



Flight tests on the U.S.S. Shangri-La in 1944 to evaluate feasibility of Navy use. At touch-down, landing hook can be seen.

# NAVY MUSTANG

**The famed Air Force P-51D makes a unique and highly effective Class 1 Navy Carrier model. It even has a Navy heritage, having been modified for experimental carrier usage. Up to .40 engines.**

By JOHN BLUM

It can be safely said that one of the most loved aircraft in military aviation is the North American P-51D. What enthusiast doesn't have a small place in his heart for the sleek, fast-moving Mustang? Quite possibly it has become the most modeled airplane in history.

There were many forerunners to the famed "D" model, but this configuration

came into being in the latter part of 1944 and was most widely used and best known. The effective use of this aircraft during World War II prompted its use by many foreign countries, even as late as 1960. Following the War, numerous P-51's were used in the popular Air Races, and some were adapted to private use and became collector's items. (Some

Author's version of the Mustang incorporates proven features of Class I Carrier winner. A realistic, relatively scale-like model.

are still flying—Editor.)

For the detail minded enthusiast a comprehensive story on the P-51 is available through Profile Publications, sold at most hobby shops and by numerous magazine suppliers.

To the writer's knowledge, previous contest-worthy models of the famous Mustang have been confined, for the most part, to Scale competition. Overlooked by many modelers is that experiments were conducted in 1944 aboard the U.S.S. Shangri-La to test feasibility of adapting the Mustang as a carrier-based aircraft. Modifications were made to install an arresting hook and to insure proper strength requirements. Numerous test flights were conducted. The P-51D design is suitable as a multi-event model, both Scale and Navy Carrier.

Several years back when Navy Carrier was flown as *one* class, the problem of selecting and building an aircraft was tough enough. Then, as now, most modelers sought a kit. Since all engine displacements were thrown into one class the hopefuls naturally built a .60-powered model. If you were choosy, you built from scratch; if you just wanted to compete, had a choice of a limited number of kits, perhaps paying the penalty of the selected kit having been designed to sell rather than being designed for the event.

In 1963, to instill life into the event, AMA adopted a set of rules establishing two classes of Navy Carrier: Class I, up to and in- (Continued on page 58)

