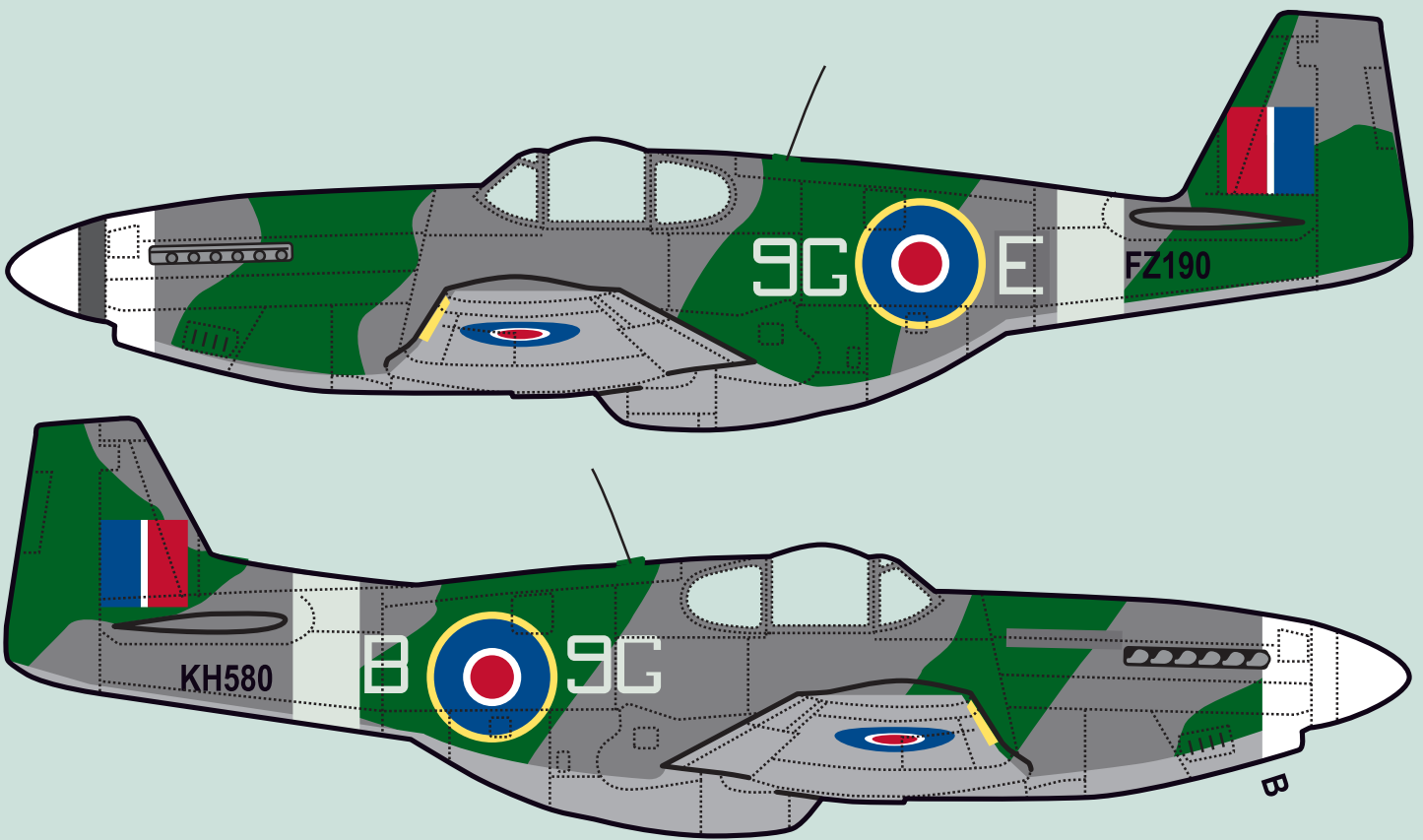


RCAF 441 Mustang IIIs

May 1945 to July 1945



Information compiled by: Dennis Weber (C#3200), with additional research by: Richard Palimaka and John Melson (C#4759)
Contributors: Robert Bracken (C#4762), Sid Bregman, Scott Hemsley, Steve Sauvé (C#0323), and Dave Thompson

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If you are an aviation enthusiast interested in making Canadian World War II fighter planes there is no shortage of options available – especially if you are a fan of Spitfires, Hurricanes, or Kittyhawks. With the Spitfire, for example, one would be hard pressed to find a variant that RCAF personnel didn't fly. But another very important aircraft during the war was the North American P-51 Mustang. With this aircraft it is also possible to find Canadian subjects too – provided you are primarily interested in the earlier Mustang Mk I or the later bubble-canopied Mk IVs. If you happen to have a P-51B/C kit on your shelf you might be discouraged to find that only one Canadian unit ever used the Mustang III – 441 'Silver Fox' Squadron. Hopefully this article might encourage you to try a "new" and uncommon option for your Mustang III.

