# DELIGHTFUL DORA

## Making an ace's plane from Eduard's 1:48 High-Altitude Butcher Bird

by Pablo Bauleo

**THE FOCKE WULF 190** was a complete surprise to British pilots when it made its appearance in 1941 over the English Channel. It evolved through the war and was a highly versatile weapons platform. The A, F and G series were powered by radial engines and proved to be reliable workhorses for the Luftwaffe, having served from the sands of North Africa to the snow-blanketed Russian steppe in a variety of roles.

The only drawback of the airplane was the lack of performance above 20,000 feet, which was the preferred altitude for the Allied bomber groups to operate over Western Europe. To remediate this problem, an inline 12-cylinder Jumo 213A was mated to an Fw 190. To restore the center of gravity of the airplane, a fuselage extension plug was added just before the tail. A more streamlined and elegant member of the 190 family, the D series, was born sometimes known as the 190 "langnasen Dora."

The "D" series had a series of subtypes, out of which the D-9 was the most numerous. It had two MG 131 machine guns on top of the engine and two 20mm cannons in the wing-roots. It was envisioned as an air superiority fighter. Two other subtypes that were manufactured, the D-11 and D-13, saw very limited service. The D-11 armament had the machine guns removed but carried a considerable punch: two 20mm and two 30mm cannons. It also had an engine rated for even higher altitudes than the D-9. Such heavy weaponry and high altitude performance implies that it was envisioned to be a bomber interceptor. The D-13, in contrast, was designed to have a 20mm cannon firing through the propeller hub and two 20mm in the wing roots, all of them synchronized to fire through the propeller arc.

Several examples of the D-series were manufactured using recycled A-series airframes and/or wings, which combined with the general breakdown of the German supply chain towards the end of the war and the distributed manufacturing shops scattered across Germany, yielded to a large variety of configurations of the D-9 series.

This airplane in the hands of the "Experten" could (and did) outperform and outmatch the best Allied

fighters available over Western Europe. The Fw 190D represents the epitome of the Luftwaffe piston-driven fighter, only surpassed by another German design, the Ta 152, which saw very limited service.

Hans Dortenmann began service with the German armed forces as an infantryman, but in 1941 was transferred to the Luftwaffe for pilot training. He entered service with 2./JG.54 in the Eastern Front, flying the radial engine version of the Fw 190. He achieved his first victory, a La-5, by the unorthodox method of ramming it. Despite suffering heavy damage to one of his wings, he was able to fly back to base. His flying skills made an "ace" of him within one month of achieving his first victory.

In June 1944 he was relocated to the Western Front to face the Allied invasion. By that time he had amassed 15 victories. He scored another five victories over France in just one month before being pulled back to Germany for rest. While in Germany, he converted to the in-line version of the Focke Wulf 190 and for a brief period he operated as take off/landing air cover for the jet-engined Messerschmitt Me 262.

Hans Dortenmann had his Fw 109D-9's tail painted yellow so his green pilots could spot their leader in a fight.

In February 1945, he was appointed Staffelkapitan of 12./JG.26. According to his memoir, he ordered the vertical surface of his airplane tail to be painted bright yellow in order to let his pilots know where he was at all times. He wasn't worried about Allied pilots picking out his airplane as a leader's aircraft. He took pride in that.

Dortenmann was a skillful and aggressive pilot who did not hesitate to engage the enemy, but the well-being of his comrades was of the utmost importance to him. It was said by another pilot that Dortenmann never lost a wingman when pursuing a victory of his own.

During his service with the Luftwaffe, he flew about 150 combat missions and he was awarded the Knight Cross. For a short period of time towards the end of the war, he flew ground

