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ASIAN AIR ARMS NEWSLETTER **25**

February/March 2021

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"Asian Air Arms SIG", a Special Interest Group of IPMS (UK)

Blue Rider Decals!



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I hope this latest edition of the Asian Air Arms SIG Newsletter finds you and your families well as we all continue to wrestle with the ongoing challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and our daily lives and routine. You will notice that this particular edition of the newsletter is a little late in publication and is very 'product orientated'. I will make no apology for this - it has been a very testing period for me over the last few months as I have tried to balance a prolonged change of status and location with a totally new job. The time I have been able to dedicate to the newsletter has been very short, so I am immensely grateful to Steve Komor for holding the fort and producing so much of the content this month as well as compiling the newsletter. Steve has managed to find some interesting new products to review and I am also pleased to see the re-emergence of the Blue Rider decal and book range after a bit of a hiatus. Time and space on this occasion preclude a full explanation on the modest expansion we are going to make to our Asian Air Arm coverage but I will return to this topic and the rationale behind it in the next edition. In the meantime, many thanks to Blue Rider for their generous provision of decals for review, many of which will be applicable as we seek to explore another fascinating aspect of the Asian Air Arms genre. Thanks are also due to Tom Cooper, another stalwart member of the Group, who has also provided a number of books for review, and these will also feature in future editions of the newsletter. While on the subject of books, Andy Binks is just about to publish the next edition of his excellent JASDF Samurai reference books, focusing once again on the F-4 Phantom in JASDF Service. Check out the preview in this newsletter. Gary Markham has also been immensely busy sourcing some great on-line material. Last but not least, I was delighted to see that Brian Griffin continues to grace us with his presence with a nice little reference piece on the unusual Morane-Saulnier MS-733 Alcyon. In closing, I must say that after a few more weeks settling in to my new environment, I will be looking forward to playing a more proactive role in developing the content of our newsletter with Steve. In the meantime, enjoy the newsletter and stay safe.

Mark Attrill, April 2021

CLICK [HERE!](#)

Looking for a back issue of the Newsletter? Click on this link to go straight to the Back Issues page, where you can download any that you're missing.

Hi readers,

Welcome to Issue 25! I hope this issue of the Newsletter finds you all safe and well, hunkered down, perhaps building models, and avoiding 'covid-land' as best you can! I'd like to kick off by thanking everyone who has contributed to this issue, thanks to you we're back up to a much healthier page-count this time around.

Next, a couple of matters that have arisen in feedback from some members (some of it passed on via Brian - thanks Brian!) following the last issue. By the way, Brian has informed me that he will sadly no longer be producing his range of generic Asian Air Arms decals. So if you have any, it might be worth hanging on to them, they may become collectors' items in the future!

Gerard Gielis asked us for a picture of an aircraft wearing a Bhutan roundel, as featured in the Roundel Quiz. Well, despite an extensive search on the Internet, I've failed to come up with a single image! Although the yellow/red roundel appears to be the accepted Bhutan roundel, it transpires that Bhutan does not actually have an air force, all air defence presently being handled by India! So my apologies for featuring it in the quiz, and for any confusion I may have caused!

Mike Davey got in touch to tell us of a very interesting and informative article about how Indonesia acquired MiG-19s and MiG-21s, with interviews of the people involved, which features in issue 500 of 'Scramble' magazine produced by the Dutch Aviation Society. A quick search for 'Scramble magazine' will take you to their website, where you should be able to download the issue (for a small fee!).

Finally, Tom Cooper, the series editor for Helion's Asia@War series, has very generously sent me a wealth of artwork featuring emblems and ex-USAF aircraft used by the VNAF. There is enough material to fill an issue on its own but, following consultation with Mark, we've decided to run those for which we have already published articles. We will 'store' those drawings for aircraft that have NOT yet appeared (such as the A-1 Skyraider) so that they can help to illustrate the relevant articles in future issues. Mark has told me that he hopes to re-start his VNAF programme in the Spring, although I know he's going to be extremely busy transitioning to his new post!

Steve Komor, March 2021

**Special FREE
offer for
members!**

I'm sure that many of you out there, like me, have a huge stash of models put away somewhere, which is constantly growing and becoming more and more unmanageable? Over

a decade ago, with the help of my wife (a bit of an MS Access wizz kid), I developed a database to help me keep track of my ever-growing collection. The database runs in any version of Microsoft Access from 2003 on. The database comes with full instructions in PDF format, and is fully customisable to suit the user's requirements.

I've decided to make it available, free of charge, to members of the AAA SIG. If you're interested, please email me at stevekomor@gmail.com and I'll send you a link to download it. I hope some of you will find it useful.

For news of Andy Binks' latest book, limited to a 250 copy print run, see p.15 and

ORDER NOW!



Aztec Models—Venomous Vipers, Part 2 by Mark Attrill

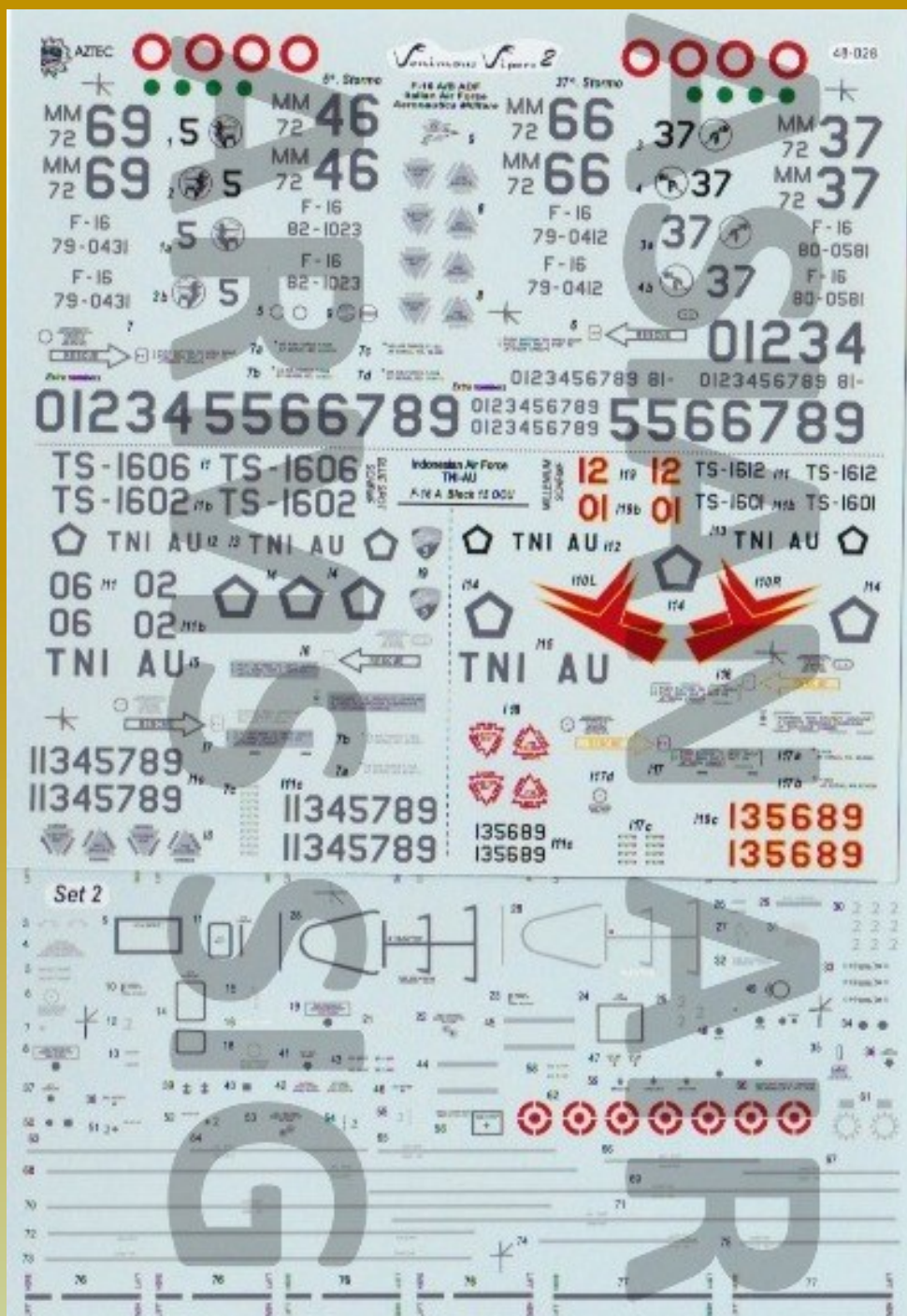
Product No. AZD48/72-028

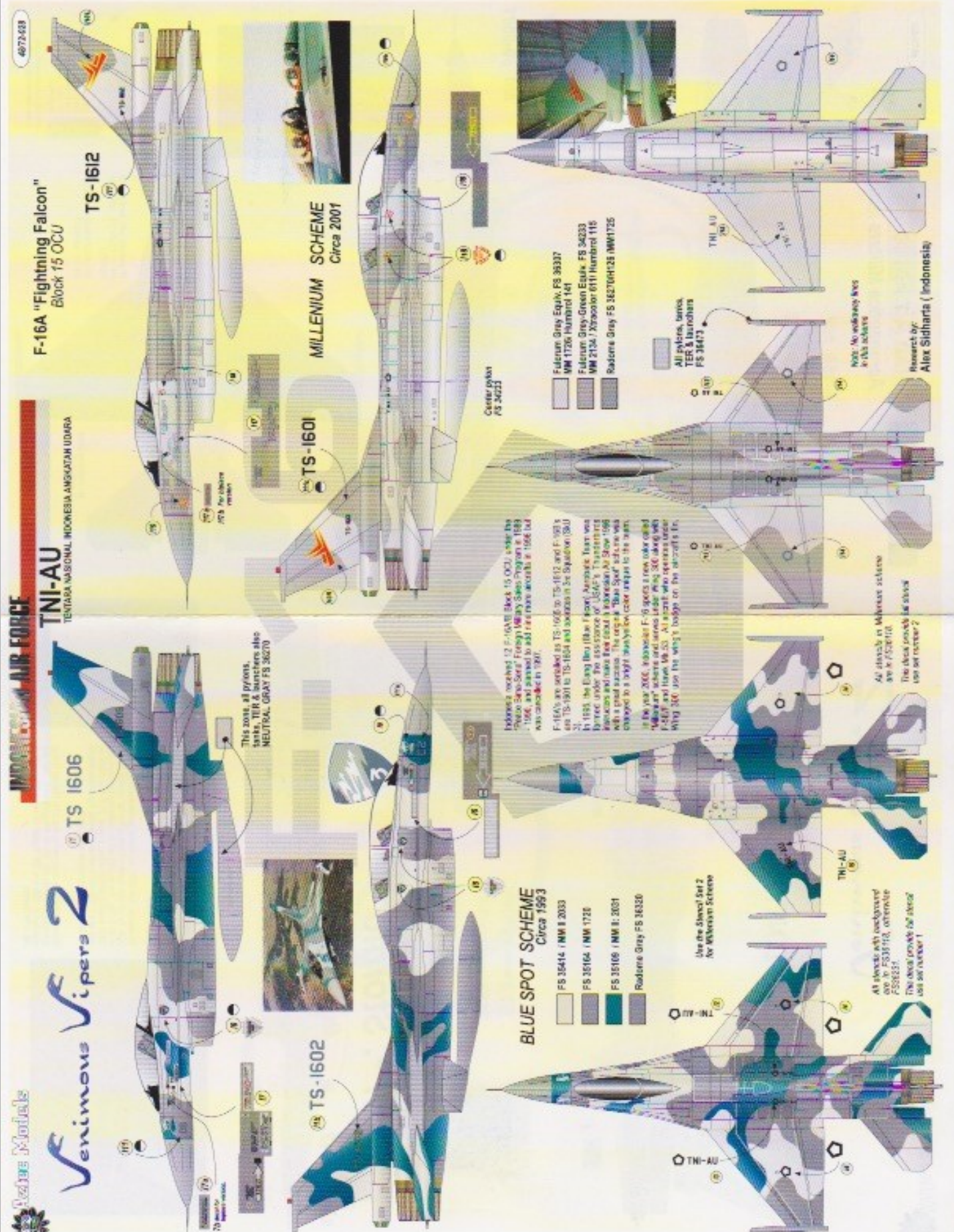
Aztec Models' decals are produced in Mexico and, as one would expect, the vast majority of their subject matter is for aircraft operated by the air arms of Latin America. On occasions, however, they will depart from their normal fare and produce something that is quite different, and this recent re-release is one such example. The original decal sheet was first seen in 2003/4 so it will not have featured in previous editions of our newsletter. This particular release includes decals for Italian and Indonesian F-16 Vipers, including the very attractive 'Blue Spot' scheme applied to *Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Udara* (TNI-AU) F-16s from circa 1993, and the later two-tone grey 'Millennium Scheme' applied from 2001. The Aztec sheet provides markings for four different TNI-AU aircraft including two single-seat fighter-bombers and two twin-seat operational trainers, one type in each of the two colour schemes. The very comprehensive decal sheet includes all special-to-type markings and a full set of stencils, matched to those found on the TNI-AU examples.

