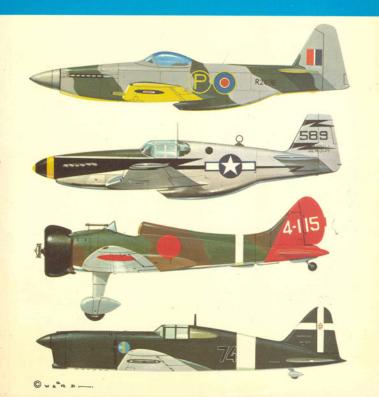
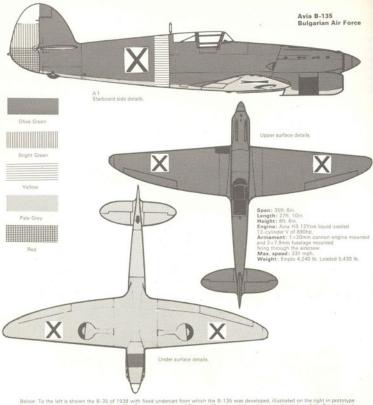
### **AIRCAM AVIATION SERIES**



# 50 FIGHTERS 1938-1945





Below: To the left is shown the B-35 of 1938 with fixed undercart from which the B-135 was developed, illustrated on the right in prototype form in natural metal and silver dope finish. The German occupation of Bohemis-Moravia and the subsequent dissolution of the Zeehostovak Republic did not interrupt the development of the 1-135 and eventually a limited production line was taid down at the Calvovice factory where 12 complete B-135 fighters were produced and handed over to the Bulgarian Air Force in 1941, after completion of this batch of arcraft production cased due to the non-availability of the engine originally intended for the B-135 series. The Avail-27-1000C liquid-cooled 12-cylinders.





No. S.17



## 50 FIGHTERS 1938-1945

#### Illustrated and compiled by Richard Ward

Introduction by Christopher F. Shores

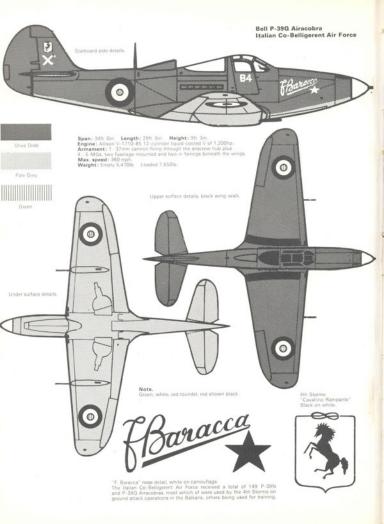
#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This series of books covering fighter aircraft of the 1938–1945 period, of which this is the first volume, will illustrate the good, the bad and the indifferent, the well known and the little known, from one- or two-off prototypes to 20,000-plus production runs. Wherever possible new or little known photographs and colour schemes will be used to illustrate the well known types. Fighter aircraft operated by neutral countries will also be covered in subsequent books. The aircraft have been arranged in alphabetical order by manufacturer's name, chronologically within that name. My thanks to all those who assisted with information and photographs.

Line-up of North American P-51A Mustangs of an unidentified unit on Kunming airfield in 1943. The shape of the teeth in the mouth are very similar to those painted on the P-40K Warhawks of the Chinese American Composite Wing late in 1943, photographic evidence indicates that no other unit used this particular design of Sharkmouth. (Herbert Rumburg)



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The magnificent Martin Baker MB.5, without doubt this aircraff reached the zenith of piston-engined fighted development and it is most unfortunate it was enver placed in production, had it been it would have more than paid its way in the least few morthed of Werld War III, in the immediate post-view years in service with the RAF, and as a valuable export item to many of the world's air forces in place of the North American P-51D Mustang, in retrospect this plaintain steps of engineering could inshirt by a realizer the STSP, of 1965.

