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ASIAN AIR ARMS NEWSLETTER 9

December 2018

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ILYUSHIN IL-76/78



An Air Team Image

The mighty workhorse of China, India, Pakistan & North Korea

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ILYUSHIN IL-76/78

OPERATORS		
Air Arm	IL-76	IL-78
China	c 18	-
India	c. 17	c. 6
Pakistan	-	c. 4
North Korea	3	-

PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY AIR FORCE—CHINA



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Because of Russian reluctance to sell them any more, the PLAAF operates a fleet of just 18 IL-76s.

INDIA



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[Watch it landing here!](#)

The IAF ordered a total of 17 IL-76MDs for delivery 1985 to 1988. In 2003, IAF acquired six IL-78MKI in-flight refuelling aircraft from Uzbekistan.



ILYUSHIN IL-76/78

PAKISTAN



[Click picture for video](#)



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PLANESPOTTERS.NET

The PAF procured its four IL-78s from Ukrainian surplus stocks in the mid-to-late 2000s. The first IL-78 was delivered to the PAF in December 2009. Equipped with UPАЗ re-fuelling pods, the PAF uses the IL-78 to support its Mirage Retrofit Strike Element (ROSE) squadrons as well as undertake heavy-lift transport tasks.

Decals advert

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

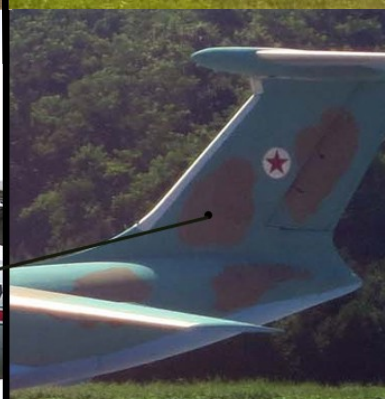
[Click picture for video](#)



New camouflaged variants of North Korea's three Ilyushin IL-76s were spotted in June 2013 but a photo obtained by *NK News* suggests they were nothing more than temporary repaints of existing Air Koryo cargo aircraft. The camouflage enabled the planes to take part in North Korea's high profile "Victory Day" parade as previously unseen

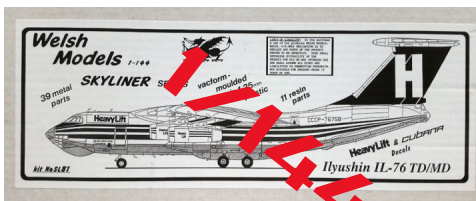
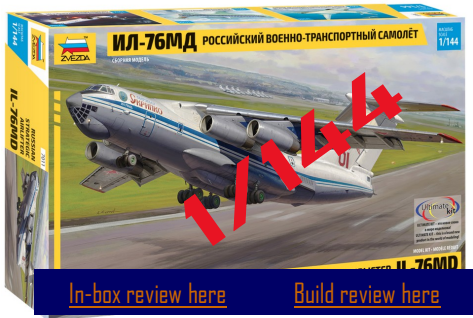


REMNANTS OF
CAMOUFLAGE VISIBLE



military assets, but the number and model of the Soviet-era aircraft has led some observers to question whether the planes were in fact new acquisitions. One picture, claimed to be taken on June 26 shows a camouflaged Ilyushin-76 on the ground at Pyongyang's Sunan airport, possibly undergoing paint or engineering work.

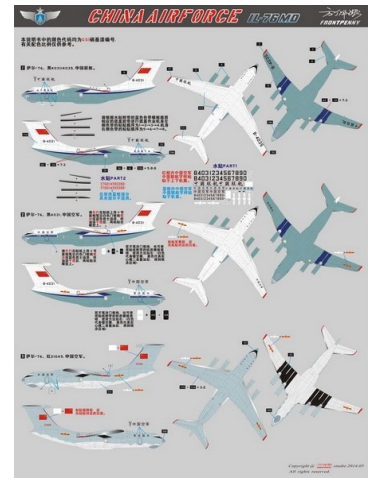
Ilyushin Il-76



Ilyushin Il-78



Ilyushin Il-76 in detail



FANCY A CLOSER LOOK AT THE ILYUSHIN IL-76? THEN CLICK HERE



SIA-Marchetti SF-260



by Major Jess D Madlangbayan of the PAF

On the morning of 21 November 2001, the "Jaguars" (17th Attack Sqdn. of the 15th Strike Wing) embarked on their first deployment mission using the SF-260TP Warriors (coined as "the multi-cab") from ACP Zamboanga at Edwin Andrews Air Base at Mindanao, in the South West of the Philippines. Guerrilla activity led by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) was rampant on the nearby island of Jolo. The flightline at Edwin Andrews was heaving like a combat zone: piles of iron bombs were seen at the rear of the parking ramp; two OV-10s were being uploaded with four Mk-82 (500lb) bombs each; two MD-520s loaded with rockets and machine guns were flying over the area; a C-130 had just landed carrying reinforcement troops; and scores of high ranking Army and Air Force officers were boarding four UH-1Hs bound for Jolo.

