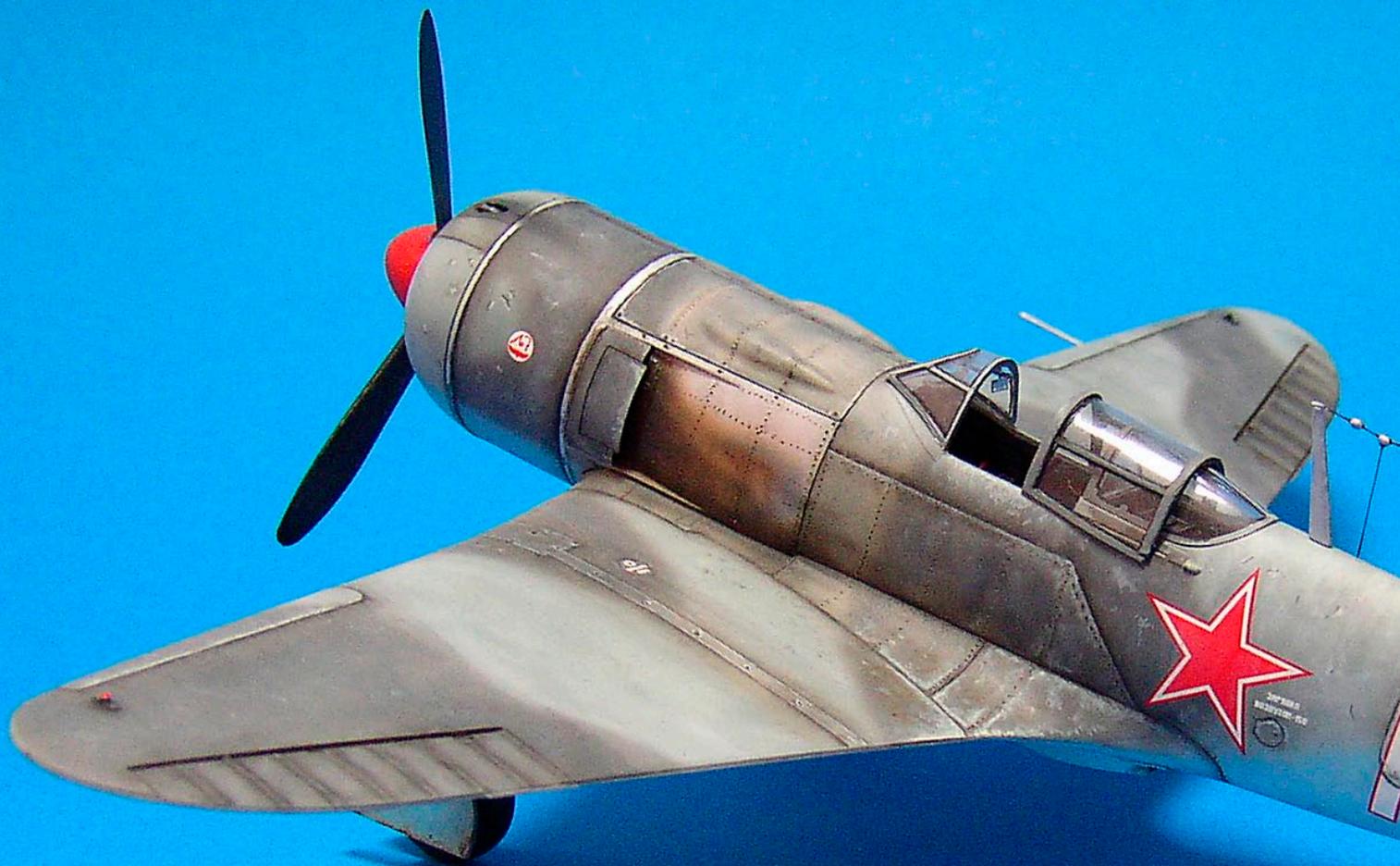


# Modeling a well-used Lavochkin La-7

Dressing (and distressing) Gavia's 1/48 scale gem

*By Francisco Alfaro*



**T**he Lavochkin La-7 was one of the best fighters available to the Soviets for battling the Luftwaffe in World War II. A collection of 1/48 scale WWII fighters just wouldn't be complete without one, so I chose a recent Gavia kit for this project.

