

Book Review by E. L. Motley

MODELLING BRITISH AIRCRAFT OF WORLD WAR II by Jeff Herne, 160 pages, paperbound, Crowood Press, 2020 (retail price \$29.99, available online for \$21.95 at Edward R. Hamilton Bookseller, www.hamiltonbook.com)

Several years ago, our chapter's Spitfire group build revived my interest in World War II British combat aircraft. However, apart from a few Squadron books and some long out of print Arco guides, it seemed that detailed (and in color) books on building RAF and RN aircraft were surprisingly limited, especially when compared to what was available for modelling German and American WWII warbirds.

Jeff Herne's new *Modelling British Aircraft of World War II* is a handy reference manual that helps to bridge that gap. In one volume filled with 300 color photographs, Herne takes novice and experienced modelers step-by-step through building, painting and detailing models of five legendary British aircraft. Herne's guide also mixes in color photographs of restored planes, including cockpits and other details. He wisely leaves combat history and technical specs to other reference works.

This excellent book is made even better by chapters devoted to 1939-1945 RAF colors and markings (including paint chips and camouflage schemes) and making model bases and dioramas. Especially impressive are the chapters describing construction of Tamiya's 1/48 Mosquito FB Mk VI and Hasegawa's 1/72 Lancaster B Mk III. For those really wanting a challenge, Herne also journeys through the build of Tamiya's 1/48 Swordfish Mk II...hardly a kit for the faint of heart. The projects covered are largely "out of the box," although a 1/32 Revell Spitfire Mk IIa is spruced up with aftermarket resin and photoetch parts.

Highly experienced modelers will be bored by the first two chapters (33 pages total) as the author explains basics to beginners: scale, choosing an appropriate kit, essential building techniques, glues, paints, tools, etc. However, even advanced model building is a repetition of doing many fundamental skills well. It's admirable that Herne doesn't automatically assume that his readers are already trophy winners or as adept at handling an airbrush as a samurai wielding his sword. He provides tips and techniques that will work as well on a P-47 or a Zero as on a Spitfire.

I recommend this "how to" guide to all fans of World War II British fighters and bombers.