

Kawanishi N1K1 Kyofu (Rex)

The Kawanishi N1K1 was one of few successful fighter floatplanes to be designed and constructed. However, by the time it entered service the role for which it had been designed no longer existed and only 97 were manufactured.

In September 1940 the Japanese Navy issued specifications for a floatplane fighter capable of supporting offensive naval operations. The resulting Kawanishi aeroplane was almost as fast and manoeuvrable as the land based Mitsubishi A6M (Zero). The prototype flew in May 1942 but necessary modifications meant production aeroplanes did not become available until July 1943. They provided aerial defence for Balikpapan, Borneo and also flew in defence of the homeland from Lake Biwa, the largest freshwater lake on the Japanese Home Island.

This model represents a N1K1 in service with the Sasebo Kokutai (Sa-132) in September 1944.

Data: *Engine* one 1400hp Mitsubishi MK4C Kasei radial piston engine. *Wing span* 12m (39ft 4³/₈in). *Length* 10.59m (34ft 8⁷/₈in). *Maximum take-off weight* 3715kg (8184lb). *Maximum speed* 490km/h. *Range* 1050km. *Armament* two 7.7mm machine guns and two 20mm cannon. *Crew* one.

Tamiya 1/48 kit with a mix of kit and Aeromaster decals. The salt weathering method used, completed by Wayne in about 1998.



THE LITTLE AVIATION MUSEUM