

WORLD WAR II PHOTO PAGE

by

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"THUNDERBOLT" PROFILE

The P-47 "Thunderbolt" was the largest single-engined single-seat fighter to see action in World War II. Because of its immense power plant and supercharger and its lethal ordnance of eight .50 calibre machine guns, the "Thunderbolt" was able to operate successfully at all altitudes from sea level to 40,000 feet. High altitude, long-range escort and low-level fighter-bomber missions were its forte. The latter was particularly true with the P-47's interdiction missions against the Luftwaffe and the Wehrmacht in the march up the Italian boot and in France just prior to "D" day.

The first model of the Thunderbolt series to reach the hardware stage under the design genius of Alexander Kartveli was the XP-47B. Sporting the P & W XR-2800-21 engine and a gross weight of 12,086 lb., the XP-47B first flew on 6 May 1941 and ultimately demonstrated a top speed of over 400 mph.

P-47B: The P-47B was the first production model and differed from the XP-47B only by the incorporation of a sliding canopy and the production version of the P & W R-2800-21.

P-47D: The P-47D followed the "C" model which had a lengthened fuselage and provisions for a 200 gallon drop tank. The "D" model was similar to the "C", incorporating shackles on the wings for additional fuel and various ordnance loads, and standardizing on water injection for prolonged combat power in the order of 2300 HP.

P-47D-25-RE: This "D" model was the first of the Thunderbolts to feature the bubble canopy in addition to stronger wing and fuselage shackles for increased external loads. This series carried either the P & W R-2800-59 or -63 engines.

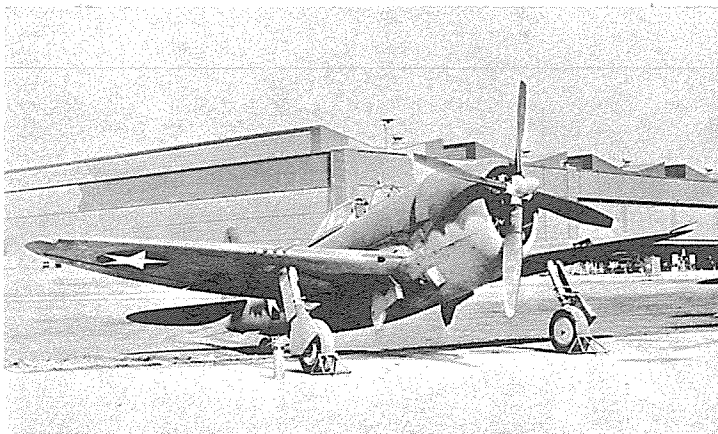
XP-47E: The XP-47E was a "one of" modification of an earlier "B" model. This aircraft featured a pressurized cabin. Production of this type was not ordered because of increasing emphasis on low level operations.

XP-47H: The XP-47H was produced from a modification of an early P-47D and carried the 2500 HP Chrysler XIB-2220-1 sixteen cylinder, inverted vee, liquid cooled engine. This combination produced a top speed of 490 mph at optimum altitude.

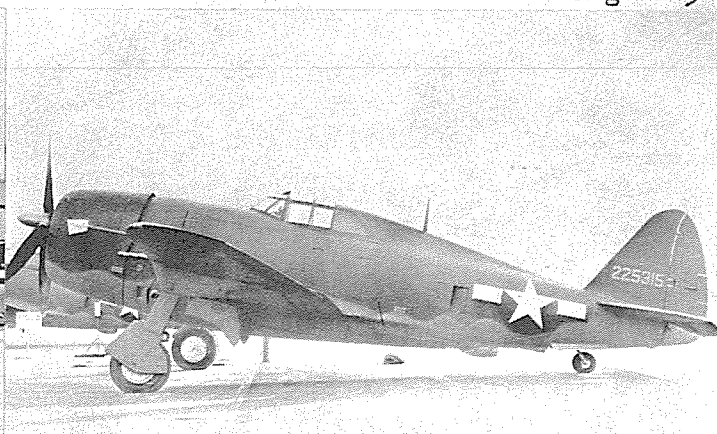
XP-47K: The XP-47K was a reworked "D" model used to test the value of the bubble canopy. This airplane was the prototype for all subsequent "D" models starting with the P-47D-25-RE series. Rework was completed 3 July 1943.

P-47M: The P-47M was similar to the later "D" models except for the installation of the P & W R-2800C (-57) and the larger capacity Ch-5 turbo-supercharger. The "M" series was developed specifically to combat the Luftwaffe's jet aircraft in the latter phase of the war.