#### 50 FIGHTERS 1938-1945

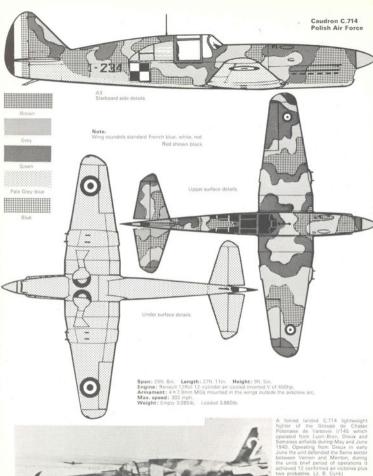
For the enthusiast or modeller interested in military aviation, few aircraft types hold quite such a fascination as does the fighter, with its undertones of individualism, lone combat, adventure and chivalry. For those who share this enthusiasm, there can surely be little more appealing, more appetite-whetting, than the rare and the unusual. The one-off prototype, the small production run model, or the well-krown type in unfamiliar markings, all hold their own peculiar delights for the connoiseur... and here is a feast of such rartites!

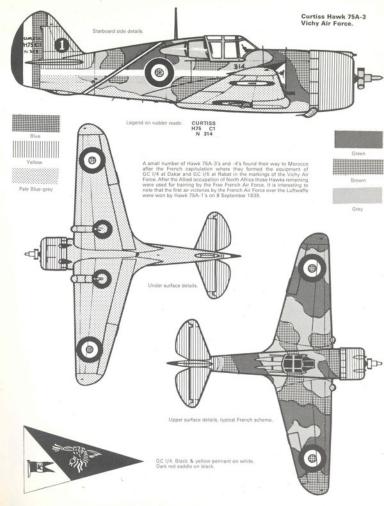
Richard Ward has depicted here a wide selection of fighters well-supported by photographic evidence. In our first category—the one-off prototypes—are the unusual Curtiss XP-55 Ascender canard fighter, the superb Martin Baker MB.5, the Grumman XF5F-1 Skyrocket built for the U.S. Navy, and its close cousin, the U.S. Army's XP-50, as well as the Finnish V.L. Pyörremyrsky, which has recently been rebuilt by enthusiasts in that country.

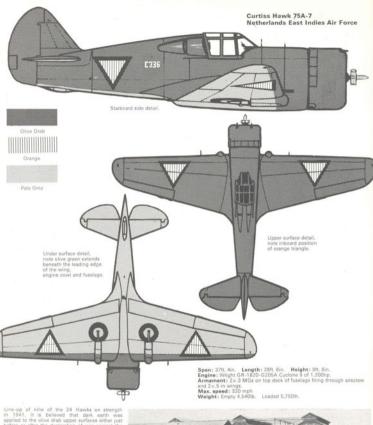
In the second category are such rarities as an Avia B-135, built in Czechoslovakia but used by the Bulgarian Air Force; a Heinkel He 112 of the Rumanian Air Force (actually used operationally in the markings shown on the Russian Front). a Yugoslav Ikarus IK-3 and Rumanian IAR-81s. Amongst the more well-known aircraft of the third category are a number of unusual and different schemes; the Russian Hurricane and Croat Fiat G.50bis; the Bulgarian PZL P-24, the Rumanianbuilt and operated Messerschmitt Bf 109G, and the Allison-engined North American P-51A Mustang with its unidentified "Sharks' Teeth" in China.

The majority of the fighters depicted here actually saw combat painted in the style and insignia shown. For many this period of action was short and often obscure; for others it was long and distinguished. The General Motors FM-2 for instance was but the last in the long line of Grumman Wildcat variants to see service, flying from the smaller escort carriers in both Pacific and Atlantic long after the decks of larger vessels had become crowded with more potent Hellcats and Corsairs. That included here was still operational against the Japanese as late as spring 1945.

Some—the Mitsubishi A5M, the Morane 406, the Curtiss Hawk 75A and the Fiat G, 50bis—represent the early days of the low-wing monoplane fighter, while others—the Martin Baker MB.5, the Kawanishi N1K2-j, the Reggiane Re.2005 and the Pyörremyrsky—represent the very peak of piston-engine fighter development. The PZL P-24 stands alone midway between biplane and monoplane, by 1938 an interesting and attractive anachronism.