Aztec have built up a very good reputation for the accuracy and standard of their decal sheets, which are the result of key partnerships with acknowledged experts, and this issue is no exception. As noted on the very comprehensive decal placement instructions (DPIs), the Indonesian aircraft have been researched by Alexander Sidharta from Indonesia, who also happens to be a fellow member of the Asian Air Arms SIG! As stated, the DPIs are very comprehensive with full colour renditions of the colour schemes supplied, complemented by an extremely detailed explanation of the two colour schemes with Federal Standard callouts. Curiously though, there is no reference to the USAF style red/yellow 'Bort' numbers supplied for the Millennium-schemed aircraft, so modellers will need to check online references before using these particular decals. Aztec Decals do tend to be a little on the thick side when compared to examples of aftermarket decal sheets printed by Cartograf, but I have not observed any negative reviews and their printing quality is assured. The DPIs also include some photographic references for each type but an online search is also recommended in order to get the best from this set of decals. I am not sure if we will see too many other Asian Air Arms subjects from this manufacturer in the future, given their understandable focus on Latin American subjects, but this is definitely a welcome re-release of some unusual schemes for the 'Viper' and it is therefore highly recommended. I would also suggest you get them while you can since I suspect production will be limited. Review sample courtesy of my wallet!

Mark ATTRILL

January 2021







Blue Rider Decals by Steve Komor



After completing my Manchukuo article for the previous Newsletter, it occurred to me that there are probably some members who are unfamiliar with Blue Rider Decals, so I thought I should prepare an article highlighting their Asian Air Arms decal sheets in particular. First of all, though, a very brief 'potted history' of Blue Rider.

In 1987, Blue Rider Models, a London-based company, began producing a range of decals *that were slightly different to the then current mainstream of modelling*. They carried on producing decals for eight years before branching out with the publication of the first issue of Insignia magazine, a quarterly publication dedicated to presenting modellers with a look at military aircraft colours and markings, especially those of the world's smaller and lesser-known air forces. Each 36-page issue was to include a small decal sheet with relevant drawings and details in the magazine. Publication sadly ceased after 19 issues, and the magazines and decal sheets quickly became collectors' items.

The company continues to produce an extensive range of eye-catching decal sheets, however, which are available from their own website, blueriderpublishing.com. Also available are 19 issues of Insignia magazine in PDF format, each one priced at a very reasonable £2.99 (except #19-£5.99). Alongside these, Blue Rider also have a series of ebooks with titles such as 'A Scale Modeller's Guide to Aircraft from the Adventures of Tintin', 'Aviation in post WW1 Austria', 'Aircraft of the Gran Chaco War' and '**Warlords, puppets and revolutionaries** (Coming Soon!)'. Five 'Air Force Specials' and two 'Colour Guides' are also available, with such esoteric titles such as 'Latvian Air Force 1918-1940' and 'Air Forces of the Baltic States 1919-2001'. Most of these titles, including the Tintin books, have companion decal sheets in the Blue Rider range.

Anyway, back to Asian Air Arms! Blue Rider decals come in three scales; 1/144, 1/72 and 1/48, and some sheets are available in more than one scale. This article covers all Asian Air Arm sheets that are currently available in all scales. All sheets also contain historical information as well as notes on colours, although it should be noted that the colours quoted are often approximate, with FS numbers only provided occasionally.

BR-231 - Royal Siamese Aeronautical Service, 1920-1930

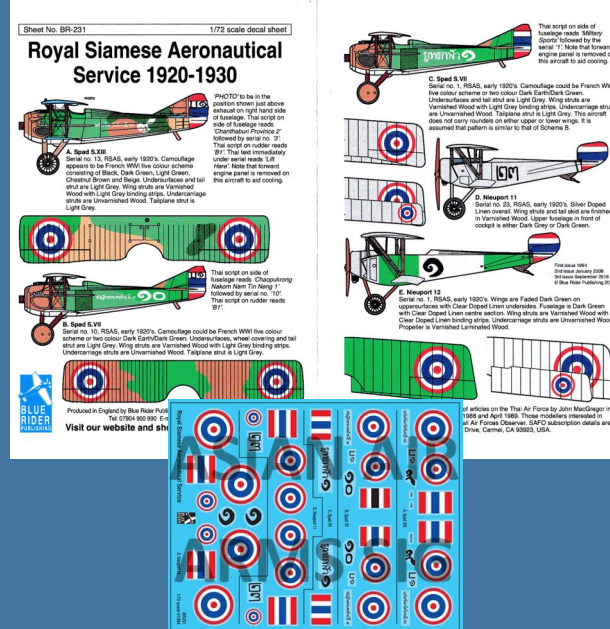
Scale: 1/72

Aircraft featured:

- SPAD S.XIII finished in the French WWI five-colour scheme with light grey undersides.
- Two SPAD S.VIIs. Alternative schemes are suggested for these, either as for the S.XIII or dark earth/dark green with light grey undersides.
- Nieuport II in an overall silver doped finish.
- Nieuport 12, painted dark green and clear doped linen.

NOTE: the white markings for the SPADs are printed in white on the decal sheet, but are shown here in black for clarity.

Also available in 1/48 scale as BR-521, but without the Nieuport 12



BR-256 - Manchuria/Manchukuo Part 1

Scale: 1/72

Aircraft featured:

- Breguet Bre.14 serving with Marshal Chang Tso-lin's private air force, Fengtian, 1931. Finished in natural doped linen.
- Avro 504K of the Nanyuan Aviation Academy, 1920, finished in overall natural doped linen.
- Breguet Br.19A2 of the Manchurian Air Force, circa 1928-1930, painted overall dark green.
- Junkers Ju-86Z-2 of the MKKK (Manchurian Air Transport Company, 1938/1940. This aircraft is light grey overall with dark blue engine nacelles



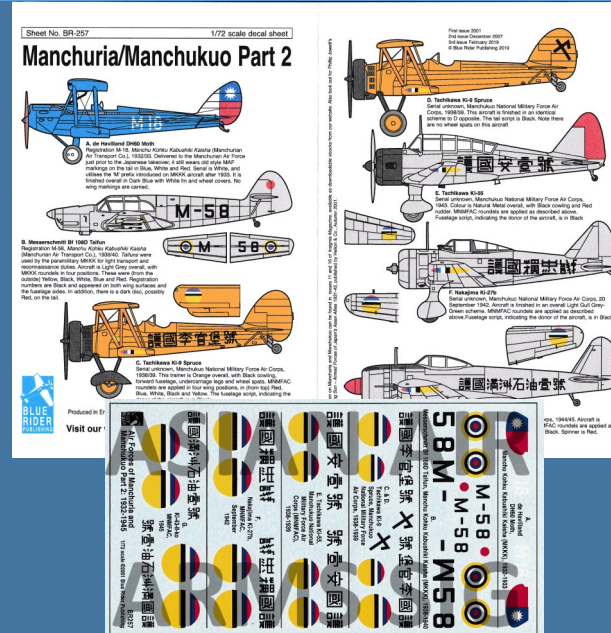


BR-257 - Manchuria/Manchukuo Part 2

Scale: 1/72

Aircraft featured:

- D.H.60 Moth of the MKKK 1932/33, painted overall dark blue with white fin and wheel covers.
- Messerschmitt Bf 108D 'Taifun' of the MKKK 1938/40. Overall light grey.
- Two Tachikawa Ki-9 'Spruce' aircraft of the Manchukuo National Military Force Air Corps (MNMFAC) 1938/39, orange overall with black cowling.
- Tachikawa Ki-55 of the MNMFAC, 1943, overall natural metal.
- Nakajima Ki-27b 'Nate' of the MNMFAC, 1942. Painted overall light gull grey-green.
- Nakajima Ki-43-II-ko 'Oscar' of the MNMFAC, overall light gull grey-green.

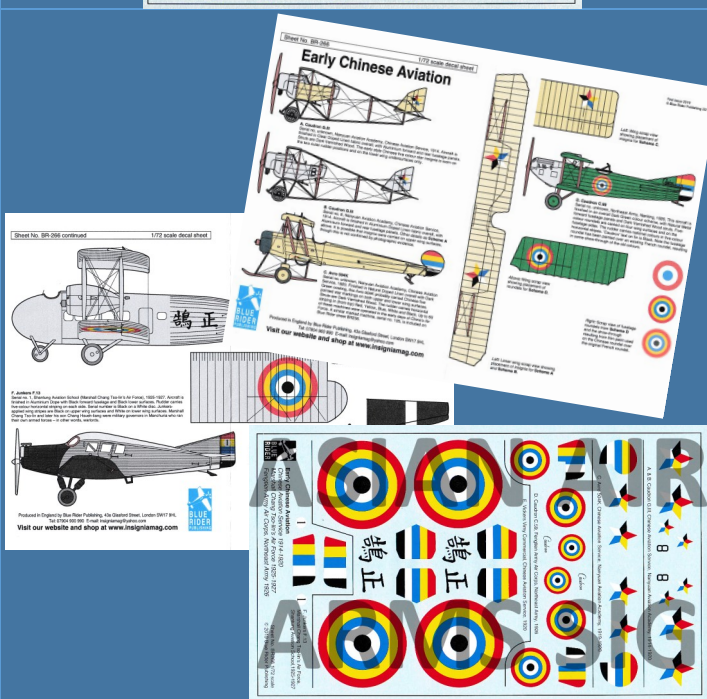


BR-266 - Early Chinese Aviation (1914-1927)

Scale: 1/72

Aircraft featured:

- Two Caudron G.III aircraft of the Nanyuan Aviation Academy, 1914. One aircraft finished overall in clear doped, the other is overall aluminium doped linen.
- Avro 504K belonging to the Nanyuan Aviation Academy, 1920, finished overall in natural doped linen.
- Caudron C.59 of the Northeast Army, Nanking, 1928. Overall dark green with natural metal engine panels.
- Vickers Vimy Commercial, of the Chinese Aviation Service, Nanyuan, 1920. Aircraft finished in aluminium dope overall.
- Junkers F.13, Shantung Aviation School (Marshal Chang Tso-lin's Air Force), 1925-1927, overall aluminium dope with black forward fuselage and undersides.



BR-409 - Cambodian & Kampuchean MiG-21

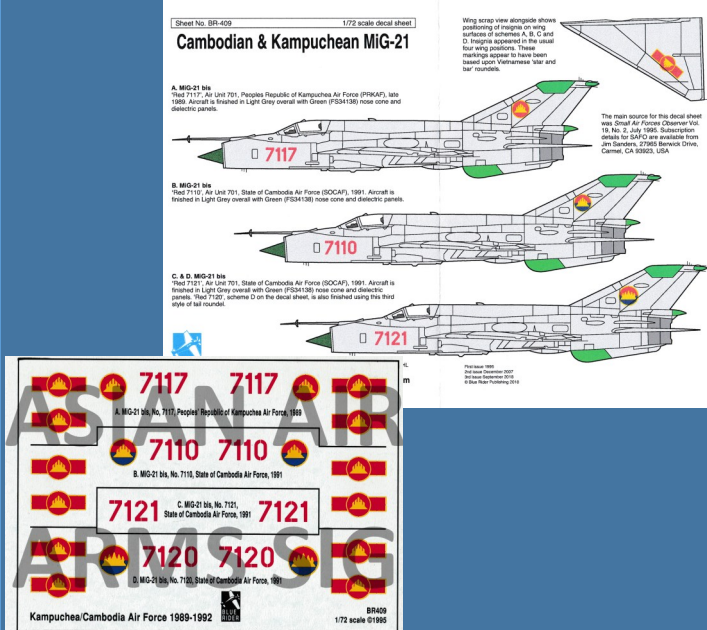
Scale: 1/72

Aircraft featured:

- MiG-21 bis 'Red 7117', Air Unit 701, Peoples' Republic of Kampuchea Air Force (PRKAF), late 1983. This aircraft is featured on the 'cover' of this issue, with the later SOCAF tail roundels as on 'Red 7110'.
- MiG-21 bis 'Red 7110', Air Unit 701, State of Cambodia Air Force (SOCAF), 1991.
- MiG-21 bis 'Red 7120' and 'Red 7121', Air Unit 701, State of Cambodia Air Force (SOCAF), 1991. These two aircraft have a different style of tail roundel from 'Red 7110'.