It's pretty challenging to find definitive information about this unit's Mustangs. The meticulous record-keeping (up until April of 1945) seems to wane soon after the end of hostilities with Germany. Pictures of these Mustangs are rather uncommon and even more rare are ones that clearly show codes with the serial numbers. But thanks to research by Richard Palimaka, the logbook of Squadron Leader Kelly Walker, and Movement Record Cards acquired from the Royal Air Force Museum, we can be confident in producing a number of the profiles that appear later in the article. And special thanks to Sid Bregman for providing the copies of the images for this article.

BACKGROUND ON 441 SQN AND ITS MUSTANGS

Shortly after the war in Europe ended, 441 received its first Mustang IIIs. Most were ex-165 Sqn (RAF) equipment and were

taken on strength in May of 1945. The squadron never flew these aircraft in anger but lost one pilot – Flight Officer McCabe was killed when his Mustang crashed into an auto wrecking yard at Clough Road, Hull, Yorkshire on 24 July 1945. Logbook records suggest 441 was probably preparing for bomber escort and related duties that might be needed with the ongoing war against Japan.

Most of 441's Mustangs shared a number of common physical traits. All of them had the bulbous Malcolm canopies to improve pilot view. Louvred cowl breather panels and a unique fairing for the dorsal spine whip antenna were features present on almost all of these aircraft. The whip antenna fairing was a flat plate with a raised lip around the forward three sides, about five inches square. These U-shaped fairings (looking very much like a horseshoe) were most often mounted on the starboard side, just down from the spine centreline, but a few Mustangs had them on the port side.

Most of 441 Mustangs had fin fillets added to the tail. This gives the back-end of the plane an appearance much like many of the bubble-topped P-51Ds, but don't be fooled. The fin fillet design added to the P-51B/C and Mustang III has a different profile. It terminates further forward than on a P-51D and has a subtle curve.

Most of 441's aircraft shared camouflage colours of Dark Green and Ocean Grey over Medium Sea Grey. The squadron code (9G) and individual aircraft letter usually are 16 x 12, or 16 x 13 (rather than the more typical 24 inch tall size).

Other common features on these Mustangs are large white bands around the wings and horizontal stabilizers. And many also have a white recognition band painted around the front portion of the engine cowling, just behind the propeller.



9G-Y KH466

The discoloured patch above and aft of the exhaust is the correct outline for where a glare shield would be attached for night flying. The overseas RCAF roundel is visible and the camouflage pattern is the nose colour is difficult to interpret.

9G-Y

KH466

Note the faired exhausts and the starboard side whip antenna mount on this aircraft. The discoloured patch aft of the exhausts is visible in this shot too.



© Sid Bregman collection

Some aircraft, like 9G•B and 9G•Y, appear to have been used for night flying in their pre-441 usage – you can see mismatched paint in a two foot by four inch strip positioned between the exhausts and cockpit – probably the remnants from a glare shield.

Interpretation of the nose and spinner colours is difficult. Some are completely white but others appear to be white plus red, or white plus black. Admittedly, tonal interpretation of the b&w photos does not rule out the possibility of other colours in some of the images.

SERIALS OF RCAF 441 SQN MUSTANGS

End-of-month reports in the Squadron's Operational Record Book (ORB) state that 441 had eighteen aircraft at 31 May 1945, nineteen aircraft at 30 June 1945 (HB876 (9G•L) flew in on 14 June 1945) and seventeen at 31 July 1945. Serials (see table) are shown with the date taken-on-charge.

MODELLING A 441 MUSTANG III

Most kits will need the addition of a few details: add a fin-fillet (included with the 1/48 Accurate Minatures P-51C and

Logbook Code Identifiers of 441 Sqn

A?
H
P
R
V

The above codes are from the logbook of Squadron Leader Kelly Walker. Question marks indicate entries where the handwriting is not definitive and open to interpretation.

Visible Code Identifiers of 441 Sqn

B
L
S

The above codes are from photographs of 441's Mustangs.

Serials of RCAF 441 Squadron

End-of-month reports in the ORB state 441 had: eighteen aircraft at 31 May 45, nineteen aircraft at 30 June 45 (HB876 flew in on 14 June 45) and seventeen at 31 July 45. Serials are shown with the date taken-on-charge:

- FB184 > 31 May 45
- FB231 > 24 May 45
- FZ190 > 31 May 45 E
- HB876 > 14 June 45 L
- HB959 > 31 May 45 M
- KH426 > 31 May 45
- KH432 > 31 May 45
- KH466 > 31 May 45 Y
- KH474 > 31 May 45
- KH479 > 31 May 45
- KH495 > 31 May 45 S
- KH499 > 31 May 45
- KH517 > 31 May 45
- KH558 > 31 May 45
- KH559 > 31 May 45
- KH569 > 31 May 45
- KH578 > 31 May 45
- KH580 > 31 May 45 B
- KH602 > 31 May 45The

two aircraft deleted from 441 strength were KH569 (from a fatal crash and thus struck-off-charge) and FB184 (sent to Air Training at Oxford 26.07.45).



