

1/285 Air Power

Part 1

McDonald Douglas F-4E Phantom (IAF's *Kurnass*)

Our first plane is the GHQ's F-4 Phantom, a widely known machine used by many countries such as the USA, UK, Israel, Iran, and so forth. I must be said that the Phantom was not my first choice, as I would prefer a true Close Air Support plane such as the A-4 Skyhawk. Perhaps one day GHQ may produce it ...

As for the model itself, it all seems very good but... well, that nose and canopy... hummm, they just don't feel right. The nose seems too long, and the canopy should go along the plane's body and then bend downwards, instead of going straight as it does. I suppose the GHQ team took a RF-4C as a working base for their F-4E. They seem quite different from the Israeli planes I've seen but then again, maybe it's just my eyes that are playing tricks with me.

Anyway, the technique for painting the F-4 was the following: after applying the primer (pure white), I used a soft grey wash which served as base colour for the belly. Then, with an air gun, I painted the base colour (a mix of different sorts of light browns) and applied a darker shade. Again I made a mix (Vallejo's English Uniform + Tamiya's XF-52 for the brown colour and Vallejo's Flat Green + Beige for the mid green colour) and applied the paint in successive layers, using soft darker shades afterwards to create "volume".

As for the bomb loads, a simple lighter wash served to highlight the impressive ordinance.

After applying the colours, I covered the plane with a glossy coat. The two main reasons for this procedure are to protect the paint, like in any other vehicle, and to ensure that the camouflage colours are protected from eventual mishaps and corrections before I started to paint the Star of David and the squadron's insignia and the plane's numbers. I would feel very stupid if I had to repaint the whole plane just because in that particular Star of David I missed the spot...

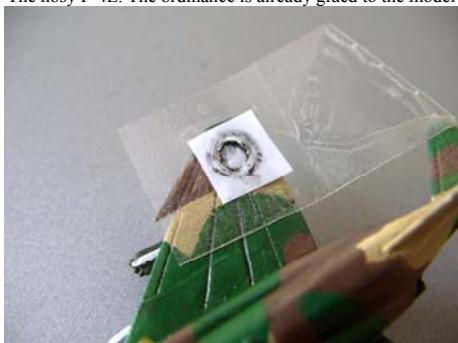
In order to paint the Israeli marking I drilled a hole in a paper and then glued the paper to a piece of tape. Over these equal-sized white circles I painted the blue stars of David. The outcome was not perfect but wasn't too bad either. Afterwards it came the squadron markings (I chose the 69th), the plane numbers and a thin red stripe and, for the final touch, the matt varnish. It was done.



The nosy F-4E. The ordinance is already glued to the model



Now the model looks better!



The IAF markings are being painted over the glossy varnish coat



A pair of proud *Kurnassim*, ready to strike Syrians and Egyptians alike!

Sukhoi-25 Grach

The GHQ's Sukhoi-25 are superb models that really capture the shark-likeness of the plane. The ordinance that comes along with them makes me feel sorry for their targets!

Again, I used the same basic technique used with the Phantom. For extra details, I took up my Windsor & Newton series 7 #00 brush and painted a nice, cartoon-like "grach" (rook or magpie), along with a set of eyes and a few victory stars near the canopy. This design was based on an actual plane that fought in Afghanistan and later on served in the 206th Air Assault Regiment (*Shturmovoi Aviapolk*) in Belaruss SSR.

The red stars I was given were applied over the glossy varnish coat. Unfortunately, they partly melted when I applied the matt coat so I had to repaint them and part of the wing. As well. A annoying setback that was quickly dealt with.

I was quite happy with the results, so happy that I actually bought one of the planes from its original owner!



The Su-25 with base colour and grey-blue underneath



The model with glossy varnish and some nice markings



The "magpie"



"Heckle" and "Jeckle" are now complete! They will happily deliver their load over the Mujahidin down there!