

# BB-05: PBY-5/5A Tail

**Kit:** Monogram PBY-5 or Pro Modeller PBY-5A 1/48

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## Background

The Monogram 1/48 PBY-5 is a great kit, but it suffers from a major error in shape which detracts from the appearance of the finished model. The tail of the kit is much too thick at the base. The width of the trailing edge of the kit vertical fin, measured at the base, scales out at 39" wide. Measurements taken from the Canso in the collection of the National Aviation Museum in Ottawa show the actual width to be 20-3/4". This means the kit tail is too wide by a whopping 18" (3/8" in 1/48 scale). Part of the problem comes from the shape of the end of the hull; the real aircraft necks in somewhat ahead of the fin, while the kit hull tapers straight back. The result is a fat looking tail and a rudder which would look more at home on a GeeBee than a PBY. This conversion set is intended to correct that problem.

## Installation

Remove flash from resin parts. As with all resin conversion sets, give the resin parts a good scrub with soapy water to remove any mould release. A light coat of lacquer-based primer is also recommended (The Tamiya primer in the spray can works very well).

The Monogram kit can be assembled as per the kit instructions but leave off the horizontal stabilizers. When the fuselage is glued and set, cut off the tail end of the fuselage at a point 1/8" (3.2 mm) ahead of the panel line just ahead of the tail. Sand the cut surface smooth and remove any scarf on the inside.

Glue the two halves of the replacement tail together. It is designed to fit snugly to the fuselage, but double check the part is vertical as it should be. Use cyanoacrylate (Crazy glue) adhesive to attach the tail. Fill the joint using your favourite filler; some minor filing of the fuselage may be required to match contours. Add a scribed line for the fin fillet as shown.

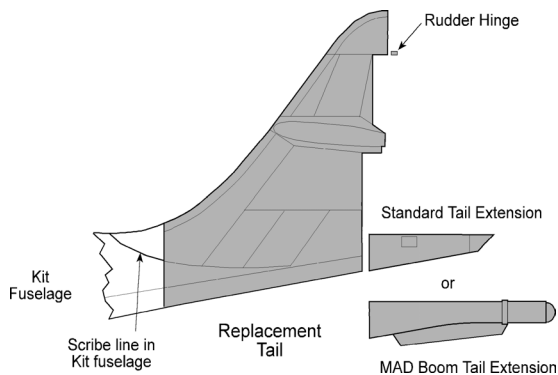
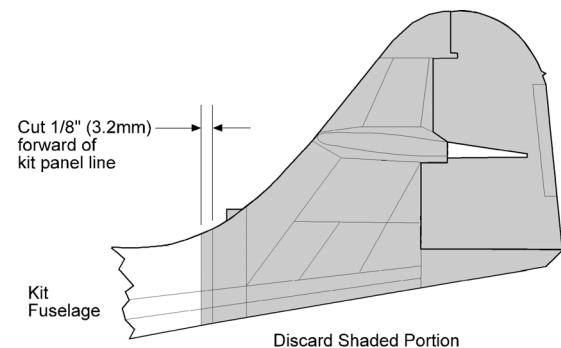
Glue on the tail extension. Some PBY-5s of VP-63 in the Mediterranean had a magnetic anomaly detector (MAD) installed in a lengthened tail boom; this is included as an optional part.

The Monogram kit includes a scoop at the base of the fin, which represents the air intake for the tail thermal de-icing system. This was late-war modification and many PBY-5s did not have the intake. It is included as an optional part in this conversion. To install, file a slot in the leading edge starting 1/16" back from the front. Glue in the new intake and fair into the leading edge.

The kit stabilizers can be used with only minor modification. Cut off the tabs at the root, and don't fill the slot which remains; the resin part has small tabs which fit those slots. The kit parts have a chamfered joint; use a hobby knife and carefully trim the root so that it is square. Test fit to the resin tail. The two stabilizers should just touch one another behind the fin. I recommend that the stabilizers be glued in place before the rudder is installed because it makes access easier. Glue the stabilizers in place, taking care that they are horizontal (check against the wing). Fill the gap at the roots and sand smooth.

Cut the piece of 0.060" x 0.100" strip provided to 0.25" (6.3mm) long and glue where indicated. It should fit in the slot in the rudder; you can use that to help position it accurately. Round the outside edges a little.

The rudder can be installed afterwards ... depending on the scheme, you may even want to install it after painting. A little bit of rudder deflection is possible but if you want to really haul over on the stick, some trimming will be required. My references state the centre line for the rudder hinge was 20" back from the trailing edge of the fin at the base.



## References

1. Walk Around Number 5 PBY Catalina, Squadron Signal Publications, 1995.
2. PBY Catalina in Action, Squadron/Signal Publications, 1983.
3. Scale Aircraft Modelling Vol.5 No.8 (May 1983)
4. Wings Vol.5 No.2 (April 1975)