Line-up of nine of the 24 Hawks on strength in 1941. It is believed that dark earth was applied to the olive drab upper surfaces either just before or after the declaration of war against the Japanese. The pattern is not known but may have been smilar to that applied to the CW 21B's. (via G.H. Kamphus)





Right: A loose formation of NEIAF Hawk 75A-7's, clearly shown is the position of the orange triangle and white serial on the fuselage.

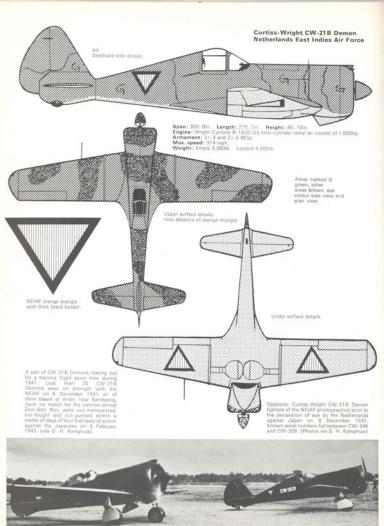
Right: Nose detail, note the serial, C336 in black on the leading edge of the wing.

Out of an original order for 35 Haws. 75A-75 placed by the Netherlands government for service with the R. Neth.AF a total of 24 were diverted to the Netherlands East Indies after the German occupation of the Low delivered in 1940 and had reached portational status by the time of the Japanese invasion. Fiving alongside the Curtis-Wight CW-218 and Brevette 3390 the Hawks gave a good period of fighther before the capitulation.

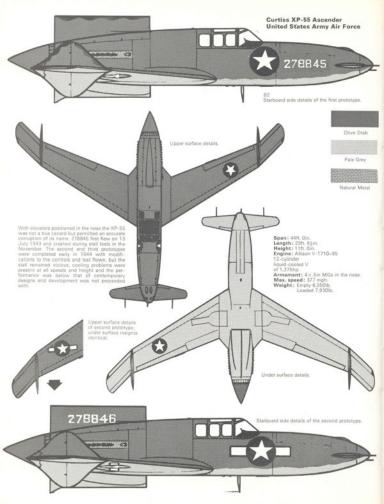


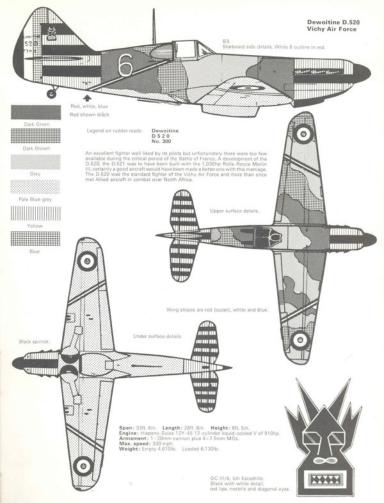
Below: Line-up of Hawk 75A-7's obviously taken before 8 December 1941 when the Netherlands declared war on the Japanese and dispersal became the order of the day. Note natural metal airscrews and that the second and fourth aircraft do not have wing guns. (Photos via G. H. Kamphuis)

