfying sight in the air. **MB**