All aircraft are overall light grey with green nose cones and dielectric panels.

Also available in 1/144 scale as MS-004





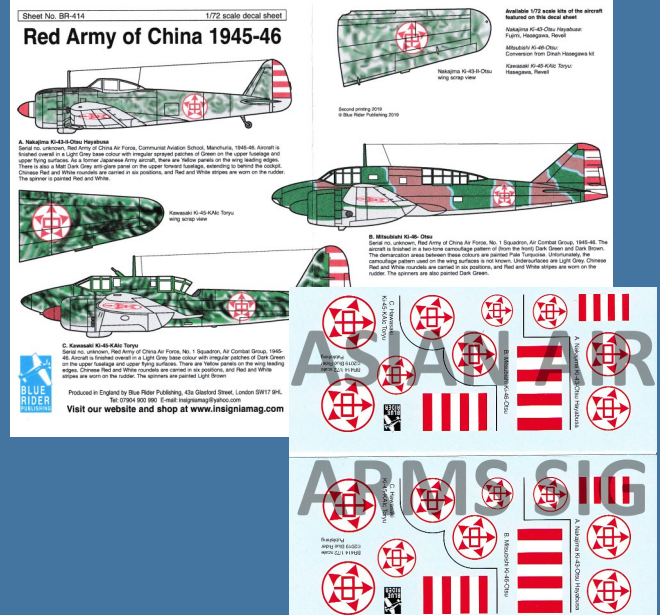
Blue Rider Publishing

BR-414 - Red Army of China 1945-46

Scale: 1/72

Aircraft featured:

- Nakajima Ki-43-II-Otsu Hayabusa, Communist Aviation School, Manchuria, 1945-46. Finished overall light grey with irregular sprayed patches of green on upper surfaces.
- Mitsubishi Ki-46-Otsu, No.1 Squadron, Air Combat Group, 1945-46. This aircraft in dark green/dark brown camouflage on the upper surfaces, with pale turquoise demarcation lines. Undersides are light grey.
- Kawasaki Ki-45 Toryu of No.1 squadron, Air Combat Group, 1945-46. Overall light grey with irregular patches of dark green on the upper surfaces.



BR-418 - Afghan Air force 1924-1928

Scale: 1/72

Aircraft featured:

- De Havilland, D.H.9, 1924. Overall light grey with red nose and upper cowling.
- Avro 504K, 1924. overall light grey.
- Duks (Polikarpov) R-1 (Soviet-built D.H.9A), overall light grey.
- Duks (Polikarpov) R-1 (Soviet-built D.H.9A), khaki upper surfaces with clear doped linen lower surfaces.

As explained in the accompanying text, it remains unclear whether the Afghan state arms were painted in red or black, so both options are provided. Optional white markings are provided for the last aircraft.



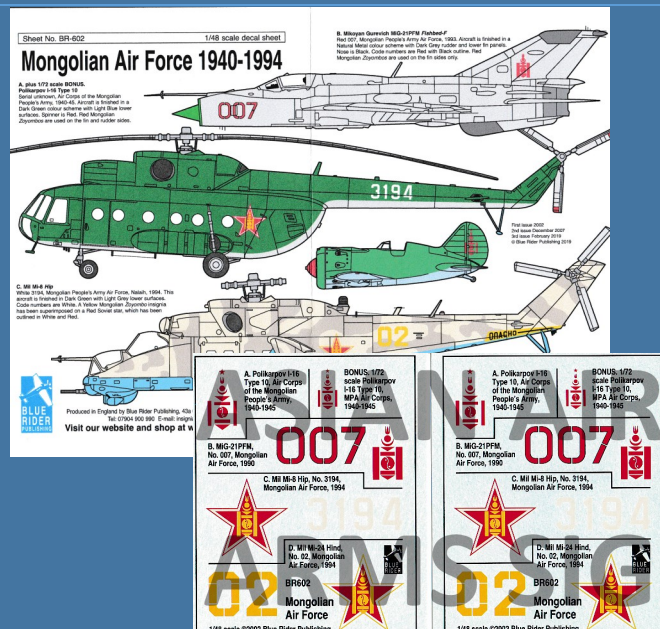
BR-602 - Mongolian Air Force 1940-1994

Scale: 1/48

Aircraft featured:

- MiG-21 PFM 'Fishbed-F', 'Red 007', People's Army Air Force, 1993. Natural metal overall with dark grey rudder and dielectric panels.
- MiL Mi-8 'Hip', 'White 3194', People's Army Air Force, 1994. Dark green with light grey undersides.
- MiL Mi-24 'Hind-D', 'Yellow 22', People's Army Air Force 1994. Finished in a camouflage scheme of pale khaki and sand with light blue undersides.
- **Bonus aircraft:** Polikarpov I-16 Type 10 (*in 1/72 scale*). Overall dark green with light blue lower surfaces.

Also available in 1/72 scale, but without the Polikarpov I-16(!)





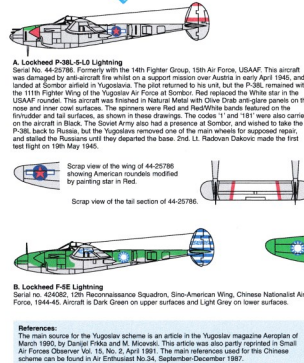
MS-001 - Lockheed Lightnings

Scale: 1/144

Aircraft featured:

- Lockheed P-38L-5-LO Lightning used by the Yugoslav Air Force following a forced landing by a USAF pilot in April 1945. Overall natural metal with olive drab anti-glare panels on the nose and inner cowlings.
- Lockheed F-5E Lightning of the Chinese Nationalist Air Force 1944-45. Dark green upper surfaces with light grey undersides. (This aircraft is also featured on sheet BR242, see below)

MiniScale 1/144 scale decal SHEET No. MS-001



BR-242 - Chinese Air Force - Nationalist Aircraft 1937-1945

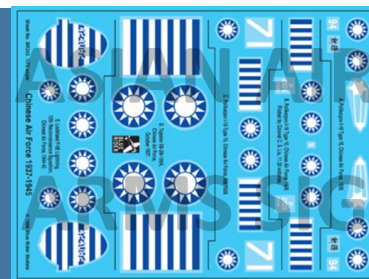
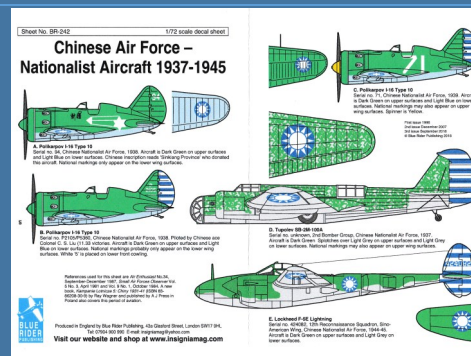
Scale: 1/72

Aircraft featured:

- Three Polikarpov I-16 Type 10 aircraft, 1938/39. All three aircraft finished in dark green upper surfaces with light blue undersides.
- Tupolev SB-2M-100A, 2nd Bomber Group, 1937. Light grey overall with dark green splotches on upper surfaces.
- Lockheed F-5E Lightning—same aircraft featured on MS-001 (see above).

Also produced in 1/48 scale as BR-523

N.B. At the time of writing, there was a VERY limited stock of this sheet left



The new Blue Rider website is very well laid out and easy to navigate, with full-colour previews of all their products, including the books. Prices for the decal sheets range from £5 to £9 with free postage worldwide (!), representing truly excellent value for money. Colours and register on all the sheets appear to be excellent. Most of the sheets I have actually used have worked very well, with one exception, which was prone to cracking, although to be fair it was several years old. I highly recommend you check out their website if, like me, you're interested in different or unusual schemes! I'm very tempted to buy the Maquette Vickers Vimy Commercial just to use those huge (3.5 cm), gorgeous roundels on BR-266!





'Paradise Afire', the Sri Lankan War vol.2 by David Thomas

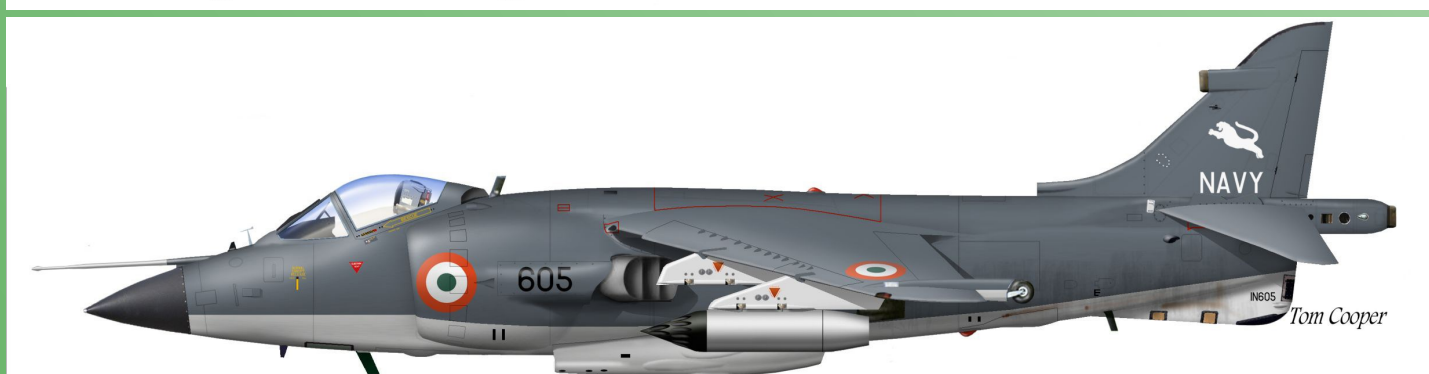
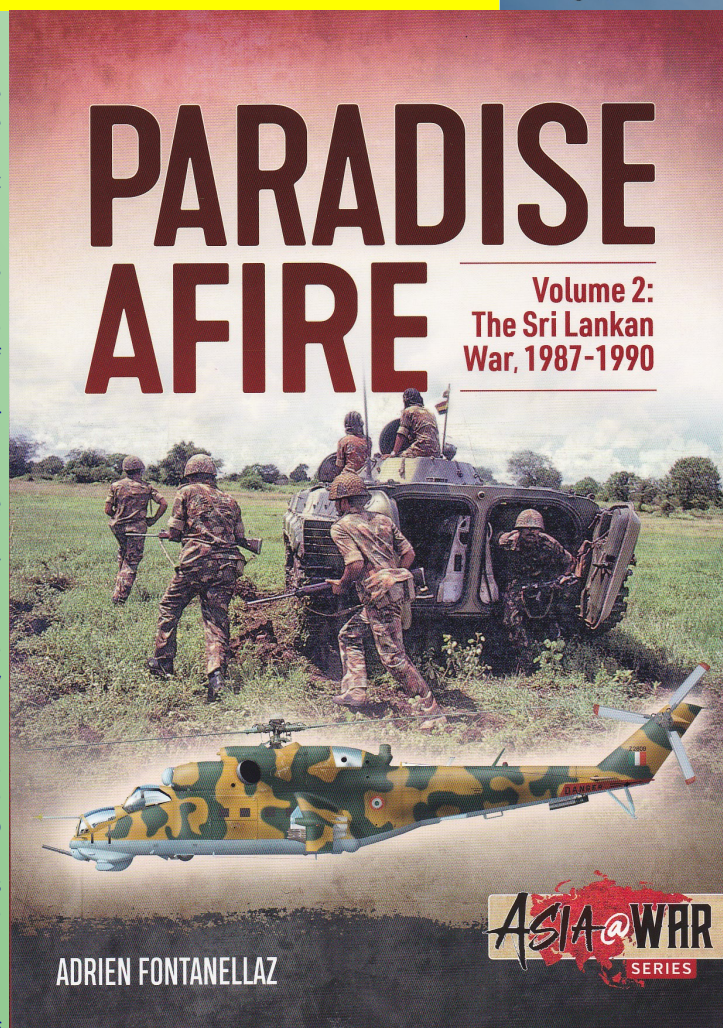
This, the second volume of three by Adrien Fontanellaz on the causes, operations and outcomes of this Civil War, was published by Helion and Co. in 2019 as part of their growing "Asia at War" Series. It covers the years involving the arrival, deployment and eventual departure of the Indian Army Peace Keeping Force (IPKF). In this volume he looks at the reasons why it was deployed, how it carried out its mission and why it was eventually withdrawn by the government in New Delhi.

As with other books in the series it is well illustrated with numerous black and white photographs, maps and tables of the forces in action. Also there are two pages of contemporary colour photos, three pages of colour profiles of aircraft used by the Indian Air Force (IAF), produced by AAA member Tom Cooper, as well as two pages of drawings of Indian Army personnel and equipment.

