



U.S. NAVY HUEYS

Markings for the Monogram 1/48 Kits

By: Pete Harlem ←

In Vietnam during 1966 the U. S. Navy initiated Operation Gamewarden with the objective of reducing VC supply routes on the Mekong Delta's many canals and rivers. In order to provide fire support and reconnaissance for the River Patrol Boats (RPBs) of Task Force 116 the Navy obtained 22 ex-Army UH-1B Hueys (the Army was using the UH-1C for gunships at the time). Navy crews received transition training from the Army, and the aircraft were refurbished and repainted to Navy specs. The Hueys were assigned to a new unit, Helicopter Attack Squadron (Light) Three (HA(L)-3) known by their callsign, The Seawolves.

The Seawolves operated seven detachments of 2 aircraft each with the remaining eight being used as reserves or down for maintenance. Detachments were stationed at Nha Be, Dong Tam, Vinh Long, Binh Thuy, and each of three Navy LSTs of the "Brown Water Navy", namely the USS Garrett County (LST-786), the USS Jennings County (LST-846), and the USS Harnett County (LST-821). Initially, when the unit was activated in April 1967, headquarters and maintenance were located at Vung Tau but were moved to Binh Thuy on the Bassac River (Mekong) in early 1969. The first Huey drawn here was photographed at Vung Tau in 1967.

Upon receipt from the Army, the Navy airframe techs repainted the aircraft in a darker shade of olive-drab that was described to me to be "nearly black from a distance". The unit emblem, a wolf with a trident and shield (see detail) on a white circle was almost always painted on the nose, and there appears to be two styles of wolf used. The wolf is blue-grey, the shield is red on the left and yellow on the right with a centered black ace of spades, the trident is black, and the "breath" and areas between the toes are red. The diameter of the background circle is just slightly smaller than the width of the battery compartment door. Other markings include NAVY and the aircraft tail number, 033, both in white on both sides. Most Seawolf Hueys also had flat black anti-glare panels, and this example also has black windshield frames. Rotor blades retained Army color patterns of OD on top over black below with yellow tips, tailrotor blades are black with red/

white/red tip stripes. The tailrotor warning arrow on both sides of the tailboom is red with DANGER in black on top.

There was some variability in the armament carried on Seawolf helicopters, but this example shows the most common set up. The XM-16 system is installed which comprises 2 flexmounted M-60 7.62mm mgs on both sides and 2 XM-158 7 shot rocket pods for 2.75" FFAR rockets. In combat the cabin doors are left open and the two door-gener (one is the crewchief) man an infantry M-60 hung from the ceiling with a "bungee" cord. Later on some Navy Hueys carried the twin minigun system (XM-21) and some fire team leader aircraft mounted one doorgunner operated .50 cal.

The USMC "Huey Hog" kit by Monogram in 1/48 will require several major changes in order to make "033". The engine intake screens on the kit are the later style seen on Navy UH-1Bs in 1969 and 1970, but this example has the earlier scoop intake. You'll have to scratchbuild this or possibly graft on parts from one of the older Huey kits (early Monogram, Fujimi, Aurora, etc.). The other major change is to increase the width of the tail fin since most Navy UH-1Bs had the wide chord fin and tail boom of the UH-1C installed. Note that this fin was distinctly concave on the left side, and don't forget to add the tail whip aerial.

Because of the too thick rotor head and mast assembly in the Monogram kit, I suggest that you replace the whole rotor assembly with one from the ESCI UH-1D kit which is much better and has the correct blade for this version. The D model has a larger rotor diameter so cut the blades to the same length as provided by Monogram and relocate the trim tabs. While you're at it, replace the kit's tailrotor with the ESCI version since it has a better hub. A kit flaw that works to some advantage is the presence of two gas tank fillers, one on each side. Hueys have only one filler, the side it's on depends on the version. For the UH-1B putty over the filler on the left side.

The final touch needed is to scratchbuild a pair of XM-158 rocket pods since the kit provides the earlier XM-157 pod. These can be made from either brass or aluminum tubing.

Bill,

11/18/84

THIS IS THE BEST

I COULD DO -

HE'S PROBABLY

THE GUY WHO
ASKED THE QUESTION.

Tommy



The second Huey illustrated is also an example from the Seawolves in Vietnam. The Navy began to turn over its riverine operations to the Vietnamese Navy during the "Vietnamesation Program" of 1970. HA(L)-3 received seven UH-1L model Hueys that were used to transport VIPs during transition. Three of these were lost to engine failures during 1970 this being one of those. The markings were taken from pictures of the wreck.

