Bf 109G





intro

No other aircraft of the German Luftwaffe is so intimately connected with its rise and fall in the course of the Second World War than the Messerschmitt Bf 109. This type, by whose evolution outlived the era in which it was conceptualized, bore the brunt of Luftwaffe duties from the opening battles of Nazi Germany through to her final downfall. The history of the aircraft begins during 1934-35, when the Reich Ministry of Aviation formulated a requirement for the development of a single-engined monoplane fighter. Proposals were submitted by Arado, Heinkel, Focke-Wulf and Bayerische Flugzeugwerke. The last mentioned firm featured a technical director named Professor Willy Messerschmitt, who was riding a wave of popularity based on the success of his recent liason aircraft, the Bf 108. His goal was to conceive of an aircraft with the best possible performance for the specified weight, size, and aerodynamic qualities. Over the subsequent months, several prototypes were built that served first and foremost in development flights and further modifications. The aircraft was relatively small, and compared to the prevailing trends of the time, docile with revolutionary features such as low wing design, the use of a retractable landing gear, a wing with a very narrow profile, wing slats, landing flaps, weapons firing through the prop hub, and so on. Even the enclosed cockpit and the method of construction were not very common just four years prior to the beginning of the Second World War. At its conception, the Bf 109 was a very promising asset despite some powerplant troubles. These were solved by the introduction of the DB601. This engine, together with its extrapolated development DB 605, is umbilically connected to the types success. These two-row, twelve cylinder inverted V engines powered several tens of thousands of '109s in over 25 versions and variants.

The first combat use was by three developmental Bf 109s in the Spanish Civil War, where they were delivered in December, 1936. The pre-series airframes were to, first of all, validate the aircraft's abilities in modern aerial combat. Shortly thereafter, production machines in the form of the Bf 109B-1 began to reach 2./J.88, the Legion Condor. The desire of Germany to demonstrate her aerial prowess to potential foes was advanced further in international sport meets. The triumphs attained in Zurich in the summer of 1937 were complemented several months later by grabbing the speed record of 610.95 kph. In very short order, the progressive developments represented by the C, D and E versions appeared. Despite this, the delivery of the types to combat units did not sustain a rate that was desired by military brass. Even by August, 1938, the Bf 109 accounted for less than half of the 643 front line fighters in service. The later months saw an increase in these rates. By the time of the invasion of Poland (which saw the participation of only a little more than 200 aircraft) the Luftwaffe possessed the best fighter produced in continental Europe. With both a qualitative and quantitative advantage, the fighter wing of the Luftwaffe entered the Polish campaign, the first defenses of the Fatherland, Blitzkrieg against the West, and the Battle for France. With one foot in the door that was the English Channel, the Luftwaffe embarked on the attacks on Britain in the summer months of 1940. Here, the first weakness of the Bf 109 was revealed: the inability to carry drop tanks that would have enabled the type to effectively escort bombers to England. This was one of the factors that made the defeat of the Luftwaffe in the Battle of Britain possible. Experiences gained in 1940 led to the development of the 'F' version prior to the spring of 1941. The elegance of the Bf 109 crested with the 'Friedrich'. Following a largely defensive stance over the Channel and northern France, the Bf 109F took on a more offensive role in Operation Barbarosa in the east, and in northern Africa. In later duties with the 'Jagdwaffe' during the second phase of the war in the east, and in the 'Defense of the Reich' from 1943 to 1945, the Bf 109 served in the form of the 'G' version, followed by the 'K'. Even if by the end of the war it was clear that the development of the Bf 109 was exhausted, during its combat career, the type was able to keep pace with the foes that it encountered. Besides its primary function as fighter, the Bf 109 also appeared as a fighterbomber, reconnaissance platform, night fighter, trainer and rammjäger.