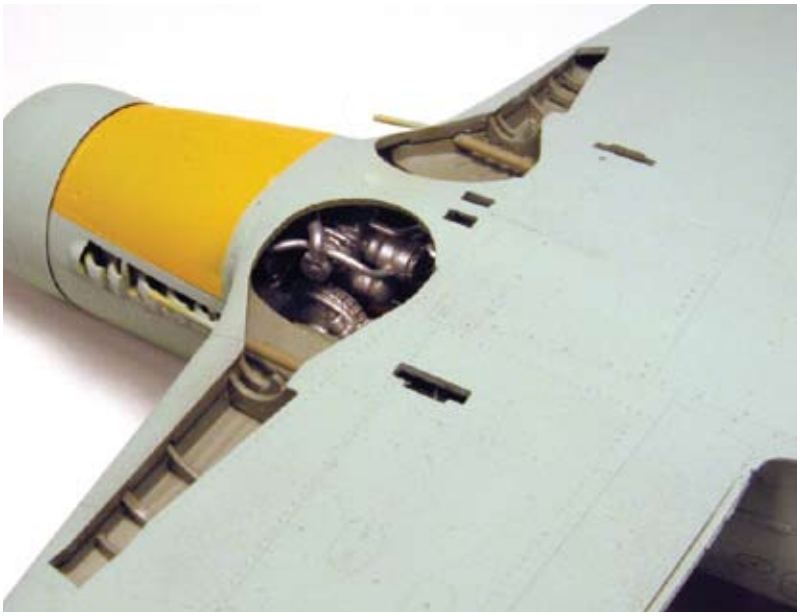
The open canopy with flexed antennae are two of the charms of Eduard's Dora.

attack missions, claiming 15 ground targets destroyed. He was credited with 38 air-to-air victories, 18 of which were achieved while flying a Fw 190D-9 (Serial Number 210003), making him the most successful fighter pilot in this type. Among his air-to-air victories were Mustangs, Spitfires, Thunderbolts, Tempests, Il-2s, Yak-3s, Yak-9s, and even a four-engine bomber, a B-17.

He destroyed his own airplane at the end of the war to avoid its capture by Allied forces. Hans Dortenmann survived the war and died in 1973.

The Eduard "Dora" includes five plastic sprues, one clear sprue, one masking set and one colored photoetched fret for a total of 150 pieces, plus a large decal sheet covering six different markings options (two of them for the same aircraft at different times). Moldings are free of flash and no ejector pins are located on any visible parts. Engraved panel lines and rivet detail are delicate and subtle. Surface detail is just beautiful. Fabric covered control surfaces detail is subtle.

Sprues are interlocked in separated bags, with no more than two sprues per bag. There are a few pieces that are marked as "not for use."



The correctly-depicted open wheel wells provide a view of the engine detail included in the kit.

Two sprues are dedicated to the wings and the fuselage, while a third one is mainly devoted to the engine plug. The last sprue has the cockpit tub, control surfaces, landing gear and a few other miscellaneous parts. Ordnance includes a drop tank and a bomb.

The sprue with clear parts – which has four canopies, flat and bulged styles both for closed and open positions – is the only sprue in common with the previous Eduard 1:48 Focke Wulf 190A kits. All the other sprues are newly tooled.

Assembly options relates mainly to the weaponry hatches, cowl flaps and canopy position. Based on which version is being built, the machine gun panel cover will need a panel line to be scribed or different fairings to be removed.

Assembly begins with the interior. The cockpit can be nicely detailed by the use of the pre-painted photoetched fret. If you choose to assemble the cockpit with plastic parts, you can either use a decal for the instrument panel or you can paint and dry-brush the instrument panel as the bezels are molded with raised detail.

The engine plug is gorgeously detailed and benefits from careful painting and weathering. Several of the engine parts are small and fragile. Care is needed when trimming the parts from the sprues, both to prevent damage to the parts and to prevent having the part going airborne to be lost to the "carpet monster."

The MG 131 machine gun shelf is simple yet convincing. Make sure you dry fit it against the fuselage before you glue it. The engine firewall and the shelf have to be perpendicular against each other; otherwise, you will have interference between them and the cockpit tub. The engine plug attaches to the engine firewall/machine

The alignment system for the usually tricky Fw 190 landing gear is all but foolproof, unless you use a solvent glue and melt the attachment points! CA glue's the way to go here.

The instrument panel coaming is provided as a separate part, eliminating the need to sand a seam in this very visible and hard-to-reach area.