9G-Y

KH466

'Block' tread tires were used on this aircraft.

© Sid Bregman collection

1/72 Academy P-51C); a radio whip antenna and fairing; and the unique louvred covers on the engine cowl breather panel. Other kits without a fin fillet option can be modified with some simple scratch-building. And use the grey-painted, 108 gallon metal drop tanks (aside: the paper version of the 108 gallon drop tank was painted Aluminum).

Firstly, if you already have the 442 Squadron 1/48 decals from IPMS Canada (www.ipmscanada.com/442teaser.html), you likely have some spare resin louvres to change the appearance of the breather panels (unless you wish to depict the all-silver HB876, 9G•L). What a great way to use up some spare parts! If you don't have these parts, you'll have to fabricate these louvres on your own.

Secondly (with the exception of aircraft 9G-E) you will need to add a fin fillet. The tail fillet is *similar* to the tail fillets more commonly associated with the P-51D, but with a different shape and size. You can easily make one from scrap stock by using the enclosed template as a guide and the photos/drawings in this article as a reference. And pay attention to your exhaust choices – they vary from aircraft to aircraft. Some aircraft carried the faired exhausts while others did not (both types are included with the AM 1/48 P-51C).

Thirdly, you'll need some code letters. They are a bigger challenge since there are no commercial decals that match this non-standard lettering style. Included with the profiles are 100% sized letters suitable for 1/48 scale aircraft. You can adjust the size of these codes on a photocopier if you wish to make 1/32 or 1/72 scale stencils.

Lastly, you'll need to create the dorsal spine whip antenna and fairing. The whip can be made of stretched sprue or fishing line (depending on scale). I believe that the angle of the whip is at about 11:00 o'clock or 1:00 o'clock (looking from the nose to tail). The fairing can be made with a tiny strip of pop-can aluminum. Cut a small rectangular strip, wrap it around a toothpick, then attach it with superglue. Use the photos in this article as a guide.

With a bit of skill and the references in this article, you should be able to build a fairly accurate model of a rather obscure and uncommon RCAF Mustang! And special thanks to all the individuals who contributed photos, information, and research to

P-51B serial blocks

Built in Inglewood, California. First flight 5 May 1943:

US Serial	Type	Designation	Construction #	Number
43-12093 to 12492	P-51B-1-NA	(NA-102)	102-24541 to 24940	400 aircraft
43-6313 to 6802	P-51B-5-NA	(NA-104)	104-22816 to 23305	490 aircraft
43-6803 to 6912	P-51B-5-NA	(NA-104)	104-24431 to 24540	110 aircraft
43-6913 to 7112	P-51B-5-NA	(NA-104)	104-24941 to 25140	200 aircraft
43-7113 to 7202	P-51B-10-NA	(NA-104)	104-25141 to 25230	90 aircraft
42-106429 to 106538	P-51B-10-NA	(NA-104)	104-25231 to 25340	110 aircraft
42-106541 to 106738	P-51B-10-NA	(NA-104)	104-25343 to 25540	198 aircraft
42-106739 to 106978	P-51B-15-NA	(NA-104)	104-25541 to 25780	240 aircraft
43-24752 to 24901	P-51B-15-NA	(NA-104)	104-25781 to 25930	150 aircraft
TOTAL				1988 aircraft

Two P-51B-10-NAs (42-106539/106540) were completed on the production with a new bubble top canopy and redesignated as XP-51Ds and not included in the above totals.

P-51C serial blockss

Built in Dallas, Texas. First flight 5 August 1943:

US Serial	Type	Designation	Construction #	Number
42-102979 to 103328	P-51C-1-NT	(NA-103)	103-22416 to 22765	350 aircraft
42-103329 to 103378	P-51C-5-NT	(NA-103)	103-22766 to 22815	50 aircraft
42-103379 to 103778	P-51C-5-NT	(NA-103)	103-25933 to 26332	400 aircraft
42-103779 to 103978	P-51C-10-NT	(NA-103)	103-26333 to 26532	200 aircraft
43-24902 to 25251	P-51C-10-NT	(NA-103)	103-26533 to 26882	350 aircraft
44-10753 to 10782	P-51C-10-NT	(NA-111)	111-28886 to 28915	30 aircraft
44-10783 to 10817	P-51C-11-NT	(NA-111)	111-28916 to 28950	35 aircraft
44-10818 to 10852	P-51C-10-NT	(NA-111)	111-28951 to 28985	35 aircraft
44-10853 to 10858	P-51C-11-NT	(NA-111)	111-28986 to 28991	6 aircraft
44-10859 to 11036	P-51C-10-NT	(NA-111)	111-28992 to 29169	178 aircraft
44-11037 to 11122	P-51C-11-NT	(NA-111)	111-29170 to 29255	86 aircraft
44-11123 to 11152	P-51C-10-NT	(NA-111)	111-29256 to 29285	30 aircraft
TOTAL				1750 aircraft



9G-N

© Sid Bregman collection

help make this article possible. Editor's Note: A special thanks from the editorial team to Steve Sauvé who shepherded this article on behalf of IPMS Canada over a period of many months.