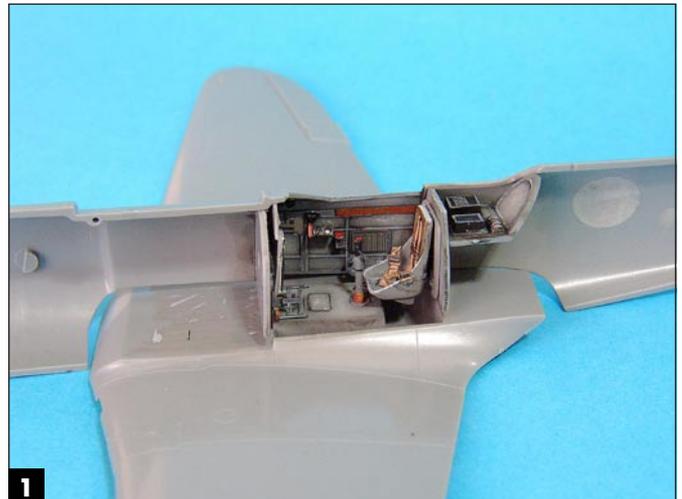
Kit No. 009 is a limited edition with Eduard accessories packed inside the box. It includes markings for the 2nd Squadron, 1st Czechoslovakian Regiment (SLP), the unit I wanted to represent. However, I wanted to model the aircraft as it looked before the unit became part of the independent Czech air force, so I used the red stars from the kit's alternate markings.

I didn't need to add much to the kit for a good representation, and with few minor fit issues, most of my efforts went into painting and weathering. I used the Eduard pre-painted photoetched cockpit set, which saved a lot of work on the interior.

The model was painted with Tamiya and Vallejo acrylics, and weathered with acrylics and Humbrol enamels.

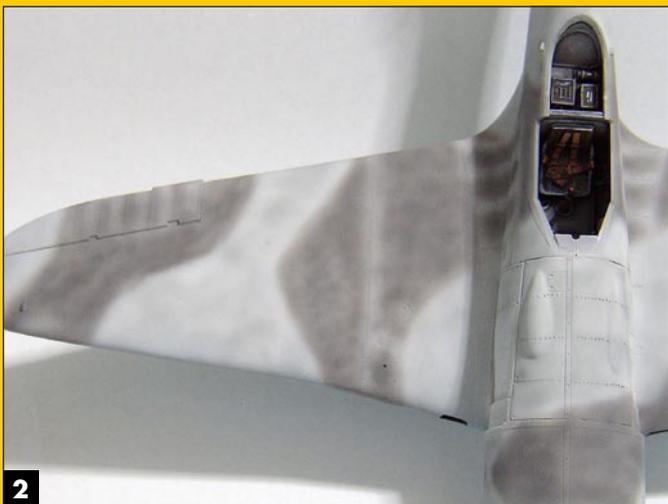
Take a look at my weathering techniques and see if they will work for you. **FSM**

Francisco's beautiful 1/48 scale La-7 started with the fine Gavia kit. His expert painting and weathering were all that was needed to make an outstanding addition to his collection.



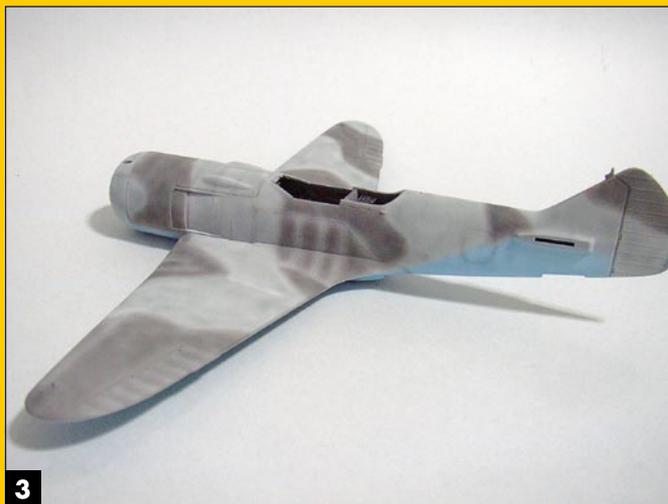
The cockpit interior was built from the kit parts and Eduard pre-painted photoetched details. The overall gray was made with 90 percent Tamiya neutral gray (XF-53) and 10 percent flat white (XF-2). Some of the pre-painted parts needed to be touched up, and all of the details received airbrushed shading and dry-brushing with Vallejo paints for more visual depth. Note the radios behind the seat.