The author notes that the years 1987–1990 saw a major development in the politics of the South Asia region as India launched what was to be its largest military action on foreign territory to date. However, despite the intention of having its troops act as a peace keeping force, events on the ground and in the political arena resulted in it metamorphosing into a prolonged and invariably vicious counter insurgency operation.

The Indian Army was largely unprepared for both the initial deployment and the subsequent change in focus and indeed the mission was subsequently described as a failure by many commentators, but as author Fontanellaz argues, to claim that is to ignore that the IPKF adapted quickly and effectively to the changed circumstances, and he devotes much of the book to explaining how this was achieved. Additionally he points out that at the same time the Indians had to deal with the problem of a spill-over of the violence into the Maldivian Islands, a problem it resolved decisively.

To further complicate matters at this time, while the IPKF was largely tied down in the north and east of Sri Lanka, a new threat to the Sri Lankan government emerged with the resurgence of the JVP, (translated as the Peoples' Liberation Front). This group had been thought to have been defeated in 1971 but reappeared, stronger and better armed, in the late 1980s, unleashing a campaign of assassinations and bombings in and around the capital Colombo which eventually killed some 40,000 people before the leaders were captured and executed, and their followers dispersed.



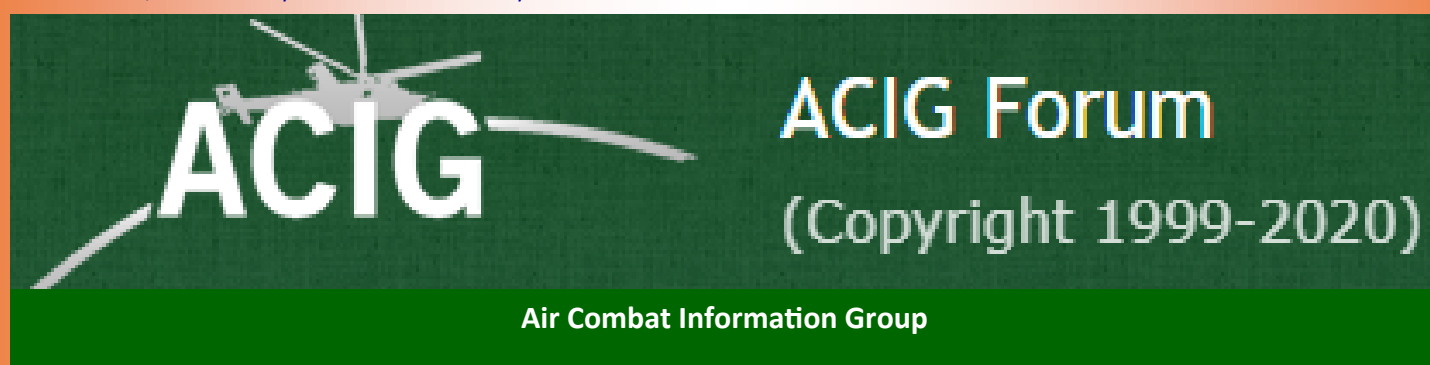


The book's main focus, however, is on the activity of the Indian forces and their main opponents, the "Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam" (LTTE). Initially the Indians had entered Sri Lanka as friends of the LTTE, as they had provided arms and training bases in the south east of India where the majority of the population were ethnic Tamils and supported the Tamil cause in Sri Lanka. However, as he explains, this was to change over the first few months of the deployment and developed into several major operations by the Indians. Many from both sides were either killed or wounded in these clashes. By the time of the final withdrawal of Indian forces some three years later they had lost 1155 KIA and some 4500 injured while the LTTE admitted to losing 754 KIA.



The withdrawal of Indian forces was completed in March 1990 and occurred in somewhat odd circumstances, in that it had forced the LTTE to the negotiating table by gradually but successfully grinding down and isolating its enemy but then being unable to expand on that success. The ironic fact was that the LTTE was forced to talk about peace but it now had to deal with a new government in power in New Delhi, a government formed from a coalition of parties who had opposed the Indian intervention from its inception. This meant it had effectively defeated the Indians, the author concludes, not on the battlefield, but at a more crucial level, that of politics.

One final footnote to emerge from the Indian involvement was that in early 1991 the coalition that had swept to power the previous year was unravelling, and it looked as if the Congress Party, which had initiated the Indian intervention, would regain power. Its leader Rajiv Gandhi was a supporter of the intervention, and for the LTTE leadership his return was likely to prove fatal. Consequently the organisation's leader decided that the only option was to order the assassination of Gandhi. This was carried out on May 21st by several members of the female cadre of the group, one of whom detonated a suicide vest close to the target, killing him and herself as well as 13 other people immediately. This proved to be a political disaster for the LTTE, as the Indians reacted by chasing down the remaining members of the assassination team and dismantling the group's support network in India. The action so shocked public opinion in India that even the Indian Tamils disavowed support for the LTTE. By this one action it guaranteed the opposition of the leading regional power, and lost its major supply and support chain and, the author claims, led ultimately to its demise some 20 years later.





To summarise therefore, this like Volume 1 is a detailed and shrewdly observed analysis of events in Sri Lanka in the years of the Indian direct intervention in the civil war. It is clear, concise and written in a highly readable manner. The author is at pains to avoid any form of "politicising" the narrative, avoiding words like "regime", rebels "terror" or "terrorist". The book does not judge the politics but rather focuses on recording and describing the military events as they occurred. As with Volume 1 it is a book I can recommend to any student of military and political events in southern Asia in the late 20th century.



Finally, I am conscious that the Asian Air Arms group is a modelling as well as a research group, and as well as including a number of images from this book I intend in the future building at least one of the Sri Lankan A.F. machines illustrated in these volumes. That build will be included as a separate feature in a future Newsletter. I did start to build a two-seat Kfir fighter in Sri Lankan colours last year but for some reason it finished up as a South African Cheetah D! However, as this second volume includes a number of images of Indian aircraft, I am taking the liberty of adding the images of two of my own models, finished as illustrated by my friend Tom Cooper in the book.



HELION & COMPANY





Sri Lankan Air Force Decals

After reading David's 'Paradise Afire' article for the last issue, I was inspired to do some digging around the 'net, and discovered that Jamie McIntyre in Australia produces an A4-sized decal sheet titled 'Tiger Tamers', covering many of the aircraft types used by the Ceylon/Sri Lankan Air Force in 1/72, 1/48 and 1/32 scales.

Jamie, who is also credited in the acknowledgements with helping to produce the colour profiles for the 'Paradise Afire' series, has obviously done a great deal of research into the subject, and he has very kindly emailed me a set of 35 pictures that he has compiled to support the decal sheet. Other references are readily available on the Internet.

There is a very comprehensive selection of markings on offer here, and the following types are included on the 1/72 sheet.

De Havilland Canada DHC-1 Chipmunk
Boulton-Paul Balliol T.2
Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-27M 'Flogger J' (initial and later schemes)
Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-23UB 'Flogger C' (initial scheme)
De Havilland Heron 2D
Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-17 'Fresco A'
Cessna 337 'Skymaster'
Beechcraft E18S
Douglas C-47B Dakota
IA-55A Pucara
IAI C-2 'Kfir' (initial and later schemes)
Antonov An-32B 'Cline'
Lockheed C-130K Hercules (initial and later schemes)
Hongdu K-5 Karakorum
De Havilland Tiger Moth (CX-123)

The 1/48 decal sheet features 13 different aircraft (plus 2 bonus options) of the Sri Lankan Air Force from 1953 to now:

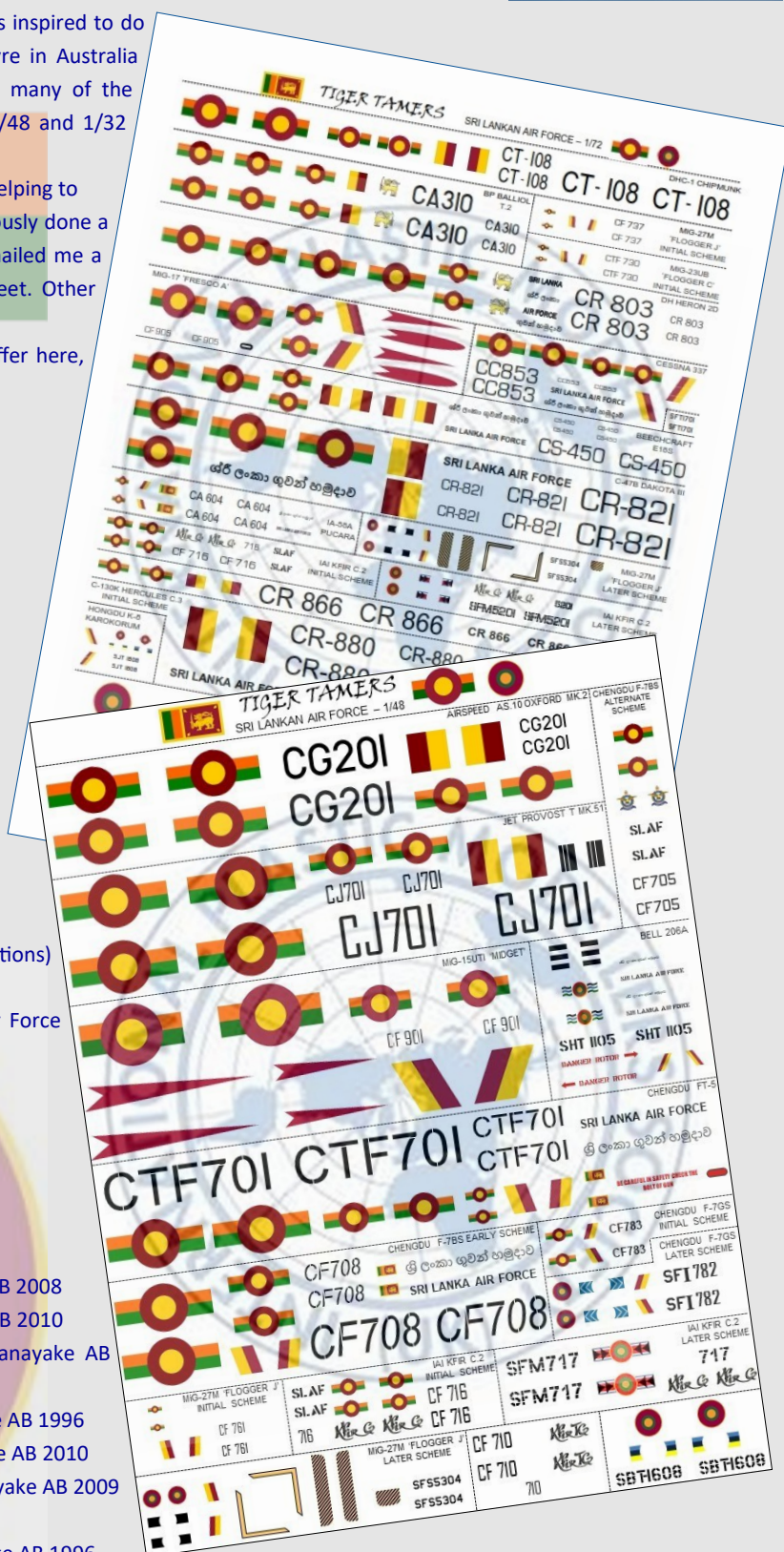
Airspeed AS.10 Oxford Mk.2 CG20I, Flying Wing, Royal Ceylon Air Force Base Kutanayake 1953
Chengdu F-7BS CF705, 5 Jet Squadron, Kutanayake AB 1994
Jet Provost T.Mk51 CJ70I, No.6 Squadron, Kutanayake AB 1960
MiG-15UTI 'Midget' CF 901, No.6 Squadron, Kutanayake AB 1971
Bell 206A SHT 1105, 7 Helicopter Squadron, Hingurakgoda AB 2011
Chengdu FT-5 CTF70I, 5 Jet Squadron, Kutanayake AB 1994
Chengdu F-7BS CF708, 5 Jet Squadron, Kutanayake AB 1994
Chengdu F-7GS CF783, initial scheme, 5 Jet Squadron, Kutanayake AB 2008
Chengdu F-7GS SFI 782, later scheme, 5 Jet Squadron, Kutanayake AB 2010
MiG-27M 'Flogger J' CF 761, initial scheme, 5 Jet Squadron, Kutanayake AB 2000
IAI 'Kfir' C.2 CF 716, initial scheme, 10 Fighter Squadron, Kutanayake AB 1996
IAI 'Kfir' C.2 SFM717, later scheme, 10 Fighter Squadron, Kutanayake AB 2010
MiG-27M 'Flogger J' SFS5304, later scheme, 5 Jet Squadron, Kutanayake AB 2009