9G-E FZ190

Unlike most of 441's Mustang Ills, this one lacks the fin fillet. The area around the E seems to have been repainted and this aircraft is most certainly FZ190. We'd be able to see a

hint of the vertical character shape of a B if it was either FB184 or FB231. Note the faired exhausts and the port side whip antenna mount on this aircraft.

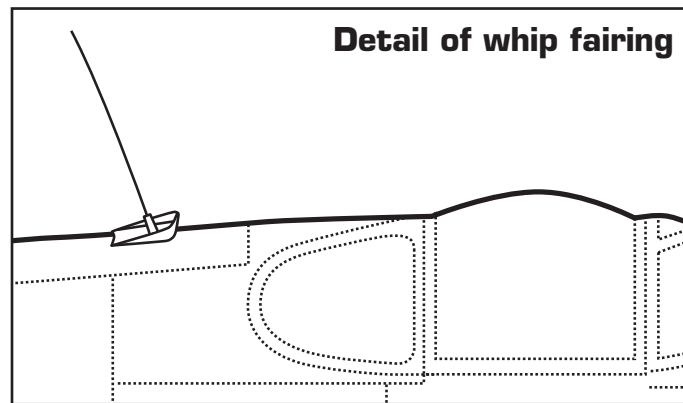
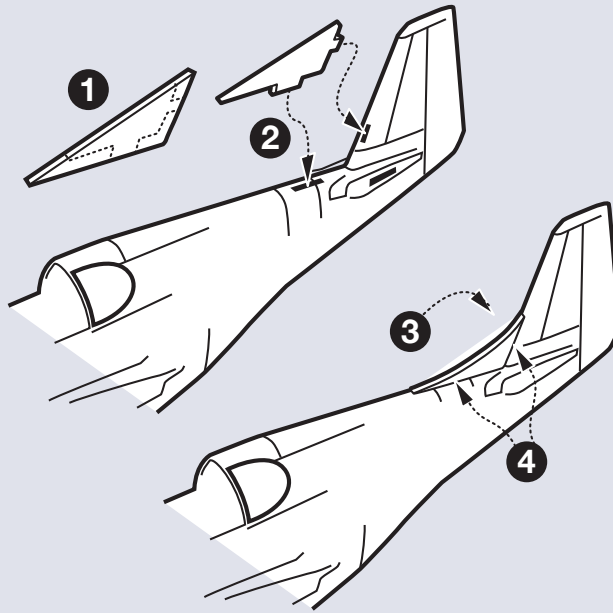
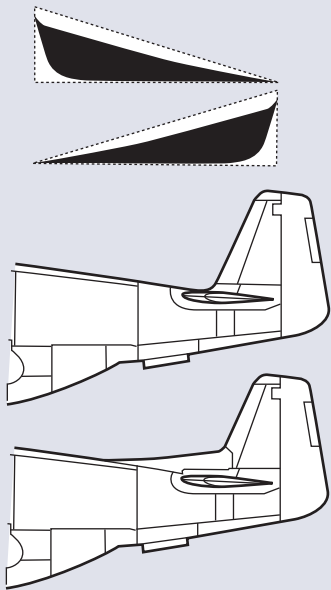


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Fin fillet templates

The triangle is your sheet stock, the black is an approximation of final shape needed for the fillet in 1/48 scale.
 Increase by 150% for 1/32.
 Decrease to 66.6% for 1/72.

- Step 1 > template with extra material for tabs.
- Step 2 > tabs secured into frame.
- Step 3 > modify contour to match black shape.
- Step 4 > build up sides with putty.



9G-B KH580

Close examination of the tail seems to depict KH580. It is the only serial that supports what can be seen in the image. And if you look carefully you can see that a B appears on the aircraft's chin! Note the 'diamond' tread tires, unfaired exhausts and the starboard side whip antenna mount on this aircraft. The discoloured patch behind the exhausts is also visible.



