

Tower Hobbies P-51D Mustang Mk II Rx-R

Looks like a scale warbird, flies like a fun sport plane

BY LARRY COOPER PHOTOS BY JOHN REID



The P-51 Mustang from Tower Hobbies is a great-flying warbird that offers sport-flying capabilities. Its tough AeroCell foam construction makes it light, sturdy, and easy to maintain. This is no beginner plane, however; it is fast and sporty, and is great for intermediate and expert pilots.

The motor, speed control, servos, and linkages are all installed at the factory, so all you have to do is add your own receiver and plug in the servos. The plane comes with fixed landing gear, but the optional flaps and retractable landing gear will upgrade its performance and appearance. In addition to the main gear, a steerable tail gear makes the P-51 easy to handle on the ground.

The provided instructions are well thought out and illustrated for easy assembly. The plane comes painted in World War II colors, and there are four different sets of decals, which allow you to customize your P-51D. The included color-matched spinner really enhances the model's appearance.

The wing is removable for easy transport in the trunk of your car. A single screw holds the wing to the fuselage, and it is easy to get to. Access to the battery compartment is concealed by the cockpit, which also includes a scale pilot in his seat. The cockpit cover is held in place by powerful rare-earth magnets and comes off with a little gentle persuasion.

UNIQUE FEATURES

The P-51 is almost ready to fly out of the box. For the basic plane, just install the receiver and plug in the servos and speed control. The servos and linkages are already installed, and the ones in my kit were pretty close to being perfectly adjusted so that all of the control surfaces were neutral. The AeroCell foam is both light and tough, and the P-51D comes with all hinges molded in (including the flaps!). It's also nice to know that if you need to make any repairs after flying, you can use CA glue.

I installed the optional retractable landing gear and installed two servos for the prehinged flaps to make them functional. These additions make the plane even cooler than the stock plane. The installation is fairly simple, and the good folks at Tower Hobbies make it easy to add these features with easy-to-follow instructions and illustrations (see sidebar for more detail on these additions).

A steerable tailwheel makes the P-51 manageable on the ground. It comes installed just below the rudder with a special linkage collar.

One of the nice surprises in this kit is the selection of decals. There are four different schemes from which to choose, and the pictures in the instructions make it a piece of cake to get them in the proper place.



AT A GLANCE	
	MODEL P-51D Mustang Mk II Rx-R
	MANUFACTURE Tower Hobbies (towerhobbies.com)
	WINGSPAN 40 in.
	PILOT SKILL LEVEL Intermediate
	ASSEMBLY TIME 3 hours (w/ flaps and retracts)
	POWER REQ'D 3S 2200mAh LiPo
	RADIO REQ'D 4- or 6-channel
	PRICE \$119.99

WHAT WE LIKE	
	Great looking
	Easy to assemble
	Fabulous in the air
	Four sets of decals; optional flaps and retracts

LANDING THE P-51 IS STRAIGHTFORWARD: I KEPT THE SPEED UP, ALLOWED THE PLANE TO SETTLE INTO A SHALLOW APPROACH, AND LET IT TOUCH DOWN AND ROLL OUT WHILE THROTTLING BACK.



IN THE AIR

My P-51D is pretty fast with all the power you need to have a great flight. You need a good-size flying area with a flat surface to take off and land successfully. I flew mine at a local dry lake where there is plenty of room.

Takeoffs are easy. Of course, I had the

optional retracts in the down position and slowly added throttle. I had to give it a bit of right rudder to compensate for a slight tendency to pull left. The plane was airborne in about 50 feet and climbed out to cruising altitude smoothly and quickly. Then came the cool part: I hit the retract switch on my radio and the landing gear

GEAR USED



RADIO

Futaba T8FG and Futaba R6008 HS (futabarc.com); four servos installed



MOTOR

1000Kv brushless and 30A speed control (installed)



BATTERY

FlightPower 3S 2200mAh 30C LiPo (flightpowerbatteries.com)



PROP

10x7E (included)

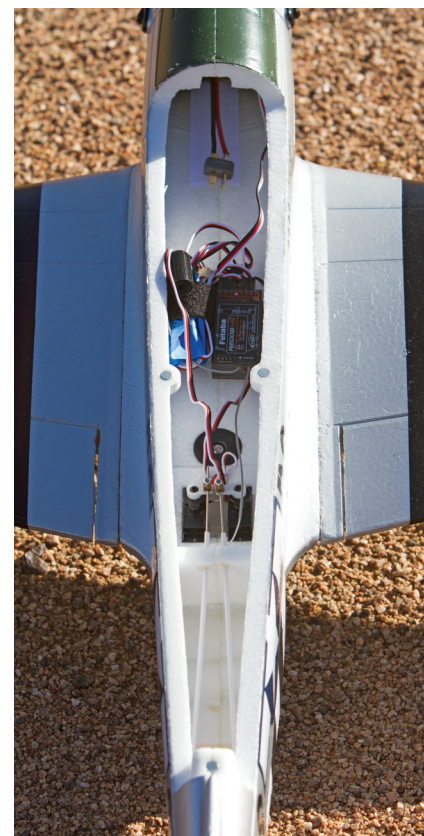
just folded right up into the wing. Landing the P-51 is straightforward: I made a low pass near myself and deployed the retracts. They came out smoothly and locked down solidly. I kept the speed up, allowed the plane to settle into a shallow approach, and let it touch down and roll out while throttling back. You can slow the plane down for landing by lowering the flaps. The model landed very smoothly, and I found it easy to control on the ground. It rolls in a nice straight line, and the steerable tailwheel lets you taxi wherever you like.