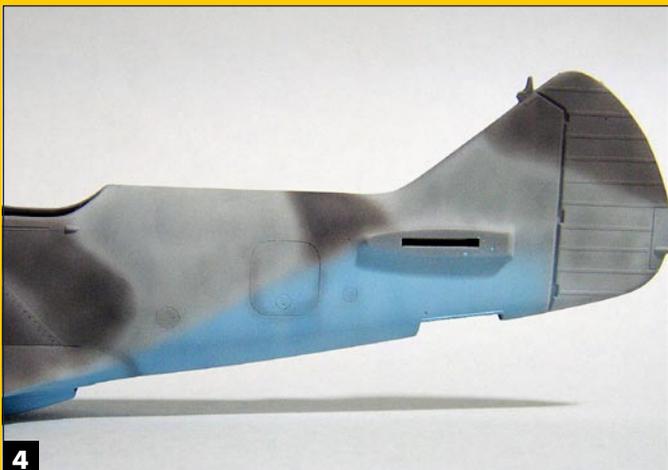
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The overall camouflage was airbrushed with Tamiya acrylic paints. I first airbrushed a light blue gray, a mix of 60 percent dark sea gray (XF-54), 35 percent flat white (XF-2), and five percent flat blue (XF-8). The darker gray came next, mixed from 95 percent neutral gray (XF-53) and five percent flat white (XF-2).



3

I then mixed a little more white with the dark gray and mixed dark gray with the blue gray and overpainted some panel lines and random spots to start the weathering process.



4

The undersurface color, light blue, is 80 percent Tamiya light blue (XF-23), 15 percent flat white (XF-2), and five percent flat blue (XF-8). This was lightly mottled with the base color mixed with a little more flat white.



5

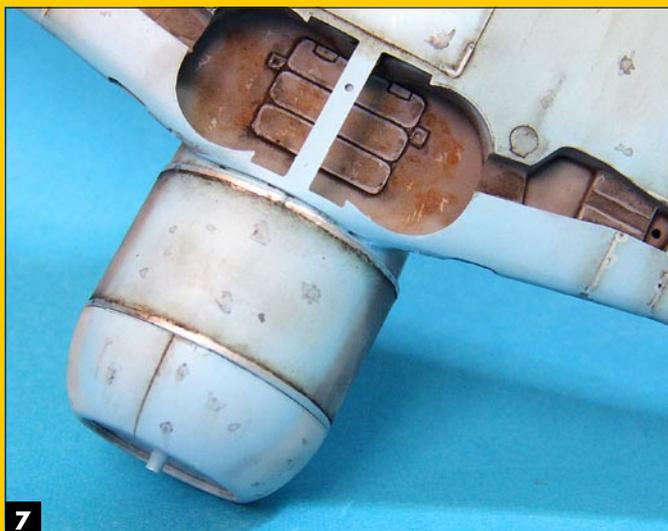
The next step in the weathering process was to apply a wash around raised details and down in the recesses. My wash is thinned Humbrol enamels, burnt sienna for the underside, and a mixture of burnt sienna and black for the topside. Enamel washes should not be a problem if the underlying acrylics have completely cured.



6

I masked the exhaust panel behind the engine cowl, airbrushed it with SnJ Spray Metal, then lightly buffed it with a cloth. The exhaust stains were carefully airbrushed afterward.

I painted the landing-gear bay with straight neutral gray (XF-53), then applied drops of thinned Vallejo acrylic dark gray and allowed it to air dry. The drops simulate hydraulic stains.

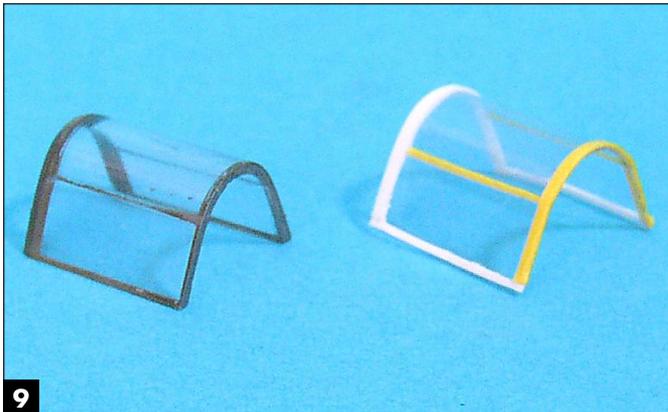


7



8

A liberal application of Microscale's Micro Sol helped the kit decals. I mixed the kit's decals to represent a Soviet machine used by Czech pilots in early 1944.



9

I vacuum-formed the center section of the canopy to help it sit properly in the open position. Evergreen strip styrene serves as the canopy framing.



10

After the decals and a flat overcoat had dried, I added leaking-fluid streaks with a fine brush and Humbrol enamels.



The finished model looks as though you could climb aboard and start 'er up!