Unusual for this late in the war, this Huey was still carrying non-subdued markings. The fuselage is painted in grey overall (similar to Gunship Grey 36118) but in gloss?, and the number and letter codes (NAVY, 7857, UH-1L, and the a/c serial-157857) are in white. The tailrotor warning band is yellow with a red arrow with DANGER/KEEP AWAY in black above and below the arrow. The red, white, and blue national emblem is in four locations (sides of tailboom, belly, and roof-see sketch). The roof emblem overlaps onto the winch housing. The anti-glare panel is flat black and the step lines are black. Main rotor blades are OD over black with yellow tips, and the tailrotor is OD with yellow tips.

For this variant use the USAF "Rescue Chopper" version of the Monogram kit since it provides the roof mounted hoist. The wide tail fin will have to be duplicated, and the ammo box should be removed from under the seat. UH-1Ls have the wider synchronized elevators (the kit has a UH-1B tailboom and elevators) so I recommend those in the ESCI Huey which are about the right size. I would also replace the rotor head and mast with those in the ESCI kit but you'll have to graft on the Monogram blade since the UH-1L has the wide rotor of the UH-1C that comes in the kit (this is the 540 doohinge rotor also used on the Cobra). This time you need to remove the right gas filler.

The high frequency radio antenna on the tailboom is repeated on the other side in the same location. This system had a radio console behind the pilot seats that will need to be added, and there is a small angled blade antenna on the belly.

The UH-1Ls in Vietnam were not used as gunships so they only had doorgunner op-

erated M-60s. I believe these were hung on bungee cords.

The third Navy Huey drawn is a typical TH-1L. Essentially the same as the UH-1L, the TH-1L is used in the U.S. to train Navy helicopter pilots. This example is one from Helicopter Training Squadron Eighteen (HT-18) and the markings are based on photos of the aircraft at the Road Atlanta sports car track near Gainesville, Georgia in November 1978. This was one of two provided to the Sports Car Club of America for possible evacuation of accident victims during the yearly sports car runoffs.

Serial number 157810 displays the high-visibility markings of gloss white and dayglo-orange. The dayglo paint covers the fuselage sides, the tailrotor driveshaft covers, and the area below the anti-glare panel and the chin bubbles. All lettering is in black (E/TH-1L/157810/HT-18/182/NAVY, all on both sides) except for the white "182" on the nose (see detail). Rescue arrows are standard yellow and black, step lines are black, and the turbine warning stripe is red. The tailrotor warning band is yellow with a red arrow and DANGER/KEEP AWAY in black. The exhaust warning says "BEWARE OF BLAST" in red letters, and the standard Navy intake warnings are red chevrons with white lettering (JET/INTAKE) and with DANGER in red inside

the chevron. This aircraft has a black roof walkway and the tail stinger is red.

The TH-1L can be built with the USAF version of the Monogram kit with the same mods described for the UH-1L above. It does not have the HF radio aerials, however. Tailrotor blades are black (no colored tips) and the main rotor is OD over black with yellow tips.

The Navy also operates the UH-1E and HH-1K varieties of Bell's ubiquitous Huey which I have not illustrated. For more information and pictures of Navy Hueys I've prepared a bibliography that follows. The author would like to thank Dan Smiley and Ulises Castells for their assistance in the preparation of this article.

Military Helicopters of the World, by Norman Polmar and Floyd Kennedy, Naval Inst. Press, 1981, p. 172: two photos of HA(L)-3 Hueys, and one of a TH-1L.

The Helicopter Directory, by Joseph M. Brown, Hippocrene Books, 1976, p. 61: photo of TH-1L No.157806.

Combat Illustrated, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1982, p. 44: two photos of HA(L)-3 Hueys including one nicknamed SQUIRT-1. Nice roof shot of UH-1B with other style of wolf emblem. Photos are part of article "Hueys at War" by Sean Greenway.

River Patrol Force, edited by LTJG John F. McGuire, 1970?, Daito Art Printing Co. 33p.: hard to find booklet style unit history of Task Force 116 printed in Japan. Has several color and b/w photos of HA(L)-3 a/c as well as VA(L)-4 (Black Ponies) OV-10s and RPBs.

The Naval Air War in Vietnam, by Peter B. Mersky and Norman Polmar. Nautical & Aviation Pub. Co. of America, 1981: has small historical section and numerous photos of Seawolf a/c.

The Vietnam War, edited by Ray Bonds, Crown Pub. Co., 1979, p. 131: nose shot in color of Seawolf ..UH-1B. Shows unit emblem to good effect.

Chopper, by Bern Keating, Rand McNally, 1976: numerous photos of Navy and other helicopters in Vietnam.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

LZ-ALPHA, No. 9, 1981, p. 2-3. markings for Seawolf a/c No. 541, photos of Seawolf patches.

LZ-ALPHA, N. 5, 1980: Brief description of HA(L)-3

Koku-Fan, Vol. 6, 1980: numerous color and b/w photos of Navy UH-1B, UH-1E, TH-1L, and HH-1K.