Just after the 3 TP's completed their engine shutdown, Brigadier-General Nelson Enslao, 3rd TOW Commander, approached the pilots and enthusiastically welcomed them to the war zone. *"Be ready for an airstrike anytime - we need you here! Go! Go!"* pumping his fist in emphasis. Meanwhile, the OV-10s and the MD-520s had been conducting airstrikes in succession for three straight days in the hinterlands of Jolo, against the MNLF rebels loyal to the outgoing ARMM Governor Nur Misuari. The chaos started when MNLF rebels began pounding the 104th Brigade PA and the TOG 9 at Jolo with mortars in the dawn of 19 November. Although the damage done was minimal, these attacks resulted in counter-strikes by the military. Three MNLF strongholds were blasted with rockets and bombs for the following three days, leaving heavy casualties on the rebel side. From their original positions, the rebels were forced by the combined aerial bombardment and ground assault to withdraw to the mountainsides. The TP pilots, fresh from a week-long gunnery-training mission at Crow Valley Range on Luzon, were eager to test their mettle in a real combat scenario, as the OV-10 and MD-520 pilots were engaged in

successive airstrike missions. The TP pilots waited in earnest for their first combat mission to begin. The good news came when the 15th Strike Wing attack pilots were called upon to report at SOUTHCOM HQS for target briefing. The primary target was to be the house of Nur Misuari in Silangkan, about 20 miles from Jolo town. Since the target is situated within a populated area, 2.75 FFAR rockets were decided to be the most appropriate ordnance to avoid hitting nearby houses. At 1030Hrs., 22 Nov, a flight of three SF-260TPs took off for Jolo Island with a mission to destroy the house of Nur Misuari in Silangkan. Tracing the route through their GPS-195 Tracker, the Jaguars reached the target area after about 35 minutes of flight.



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COMBAT DEBUT OF PAF SIA-Marchetti SF-260—Part 2

As the flight circled the target for positive identification, the leader ordered *"Jaguars, check your sights. The target is the bungalow-type house painted in blue in the middle of row of houses along the shoreline."* The wingmen radioed *"Tally ho!"* knowing that they only had a couple of chances for a high angle delivery and a very low release altitude before the enemy's 50 cal. machine guns got active. Pumping high with adrenalin, the lead pilot descended to 1,500ft and initiated a roll-in to the target. *"It must be a sure hit, it must be!"*, the pilot muttered as he tracked the pipper onto the target. The altitude countdown began 1,200 ft., 1000 ft., 800 ft., fire! Then "Kaboom", 4 FFAR rockets blasted out from the launcher and smacked right into the target. Four gaping holes appeared on the center of the roof. With that, the remaining rocket propellant and warhead explosions penetrated the flimsy roof and started a fire. Seconds later, thick smoke and traces of flame billowed from the holes. The wingmen fired their 7.62 mm machine guns in the immediate vicinity of the house to ensure that nothing of the target was left untouched. The Jaguars then proceeded to their next target: a cluster of *nipa* houses at the foot of Mt Tukay, reported to be a rallying point of the withdrawing rebel forces. These secondary targets were totally destroyed after a series of precision rocketry by the Jaguars. As they headed home, the Jaguars saw in the distance a towering smoke column from Misuari's house, still burning. With that, the maiden combat mission flight of the SF-260TP was concluded successfully and, proved very fulfilling as regards to the value of the target hit. The precision targeting and pilots' bravery proved once again the professionalism of PAF pilots. In the aftermath of these clashes, the Air Force blasted several of Misuari's hideouts in four other towns in the Sulu Archipelago, leaving 113 killed, including 100 rebels, whilst the ground troops captured at least five MNLF camps in Jolo.



[Click here for video](#)

Group Build for anyone?

Member Craig Godwin is organising (via Britmodeller) a Group Build entitled "1980s Frontline Asia". It covers any military equipment operated by countries within the geographical boundaries of the Group Build (basically anything from Pakistan eastwards, up to and including Alaska and also including Australia and New Zealand, plus equipment from other countries based in theatre, such as Soviet Asia, and US equipment in Japan, South Korea, the Philippines etc. Many modellers love the community that comes from Group Builds so, if you'd like to get more information on how you could be a part of this, go to Britmodeller Forums or [click here](#).

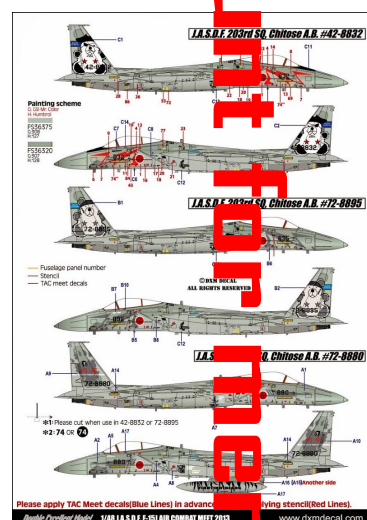
New Members

We've gained another 6 members since the last Newsletter—now up to 215 members in 28 countries!

Welcome to: Rahul Kulkarni from India; Thant Zaw Win and Tin Aung Yin from Myanmar;

Bob Migliardi from Canada; Tim Keily and Peter Avis from the UK.

DXM DECALS



SINGAPORE MODELLERS (RSAF SIG)



The Republic of Singapore Air Force Special Interest Group (RSAF SIG) consists of about 350 modellers whose main focus is RSAF subjects, including its predecessors.