BONUS OPTIONS

IAI 'Kfir' TC.2 CF 710, initial scheme, 10 Fighter Squadron, Kutanayake AB 1996
1/32 Nanchang CJ-6 SBT-1608, 1 Flying Training Wing, Anuradhapura AB 2009

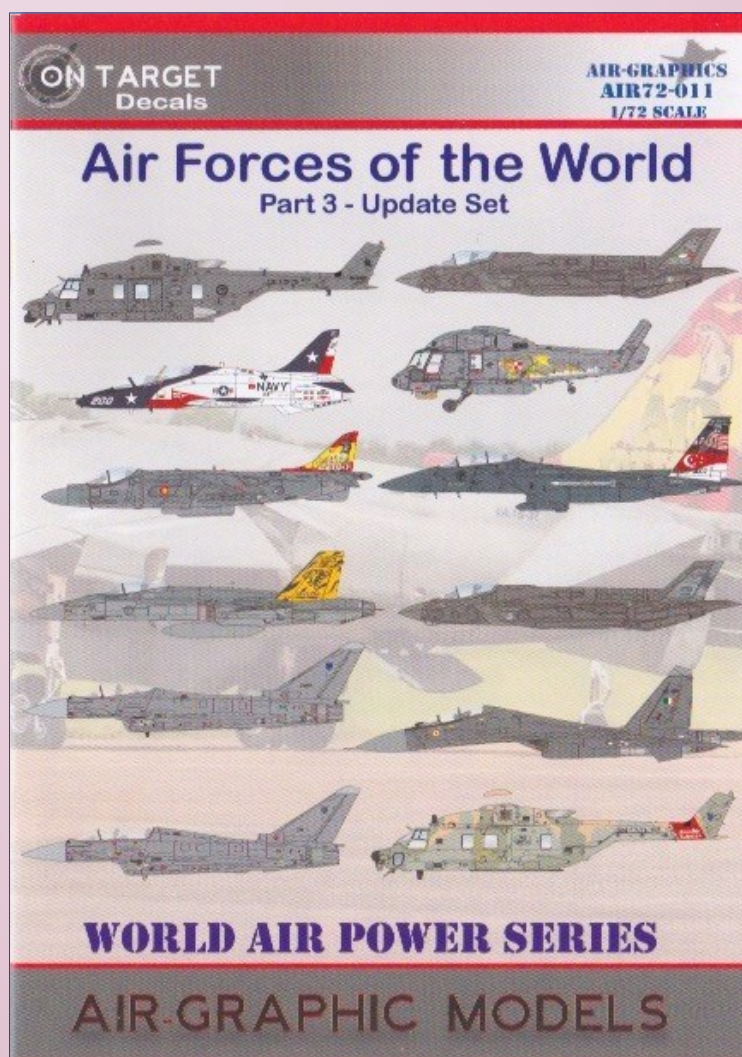
The decals are printed on Dr Decal & Mr Hyde Waterslide Inkjet Decal Paper using a Canon Pixma MG2965 printer, and over-coated with Microscale Liquid Decal Film. As the decal film is continuous, each image will need to be trimmed out individually prior to use. The price for the decal sheet is AUD\$20 plus postage, and Jamie can be contacted by email at redfern73@hotmail.com. Jamie informs me that his production rate is quite slow, so a little patience will be required on the part of the modeller! I can assure you, however, the wait will be worth it! Highly recommended to anyone who has been inspired by David's 'Paradise Afire' series!

Steve Komor, February 2021





Air Forces of the World - Part 3 Update Set



One of the most recent releases from Air Graphics Models, **Product No. AIR72-011**, will be of interest to Asian Air Arms fans. The style and format of this very busy decal release may appear familiar to some modellers since it is the work of at least two members of the former, late-lamented Aviation Workshop team. The sheet covers no less than 12 separate colour schemes, some of which are for very recent aircraft types such as the Royal Air Force of Oman Eurofighters, and F-35 Lightnings operated by both the Aeronautica Italiana and the Royal Netherlands Air Force. There are only two Asian Air Arm schemes present, but since both are particularly interesting and attractive, I have decided we should include a quick review in the Newsletter. The first offers decal markings for an Indian Air Force Sukhoi Su-30MKI operated by 102 Squadron (Trisonics) and is designed to fit the Trumpeter or Zvezda kits of the Sukhoi Su-30SM or Su-30MKK respectively. It should be noted that modifications will need to be made to either of these kits and Air Graphics are promising a suitable Su-30MKI update set in due course. The second offering is for one of my all-time favourites, a Boeing F-15SG Strike Eagle operated by the 428th Fighter Squadron of the Republic of Singapore Air Force. This particular aircraft was actually assigned to the 366th Fighter Wing of the USAF at Mountain Home Air Base, where Singaporean crews train with their USAF counterparts under Project Peace Carvin. As such, the aircraft is presented in the standard overall Gunship Grey colour scheme which contrasts nicely with the superb special tail markings which commemorate the close association between the two nations with stylized flags and, on the inner surfaces, a skull and crossed cutlasses to reflect the 428th sobriquet 'The Buccaneers'. Air Graphics recommend several kits although personally I would opt for the new Academy version or the Great Wall Hobby kit. Again, it should be noted that modifications will need to be made to the rear fuselage fairings and some additional

aftermarket pods will need to be procured.

Air Graphics have built up a very good reputation for the accuracy and standard of their decal sheets which are the result of a long partnership with Cartograf of Italy, so their quality is assured. The decal placement instructions are also some of the best in the marketplace with, in most cases, comprehensive colour references including FS numbers and specific paint references for at least six of the most popular brands. Please note that some of the schemes on offer, including the two Asian Air Arm types, rely on the use of some stenciling from the donor kit. Air Graphics have also taken the trouble to provide kit and aftermarket accessory recommendations, which are also helpful. The DPIs also include a nice selection of photographic references for each type for further inspiration. I have little doubt that Air Graphics will treat us to more Asian Air Arms subjects in this series in the future but in the meantime, I would thoroughly recommend this particular issue.

Review sample courtesy of my wallet - again!

Mark ATTRILL

January 2021





AIR-GRAPHICS





Book Announcement - Limited run - Order NOW!!

Samurai Phantoms

The McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II in Japanese service
Volume 2 F-4EJ*Kai* and reconnaissance variants

Andy Binks



In collaboration with Asian Air Arms Research Group and 4Aviation

Due to the huge popularity of our first "Samurai Phantoms" book, we're now proud to announce the release of its companion volume - *Samurai Phantoms, F-4EJ Kai and Reconnaissance Variants*. As before, it has been created with modellers in mind, using 72 never-before published personal colour photographs within its 70 pages. It will be printed as a softback (20x25cm) on 100# Premium Lustre Gloss (148 GSM) Paper.

With superb new kits recently released in both major scales, this wonderful book will guarantee inspiration. As ever, we have included even more of the latest available information, providing you with the most complete guidance for each colour scheme. Copying our previously acclaimed formats, we also refer to alternative photographs in other publications to aid the completion of an accurate late-variant Japanese Phantom kit.

This will be a limited-run production - just 150 copies will be made available - so ensure you don't miss out.

Pricing will be £32 (UK), £36 (EU) or £39 (Rest of the World), all including standard postage and packing charges. To get your limited-edition copy contact andrewbinks@btinternet.com without delay.

Sample Pages

Order NOW!!!



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titles for
members of
Asian Air Arms!**



Photo by Kenji Kikuzaki

Wearing the woodland camouflage colours, this 501 Squadron RF-4E*Kai* Phantom took part in the 1994 *senkyo* held at Komatsu AB.

The drawing on the nose is that of a white tiger, which according to legend, offers protection from the westerly direction. The large kanji characters on the engine intake splitter plate read *Byakko*, white tiger, and the smaller upper characters mean *seishin* or spirit. Clear photographs of this aircraft and its markings, can be found on page 18 of *Senkyo*, *Koku-Fan Illustrated No. 78* (Bunrindo), as well as page 77 of *The Collected Special Color Scheme of JASDF Aircraft* (Ikaros, ISBN 4-87149-678-3).

Page 1 of *JASDF All Aircraft, 40th Anniversary of JASDF* (Green Arrow, ISBN 4-7663-3171-0) shows a detail photograph of the lettering, and the monochrome picture on page 17 of the same publication, shows that the opposite side of the nose has the same kanji characters and artwork. The latter is shown clearly at the bottom of page 115.

Page 111 of *1979-2000 Senkyo* (Green Arrow, ISBN 4-7663-3326-8) has a close up photograph of the white tiger, as do the excellent detail photos on page 39 of the September 1994 issue of *Koku-Fan* magazine. Note that the artwork always faces forwards.

The aircraft has not yet had the UHF/VHF radio equipment upgrade, as the fuselage spine aerial is of the earlier shorter type. An AN/ALQ-131 ECM pod is being carried on the usual, for RF-4Es, port inboard underwing pylon, and 907R is stencilled onto the outboard underwing fuel tank pylon, presumably with 907R is on the opposite side.



Order NOW!!!



Upper photo by Nobuyuki Kenae and lower photo by Kenji Kikuzaki

F-4EJ Kai number 404 was chosen to represent 306 Squadron's celebration of the 40th anniversary of the JASDF. It first appeared before the public at the Komatsu air show on 4 September 1994, as shown in the upper image. When compared to the lower photo, it should be noted that the FS35550 Sky Blue stripe (and black lettering) from the base of the tail to the fuselage *hinomaru*, more clearly seen in the photo on page 8 of the December 1994 issue of *Koku-Fan* magazine, or on page 5 of *JASDF All Aircraft, 40th Anniversary of JASDF* (Green Arrow, ISBN 4-7663-3171-0), was added at a later date, as was the white border around the 40 on the tailfin. Page 1 of the same book has a close up photo of the right hand nose area, and page 38 of *F-4 Maniacs, 50 Years of Activity* (Shuwa System, ISBN 978-4-7980-5765-1) shows a further four images. The November 1994 issue of *Koku-Fan* magazine has detailed pictures of the earlier overall Insignia White colour scheme on pages 34 and 35. Note the Dark Compass Ghost Gray engine intake ramp.

The writing around the cartoon character on the engine intake splitter plate says JASDF 40th ANNIVERSARY. The crew chief name J.SATOH, appears on the port side air conditioning (A/C) intake mounted on the side of the nose, only on the later aircraft, as confirmed by page 42 of *The Collected Special Color Scheme of JASDF Aircraft* (Ikaros, ISBN 4-87149-678-3).

Order NOW!!!





Video goodies!

curated by Gary Markham

Gary Markham, our resident South Korean specialist, has sent me a whole slew of links to videos on YouTube which may be of interest to members. Most of these feature RAAF aircraft, which some may argue is outside the remit of this SIG, although Gary assures me that, according to the **Office of the Prime Minister of Australia** no less, Australia **IS** in Asia! Anyway, I'm sure there will be many who, like me, will be only too pleased to have all these links in one place. Gary has been personally involved in the production of some of these films, and also features in a couple. His list is presented here in its entirety for your viewing pleasure—thanks Gary!

