

The XS-Models 1/72 "1972 Crazy Horse P-63" – Conversion kit review

Anders Bruun

XS-Models (No. 05CH1RC) "**P-63 Kingcobra #90 'Crazy Horse' 1972**". 1/72 scale conversion kit, available from XS-models, Neuer Weg 18, D-38302 Wolfenbüttel, Germany (phone +49 53 3197530, fax +49 53 31975353, info@XS-models.com, www.xs-models.com. Price: EUR 23.95.

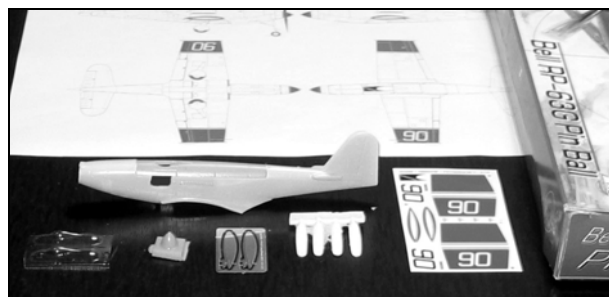


This radical P-63 racer, owned by Larry Havens, was developed by Pylon-Air in Long Beach. It made its debut in 1971, in natural metal and with concave wing tips. Before the 1972 races the plane was modified with flat wing tip endplates and a red and white paint job. It never got the chance to prove itself, since Larry Havens had to bail out of the plane over the Pacific after an engine failure on September 7th.

The kit includes six resin parts (a fuselage "turtledeck", a spinner and four propeller blades), four etched metal parts (the wing endplates and their little stiffener fins) and two vacuum-formed canopies. The resin parts don't have any bubbles, but both the turtledeck and the spinner are attached to big blocks of resin that have to be removed.

I tried the conversion on the Toko kit, which is one of the recommended basic kits for the conversion – it might of course be easier or more difficult if you choose another kit. The Toko kit has a similar turtledeck layout, but you have to remove the turn-over structure. A pretty massive amount of resin has to be removed from the turtledeck. I put a really coarse sanding disk on the mini-drill and went to work - freezing work in Sweden in February, since I always try to avoid sanding resin indoors! Even after cleaning-up it didn't really fall into place. It is slightly too long and should be shortened, mainly at the rear. The conversion part fits well at the rear, but it is almost 2 mm deeper at the front than the corresponding kit part. Some adjustments have to be made, and it is much easier to remove material from the kit's fuselage sides than from the resin part. Before the turtleback can be fitted, the door openings on the fuselage have to be filled – it is probably easier to use plastic card than the kit's transparent parts. There are also two narrow triangular gaps further to the rear, where the conversion part is straight while the corresponding Toko part follows the angled panel lines on the fuselage, but when you cut

down the fuselage sides they disappear. The cross-sections of the kit and the conversion part match very well, so if you are careful you will not need much filler at all.



The turtledeck dry-fitted to the Toko fuselage, and the rest of the kit parts

The pointed spinner of the conversion kit has too small diameter to fit the nose of the Toko kit. You could of course add plastic card to its base to widen it, but I think it would be easier to use the Toko spinner and fill its tip. The conversion kit includes paddle-type propeller blades – there's nothing wrong with them, but the Toko blades aren't so bad either. The canopies are clear and should be easy to fit in the recess provided in the fuselage. The etched wing-tip end plates look good and help with a part of the model that would be difficult to make in plastic card.

The decal sheet is very nice, well-printed and sharp with very nice propeller decals. However, I have two question marks. The first is that the under-wing race number would read upside down in a pylon turn. According to Dustin Carter's drawings (and according to normal practice) it should have the top of the number towards the tip, rather than towards the fuselage. I guess this could be corrected by carefully cutting out the number from the red panel and reapplying it upside down – the area under the decal should be painted red first. My second question mark relates to the anti-glare panel in front of the canopy. The decal is correct according to Carter's drawing, but from the photo in the Kinert book it appears that the black area extended much further towards the front - it might even have finished in a point at the spinner.

The kit instructions feature useful assembly photos and a good six-view drawing. These show the front of the propeller blades as red – according to Carter's drawings they were black, and I think they look black in photos.

Conclusion

This is a useful conversion kit, which will relatively easily produce a radically different-looking Kingcobra – a certain eye-catcher at any exhibition! There are a couple of minor question marks, but nothing serious.

A big thanks to Andreas Krause of XS-Models for the review example!