Formed by CL Kwek, the intention was to create a buzz for an internet group build for the 50th anniversary of RSAF. Some of you may have met Kwek at the Asian Air Arms stand at Telford this year. The SIG has seen good growth in terms of membership and has a very strong presence on Facebook. Our area of interest spans the RAF years, to the current fleet of the RSAF, one of the most modern in the region. The RAF had a strong presence in Singapore in the 50s to the early 70s. Indeed some of the Asian Air Forces SIG members grew up in Singapore, as children of RAF personnel serving in various RAF bases in Singapore. Many significant aircraft types ended their operational careers in Singapore e.g. RAF Seletar saw the last operational sorties for the following types: Short Singapore in 1941, Spitfire XIX in 1954, Mosquito PR.34 in 1955, Sunderland in 1959, Beaufighter TTX in 1960.

[Click here for a comprehensive photo record of these days.](#)

Moving up to the 21st century, the RSAF has just celebrated its 50th anniversary this year. It has grown in strength from a handful of second-hand Hunters in the '70s, to her first supersonic jet the F-5 Tiger II, followed by Skyhawks for ground attack. It now is a highly competent operator of such advanced aircraft as F-16C/D, F-15SG, Gulfstream Aerospace G-V G550 ELINT, Alenia M-346 and Airbus A330 MRTT: more than enough exciting and unusual builds to keep all modellers very busy!

Watch out in future Newsletters for some fascinating builds from the RSAF SIG!

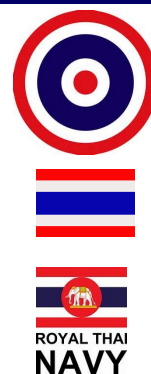


Asian Aircraft Markings A History

6. Myanmar



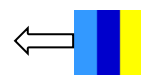
7. Thailand



8. Malaysia



1963-1982



1982-?



Early F/A-18s blues reversed

VIP a/c. Blue
always to the left.



Royal Malaysian Navy

Ref: Military Aircraft Insignia of the World—Cochrane/Elliott



60 SECONDS OVER SARGODHA

By Neil Robinson



The Indo-Pakistan Air War of September 1965 is possibly best remembered more for the conflicting reports of aerial claims and subsequent counter-denials than the political reasons for the conflict, but from a modeller's point of view the variety of combat types used, which spanned nearly three decades of international aircraft design, makes for an interesting modelling project.

The two protagonists I modelled here serve as excellent examples of this diversity and were also involved in one of the most contentious actions of the month long war, the claimed downing of five IAF Hunters by a PAF F-86F Sabre flown by Squadron Leader Muhammad Mahmood Alam in under a minute!

The story goes that just before 0600hrs on 7 September 1965, the seventh day of the conflict, Sqn Ldr Alam, the CO of No 11 Squadron PAF, based at Sargodha in the Punjab, and his wingman, Flying Officer Masood Akhtar, were scrambled in their NA F-86F-35 Sabres with two other F-86s, (and an F-104A Starfighter which was to provide top cover for the four Sabres), to patrol their airfield, following a previous incursion half-an-hour earlier by six IAF Dassault Mystère IVA fighter-bombers which had flown in at tree-top height under Sargodha's airfield CAP and strafed the base with 68mm air-to-ground rockets and 30mm cannon fire.

Orbiting the airfield at 10,000ft, the four PAF Sabres were advised by Sargodha's Ground Control of a second strike, consisting of ten IAF Hunter F.56s, in two separate formations, which had also been spotted by the top cover F-104A pilot, Sqn Ldr Arif Iqbal. The IAF Hunters, from Nos 7 and 27 Squadrons, which were armed with French-made T.10 air-to-ground rockets, passed under the PAF F-86s who immediately jettisoned their drop tanks and gave chase. The leader of the second PAF F-86 section, Flt Lt Bhati, had to break off due to one of his drop tanks hanging up, but Alam and Akhtar continued diving through their airfield's own AAA defences and lined up behind a pair of IAF Hunters from the first wave. Alam fired an AIM-9B 'Sidewinder' at the rearmost, but it hit the ground just short of its intended target.

As the IAF Hunter formation pulled up to clear some high tension cables, Alam fired his second 'Sidewinder', although neither Alam nor Akhtar saw the missile strike home. A few moments later, the Hunter's pilot, Sqn Ldr Onkar Nath Kacker, the CO of No 27 Sqn IAF, successfully ejected, and was subsequently taken prisoner. However, it is now thought that Alam's 'Sidewinder' missed and that Kacker was actually damaged by ground fire causing an engine flame-out, obliging him to eject.

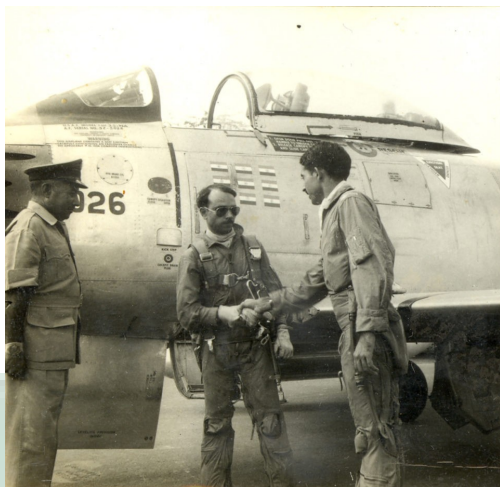
Losing sight of the rest of the first IAF Hunter wave, it was Alam's wingman, Masood Akhtar who spotted the second wave of IAF Hunters in a loose formation at about 200ft. Just as the PAF Sabres were getting in to gun range, the Hunters broke – but all in the same direction, climbing and turning steeply to the left!

