

How to convert the Tamiya 1/48 scale P-47D cowl to a C-model cowl

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8-10-2018

Note: The original P-47C did not have the lower fuselage bulge that the D-model has and is depicted in the Tamiya kit. Consequently, just modifying the cowl may not be the only modification necessary. However, many C-model Thunderbolts were converted in the field . Check photos / references of your modeling subject to determine the amount of work needed to convert the kit for your project.

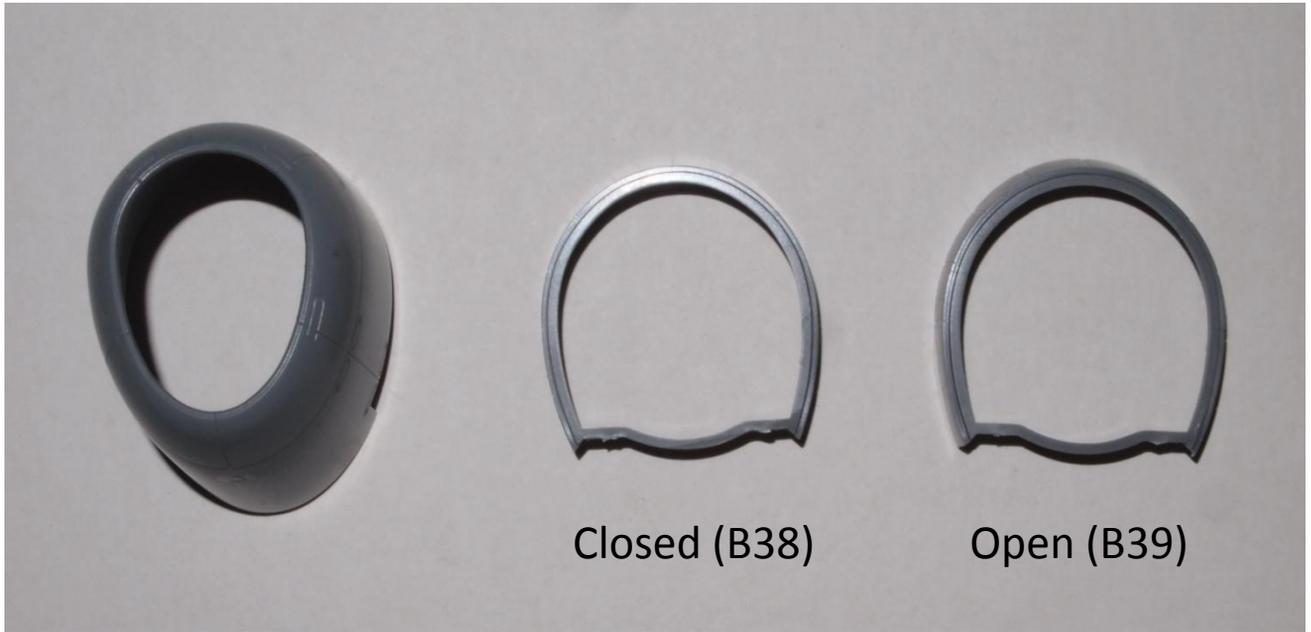
Lets look at a real P-47C cowl up close (via a photo)



The biggest defining feature is that there are less cowl flaps so the flaps end in approximately the middle of the cowl side panel.

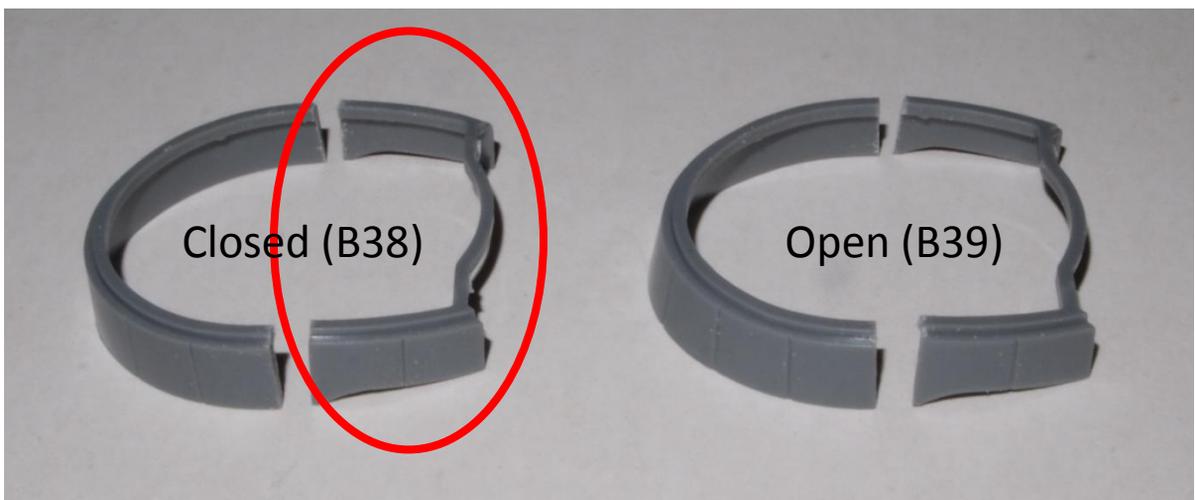
However, another key feature to note is that the panel latches are in the same location as the D-model cowl. This allows a fairly straight-forward modification of a kit D-model cowl into a C-model cowl. The cowl flaps part can be cut down to the lesser number of flaps and the side panel must be extended rearward to be even with the bottom panel.