[F/A-18A Hornet Walkaround with Flight Lieutenant Em](#)

[F/A-18 Cockpit View of Landing at Williamtown Airbase](#)

[RAAF NO. 77 SQUADRON FAREWELLS F/A-18A/B HORNETS](#)

[F/A-18A/B Hornets Farewell at Williamtown RAAF Base/Newcastle Airport](#)

[P51 Mustang undergoes 50hourly/yearly check, Tyabb YTYA](#)

[Aussie Warbirds - Sights & sounds at Tyabb Airshow](#)

[Mirage III - Butterworth 1987 - Part 3 - Heavy Bombing](#)

[Air Force Roulettes perform at Royal Hobart Regatta](#)

[F/A-18A Hornet - Sydney Harbour Fly Over on Australia Day 2019](#)

[Warbirds Down Under 2018 - F/A-18 Hornet Display](#)

[Australian Hornet Montage 2017 HD](#)

[Ride in a F/A-18 Hornet](#)

[JEJU AEROSPACE MUSEUM](#)

[STOL Circuit in a DHC-4 Caribou](#)

[RAAF DHC-4 Caribou - Incredibly Short Landing](#)

[Wings Over Illawarra / Sydney Airshow Highlights - 2017](#)

[HARS Super Constellation with John Travolta](#)

[Inside North Korea's One Star Airline \(FASCINATING!\)](#)





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A big welcome to our 4 latest members

Peng Hwee Ong from Singapore; Leonardo Osbaldo Vandervort and Ezekiel Stacy Nitzsche from the USA; Simon McKinlay from the UK

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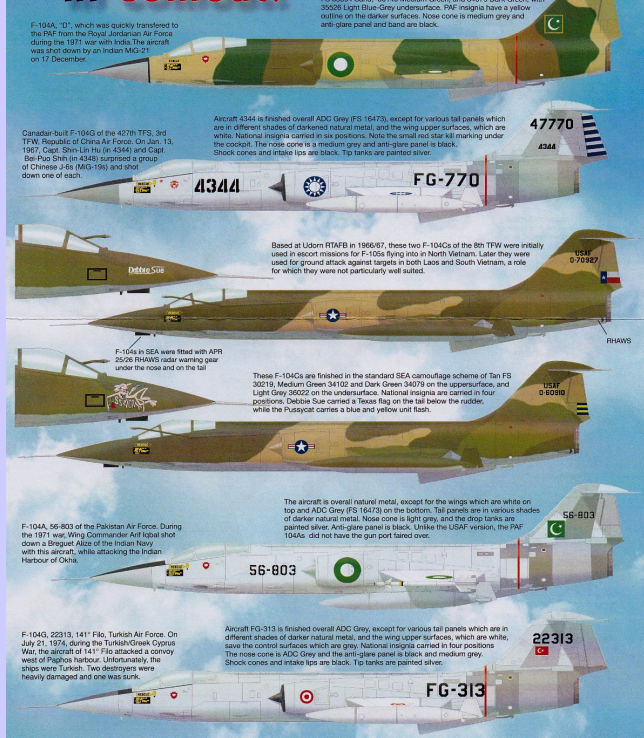
Abu Dhabi, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bermuda, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Laos, Latvia, Malaysia, Malta, Myanmar, Namibia, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, The Philippines, Portugal, Poland, Qatar, Russia, Singapore, Slovenia, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Ukraine, UK, USA and Venezuela—Phew!



Iliad 'Starfighters in Combat' by Steve Komor

Starfighters in combat!

ILIAD
DESIGN 40



Here's a sheet that will be of interest to many of our readers. I know it's been reviewed before, but there may be some who missed it first time around. Bob Migliardi's Iliad decals have been around for a while, and from personal experience I can say that they are well-researched, accurate and of very high quality. This particular sheet, 48020, features markings for no fewer than six Starfighters, three of which represent Asian Air Arms.



The first is a Pakistani F-104A which was acquired from the Royal Jordanian Air Force and used by the PAF during the 1971 war with India, where it was shot down on December 17th 1971. It still retains its RJAF camouflage, and the national markings on the upper surfaces all have yellow outlines, which are provided as separate decals.

Next up is an F-104G of the Republic of China Air Force, which shot down a PLAAF J-6 (MiG-19) in January 1967. This aircraft is finished in overall ADC Grey with white upper wing surfaces and natural metal panels around the tail section.

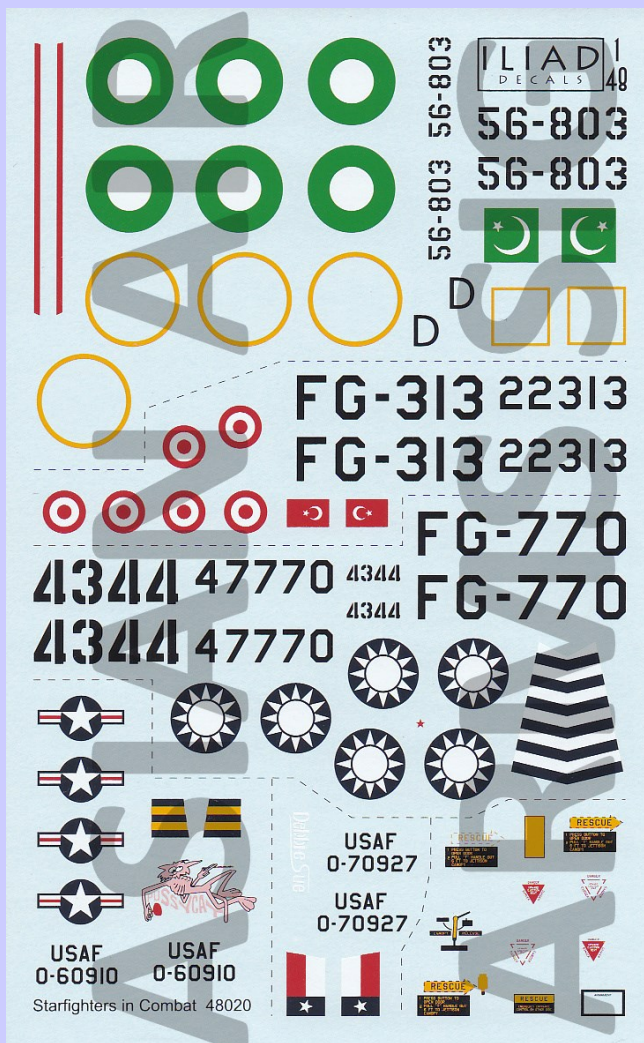


The last Asian aircraft on the sheet is another Pakistani F-104A, which shot down an Indian Navy Breguet Alize during the 1971 war with India. The aircraft has a natural metal fuselage, while the wings have white upper wing surfaces with ADC Grey on the undersides.



While perhaps not relevant to our SIG, the other markings on the sheet are for two F-104Cs of the USAF, based at Udon RTAFB in 1966/67, and a Turkish F-104G. During the Turkish/Greek Cyprus War in July 1974, this and other aircraft of 141° Filo mistakenly attacked a Turkish convoy, sinking one destroyer and heavily damaging two more.

As well as providing full national markings and serials for all the featured aircraft, there is also a small section on the decal sheet which has the common emergency/rescue markings which are applied around the cockpit area.





AAA Events No.1

by David Thomas



SHAHEEN IX

A joint exercise between the Pakistani and Chinese air forces took place in Pakistan in December 2020 according to an official statement from both governments. Titled "Shaheen-IX", as it is the ninth round in the Shaheen series of annual air exercises, it began at an undisclosed operational air base. As well as aircraft from the Pakistan A.F. a contingent of People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF), including some of the latest J-10C fighters, comprising combat pilots, air defence controllers and technical ground crew was involved.

The opening ceremony was witnessed by PAF's Air Vice Marshal Waqas Ahmed Sulehri and PLAAF's Maj. Gen. Sun Hong who said the exercise would improve the level of combat training and strengthen practical cooperation between the two air forces, AVM Sulehri argued it will provide an opportunity to enhance "interoperability" of both the air forces, and fortifying bilateral relations. Last month, the two allied nations signed an MoU to further deepen bilateral defence cooperation.

Given the tension at the time between Pakistan and China on the one hand and India on the other, the exercises, which lasted a few days, would have been of great interest across the border.

Related Topic

Also in late 2020 the PAF formally inducted fourteen new JF-17 Thunder Block II dual-seater fighter aircraft jointly developed by Islamabad and Beijing, into its fleet. This marks a significant advance in the country's air defence arsenal. The ceremony was attended by the country's Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan and Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong.



ACM Anwar Khan congratulated the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC) and China National Aero-Technology Import and Export Corporation (CATIC) on the successful completion of the production target in a record time and called the induction of the dual-seat fighter aircraft JF-17 Thunder in the PAF fleet a significant milestone towards self-reliance.

The JF-17 Thunder dual-seater is designed to improve the PAF's operational and training capabilities, and the ACM continued, "It will further enhance the advanced combat training of PAF fighter pilots on this indigenous war fighting machine."

The aircraft is part of the modernization of Pakistan's air fleet to compete with its arch-rival, the Indian Air Force, which has more than 2,000 aircraft compared to the PAF's current strength of over 900 aircraft and helicopters.

In recent months, India has received Rafale fighter jets from France after New Delhi paid €7.8 billion (\$9.2 billion) four years ago for the purchase of a total of 36 aircraft from French defence manufacturer Dassault Aviation.

In addition the Pakistani air chief and the Chinese ambassador inaugurated the production of the latest Block III of JF-17, multirole fighter aircraft, which is suggested to be broadly equivalent in capability to the Rafales.

The PAC has so far delivered more than 100 home-made JF-17 Block I and Block II aircraft to the PAF since 2009.



The single-engine multi-role jets can carry up to 3,630 kilograms (8,000 pounds) of weapons, reach speeds of up to 2,200 kilometers per hour (1,370 miles per hour) and have a combat radius of 1,350 kilometers (840 miles).

Indian A. F. News

For the first time in the strategically-located Persian Gulf region, India is all set to take part in a major multi-nation air combat exercise in the United Arab Emirates with fighter jets and heavy-duty airlift aircraft this month.

The IAF dispatched six Sukhoi-30MKI fighters in the first week of March 2021, plus two C-17 Globemaster-III aircraft and around 125 personnel for the high-voltage "Desert Flag" exercise, which will see participation of air forces from the US, France, South Korea, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Greece, Jordan, Kuwait and Egypt, in turn, will be "observers" for the three-week wargames coordinated by the air warfare centre of the Al Dhafra airbase in UAE, with fighters like American F-15s and F-16s, French Rafales and Mirage-2000s and Russian-origin Sukhois taking part. India has been building stronger defence ties with the Gulf nations through military training, intelligence-sharing and a few bilateral exercises over the years, however this will be the first time the IAF will take part in such a multilateral exercise in the region.

"The exercise will see the entire gamut of offensive and defensive operations with force-enhancers like AWACS (airborne warning and control systems) and flight-refuelling aircraft operating in a realistic combat setting," a senior Indian officer said.

Although the first time in the Gulf, this is the fourth time the IAF has participated in such a multinational exercise in the last five years, following on from the American 'Red Flag' in 2016, the Israeli 'Blue Flag' in 2017 and the Australian 'Pitch Black' wargames in 2018. The IAF's versatility in operating in diverse terrains, from the high-altitude region of Ladakh and the deserts of Rajasthan to the Indian Ocean Region, has made it "a partner of choice" for such exercises around the globe.

Moreover, the IAF has successfully integrated fighters from western (Rafales, Mirage-2000 and Jaguars) and eastern (Sukhois and MiGs) manufacturers, as well as the new indigenous Tejas, into its network-centric operations, which makes it an interesting partner in the exercises.



The upward trajectory in military ties with the Gulf countries also saw General M M Naravane tour UAE and Saudi Arabia, in the first-ever such visit by an Indian Army chief, in December last year at a time when their traditionally close ties with Pakistan have faced turmoil in recent months. The UAE has also taken the lead among the Gulf countries in "normalizing" ties with Israel, a country with which India has close strategic-military ties. The UAE Air Force, incidentally, has been providing support through its Airbus MRTT refuelling aircraft to the IAF's new Rafale fighters on their over-7,000-km flight to India from France.

India is also in discussions to export BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, which have a strike range of 290-km, and the Akash air defence missiles, which have an interception range of 25-km, to the UAE and Saudi Arabia, among other countries.



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KEY KEY
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Key Publishing by Steve Komor

New out from this prolific publishing house is Volume 4 in their Regional Air Power Review series, this one titled 'Air Forces of the World - Pacific Asia'. As such, it falls squarely into the AAA Sig's sphere of interest, and brings the reader right up-to-date with the latest developments in the aerial capability of ten air forces of the region.

NEW 2021 REGIONAL AIR POWER REVIEW VOLUME 4

KEY
PRESENTS

Air Forces OF THE WORLD

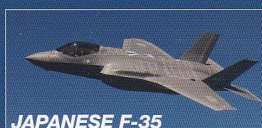
PACIFIC ASIA

FROM THE
MAKERS OF
AIRFORCES
MONTHLY

**CHINESE
DRAGON**
CHENGDU J-20 IN
THE SPOTLIGHT

PLUS
KOREAN STANDOFF
NEW TECH VS OLD GUARD
LEGACY FIREPOWER
DAKOTAS AND F-4s
STILL IN SERVICE

AIR POWER ANALYSIS - 25 AIRCRAFT TYPES IN DETAIL



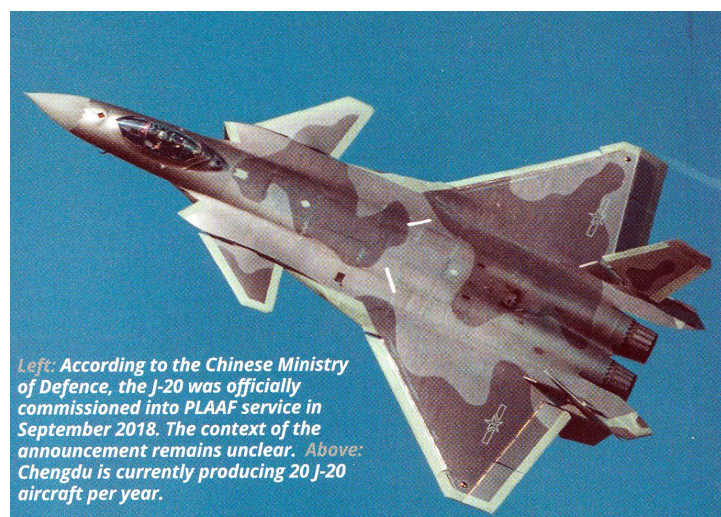
The ten countries covered in this volume are China, Indonesia, Malaysia, North Korea, Japan, Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand.