GENERAL FLIGHT PERFORMANCE

Stability: In the air, it is stable and responds instantly to the inputs. I programmed my radio with dual rates; the P-51D is mild on low rates and snappy on high rates.

Tracking: It is plenty fast to give you the thrill of speed but never feel like you are out of control.

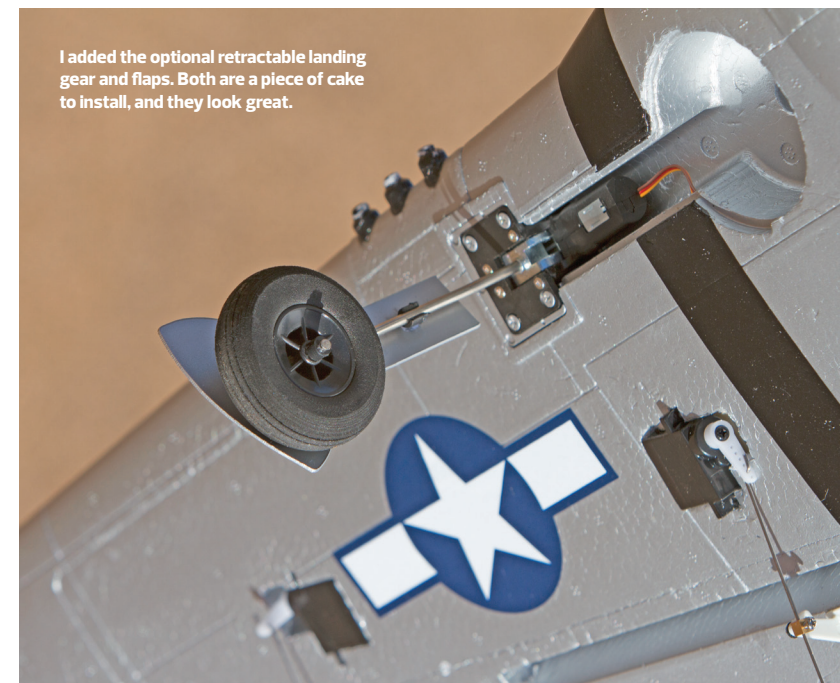
Aerobatics: I found this plane to be delightfully aerobatic and was able to do loops and rolls with little effort. In the hands of an experienced pilot, this plane will perform all the common



There is plenty of room for the receiver, all the wires, and the battery pack. The removable cockpit allows easy access to the fuselage interior. All the linkages and the pushrod tube come installed in the plane. All you need to do is plug the servos into your receiver.



The battery goes into the very front of the compartment and is held in place with hook-and-loop fastener.



I added the optional retractable landing gear and flaps. Both are a piece of cake to install, and they look great.

Gear Up!

Optional Flyzone retracts (\$29.99) and servos (\$5.99 each) for the flaps really amp up the scale appearance and performance of this Mustang P-51D. The optional retracts fit into the wings where the fixed gear would go. The wheel wells are already molded into the wing, and the gear retracts into the wells perfectly with plenty of clearance for reliable deployment.

The flaps come molded into the wings, and a sharp hobby knife will free them from the surrounding wing surface. The hinge is molded into the wing. The servo compartments are clearly marked and perforated, so the foam is easy to remove with a hobby knife. I used thin double-stick tape to hold the flap servos in place.

The wing has concealed channels molded on the inside that hide the wires for the ailerons, flaps, and retractable landing gear. You need to fish the wires through the channels, but the instructions make this task a no-brainer. The flaps, retracts, and ailerons all have Y-connectors that are routed through a hole in the bottom of the fuselage. I labeled the Y connectors with painter's tape so that I could ensure I plugged the proper connector into each channel of the receiver; that way, you can see which is which after the wires have been pulled through the hole.

I really like the scale appeal of the optional retracts, and the flaps slow down the P-51D nicely for landing. These easy and inexpensive additions get two thumbs-up!

aerobatic maneuvers easily and immediately.

Glide and stall performance: Being a sport plane, it naturally doesn't glide well, but with the power on, the plane is fully under control all the time.

PILOT DEBRIEFING

The bright color scheme comes into play while

flying because it makes the plane easy to see, and the red spinner really helps with the orientation. This plane has a lot of cool features, from its great color scheme to the optional retracts and flaps. Flying it is just a lot of fun. If you like sport planes and warbirds, the Tower Hobbies P-51D Mustang Mk II is a terrific plane for you.

BOTTOM LINE

The P-51 is a great-looking and great-flying plane. I put the entire plane together—decals and all—in about three hours. Assembly is straightforward, and it is easy to end up with a good-looking plane. This Mustang is a blast to fly and loaded with features. Its great performance and good looks definitely will turn a lot of heads at the flying field. ±



The radio/battery compartment is concealed by the cockpit. The cover is held in place with rare-earth magnets.