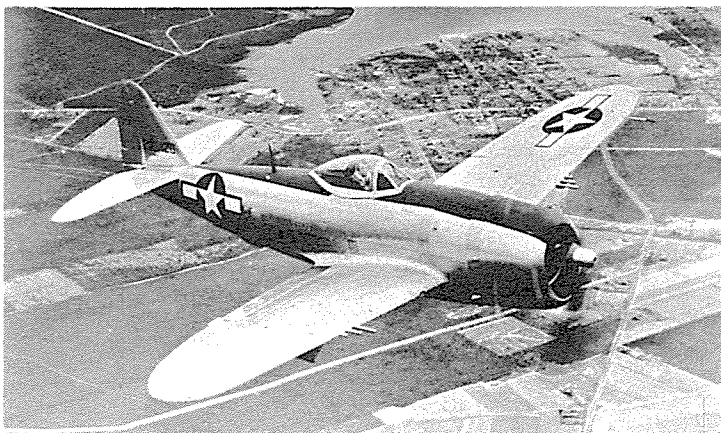
XP-47N: The "N" series planes were developed expressly for long range requirements of the war in the Pacific. These were basically "M" fuselages with larger and stronger wings of increased span and area. Maximum fuel including drop tanks was 1,266 gallons which provided a range of 2,350 miles.



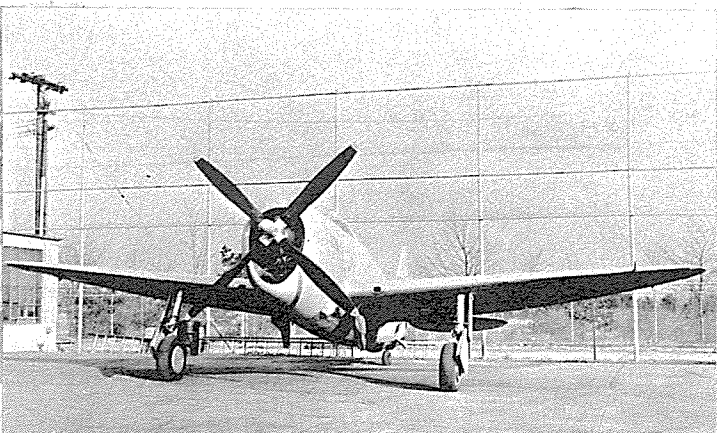
P-47B



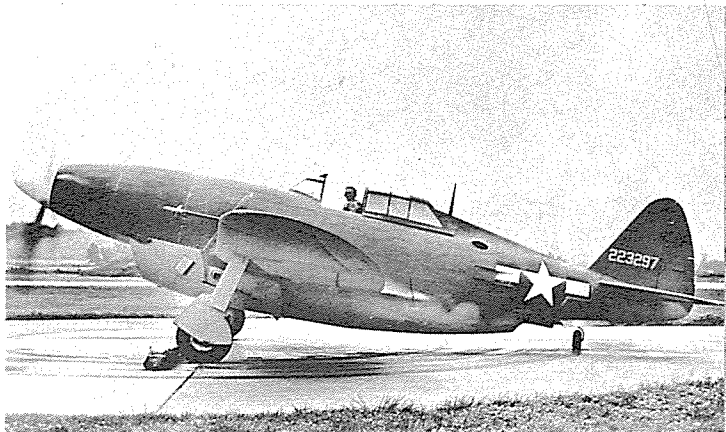
P-47D-20



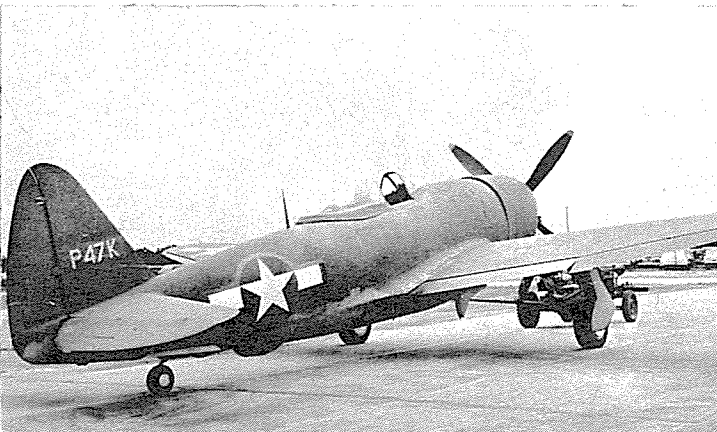
P-47D-25-RE



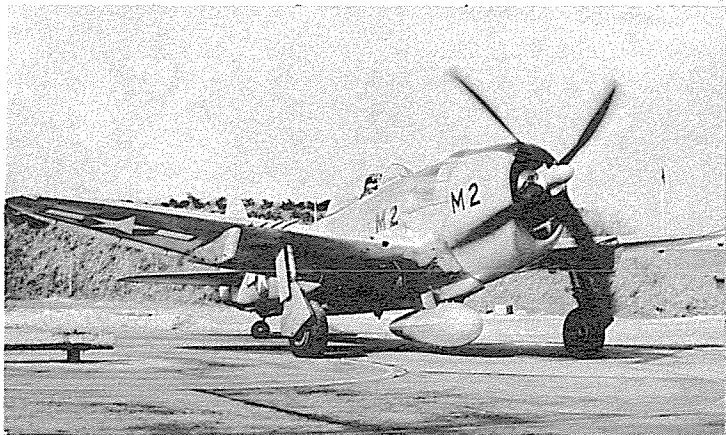
XP-47E



XP-47H



XP-47K



P-47M



XP-47N

All photos from Republic Aircraft Corp.