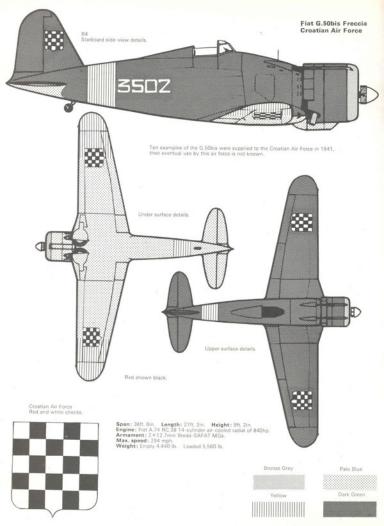




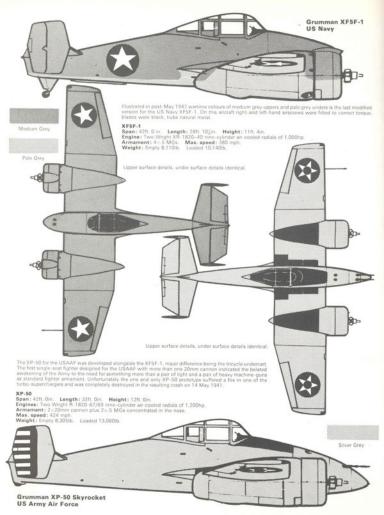


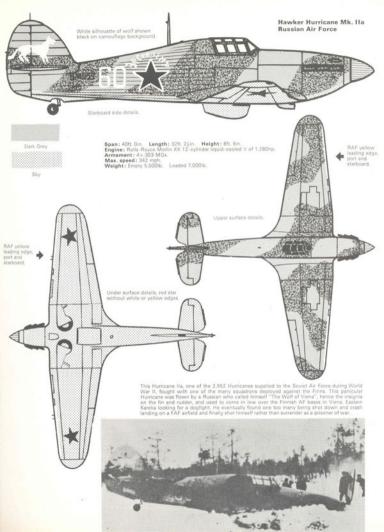


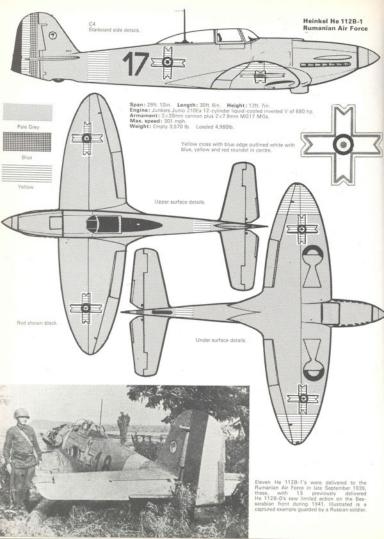


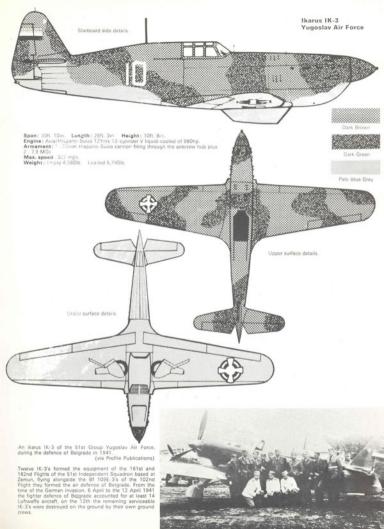


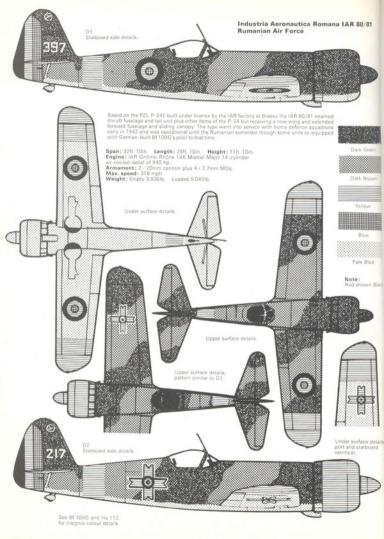






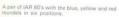








IAR 80 in flight showing clearly the camouflage pattern and the national insignia.

