











CORRECTING THE KITTY HAWK F9F-8/F9F-8P KIT IN 1/48 TH SCALE

Detail & Scale provided research information to Kitty Hawk for the development of their 1/48 th scale F9F-8T (TF-9J) and F9F-8/F9F-8P kits of Grumman's swept-wing Cougar fighte. While the two kits are generally quite good, Kitty Hawk did not follow the research material as diligently as they should have, and this resulted in some errors that need to be corrected to build an accurate scale model of any of the Cougar variants. Fortunately, the corrections are rather simple to make if the modeler is aware of them.

When the F9F-8T (TF-9J) kit was released in the summer of 2014, Detail & Scale noticed these inaccuracies and pointed them out in detail to Kitty Hawk, providing a complete description and photographs to illustrate exactly what the errors were and how to correct each of them. These errors were also pointed out in a review of the kit in Detail & Scale's digital book on the Cougar, F9F Cougar in Detail & Scale Kitty Hawk assured Detail & Scale that the corrections would be made on the yet-to-be-released F9F-8/F9F-8P kit, but to make the corrections, the release of the single-seat Cougar kit would be delayed at least six months. While six months passed before the kit was released, when it did become available not one of the corrections had been made, and two additional errors had been added. Because of this, Detail & Scale is providing a list of the corrections that need to be made to the Kitty Hawk F9F-8/F9F-8P kit. Most of these corrections also apply to the previous F9F-8T (TF-9J) kit as well.

ERROR 1: Kitty Hawk included a clear cover for the landing approach lights on the leading edges of both wings. The Cougar had these lights only on the leading edge of the left wing.

CORRECTION 1: When assembling the right wing, glue the clear piece that is the cover for the landing approach lights (Part GP1-5) onto the wing. Fill and sand as necessary where the piece joins the wing, then paint over it during the painting process so that it looks like the solid part of the wing it should be.

ERROR 2: The kit provides two small scoops to go on each side of the forward fuselage next to the cockpit. These are Parts F4 for the left side and F5 for the right side that are added in Step 4. The Cougar only had this scoop on the right side.

CORRECTION 2: Do not use Part F4. Fill and sand its locating hole.

ERROR 3: Entry to the cockpit of the Cougar was gained through a one pull-down step and several boarding steps in the fuselage that were covered by spring-loaded doors. These were only on the left side of the forward fuselage, but Kitty Hawk scribed them in as surface detailing on both sides of the forward fuselage.

CORRECTION 3: Gently sand off the two steps on the right side of the forward fuselage.

ERROR 4: Kitty Hawk provides two fuel dump drains for the internal fuselage fuel tanks that go under the extreme aft end of the fuselage on either side of the arresting hook fairing. These are Parts E17 and E18 that are added in Step 12. The Cougar only had one drain for the fuselage tanks, and it was on the right side.

CORRECTION 4: Do not use part E18.

ERROR 5: A very small formation light is represented on top of each wing near the leading edge of the tip. These formation lights are molded into the plastic and can be identified as the small raised teardrop-shaped bump just inboard of the cutout for the navigation light on each wing tip. The Cougar only had this formation light on top of the right wing tip.

CORRECTION 5: Cut off the formation light on top of the left wing and sand the area smooth.

ERROR 6: Kitty Hawk etched a wing trimmer into the outer panel of each wing on the trailing edge. The Cougar only had a wing trimmer on the left wing.

CORRECTION 6: Fill and remove the wing trimmer on the trailing edge of the right wing. It would also be helpful to scribe the hinge line for the wing trimmer a bit deeper on the top and bottom surfaces of the left wing. Kitty Hawk represented it to be more of a panel line than a hinge line.

ERROR 7: While the Cougar had a "flyingtail," meaning that the entire horizontal tail surface could be moved together, it could also function as a conventional tail and had both a horizontal tail surface and a movable elevator. A switch in the cockpit selected which mode the tail was to be used in during flight. There was a very distinct hinge line between the horizontal stabilizer part of the tail and the elevator, however Kitty Hawk represented this only as a panel line rather than a hinge line.

CORRECTION 7: The panel line provided by Kitty Hawk is correctly located, so re-scribe the line deeper to make it represent a hinge line. This needs to be done on the upper and loser surfaces of both horizontal tails. A second option would be to cut the elevators off of the horizontal tails, rework the edges where they join, and then glue the elevators back in place.

ERROR 8: The instructions refer to the Sidewinder missiles as AIM-9B versions, and the drawings are also of AIM-9Bs. But the plastic parts in the kit area for AIM-9L/M versions of the Sidewinder, and these versions did not become operational until long after all versions of the Cougar had been retired from service.

CORRECTION 8: Do not use the Sidewinders provided in the kit for any Cougar. If Sidewinder missiles are to be displayed on the F9F-8, find AIM-9B versions in another kit, a weapons set, or form after-market sources.

ERROR 9: The instructions show the two outboard wing pylons being installed on the F9F-8P photoreconnaissance version of the Cougar. That version did not carry those pylons. Outboard of the large pylon, which is correct for any version, the F9F-8P only carried special pylons with photo-flash cartridges

CORRECTION 9: Do not use G13, G-14, G-53 and G-54 on the F9F-8P version of the Cougar.

ERROR 10: On page 18 of the instructions there is a drawing that would indicate that AIM-9B Sidewinders were carried by the F9F-8P version of the Cougar. Photos of built-up display models posted by Kitty Hawk on the Internet also show Sidewinders on the F9F-8P. The F9F-8P was not capable of employing any version of the Sidewinder missile.

CORRECTION 10: Do not use any version of the Sidewinder missile on the F9F-8P.

ERROR 11: The instructions for the use of the decals show stencils on the Blue Angels F9F-8. Blue Angels Cougars did not have any standard stenciling.

CORRECTION 11: Do not use any standard stenciling on a Blue Angels Cougar if that is the chosen scheme being modeled. If a Blue Angels Cougar is being modeled, Detail & Scale recommends using the after-market decals created for the Kitty Hawk kits in a collaborative e ffort by Furball and Detail & Scale. There are errors in the Blue Angels markings supplied in both Kitty Hawk releases.

There are other improvements that can be made to the kit, but these corrections will solve the noticeable inaccuracies. With a little work, a truly excellent model of three di fferent Cougar variants can be built from Kitty Hawk's two Cougar kits.

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