

Detail Note

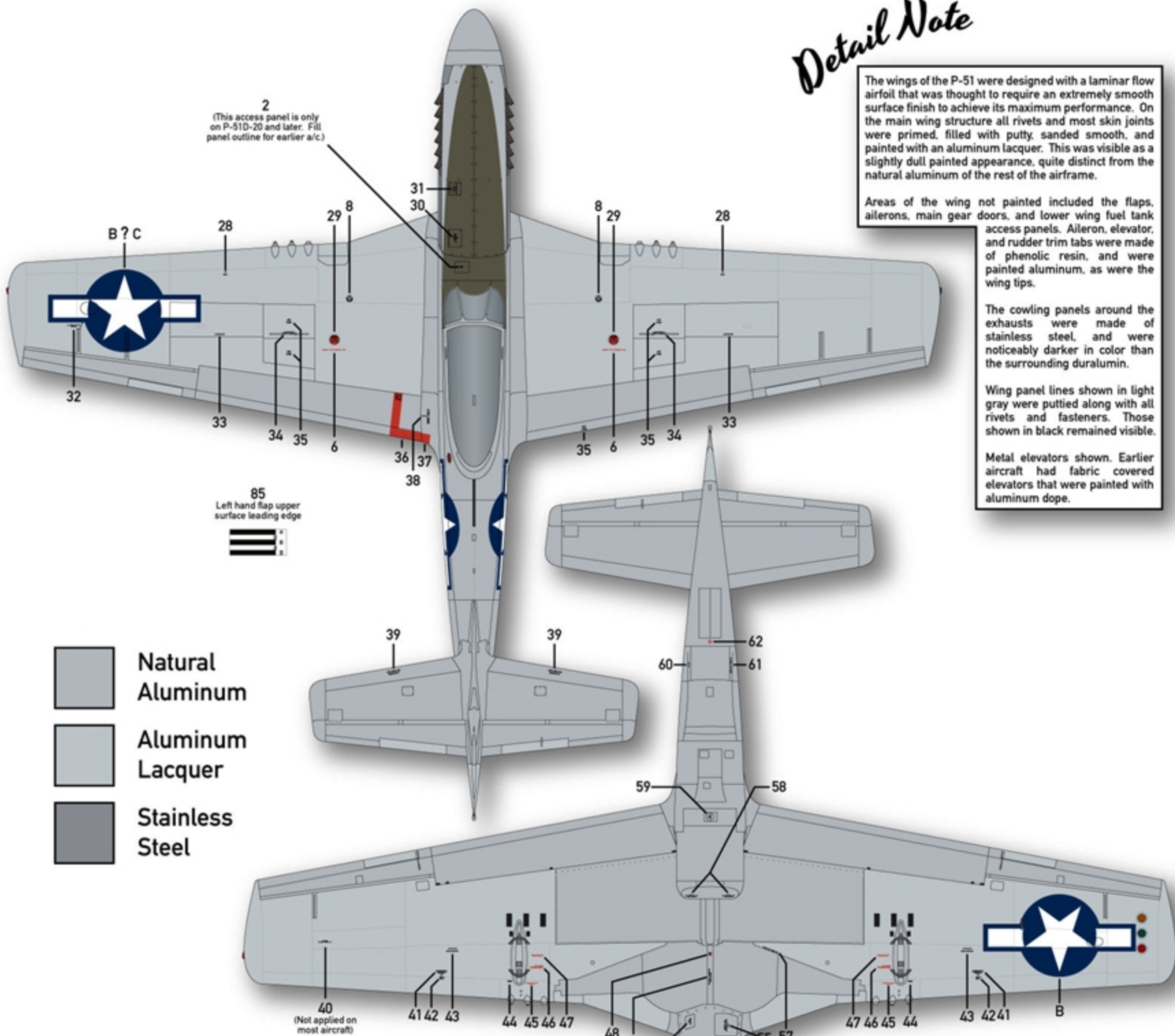
The wings of the P-51 were designed with a laminar flow airfoil that was thought to require an extremely smooth surface finish to achieve its maximum performance. On the main wing structure all rivets and most skin joints were primed, filled with putty, sanded smooth, and painted with an aluminum lacquer. This was visible as a slightly dull painted appearance, quite distinct from the natural aluminum of the rest of the airframe.

Areas of the wing not painted included the flaps, ailerons, main gear doors, and lower wing fuel tank access panels. Aileron, elevator, and rudder trim tabs were made of phenolic resin, and were painted aluminum, as were the wing tips.

The cowling panels around the exhausts were made of stainless steel, and were noticeably darker in color than the surrounding duralumin.

Wing panel lines shown in light gray were puttied along with all rivets and fasteners. Those shown in black remained visible.

Metal elevators shown. Earlier aircraft had fabric covered elevators that were painted with aluminum dope.

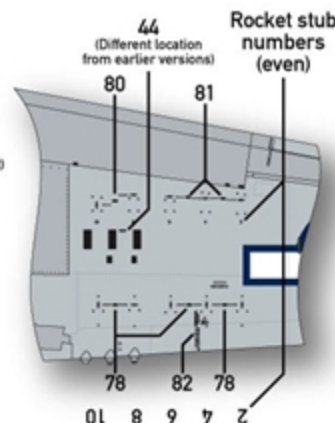
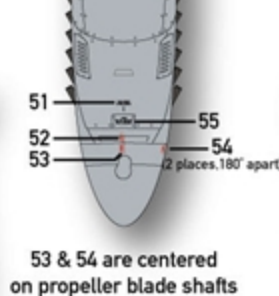
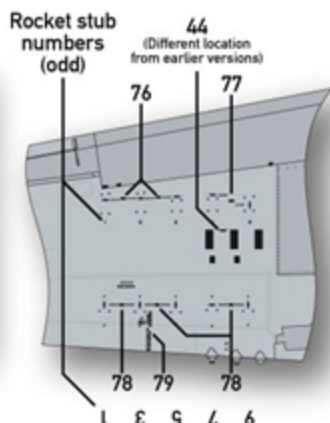


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Optional 5" rocket stub mounts were fitted on P-51D-20-NA 44-72227 and subsequent (Inglewood), and P-51K-15-NT 44-12553 and subsequent (Dallas). Although the stub launchers were not always fitted, markings were applied as shown on these aircraft.

All markings are readable when viewed from the leading edge. The baseline for the lettering is toward the trailing edge of the wing.

Other lower surface decals also apply to these late aircraft, but are not shown in scrap views for clarity. The stub mounts themselves are also not shown.



North American utilized several methods for applying maintenance and safety "stencil" data to its P-51D/K. Very little was actually applied using stencils and sprayed paint, the majority being either decals or applied with paint using rubber stamps. For most of these items, a unique lettering style was used that has never before been used in reproducing these markings for scale models.

Using extensive NAA factory data, we have painstakingly reproduced not only the markings themselves, but the unique letters and numbers used to create them. This will help you achieve the maximum level of realism on your model.

To be sure, not all P-51s carried every single item we have provided. This data decal provides just about everything called for in the original NAA documents. Why some aircraft carried this or that marking while others did not is a mystery we will probably never solve. Photographic evidence is best though, so we recommend studying as many photos of your subject aircraft as you can find, then decide what to apply or not.

In some cases, notably the Hamilton Standard propeller blades, we have provided several different markings based on photographic evidence of in-service aircraft. The factory specifications show items that are clearly not carried by all in-service P-51s, while those same photos show markings that the factory specs do not address.

Special thanks to Chrisitan Alamy for his generous assistance on this project. Without his support and encouragement, all this eye-crossing detail stuff would never have come to pass!