My approach is to use both cowl flap parts that are supplied in the Tamiya kit. One part represents the flaps in the closed position and the other is the open or extended flaps version.



By using the lower portion of the closed flaps part (kit part B38), the modeler has some plastic that has the proper curvature to match the Tamiya cowl.

The first step is to cut each part to separate the upper flaps that are seen on the C-model cowl from the lower flaps that were introduced on the D-model cowl:



Glue the lower portion of the closed cowl flap (B38) to the kit cowl one side at a time to attain proper alignment. I cut the connecting piece in the middle.



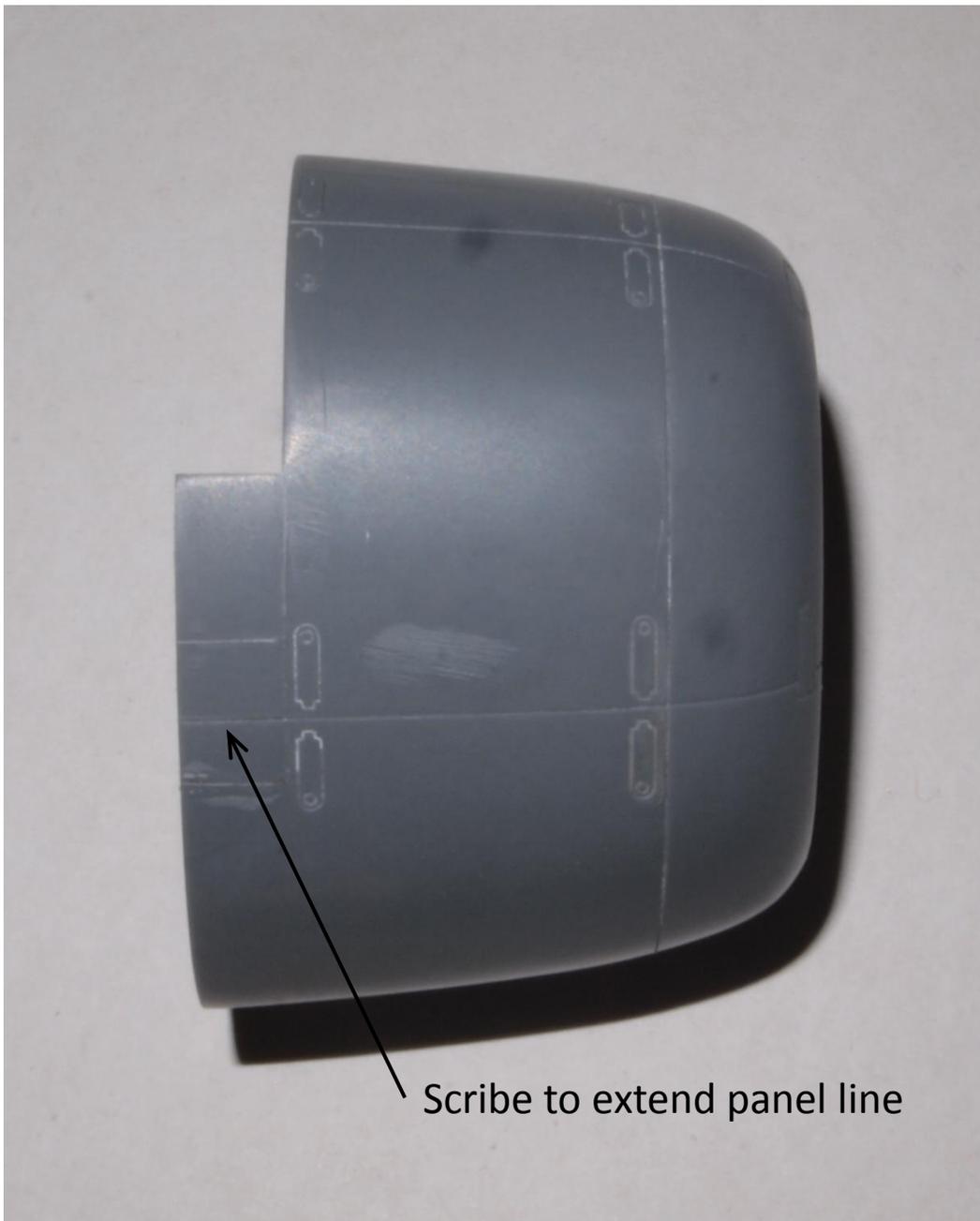
I reinforced the lower joint with a piece of scrap plastic glued on the inside.

After attaching both sides, the seams of the joined parts and the panel line between the upper and lower flap must be filled. Use your favorite seam filling method. I like to use plastic so I glued some stretched sprue of the proper diameter into each location.



Next, trim the excess plastic off the back of the cowl to have straight line along the rear even with the existing bottom panel.

Sand the filled panel lines and retouch until they have completely disappeared. Primer may be a good way to verify they are completely gone. Scribe to extend the panel line that separates the side cowl panel from the bottom cowl panel. I like using the scribing tool from Unique Master Models (UMM™).



Remove the lip on the inside from the lower portion of the closed cowl flaps. This is necessary so part B9, with the rest of the engine assembly, will fit inside the cowl (step 4 of the kit instructions). I removed the plastic using a Dremel© tool.



Use the remaining upper flaps (open or closed) per your liking.