According to Alam and Akhtar, Alam then despatched four IAF Hunters, one after the other in rapid succession, (although it now appears that two of the IAF Hunters were only damaged and returned to their base), with full deflection shots from his six 0.5 inch (12.7mm) machine guns using his A-4 radar-ranging gunsight, resulting in Alam's claim of five 'kills' in under a minute – which included the 'unseen' AIM-9B missile strike mentioned previously – which at the time was heralded as "an achievement believed to be unequalled in the annals of air combat" by Pakistan.

The gun camera film from Alam's Sabre was not made public during or after the war, and to date, (as far as I am aware), the PAF has never shown it. More recent research has revealed that it would appear that Alam actually only (sic!) shot down two IAF Hunters in this particular engagement, (flown by Sq Ldr S B Bhagwat and Flg Off J S Brar, both of whom were killed and from which Pakistani authorities recovered their bodies from the debris of the two aircraft). As Sqn Ldr Alam had previously claimed two IAF Hunters, on 6th September, and went on to claim another two on 17th September – again disputed by Indian AF sources – these 'kills' effectively gave him 'ace' status. Notwithstanding the controversy surrounding Alam's claimed 'kills', the actual destruction of two Hunters during a 270 degree, 5G climbing turn, was no mean achievement in its own right.



IDENTIFYING SQUADRON LEADER ALAM's F-86 SABRE



Not only is there controversy over Alam's 'kills', there is also some uncertainty about the actual aircraft he was flying on 7th September! It has invariably been quoted as F-86F-35-NA, serial number 55-4026, but during the research for this project, I came across a fascinating exchange on Britmodeller, which has thrown doubt on this.

An F-86F with the s/n 55-4026, (quoted as Alam's in most references), did serve with the PAF, (after initial allocation to the Japan Air Self Defense Force in 1957, although it was not used by them and was returned to the USA in February 1959), being delivered to the PAF circa 1965. However, the PAF operated two F-86Fs marked with the 'last three' of '026' on the nose, and it is this 'second' machine that is now thought to have been Alam's aircraft – s/n 52-5026. This aircraft started life as an F-86F-30 (with the 6-3 wing) and served with 3595th Combat Crew Training Wing at Nellis AFB, then with a series of other USAF units, until it was transferred to the Royal Norwegian AF in January 1961. It was at this point that it was fitted with the long-span, slatted F-40 wing, and also received TACAN (tactical air navigation) equipment. It served with 336 Skvadron, RNoAF before being transferred to the PAF just in time to see action during the September conflict.

Photos of the aircraft in RNoAF service show 52-5026 just prior to transfer to the PAF, with Norwegian national markings removed but with the original NAA ejection seat (Martin-Baker ejection seats were fitted in some Norwegian F-86Fs). The fin tip cap wasn't black as sometimes shown in illustrations, but medium-pale grey, and the anti-dazzle panel was matt black except for the middle part which covers the radio/radar/gunsight bay which appears to be olive drab and may have been a replacement item from another F-86F. A TACAN intake (on the starboard side by the air brake) was fitted but not the antennae – of which there should be two: one on the top of the nose intake and one under the fuselage, aft of the main landing gear bay. There is also a line of thought that 52-5026 wasn't actually fitted with 'Sidewinders', despite Alam's reference to them in his 7th September combat report.

Added to all this, there is no real evidence that Alam used '026' for all, or even any, of his 'kills'; the decal sheets that purport to be of his aircraft may only actually represent the aircraft that Alam was photographed in front of, taken some time after 16th September 1965. However, even if he did use this aircraft for all his 'kills', the only time all the IAF flag 'kill' markings would have been applied to '026' would have been at the end of it all.

The only photographic evidence (that I've seen of '026' in the PAF scheme) is of the aircraft without missiles, or even rails fitted, although it is recorded that twenty-two airframes were modified to carry a pair of GAR-8/AIM-9B 'Sidewinder' air-to-air missiles. It was also fitted with a pair of later-type 200-gallon drop tanks, carried by many F-86Fs supplied to overseas air forces. These drop tanks are the big finless type on 'forced ejection pylons' (that is the pylon is part of the wing not the tank), resulting in a noticeable gap between the tank top and the pylon.





MODELLING THE COMBATANTS—1

Squadron Leader Alam's F-86 Sabre "026"

There are several F-86F Sabre kits available in my chosen scale of 1/48th – Academy, ESCI, ERTL, Hasegawa, Italeri, Monogram, Revell – and although it is possible to 'extend' the wings of any of these F-86Fs, my particular starting point was the 'limited edition' Hasegawa QF-86F Sabre 'Full size Drone' (kit 09306), which features the extended 'G-3' 39 foot 1 inch wings, (whilst also containing the parts for the standard-span F-86F), and the TACAN intake on the starboard side by the air brake.



QF-86F SABRE "FULL-SIZE DRONE"

I modelled the leading-edge slats in the 'open' position, (as seen on many leading-edge slatted Sabres when 'at rest', due to the effects of gravity), and utilised the Airwaves resin set for this, (now marketed by Hannants I believe), although Cutting Edge and Scobie-Do produce resin 'open' slatted wing leading edges too.