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RAF Mustang III Serials

Mustang III (P-51B)	
FB100 to FB124	25
FR411	1
FX848 to FX999	152
FZ100 to FZ197	98
initial B subtotal:	276

Mustang III (P-51C)	
FB125 to FB399	275
HB821 to HB961	141
KH421 to KH640	220
initial C subtotal:	636

Bs returned to USAAF:	
FX848 to 851	4
FX856 to 857	2
FX861	1
FX863	1
FX867 to 870	4
FX875	1
FX877	1
FX879	1
FX883	1
FX886	1
FX891	1
FX894	1
FX902	1
FX905 to FX907	3
FX909 to FX911	3
FX913 to 916	4
FX918	1
FX927 to 928	2
FX932	1
FX948	1
HB838	1
Bs lost in transit:	
FX992	1
Bs diverted/lost:	37

Cs lost in transit:	
FB205	1
FX992	1
KH470	1
C's diverted/lost:	3

acquired from USAAF (all but one are Bs):	
HK944 to HK947	4
HK955 to HK956	2
SR406 to SR438	33
SR440	1

TOTAL Bs: 278
 TOTAL Cs: 634
 TOTAL Mk III's: 912

Pre-441 sqn identities

In some case aircraft codes letters from pre-441 serial were discovered:

FB184:	234 RAF, AZ•R
FZ190:	19 RAF, QV•A 165 RAF, SK•A
HB959:	165 RAF, SK•M
KH426:	165 RAF, SK•Z
KH495:	165 RAF, SK•S
KH499:	64 RAF, SH•D
KH517:	165 RAF, SK•T
KH559:	118 RAF, NK•T
KH580:	165 RAF, SK•P



9G-L
HB876

Note the unfaired exhausts and the starboard side whip antenna mount on this aircraft. This aircraft has a regular engine cowl breather and it's uncamouflaged finish is unusual for 441 aircraft

© Mallandaine collection



9G-S
KH495

Note the unfaired exhausts and the starboard side whip antenna mount on this aircraft. The presence of D-Day stripes are a mystery and highly unusual during the time 441 used these aircraft.

© Mallandaine collection

9G-Y

KH466

'Block' tread tires, wing bands, louvred cowl breather panels, and undetermined nose colour.



© Sid Bregman collection



9G-Y

KH466 (right)

'Block' tread tires, wing bands, louvred cowl breather panels, RCAF overseas roundel, and no evidence of a chin letter.

9G-M

HB959 (background)

This aircraft shows remnants of black from D-Day stripes. The white appears to be stripped from the aircraft.

© Sid Bregman collection

Colour Information

Most of 441s Mustangs were Dark Green and Ocean Grey with Medium Sea Grey undersides. Sky was used for the tail bands and code letters (which seem to be 16x13 or 16x12). Camouflage pattern is typical (with minor differences).

Fuselage: 36" C1 roundel

Upper wing: 40" C roundel

Under wing: 32" C roundel

Fin flash: 24" x 24"

Serials: 8" x 5" x 1" or 8" x 4" x 1"?

Tail band: Sky, 18" wide

Code letters: Sky, 16" x 13" or 16" x 12"

Bomber Escort ID

During WWII many Mustangs doing long-range escort duties had special recognition markings to help bomber crews more easily identify their aircraft (*from C&M - p.39, Special Identification Markings*):

Nose: White spinner and the front 12" of the engine cowling.

Wings: White, 15" wide, painted 15" outboard from the widest part of the wing root fairing.

Tailplanes: White, 15" wide, 33" inboard from the tips.

Stencil how-to

(1) Make photocopies of the squadron codes below. You can verify that they are the correct size by measuring the diameter of the roundel. It should measure 0.75" for the 1/48 scale samples.

(2) Place a wide piece of masking tape atop a clean cutting board. This piece will become your final mask. The roundels are a convenient spacer so you can determine the correct placement of your choice of aircraft code letter.

(3) Place the desired markings above the piece from step 2, then secure it with another thinner piece of tape.