The first 29 pages cover the PLAAF, by far the region's largest air arm, and includes two-page reviews of several types used by that air force: the J-10 and JH-7 fighters; the next-generation 'stealth' J-20; the H-6 bomber; and the Y-8, Y-9 and Y-20 multi-engine aircraft.

Several pages are then devoted to each of the other nine air forces, with the exception of North Korea which, for obvious reasons, only gets two pages. The most extensive articles, after that on China, cover Japan (16 pages), Singapore (10 pages), and South Korea (12 pages).

Other new types mentioned in the articles are the Indonesian KT-1 trainer, Malaysia's A400 transport, Japan's F-35A Lightning II, Singapore's A330 MRTT, South Korea's KF-X and Taiwan's F-CK-1. There is also extensive coverage of many of the older types in use with the various air arms, such as the OV-10 Bronco light attack aircraft still in use with the Philippines Air Force, the F-4E still going strong with the ROKAF, and even the venerable 'Dakota' which is still in use with the Royal Thai Air Force, albeit in BT-67 Turbo 'Dak' guise.

There is a lot of information packed into the 98 pages of this volume, richly illustrated with excellent colour photos, and I can highly recommend it to all our members. It is available in printed format directly from Key Publishing (**click on the picture to go straight there**) priced £8.99. It is also available as a digital download via the '[Pocketmags](#)' app for iOS and Android, priced £7.





From the same publisher are second editions of two of its best-selling titles, 'Vietnam - The Air War Over South - East Asia' and 'Korean Air War - The Forgotten 'World' Conflict'. Both these titles first appeared on shelves in 1971.

The 'Vietnam' book kicks off with a chapter covering the early years of conflict in Indo-China from 1945 to 1961 and then proceeds, through a further 15 chapters to tell the story of the war to its conclusion in 1975. The final section, 'Counting the Cost', provides a breakdown of the almost 4 million casualties, both military and civilian, caused by this prolonged and tragic war. There is also a very interesting breakdown showing the total numbers of various aircraft types lost by both sides. It came as something of a shock to this reviewer to see the sheer scale of aircraft losses suffered by the Americans compared to the comparatively few (192) losses inflicted on the North Vietnamese Air Force. One must realise, of course, that the vast majority of the American losses would have been due to ground fire over hostile territory, while almost all of the North Vietnamese losses would have been in air combat.

This is a fascinating and unbiased account of a conflict that lasted, on and off, for almost 30 years. It was, by a country mile, the longest war in America's history, and it probably polarised public opinion more than any other war in which the United States had been involved.

This title is available via the same sources as the one above, priced £7.99 for the printed version and £6.99 for the digital edition via Pocketmags.



Korean specialist Gary Markham drew my attention to the second edition of this 'special', which has been issued to mark the 70th Anniversary of the Korean conflict, known as the 'Fatherland Liberation War' in North Korea. Like the other two publications reviewed here, it's packed with information and photographs, in both black & white and colour. It tells the story of combat in the air, mainly over North Korea, and of the often harrowing fate that befell those aircrew unlucky enough to be shot down and captured by the Communist forces.

There are 'chapters' dealing with some of the most notable types to participate in the air war, such as the Lockheed P-80 'Shooting Star', B-29 Superfortress, Hawker Sea Fury, Fairey Firefly, Grumman Tigercat, Chance-Vought Corsair, Lockheed F-94B Starfire, Douglas Skyknight, MiG-15, Po-2 and others.

Notable Incidents of the aerial war are also dealt with, many of them including quotes from some of the aircrew who took part. These include the arrival of the RAAF's Mustangs, the first practical helicopters, the attack on the bridges at Toko-Ri, and so-called 'Black Tuesday'.

The final chapter, 'Counting the cost', deals with losses on both sides, which were far greater than had been anticipated at the start of a supposedly 'limited war'. It highlights the fact that many American and UN aircrew never returned home, having been shot down and captured. The tragic fact that almost 70 years later, some families have still not ascertained the fate of loved ones who were transferred to prison camps in the Soviet Union, is also mentioned.

For anyone wishing to find out more about the air war over Korea, this publication will make interesting reading, and it comes highly recommended. The price, as above, is £7.99 for the printed version and 36.99 for the digital download from Pocketmags, although only the first edition appears on the latter's website.





Asian Aerobatic Teams - Part 1 by Steve Komor

Being an aerobatic team 'nut' myself, I figured there must be at least a few others out there who, like me, just can't get enough of the vast array of designs and colour schemes used by the aerobatic teams of the world. So I thought I'd start an occasional feature dealing with the aerobatic teams of the Asian Air Arms, beginning with

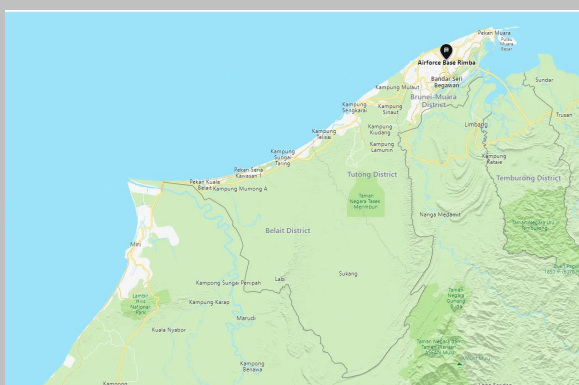


Ensign of the RBAF



BRUNEI

The aerobatic team of the Royal Brunei Air Force (Tentera Udara Diraja Brunei) is called the 'Alap-Alap' (Kestrel) Formation. Currently equipped with three Pilatus PC-7 Mk.II trainers which were purchased from Switzerland in 1997, the team was formed in February 2011, as part of No.63 Training Squadron.



The team is based at Rimba Air Force Base, which lies within the Brunei International Airport in the north of the country. Their aircraft are painted in a four-colour scheme of white, blue, red and yellow. Each aircraft carries two white smoke pods under the wings. The team's collective call-sign is 'Eagle'.

The team currently consists of three qualified instructor pilots, two of whom are actually RAF pilots. One of these is on loan from the RAF while the other is under contract with the RBAF. The third pilot is an RBAF pilot.





Afghan Air Force Markings

AFGHANISTAN



1924-29



1937-67



1967-79



1979-83

Editor's Note: this page is reproduced from Small Air Forces Observer no.150, which was itself a reproduction of a page from John Cochrane's book *Military Aircraft Insignia of the World* (see p.24)

The first military aircraft arrived in Afghanistan from Russia in 1921, but the air arm was not established until 22nd August 1924. Its few aircraft were destroyed in the revolution of 1929 and a new force was not reformed until 1937.

During the early period the aircraft, mostly of Russian origin, bore the Muslim-based arms of Afghanistan in black on white, and the legend 'Allah u Akbar' (God is great) below the wings together with the Afghan flag and coat of arms. Mohamed Nadir Shah, the victor in the 1929 insurrection, changed Afghanistan's colours from largely red to red, green and black, symbolising bloodshed for independence, hope for the future, and the country's dark past. These colours were carried as rudder stripes. There is some evidence of a four-colour roundel, black, red and green with a white centre. The central spot being inscribed with the phrase 'Allah u Akbar'. The use of this marking has no photographic confirmation and its use is very unlikely.

On the reorganization of the air arm in 1937, aircraft were released from British stocks in India, and the RAF roundels were over-painted in Afghan colours. Additionally some aircraft may have sported red, green and black stripes across the wings.

The Royal Afghan Air Force was formed in 1948, and the roundel continued in use until 1967. In the early 1950s the rudder striping gave way to a similarly marked fin flash. In 1967 a new insignia consisting of a three-colour segmented triangle within a white circle was carried on wings, fuselage and fin. The white surround featured the initials of the Afghan armed forces in Arabic script.

The monarchy was overthrown in 1973 and the country fell further within the Soviet sphere of influence. The triangular insignia continued in use until the Russian invasion of 1979, probably with different letters on the roundel. After 1979 a red disc with yellow inscriptions was adopted and later, in 1983, a red star within a circle of the Afghan national colours.

Following the departure of the Soviet forces in 1989 there was a complete breakdown of the government, and various dissident groups carried their own markings, many of which were discovered during the Allied invasion of 2002. Examples include possible Taliban aircraft which carried roundels of black, white, green and white, and Hezb-a-Wahdat, using a green disc with a black border with various symbols, or others with similar markings with a central small white spot. The Northern Alliance used the triangle insignia without the red portion.

The three coloured triangle of 1967-1979 has been reintroduced with a new inscription, which was changed in 2010 with a change of the name to the Afghan National Army Air Force.



1983-94



1996



2000



2010



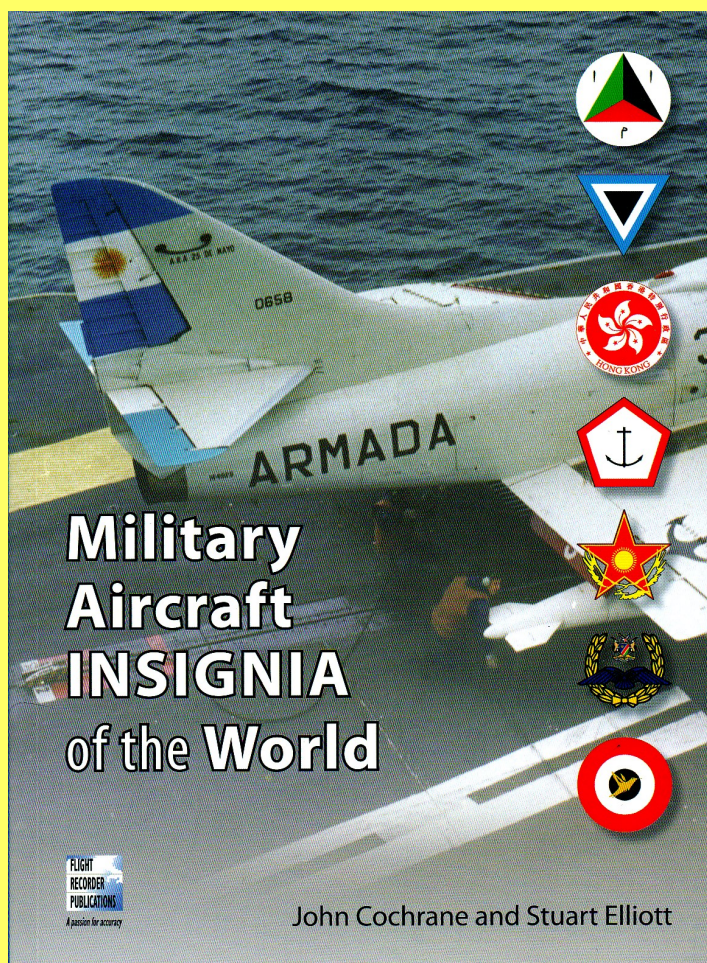
Northern Alliance



Is it my imagination, or is the roundel on the tail offset from the vertical?



Book Review



Military Aircraft Insignia of the World, by John Cochrane & Stuart Elliott. 142 pages (20 mm by 270 mm). Softbound. Published by Crécy Publishing. www.crecy.co.uk. £14.95

UK; £14.95 USA; \$22.95 (2014).

The history of military aircraft insignia for 216 countries is presented in well-researched text, with excellent colour drawings of insignia and carefully selected photos.

Rather than try to describe the quality of this work in words, a reproduction of the pages on Afghanistan will be found elsewhere in this Newsletter. It accurately presents all the information in John's book, although the format has been changed to enable me to fit all the information onto one page.

Organised by country, Military Insignia of the World brings together global markings from such countries as Abkhazia, Afghanistan, Chad and Iran through to Kenya, Kuwait the Ukraine and . Over 500 insignia combine with contemporary photographs and a brief history of the military air activity of that country to provide a wealth of information for the aviation historian and modeller alike.

Krishna Jaga's detailed review was published on Amazon, summarising the book very nicely. It is presented here (with slight editing).

"Books on the history of aircraft roundels are very rare. This is a real labour of passion. It has taken almost 11 years since the publication of the first edition, with the same title by the same authors, for a publisher to finally release an update on this exotic subject.

"If you have ever wondered about all the historical roundels for a

particular country and where could you look it up - this book has it all. The authors have kept in touch with many enthusiasts around the world and researched some of the really rare historical roundels for this updated edition.