Despite the apparent evidence to the contrary in the photos of Alam standing in front of a Sabre marked '026', I decided to 'tool up' my model anyway and fitted 'Sidewinders' – the AIM-9Bs and launch rails borrowed from the standard Hasegawa F-86F-30 kit. I also fitted the larger, later-type, 200-gallon drop tanks invariably used by PAF Sabres during this period, which I had to 'borrow' from an old Monogram F-86E kit.

The model was undercoated with Halford's acrylic Grey Primer, and then sprayed in various 'shades' of silver, suitably masked off, to create an overall natural metal/aluminium finish. Although most PAF Sabres did not feature anti-glare panels in front of the windscreen, Alam's '026' was a famous exception and, as mentioned, sported a black and olive drab anti-glare panel!

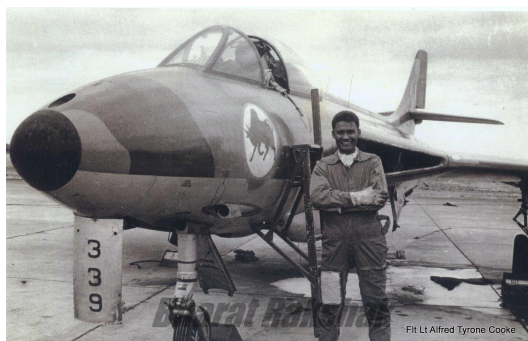
National markings and serial number came from Cutting Edge sheet (CED48023) 'F-86F Sabre 3', which actually provides the markings for Alam's Sabre, albeit featuring the s/n presentation '54026', so I had to source a 'spare' numeral '2' in the same style, and chop the decal sheet's numerals around to create the '25026' fuselage-side serial presentation. Together with the kit's standard stencilling, (and there's quite a lot on a natural metal finished Sabre!), the Cutting Edge decal sheet provides all the other markings needed, including the letters 'SA', referring to the aircraft's home base, Sargodha, stencilled at the top of the fin. As an act of deliberate artistic licence, I also added two miniature IAF 'kill' flags, to represent Alam's previous 'kills' (claimed on 6th September).





MODELLING THE COMBATANTS—2

Hawker Hunter F.56 of 27 Sqn Indian Air Force, 1965



Over a hundred Hunters were in service with the IAF at the beginning of hostilities on 1st September 1965, comprising the surviving airframes of 160 or so new-build F.56s, (an updated export version of the standard F.6 with wings 'plumbed' for drop tanks, bombs or air-to-ground rockets, and were fitted with a braking parachute over the jet pipe, making them almost indistinguishable from the FGA.9), and four follow-up orders for some 40 or so refurbished aircraft, also to FGA.9 standard, designated F.56A.

So, the basis for this model was an Academy FGA.9, (kit 2169), originally released in 1997, but which has subsequently been re-released in Italeri boxings in 2012 and 2017, (2708/2722) 'Hunter F.6/9', and again by Academy 'RAF & Export Hawker Hunter F.6/FGA.9 Special Edition' (12312) in 2016.

[NB: Before this article 'went to print', Airfix announced a CAD-designed, all singing, all dancing, new tool kit, to be released in December 2018, which will naturally be the Hunter kit of choice in the future, but for all those who still have Academy/Italeri kits in their stashes, read on!]

Construction-wise, the kit goes together well, notwithstanding the well-documented fit problems with the wing-to-fuselage join and the intake trunking, and the more major errors including a grossly undersized ejection seat, shallow cockpit tub floor, nose and mainwheel legs which are too long, and nose and mainwheels which are too small in diameter! Thankfully there have been several aftermarket correction sets produced, amongst which are Maestro Models 'Hunter Main & Nose Wheels' (K4824), Heritage Aviation Models 'Hunter Correction Set', and Aeroclub 'Hunter FGA.9 Correction Set' (K423) – sadly no longer generally available, but which was the one I used. There are also resin cockpit interior correction sets and Martin Baker ejection seats, available from NeOmega, Aires, and PJ Productions.

There is also a 'problem' with the tailplane location and rudder shape. So, I removed about 2mm from the tailplane location tabs which allowed me to fix the tailplanes slightly more forward into their correct position. I then removed an angled section of plastic from the leading edge of the rudder – about 2mm wide at the top tapering down to zero towards the bottom, which was then stuck to the rear of the fin and when dry filled and rubbed down. The remainder of the rudder was then re-shaped on the leading edge and cemented onto the new fin/rudder hinge line. Final bit of detailing was to add a fuel dump pipe on the rear fuselage and a short blade aerial just behind the canopy. I also 'dropped' the flaps as a bit of artistic licence as they were not normally left in the 'down' position when the aircraft was parked on the flight line.

The model was painted in the standard IAF colour scheme of the period, BS 381C: 641 Dark Green and BS381C:638 Dark Sea Grey upper surfaces to the standard Air Diagram pattern for the Hunter, with painted High Speed Silver undersides. Decals were from Cutting Edge sheet (CED48044), 'Hunters: Part 2' (again, sadly no longer generally available) and represents a No 27 Sqn IAF machine, BA341, (albeit not necessarily one of the aircraft involved in the 7th September combats), which was one of the original new-build F.56s delivered in the late 1950s. As the aircraft had seen a few years of service, I gave it "a bit of a weathered finish", especially with the faded national markings.