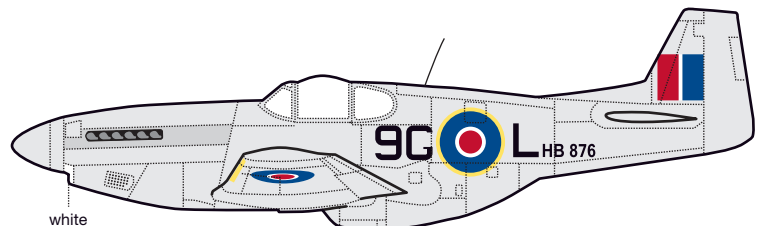
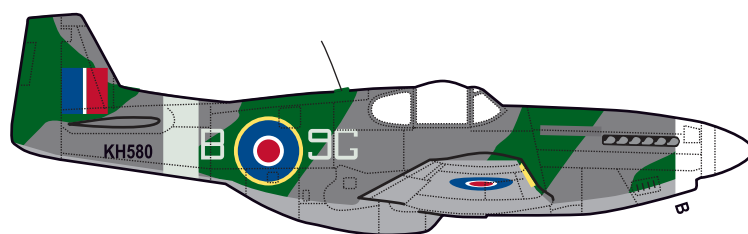
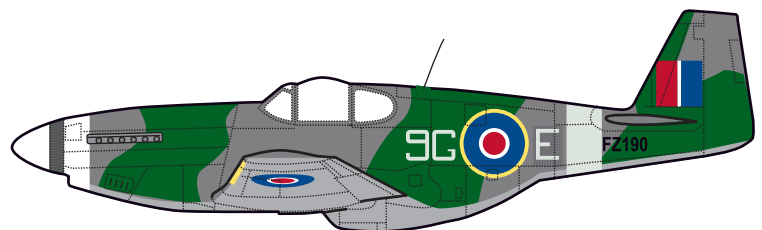
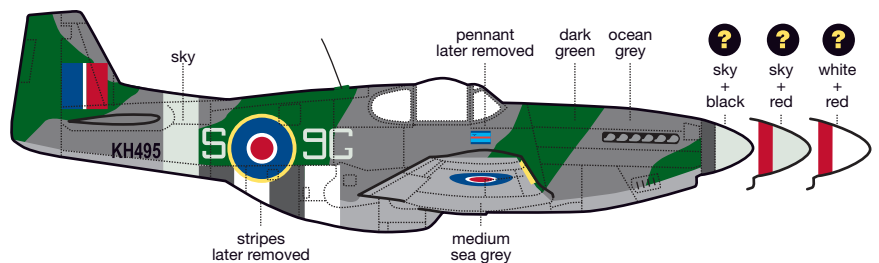
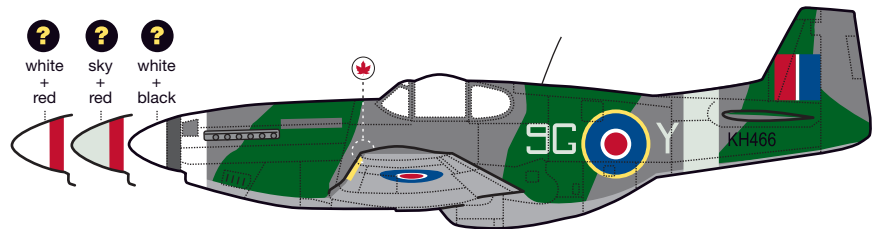
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(5) Remove the paper template.

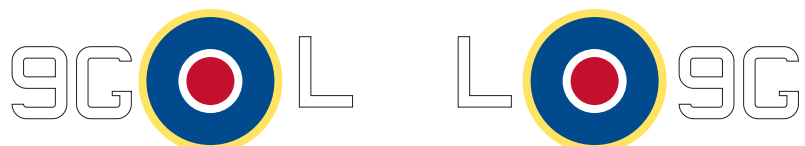
(6) With a new Xacto blade, carefully make cuts from point to point and remove tape that forms the inside of the characters.

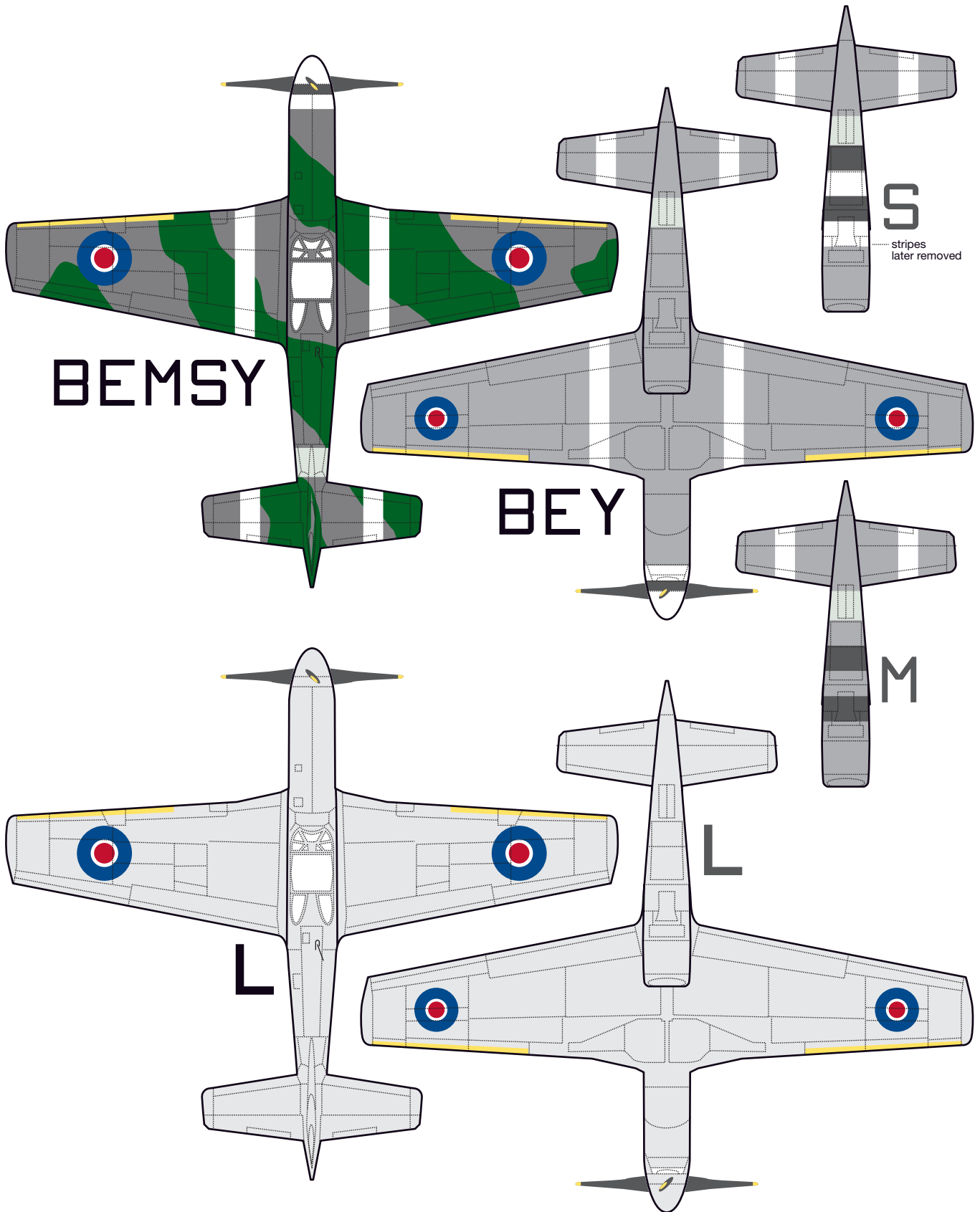
(7) Remove the remaining mask and apply it to your model. Burnish and paint. Remove masking tape.