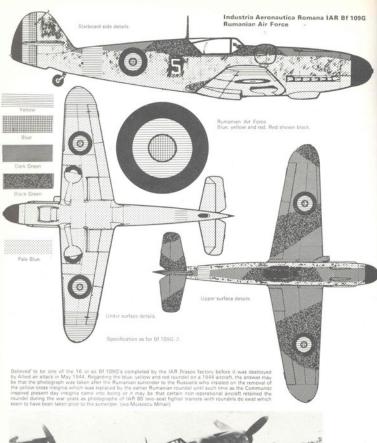




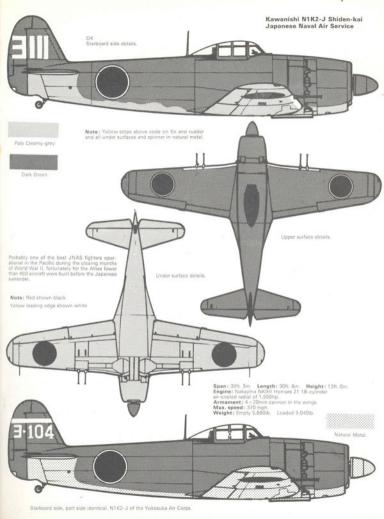
Right: Close-up of a bombed-up IAR 81, note the all yellow cowl.

Below: Three-quarter rear shot of a IAR 80, note the fuel markings, position and size of the national insignia. (Photos Moisescu Mihail)