Finally, the model was armed with French T.10 air-to-ground rockets, which were used by the IAF during the mid-1960s, (which I sourced from an old Model Design Construction resin aftermarket set which also may no longer be available).

Neil Robinson



60 SECONDS OVER SARGODHA—KITS & DECALS



PAKISTAN



1/32 Hasegawa—Click picture for build



1/48 Academy—Click picture for build



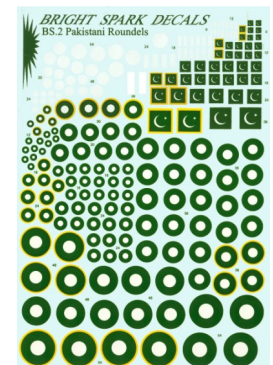
1/72 Airfix—Click picture for build



1/144 Trumpeter—Click picture for build



Cutting Edge Decals 1/48 & 1/32



Bright Spark Decals 1/72 & 1/48
Produced by SIG member.
Order via Asian Air Arms.

INDIA



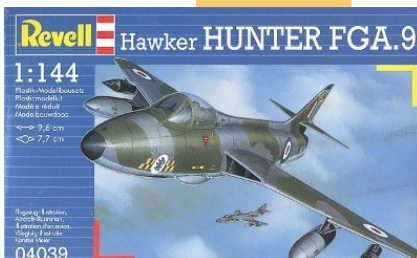
1/32 Revell—Click picture for build



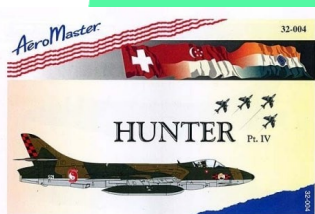
1/48 Italeri—Click picture for build



1/72 Revell—Click picture for build



1/144 Revell—Click picture for build



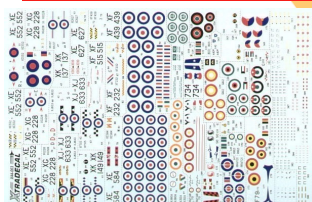
Aero Master Decals 1/32



Trisonic Decals 1/48
Produced by SIG member.
Info: philcamp@aerorepltd.co.uk



Xtradecals 1/72



Xtradecals 1/144



ASIAN AIR ARMS UPDATE—I

JAPAN COASTGUARD



Forgive me for repeating this photo from an earlier Newsletter but our resident experts on Japanese aviation think that, contrary to press reports, it's highly unlikely that the Coastguard's Dassault Falcon 2000 Maritime Surveillance aircraft will carry air-to-surface missiles.



CHINA



The **Guizhou FTC-2000 G** made its debut at Airshow China 2018, in October. It is a multifunctional aircraft whose main mission is ground attack with a secondary role of air combat and the training of strike pilots. It can perform reconnaissance and electronic warfare missions, equipped with the relevant mission or pods equipment. The number of weapons stations has increased from four to six, and it can carry up to 3,000 kg of weapons, including missiles and guided bombs. It has been developed from the FTC-2000/JL-9 advanced trainer but it's not known if the PLA will adopt it.

Also revealed at the Zuhai airshow was what seems to be an updated version of the J-10 fighter aircraft. The **J-10 Thrust Vectoring Control, or TVC**, is equipped with a hinged thrust-vectoring nozzle that allows it to control the direction of its exhaust. This capability gives it improved manoeuvrability and low-speed handling.

[Click the image to see it performing the Cobra turn.](#)



THAILAND



NEW ALBATROSS FOR RTAF?

Jane's reports that the Thai MoD is interested in buying several **L-39NGs** from the Czech Republic.

The Royal Thai Air Force has received two more **H225M** multi-role medium helicopters – its seventh and eighth, manufacturer Airbus Helicopters announced on October 24. These new additions will join the air force's existing fleet of six H225Ms for combat search and rescue, search and rescue flights and troop transport missions. The Cougars will be equipped with emergency flotation gear, fast roping equipment, cargo sling, searchlight and electro-optical systems.



VIETNAM



At the completion of what is now a third year providing a Fire Fighting contract, "VNH South's" two **Mi-172** helicopters VN-8428 and VN-8427 were ferried from Indonesia back to Vung Tau Airport, in southern Vietnam.

ASIAN AIR ARMS UPDATE—2

SOUTH KOREA



The Republic of Korea Air Force (RoKAF) is currently inducting its first of four **Airbus A330 Multi Role Tanker Transport (MRTT)** aircraft. The aircraft is stationed at Gimhae Air Base in Busan, South Korea, where it's presently undergoing acceptance trials.

A-400M FOR SOUTH KOREA? Defense News reports that South Korean and Spanish defense officials are currently negotiating a possible trade of trainer and transport aircraft. The deal may involve the exchange of 54 advanced trainer jets built by KAI for four to six **A400M** transport aircraft. If the deal goes through, Spain could exchange some of its transporters for 34 **KT-1** basic trainers and 20 **T-50** advanced trainer jets. The total value of the swap deal is estimated to be \$890 million.