441 Mustang IIIs



This artwork is 100% actual size for 1/48 if the roundel has a 0.75 inch diameter
Reduce to 66.6% for 1/72 • Increase by 150% for 1/32





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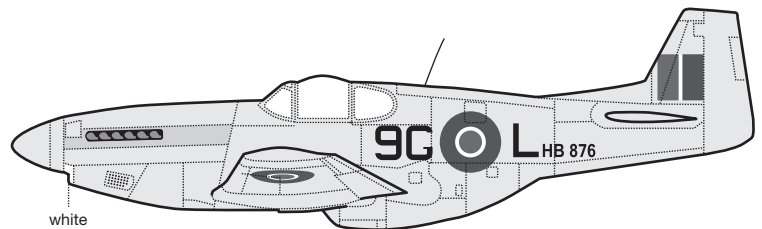
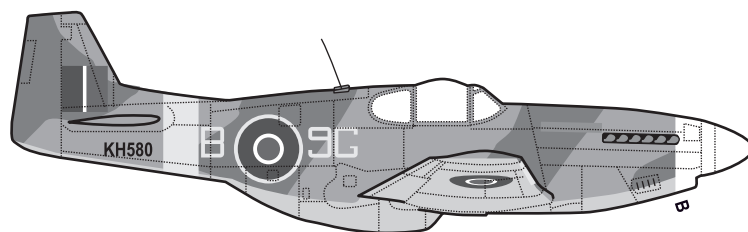
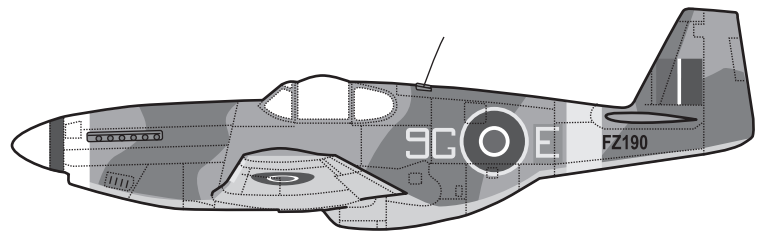
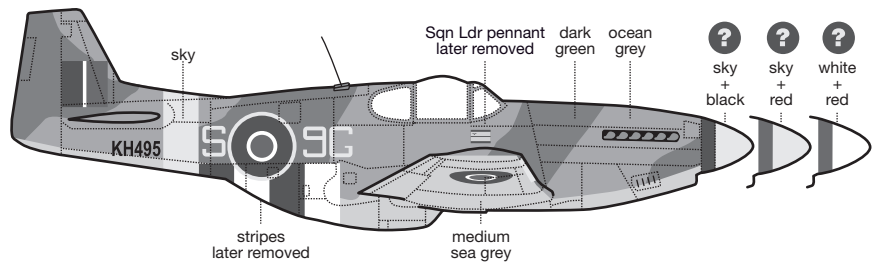
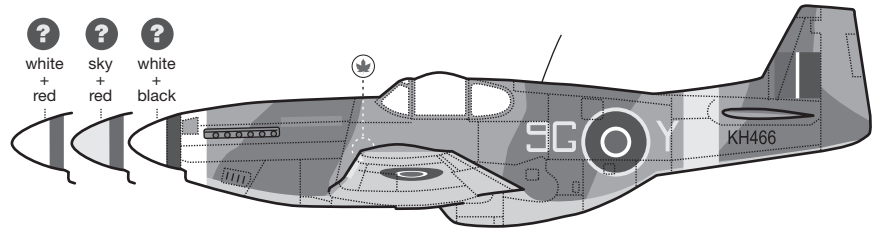
