

## P400 Airacobra (Aircobra I in RAF service)

When WW II broke out in Europe, Britain and France were woefully short of modern aircraft with which to oppose the Axis powers. So great was the need for interceptors that when Bell submitted specifications to the British Direct Purchase Commission for a fighter with a top speed of 400 MPH, a ceiling of 36,000 ft. and a range of 1000 miles, an immediate order was placed for 675 Bell Model 14s, sight unseen on April 13, 1940. The performance which Bell had claimed had indeed been achieved by the XP-39, but when the first Airacobra was delivered to RAF Duxford (actually a P-39C rearmed to British standard) it couldn't come close. Even when the first Model 14 arrived, powered by a 1150 hp V-1710-E4 Allison, it still couldn't top 367 MPH. Besides the somewhat more powerful engine, the other difference in the Model 14, designated Airacobra I by the RAF, was in armament. The Model 14 carried a 20mm Hispano Mk1 cannon with 60 rounds in the propeller hub, two .303 Brownings in the cowling and two in each wing.

Tests with 601 Sqdn. at Duxford were extremely disappointing to the British. Expecting a nimble interceptor, they found that they had a troublesome close-support fighter. I could go on, but you get the picture. Of the 675 Model 14s ordered by the RAF, 212 were diverted to the Soviet Union (54 of that number being lost in transit). The Russians took to the fighter immediately, it had the best gunsight of any fighter the Russians had. Prior to the arrival of the Airacobra, the Russians had to get by with the old fashioned ring and bead sight from WW I.

Of the rest, 179 were taken over by the USAAF. Retaining their RAF serial numbers, over 100 Model 14s, designated P-400 in US service, and rearmed by replacing the .303 Brownings with two .50 Brownings in the cowling, and 2 .30 Brownings in each wing, the 20mm was left, as it would have been a major pain in the rear to replace it with the 37mm cannon, were shipped to Australia in early 1942 to strengthen USAAF units there. Along with P-39Ds the P-400 became one of the first USAAF aircraft to see action when the 8th Group took it into action over port Moresby, New Guinea, in April 1942.

The basic difference between this and the P39D in AOTP, is instead of a 37mm cannon with 15 rounds, you have a 20mm cannon with 60 rounds. From all the information I've been able to find, the P400, in it's various forms flew intermixed with the P39 until the entire type was withdrawn from service.

## Installation

Unzip the P400 file and place the following files in your AOTP directory:

P39.FMD	You can use these anytime the P39 is active.
P39.GLT	The P400 actually represents a long list of P39
P39.TST	variants that were equipped with the 20mm instead
P39.GL	of the 37mm cannon. They were all the leftovers
P39.DAT	of the Model 14s the RAF ordered, but refused to
AIR0.DAT	take. As far as I can tell, the performance didn't
PLTXT0.DAT	differ too much between the different models.

## NOTES:

You will notice in the setup were you can pick your load out and formation

type, it will list the guns of a P39D, but under type will read "P400". Don't worry, when you fly, you will find you do indeed have a 20mm cannon instead of a 37mm cannon. And I can tell you, it's very nice not having to get so close any more.

Now, For the LEGAL stuff!!

I'm sure you've seen this in other files like it, but I feel a need to repeat it anyway. DYNAMIX does not endorse "messing around" with their games. You use this file at you own risk. If you have any problems, contact Nicholas Bell, 72162,1667 or me, Albert Lowe, 73233,2455. There is no warranty either implied or expressed, but we will help if we can. If you use this file, then you are agreeing to these terms. (SUCKER!! "shhhh! We don't want to alarm them yet!")

Concept: Albert Lowe, 73233,2455 ( I wasn't sure I could call it "Original")  
A GREAT DEAL OF HELP: Nicholas Bell, 72162,1667 ( And I had to have Nick so I could blame someone else if something went wrong.)

Comming Soon!!! P39Q (Maybe!) with 30 rounds for the 37mm and 4 .50-caliber machine guns.

And before I forget... I'd like to thank all those guys out there who started this whole mess with fooling around and changing the files for the "new" planes. You know who you are (and so does everybody else), and normally I'd list all of you, but this file is too big already. So, THANKS, ALL OF YOU!

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