PHILIPPINES

The Coast Guard has placed an order for one **Airbus H145** helicopter, making it the first H145 para-public operator in the Philippines. The helicopter is specially equipped with high frequency radios, emergency flotation gear, fast roping, cargo sling, search light, and electro-optical systems to perform critical missions including search and rescue, medical evacuation, maritime patrol and law enforcement.



INDIA

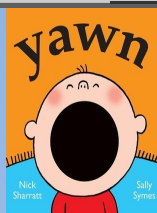


India's Coast Guard (ICG) is upgrading its fleet of maritime reconnaissance aircraft (MRA). The upcoming mid-life upgrade of the 17 licence-built **Dornier Do-228s** is expected to cost about \$129 million. The aircraft will help the ICG to monitor the country's 3,370 mile long coastline and over 77,000+ square miles of India's Exclusive Economic Zone. According to the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) the aircraft will be fitted with "state-of-the-art technology" and Pollution Surveillance Systems. Primary contractor will be India's state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.



GREY, GREY AND YET MORE GREY!

Member Bob Nichols kindly sent me this photo he took of a grey ROKAF F-35 coming in to land at Luke A.F. Base.



And here's the JASDF F-35. Even a grey Hinomaru! Boring or what?



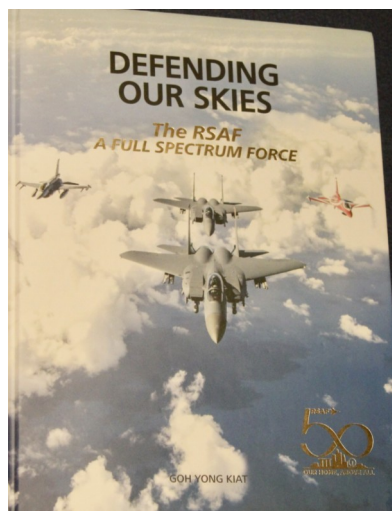


DEFENDING OUR SKIES – THE RSAF – A Full Spectrum Force

Book Review – by Mark Attrill

DEFENDING OUR SKIES – THE RSAF – A Full Spectrum Force

Author: Goh Yong Kiat



As a young boy growing up in the Far East, my formative years in developing a lifelong interest in military aviation mirrored those of the young Republic of Singapore, only founded in August 1965, and yet faced with the urgent requirement to establish an effective military capability following the accelerated withdrawal of British Forces from the Island Nation as part of the UK Government's 'East of Suez' drawdown programme in the early 1970s. As part of a UK-sponsored programme to generate and support an indigenous military capability, the Singapore Air Defence Command (SADC) was created in 1968 and the modern day derivative, the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) therefore celebrated its 50th Anniversary this year. I can clearly remember those early years, being treated to the sight and sound of familiar British aircraft sporting not so familiar colour schemes and national markings, as BAC Strikemasters and Hawker Hunters entered the circuit and landed a short distance from my Primary School located on a soon-to-be former RAF Station.

I was, therefore, delighted when Brian Griffin, our SIG Leader, invited me to review a wonderful new book that has been published this year to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the RSAF and chart the short but illustrious and fascinating history of one of the most capable Air Forces in the world today. As I understand it, the Author is a former RSAF Officer and this fact alone shines through the book's meticulous research and his pride in the Air Arm to which he dedicated his Service. The large book is presented as an impressive 'coffee table' tome and is logically laid out to present the reader with a concise, yet fact filled, summary of the RSAF's 50 year story before providing a comprehensive summary of the various categories and types of equipment with which the Service has operated over the years. The thirty pages that outline the history of the RSAF from very humble beginnings, with the arrival of a single Cessna 172H in September 1968, charts the very impressive growth of the RSAF, both in terms of equipment and capability.



Several photographs in the 'early years' section took me right back in time, to a memorable trip to SAFTECH's Air Technical Training School at RAF Seletar. My best friend's father was a senior instructor at the School and knowing that we were both aviation crazy, we were given exclusive access on Sunday afternoon to climb in and around a variety of RAF types that had been gifted to the school, including some ex-60 Squadron Gloster Javelins previously based at RAF Tengah and a former RAF Seletar Target Towing Meteor. Clearly there was no-one from the Health and Safety Executive around in those days. In fact, a large proportion of the photos contained in this section of the book have been clearly sourced from personal collections which makes the story ever more interesting. If anything, there are perhaps too many images which results in a number being quite small although those provided offer a wealth of information including some little known facts regarding colour schemes and markings applied to the various aircraft, which will be of interest to modellers and aviation aficionados alike. I did not know, for example, that the Singapore Tactical Weapons Unit (SWTU) operated a number of Hawker Hunters from RAF Chivenor in the early 1970s, sporting the standard SADC combat aircraft colour scheme and serials but with RAF roundels and fin flashes.