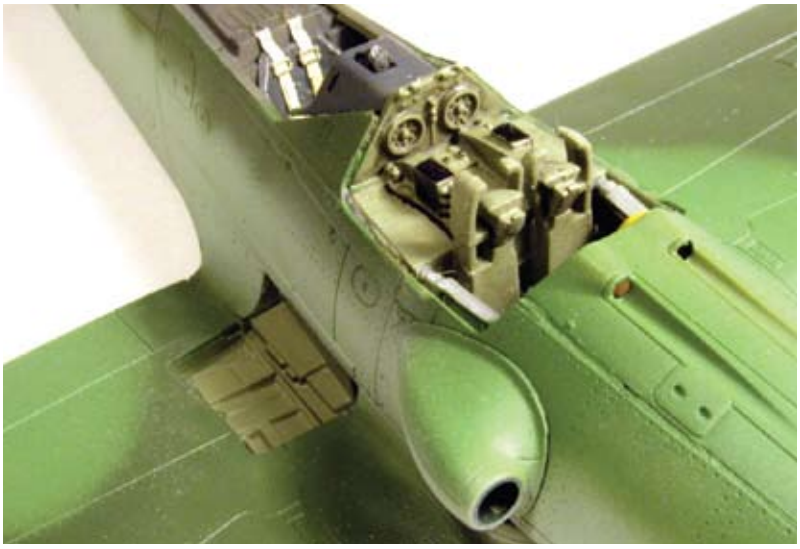
gun shelf via a series of engine mounts and engine pipes. It is a little bit of a fiddly task and it was difficult to get the sub-assembly to be strong and mechanically sound. Use of the fuselage part as a guide is strongly recommended to facilitate proper alignment.

Before closing the fuselage make sure you have the cockpit tub, the engine firewall and the engine plug properly lined up. I had to do some minor sanding in the base of the cockpit tub to get a good fit of the fuselage halves. Also, don't forget to add the engine exhausts at this point, as you cannot add them later. It would have been nice to be able to paint them and add them later, as part of the final assembly.

Once you have the engine exhaust installed in each fuselage half, add the cockpit tub, the engine firewall and the engine plug. Alignment of these parts is very important for a good fit of the fuselage halves and wing alignment. I had to do some minor sanding in the base of cockpit tub to get a good fit of the fuselage halves. Once I achieved this, I ran Tenax 7R along the fuselage spine and I got a strong bond.

During wing assembly you have the choice of assembling the gun bays in either the open or closed position. I thought of building one of the bays open and the other closed, but while dry-fitting the parts I realized that having the gun bay hatch to lay in the "closed" position would require some extra fitting and trimming work. Considering that you can have a very nice detailed open gun bay, why do the extra work?

Assembly of the wings is straightforward, but still it calls for more pieces than most kits normally would. Some parts are really tiny, but the reward is a very nicely detailed wheel well. Before you close the wings, you have to install the cannon barrels. The only inconvenience is that they tend to get bumped and potentially broken during construction and painting.



Getting the shelf for the MG131 machine guns is crucial to the later fit of other components.

Assembling the wing to the fuselage presented no problems. The machine guns' ejector chute traps the back of the wheel well, providing a sound alignment for the parts. If you did your homework and have the fuselage parts lined up properly, then the wings will line up with the fuselage.

A nice engineering detail: the part that goes on top of the instrument panel is molded as an independent piece, avoiding the annoying seam in the very visible area behind the windscreen. However, during construction it was difficult to find a positive attachment point

for this part. I had to scratch-built a small shelf for this part to have a solid attachment point to the cockpit.

The Focke Wulf 190 had a "hinge" in its canopy that allowed it to flex and change its cross-section between closed and open positions. You are provided with canopies with the correct shape for either open or closed positions. Be sure you choose the proper one for your desired configuration.

The canopy masks reduced the build time and fast-tracked the build towards the paint booth. You are provided with masks for both kinds of canopies: flat and bulged, so you get an extra set of masks for the canopy style that you don't use. I finished my model with Model Master enamels, masking the tail band and yellow sections while free-handing the rest of the camouflage.

After a coat of Pledge Future, I started the decaling process. The decals are printed by Cartograph, with good color density and in register. I had no problems working with them; I only needed to use MicroSet in a few places to have the decals to snuggle down into some panel lines.

Depending on the marking option you choose, you might have to paint the inside of the fuselage marking. I decided to use an aftermarket decal instead. A nice touch is that you are provided virtually two full sets of stencils; the second one can be used to dress-up another model (the Eduard Weekend release of the D-9, for instance).

A second coat of Pledge Future to seal the decals was applied and then an oil wash was done. I tinted mineral spirits with two minuscule drops of burnt sienna and black. Flat coating the model to protect the paint and weathering job, and a few strokes of Tamiya Smoke in the exhaust areas and around the control surfaces hinges, completed the main paint job.