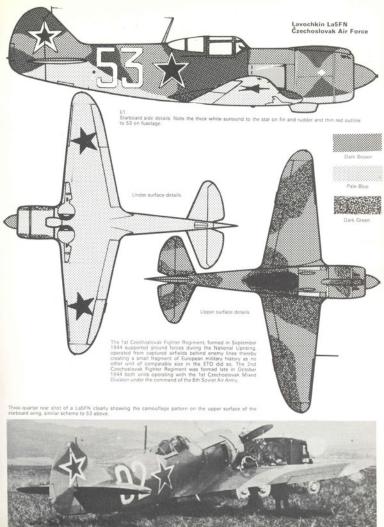








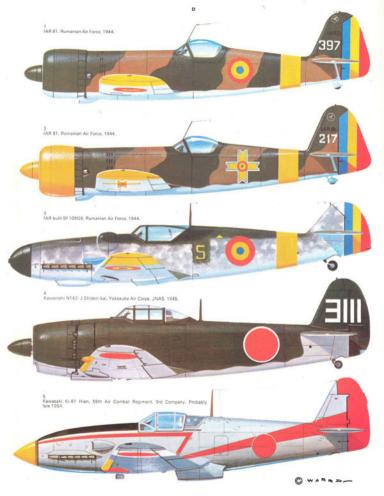




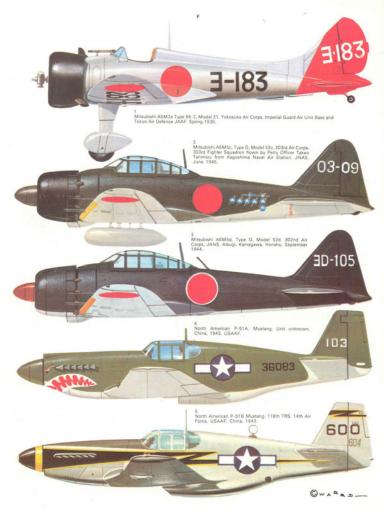


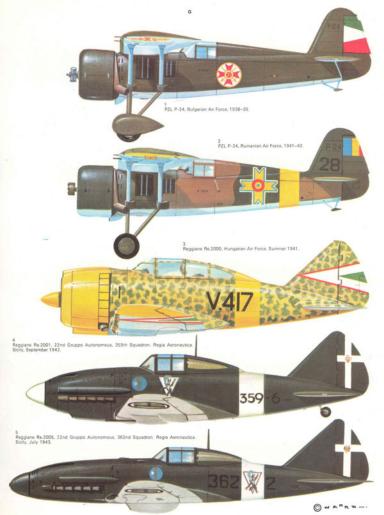


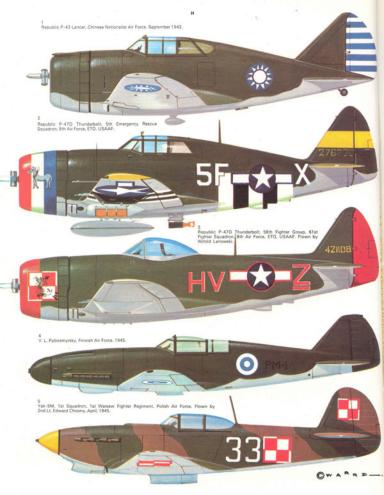


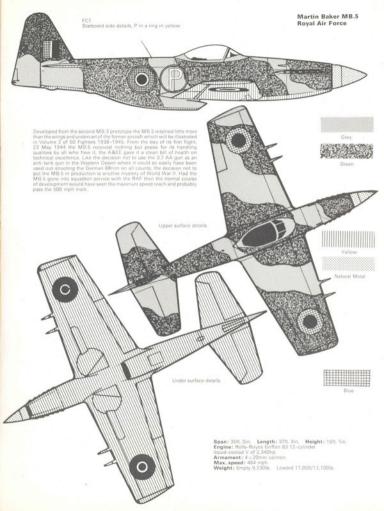


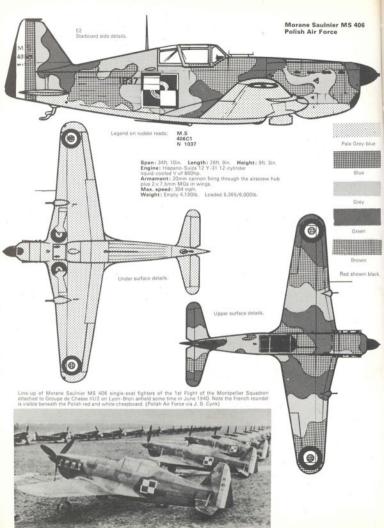


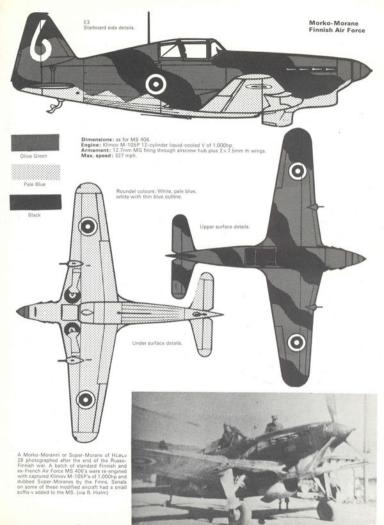


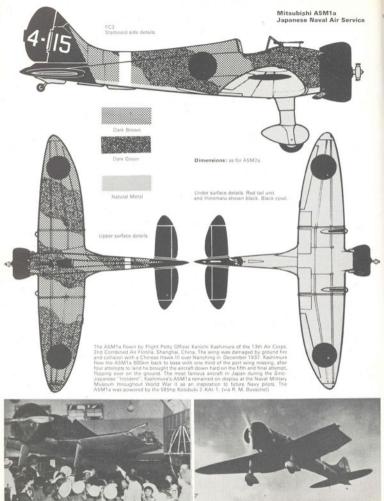


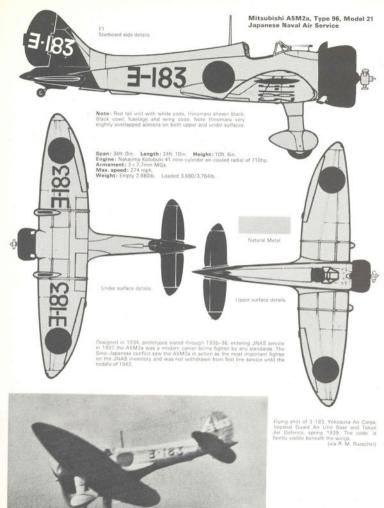


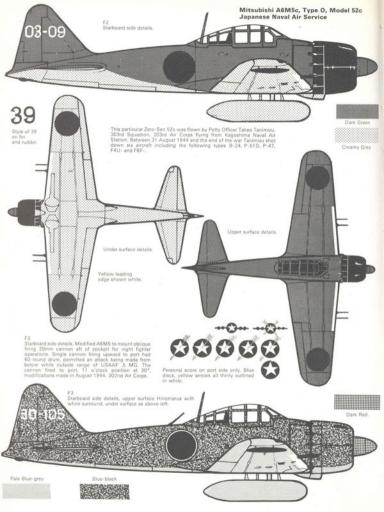


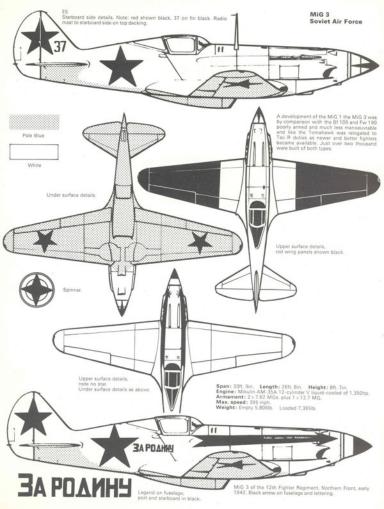


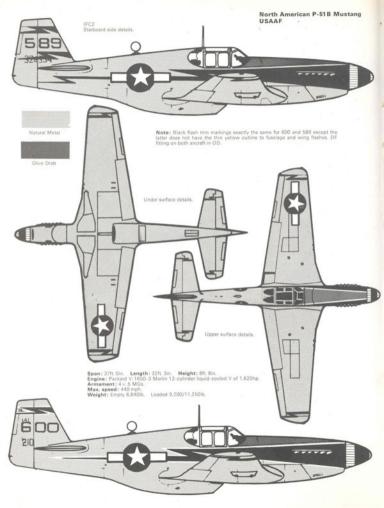




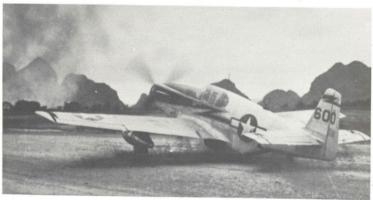






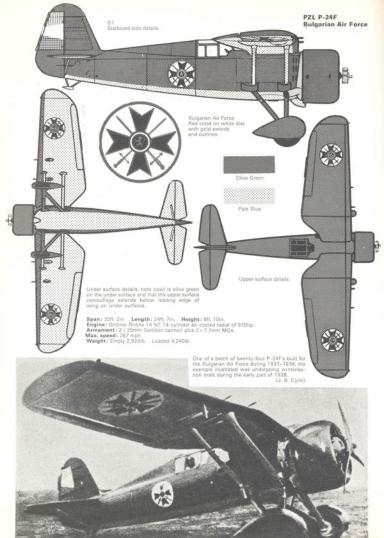