"It is in glorious full colour, and comprises 142 pages (the authors originally planned two volumes which Crécy have compressed into a single volume), depicting all the roundels for all countries as well as all the roundels for countries which no longer exist like Katanga, Biafra, South Vietnam, etc, with approximately 500+ in all. The new roundels include Abkhazia, Iraq, Chad, Afghanistan, etc., but Iraq 2006-9 and Abkhazia 1992-2008 are missing.

"The updated edition features colour photos (some are very tiny and unclear), but the diagrams of fin flashes as featured in the previous edition are missing from this one. This was a real disappointment for me and I will need to retain the first edition due to the diagrams. For some of the countries, like South Sudan and Kurdistan, the authors state that the national flag is used. In these cases, it would have been appropriate to display the flag.

"Some of the text also could have done with an update from the first edition (e.g. India) and some of the navy roundels are also missing, and I think there are more historical roundels for Bulgaria than shown.

"This book could have done with another 50 pages if the publisher had been more generous and included more photographs and artwork to show the fin flashes. Also, it should have been published in a bigger size like the first edition by Airline. Nevertheless, I am quite excited as it's a long awaited update on this esoteric topic and a must-buy."

Editor's comment- Having bought both editions of this excellent book, I wholeheartedly agree with Krishna's comments. There are a few typos, e.g. a photo of a Fairchild Argus is labelled as a Fairchild Argos, but this does not detract from the overall enjoyment of the book. It is one that is definitely worth adding to your arsenal of references if you have the slightest interest in the development of national markings.

A plea for help - please can anybody supply me with PDF copies of Small Air Forces Observer nos. 112-119 inclusive to enable me to complete my collection? Please email stevekomor@gmail.com if you're able to help. Thanks!





Early French Aircraft in the Service of Asian Air Arms: Part 2

Morane Saulnier MS.733A Alcyon by Brian Griffin

The first Morane Saulnier 733 Alcyon (Kingfisher) made its maiden flight on 16 April 1951, and five pre-production and 200 production aircraft were built by Morane Saulnier. In 1955 a batch of 11 (some sources say 15) Alcyons was sold to Cambodia for use as trainers, and two of these were equipped with two 7.5-mm machine guns and pylons fitted beneath the wings for four 3.5-in rocket missiles, for use in COIN operations. A follow-on order was placed for eight Alcyons for delivery in 1957. During the early 'sixties, the Aviation Royale Khmère attempted, without success, to purchase 12 additional Alcyons from France. In March 1963 the US donated four Cessna T-37Bs to back up the Alcyons of the air academy and in the late sixties the remaining 15 Alcyon trainers were replaced by 16 Gardan GY-80 Horizons.

Not surprisingly there are not too many photos of Cambodian Alcyons so, for your information, I've included some examples as seen on modern restorations, both Cambodian and French.

Video at airshow <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbkdWkLXyv8>

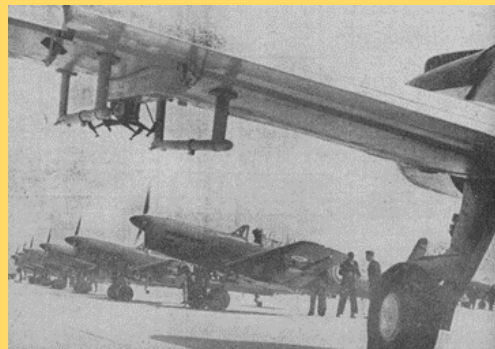


Getting airborne <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgCrsFohF30>

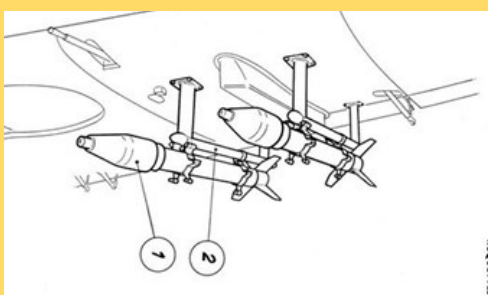


Photo Gallery

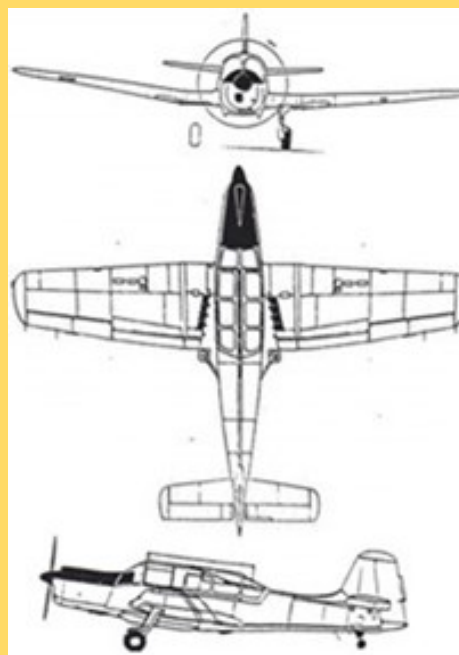




"Armed to the teeth" (in Algeria)



Montage Lance-bombes (Rocket Launcher mountings) Schloss 50 modifié Alkan

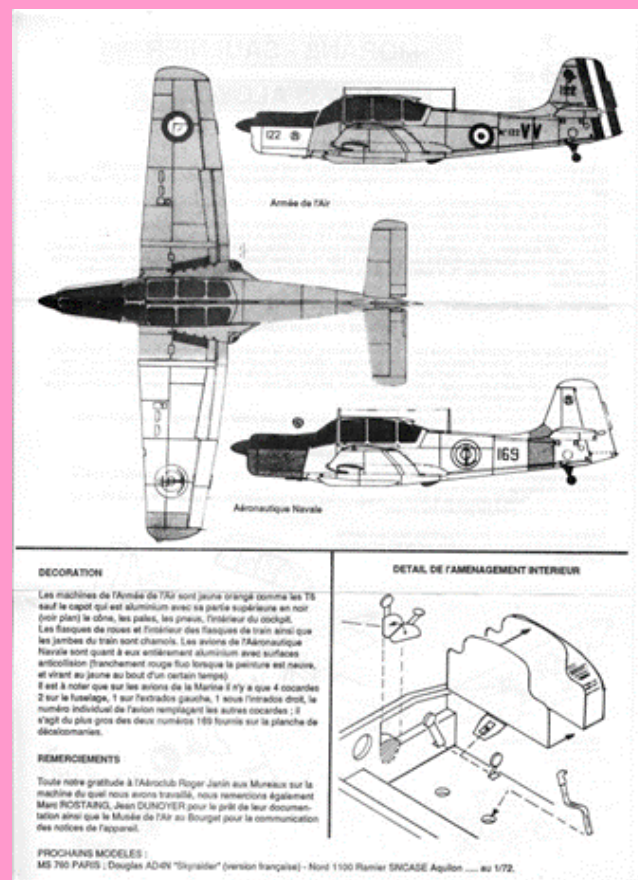


Montage SCR 300 (Bomb carriers)



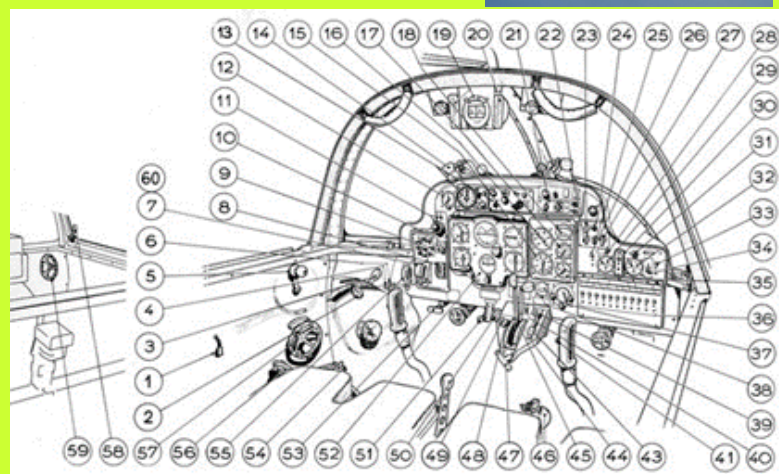
Modelling

Scalemates are listing only one kit and this is/was in resin and 1/72, by Aerokit. In 2015 they were being offered on e-bay for 200-250 Euros!





Cockpit Detail



- (1) *Cordon prolongateur radiotéléphone (poste gauche).* **Radio telephone extension cord (left set).**
- (2) *Gaz.* **Gas.**
- (3) *Régulateur d'hélice.* **Propeller regulator.**
- (4) *Commande du feu rouge de repérage.* **Red marker light control.**
- (5) *Manivelle de verrière mobile (gauche).* **Canopy crank (left).**
- (6) *Commande de phare.* **Headlight control.**
- (7) *Commande de train munie d'une sécurité.* **Train (undercarriage? - Ed.) control fitted with a safety device.**
- (8) *Commande de volets.* **Shutter control.**
- (9) *Contrôle de la position du train.* **Undercarriage position indicator.**
- (10) *Réchauffage antenne anémométrique et lampe-témoin.* **Heating anemometric antenna and warning light.**
- (11) *Clignoteur et son bouton-poussoir de contrôle.* **Flashing light and its control push-button.**
- (12) *Montre.* **Clock.**
- (13) *Commande de radiocompas.* **Radio-compass control.**
- (14) *Lampes UV.* **UV lamps.**
- (15) *Manomètre d'admission.* **Intake pressure gauge.**
- (16) *Tachymètre.* **Tachometer.**
- (17) *Manomètre de pression d'huile.* **Oil pressure gauge.**
- (18) *Manomètre de pression d'essence.* **Fuel pressure gauge.**
- (19) *Compas d'orientation et sa courbe de compensation.* **Orientation compass and its compensation curve.**
- (20) *Plaquette compensation radiocompas.* **Radio compass compensation plate (dial? - Ed.).**
- (21) *Commande du VHP.* **VHP Control**
- (22) *Rhéostat de feux de bord.* **Dashboard light rheostat.**
- (23) *Rhéostat de compas.* **Compass rheostat.**
- (24) *Feu de signalisation et tirette de commande incendie.* **Signal light and fire control pull tab.**
- (25) *Interrupteur feux de route.* **High beam switch.**
- (26) *Disjoncteur réchauffage Badin.* **Badin heating circuit breaker.**
- (27) *Rhéostat lampes UV.* **UV lamps rheostat.**
- (28) *Interrupteur éclairage cadran.* **Dial light switch.**

- (29) *Voltmètre.* **Voltmeter.**
- (30) *Disjoncteur général.* **General circuit breaker.**
- (31) *Lampe-témoin de charge batterie.* **Battery charge indicator light.**
- (32) *Ampèremètre.* **Ammeter.**
- (33) *Disjoncteur incendie.* **Fire circuit breaker.**
- (34) *Interrupteur détresse génératrice.* **Generator distress switch.**
- (35) *Thermomètre d'entrée d'huile.* **Oil inlet temperature gauge.**
- (36) *Tableau de disjoncteurs des réseaux.* **Network circuit breakers table.**
- (37) *Distributeur de vide.* **Vacuum distributor.**
- (38) *Jaugeur d'essence.* **Fuel gauge.**
- (39) *Robinet d'huile.* **Oil tap.**
- (40) *Pompe d'amorçage.* **Priming pump.**
- (41) *Bouton alternant (sur les 2 manches).* **Alternating button (on both sleeves).**
- (43) *Robinet d'essence (coupe-feu).* **Fuel tap (fire stop).**
- (44) *Gaz.* **Gas.**
- (45) *Régulateur d'hélice.* **Propeller regulator.**
- (46) *Extincteur de cabine.* **Cabin fire extinguisher.**
- (47) *Robinet distributeur d'essence (Réserve - Normal).* **Fuel selection switch (Reserve - Normal).**
- (48) *Starter.* **Starter.**
- (49) *Démarreur.* **Starter.**
- (50) *Etouffoir.* **Choke.**
- (51) *Commande réchauffage cabine.* **Cabin heating control.**
- (54) *Commande téléphone (poste gauche).* **Telephone control (left extension).**
- (55) *Contact.* **Contact**
- (56) *Commande tab de direction.* **Direction (Rudder trim? - Ed.) tab control.**
- (57) et (59) *Commande de tab de profondeur (postes G et D).* **(57) and (59) Depth (Elevator trim? - Ed.) tab control (L and R positions)**
- (58) *Commande largage verrière.* **Canopy release control.**

Brian has kindly provided English captions for the key, which he obtained courtesy of Google Translate. Therefore, it is more than likely that some of these captions are not aeronautically accurate, and may occasionally be the cause of some amusement!



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