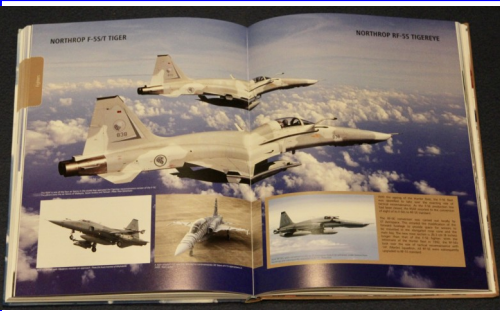
Four pages of the book are then dedicated to outlining the RSAF Organisation, heraldry and personal insignia with another two illustrating the changes to the National insignia carried by the aircraft of the SADC and RSAF. The clever use of photographs of common types in this section really helps to visualise the impact of these revised markings over the years on types such as the Shorts Skyvan and Douglas A-4SU Skyhawk. The bulk of the book is then taken up with detailed descriptions and hundreds of photographs of the various aircraft, helicopters and equipment that have



equipped the Air Arm since its inception. The reader is reminded that any effective Air Force cannot rely upon air assets alone so the introductory sections cover Surveillance and Early Warning Radars and Ground Based Air Defence systems before the Author launches into 100 plus pages of excellent imagery supported by informative text on the airborne assets. Rather surprisingly the sequence starts with the Basic and Advanced Training aircraft that have served the RSAF so well, before coverage of Helicopters, Transport and Special Mission Aircraft with, last but not least, the Fighter/Bomber aircraft. Once again the reader is treated to a wealth of new information since many of the photographs do not appear to have been published elsewhere.



DEFENDING OUR SKIES – THE RSAF – A Full Spectrum Force – Part 2



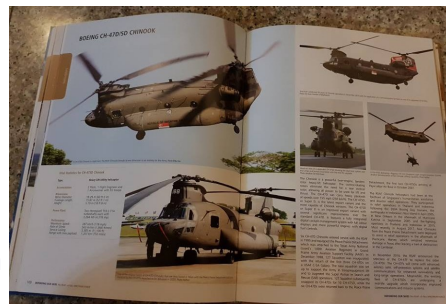
Two additional Hawker Hunter photos caught the reviewer's eye in this section; one shows a Hunter Mk 74 sporting no less than seven weapons/stores stations including three under the fuselage totting 68mm SNEB rocket pods while another image reveals an experimental blue/grey air defence camouflage scheme trialled in the early 1980s. Yet more reveal the plethora of markings applied to the BAC 167 Strikemaster, Douglas A-4SU Skyhawk and Lockheed T-33A Shooting Star, the latter seeing brief service with the RSAF as a stop-gap before the acquisition of a new generation jet trainer.

This truly comprehensive coverage then continues with the Black Knights Aerobatic Display Team and the Air Arm's ventures into the procurement and operation of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). From the earliest days of its inception, the RSAF has valued the need to generate and maintain an interest in aviation among the youth of Singapore to provide a source of pilots and airmen so the book also provides coverage of the important work conducted by the Singapore Youth Flying Club from the very start, before rounding off aviation coverage with a brief look at those contractor-operated specialist aircraft that support the RSAF's overall mission. Two Appendices then complete the volume, covering RSAF Aerodromes and the Air Arm's extensive external activities: the crowded airspace of the Island Nation of Singapore has always necessitated the establishment of robust training and exercise facilities overseas and RSAF aircraft are now regularly, and in some cases permanently, deployed to Air Bases in Australia, France and the United States.

Have no doubt, this is an extremely impressive book that has masterfully captured the spirit and essence of this young Air Force in words and pictures, and truly illustrates the RSAF claim to be a Full Spectrum Force. As previously stated, a large proportion of the imagery has been sourced from personal collections and has, therefore, not been seen or published before. For the modeller, this book offers a wealth of new information on the colour schemes and markings sported by the SADC and RSAF over its 50 year history and should provide some great ideas for reproducing unusual and attractive subjects in model form. It is to be hoped that some of the aftermarket decal manufacturers, including Singapore's very own Miliverse Decals can also find the inspiration to cover some of the SADC/RSAF colour schemes and markings, since a large number of the military aircraft types operated by the Air Arm over the years are readily available in an equally wide variety of scales.

Thoroughly recommended to anyone with an interest in Asian, British Commonwealth or Small Air Forces.

Reviewed by Mark Attrill



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WOW! Colourful choppers or what?

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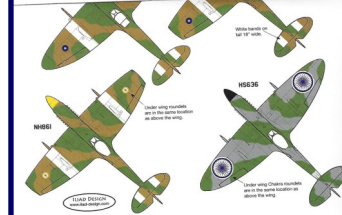
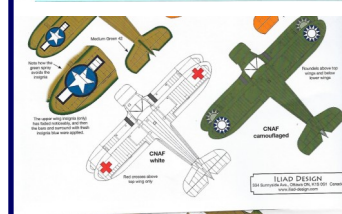
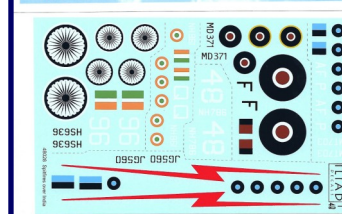
LOOKING FOR SOMETHING SPECIAL?

From next month we shall be featuring a regular WANTS column to help you find that kit, decals or books that you're after.

You'll find it under the title of "Change Alley".

Let us know of your needs and we'll put your requests in this section.

To start the ball rolling, I'm looking for the Hasegawa 1/72 boxings of the T-34 Mentor that featured cartoon characters on the fuselage (I think they made two versions). Also, I'm after an Eastern Express or A-Model 1/144 Antonov An-12 at a reasonable price. Their prices have gone crazy recently and are completely out of my reach. If you have one or other of these please get in touch.





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