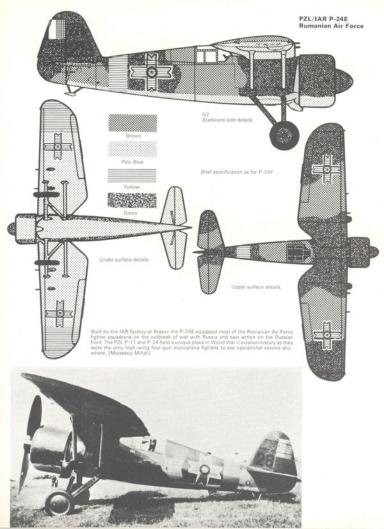


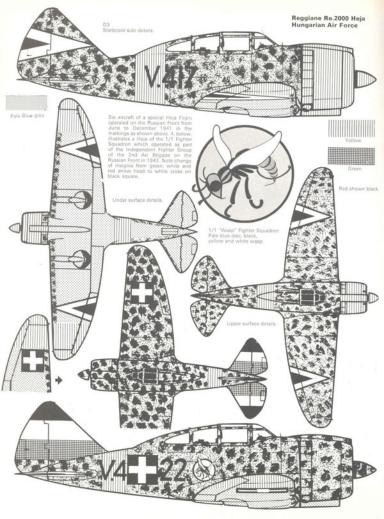


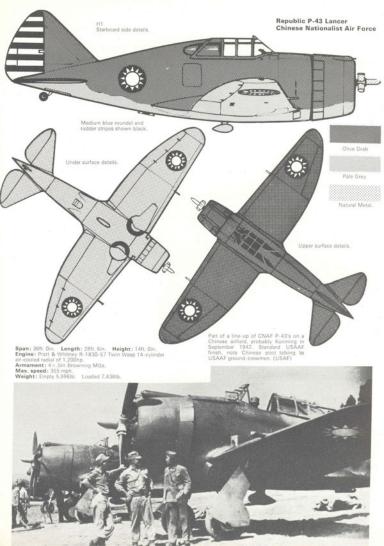
P-518's of the 118th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 14th Air Force, USAAF on Kweillin airfield, China during the last few days of the American occupation of this field before it was evacuated in the face of advancing Japanese armies. Middle photo shows 600 taking off, probably for the last time with airfield buildings burning against the rugged mountain backdrop of this field. Lower photo shows 589, note two Jap, flags under cockpit, pilots name unknown. (Photos Jack Canary via R. M. Bueschel)

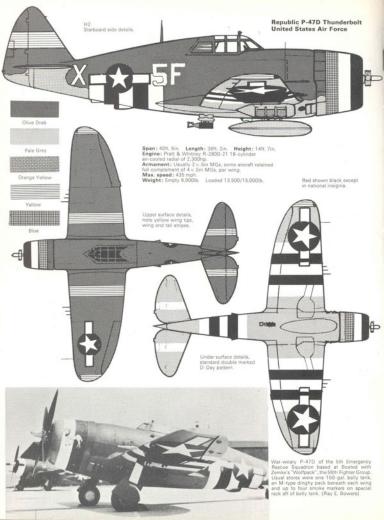