I then airbrushed the propeller and the propeller hub. After brushing some Pledge Future on the hub, I applied the spiral decal with abundant water to help it float into position. For this decal, I used MicroSet and MicroSol. It wrinkled a little bit but by the next morning it was looking perfect.

While working on the propeller I decided to paint the wheels too. I was pleasantly surprised to find masks for the tires in the detail set. You are given the options of plain and treaded tires.

When working with the landing gear oleo scissors, pay attention to the parts and the instructions. There is clearly an up and a down position for them. The landing gear has keyed attachment points that will line up the legs with the wheel wells for you. I would recommend using CA glue to attach the landing gear. If you use liquid cement, you might risk melting the alignment pins and losing their help for alignment. I know that by experience.

The cowling ring part can be attached to the fuselage without the need for glue. I decided to put it in place for painting, then removed it, glued the propeller in place and re-attached the cowling ring.

The fit is very good, but it is

**Paints & Tools Used**

- Model Master Enamels
- Tamiya Smoke
- Pledge Future Floor Wax
- Daler Rowney Oil paints
- Aeromaster 48-020 German National Markings
- Decal Setting Solution: MicroSet and MicroSol
- PollyScale Flat Coat
- EZ-line for aerials

The spiral on the nose was a decal that Pablo carefully floated into place with plenty of water and setting solution.

Pablo moved the pitot tube out to the more common wingtip location. Because the canopy lacked a tensioner, many D-9s' aerial antennas sagged against the fuselage when the canopy was open.

tight and I managed to break one of the cowling flaps. I was lucky that the break was clean and a tiny drop of CA kept the cowling flap in place. I recommend carefully dry-fitting the cowling ring and file (if needed) some of cowling flaps as to avoid risking breaking them when placing the part in place.

Another problem I ran into was that I got the armor rest assembly twisted in the canopy. I didn't realize this until the glue had set and the canopy would not sit properly on its rails. I decided to gently trim the offending part until the canopy sat flush against the fuselage.

I decided to keep the MG 131 machine guns off until the very end for ease of painting. It is possible to thread them through the cowling openings, but it is very difficult to do so. I was worried I would break the parts. It might be easier to actually assemble them when the instructions suggest doing so (Did I mention that paying attention to the instructions is a good idea?) and mask them than to do it the other way around. I got away with it, but for a short moment it crossed my mind that there was no way to do it.

Another minor glitch was that the gun bay covers wouldn't really fit the "hinge" openings in the fuselage. I'm not sure really what the problem was there, but I had that issue with both of them. I had to file the gun bay cover a little bit to make them fit. It's a minor issue, but I had to do it after painting and then I had to touch up the paint. You might want to check the fit before painting the parts.

One point that confused me was the location of the pitot tube. I've seen pictures of D-9s with the pitot tube located near the wing tip. Eduard has it molded roughly half way between the fuselage and the wing tip. I couldn't find pictures showing the pitot tube location of Hans Dortenmann's airplane. I installed mine near the wing-tip, as it seems that most production models had it installed there.

The final detail was the aerials, made with EZ-line, a thin, dark-colored and stretchable material. The D-9 didn't have a tensioner for the aerial and when the canopy was open, the antenna just slumped to the side of the fuselage. The EZ-line works wonders to replicate this effect. Because it is stretchable, you won't run the risk of snapping it by accidentally touching it.

Eduard provides an excellent value in this kit, including a pre-painted photoetched fret, a set of masks, excellent decals for six markings, plus a correct wheel well and an engine plug. All of above comes as an "in-the-box" model for $40. As a bonus you get masks for the canopy style that you didn't use and lots of spare decals.

The total number of pieces, the photoetched fret and the elaborate interior subassemblies means that this kit is intended for the intermediate skilled modeler. I highly recommend this kit to the modeler that wants to have the ultimate rendering of the Focke Wulf 190D-9. ■

**PABLO BAULEO IPMS/USA #46363**

Pablo was born in Argentina, but today lives in Fort Collins, Colorado. He is the president of IPMS/High Plains Modelers and a member of the IPMS Reviewers Corps. Pablo's modeling interests mainly focus in WWII-era airplanes, but recently he has expanded his interests into vehicles and ships. He has installed a 6x4.5-by-1.5 feet display case in his hobby room with the full support of his wife, Andrea. He estimates it will take him at least 10 years to fill it up, while his wife insists it will be less than five years They have an ongoing bet on how long it will take him to need a second case. Pablo seems to be working very hard to lose the bet.