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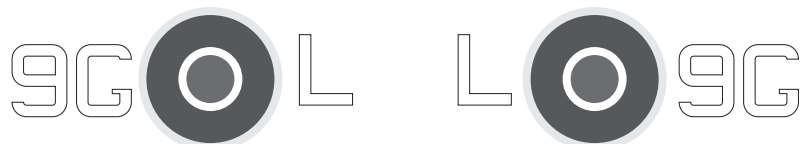
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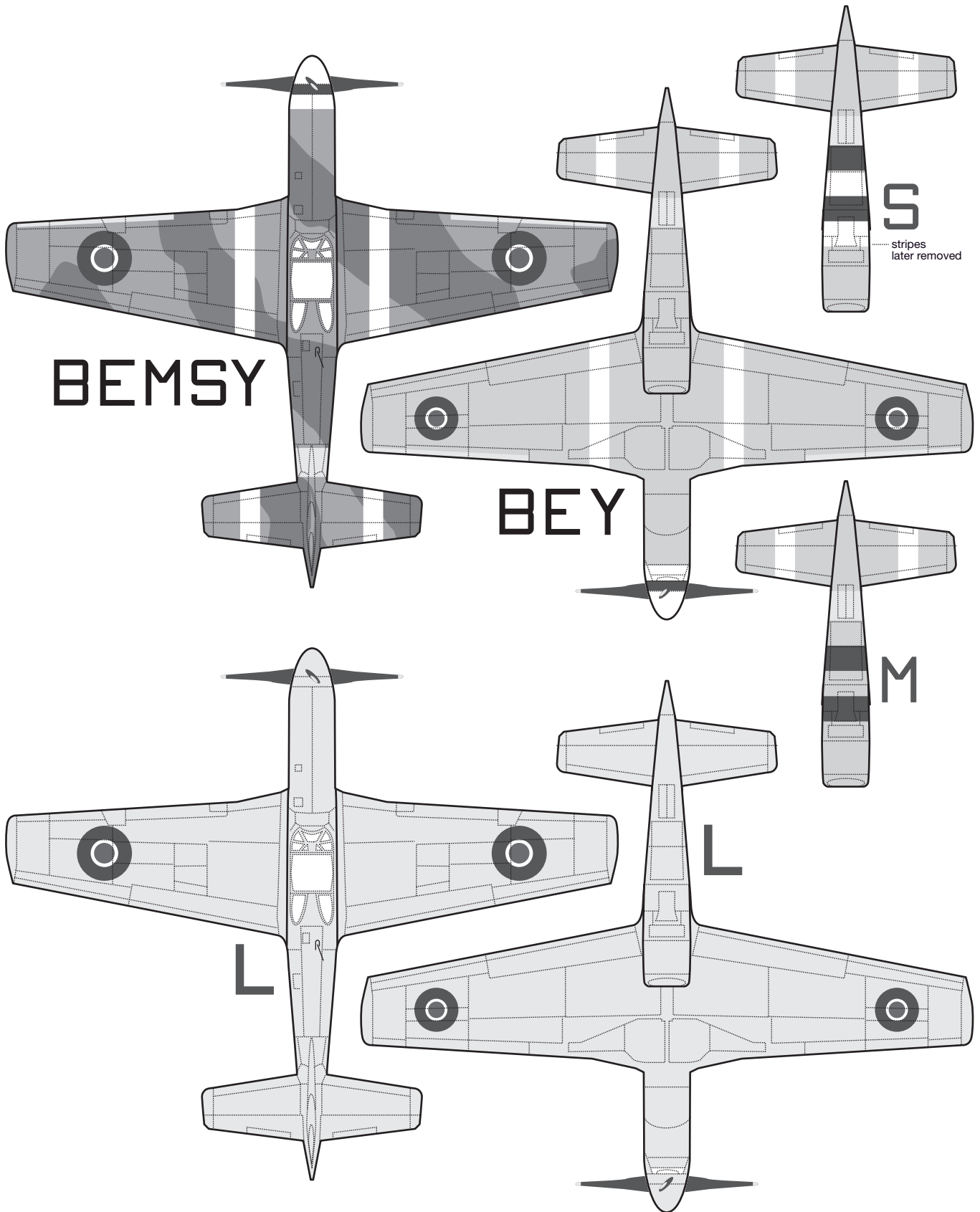
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441 Mustang IIIs



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BEMSY

BEY

S

stripes
later removed

M

L

L

SC  BEMSY

BEMSY  SC