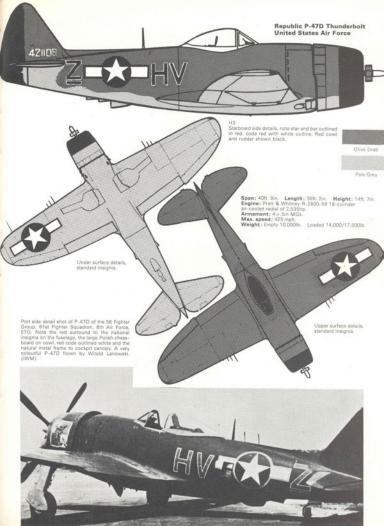


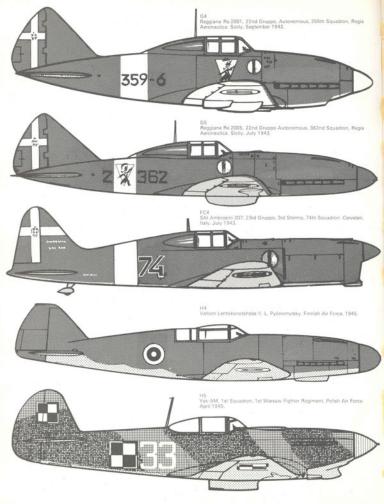














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- 29 Nakajima Ki.84 Hayate

  - Martin Baker MB.5, Royal Air Force.

- 30 McDonnell F-4 Phantom
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Front cover, top to bottom:

Autrin Baser Mio. 2, Royal Air Force. 18 (1994). Autrin Baser Mio. 2, Royal Air Force, USAAF, China, 1943–44.
FC3 Mitsubishi ASM Ia, Type 36-1; Model 1, 13th Air Corps, 2nd Combined Air Flotilla, Shanghai, China 1937–38.
FC4 SAI Ambreain 207, 23d Gruppo, 3d Stormo, 74th Squadron, Regia Aeronautica. Cerveteri, Italy, July 1943.