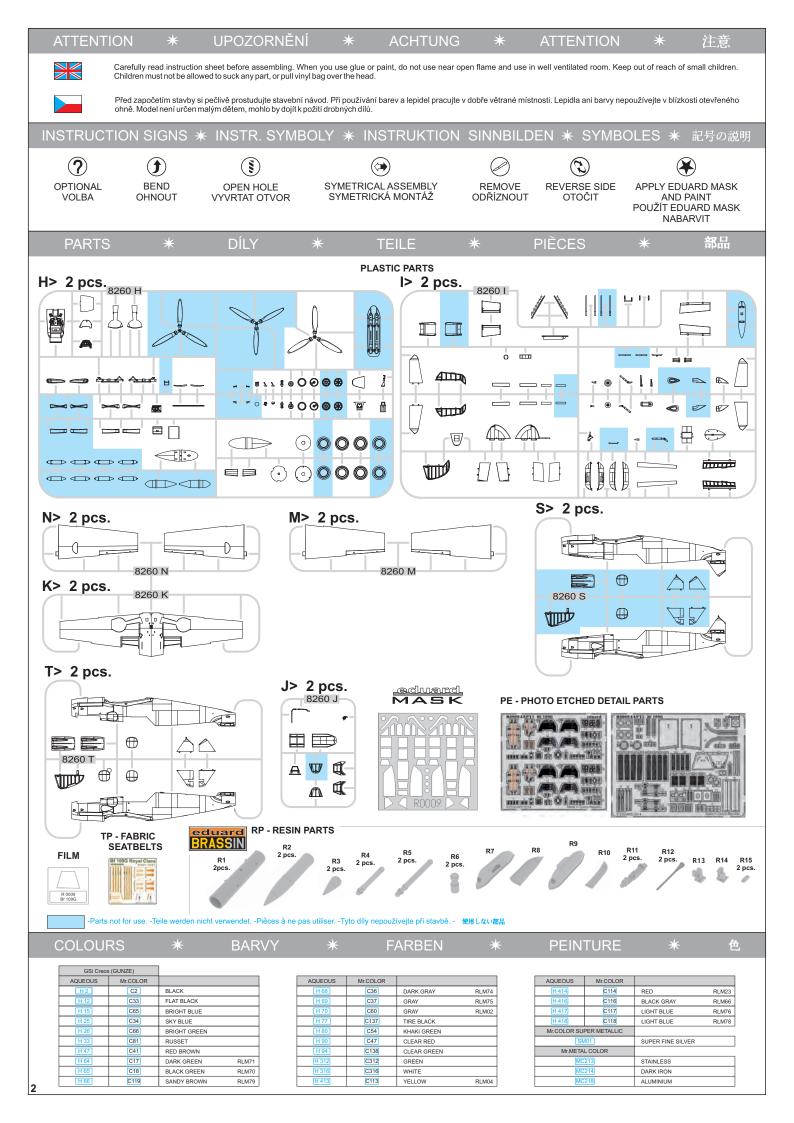
The disappearance of the Bf 109 from the skies over Europe was not spelled out by the end of the war. Several examples were in Swiss service up to 1949, and many flew in the air force of Czechoslovakia in both original form with a DB 605 powerplant and as aircraft built out of necessity with surplus Jumo 211s. The latter type also served as the first fighter to fight for the independence of the newly formed state of Israel. Finland retired the type as recently as 1954, and Spain didn't retire its HA-1109-1112, re-engined Bf 109s, until 1967. The legendary low-wing fighter of Professor Willy Messerschmitt survived the state that developed it

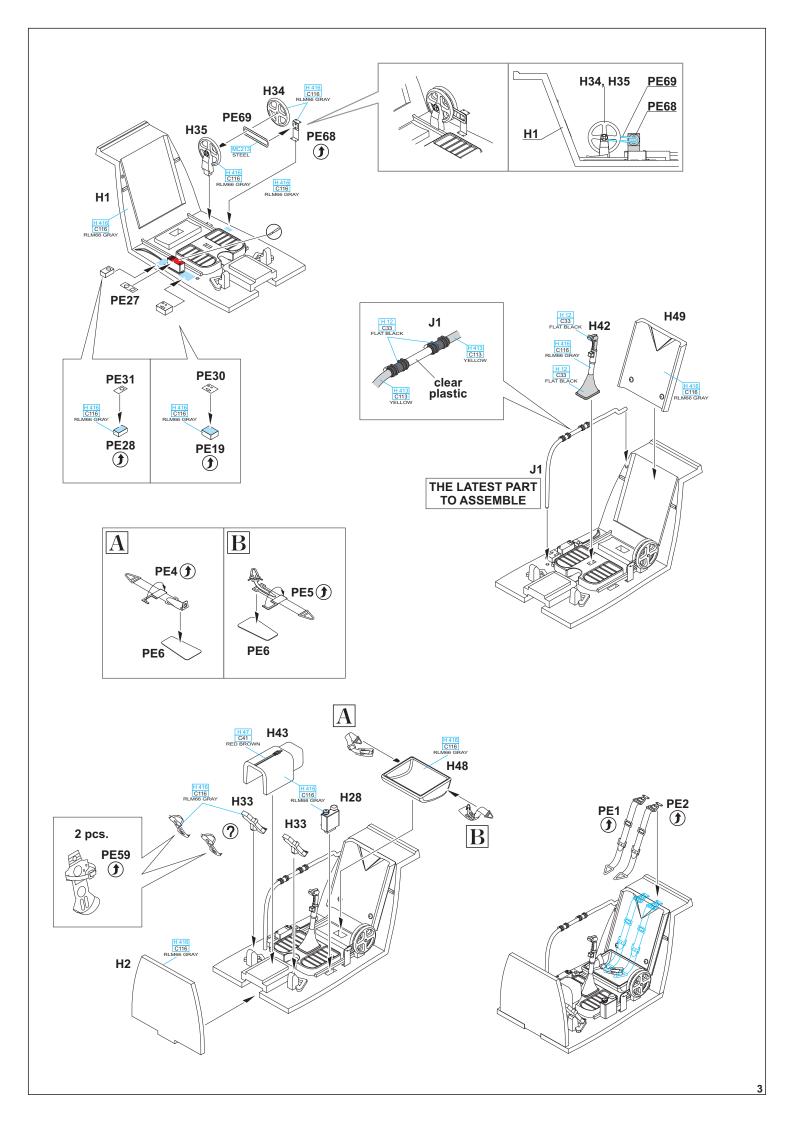
úvodem

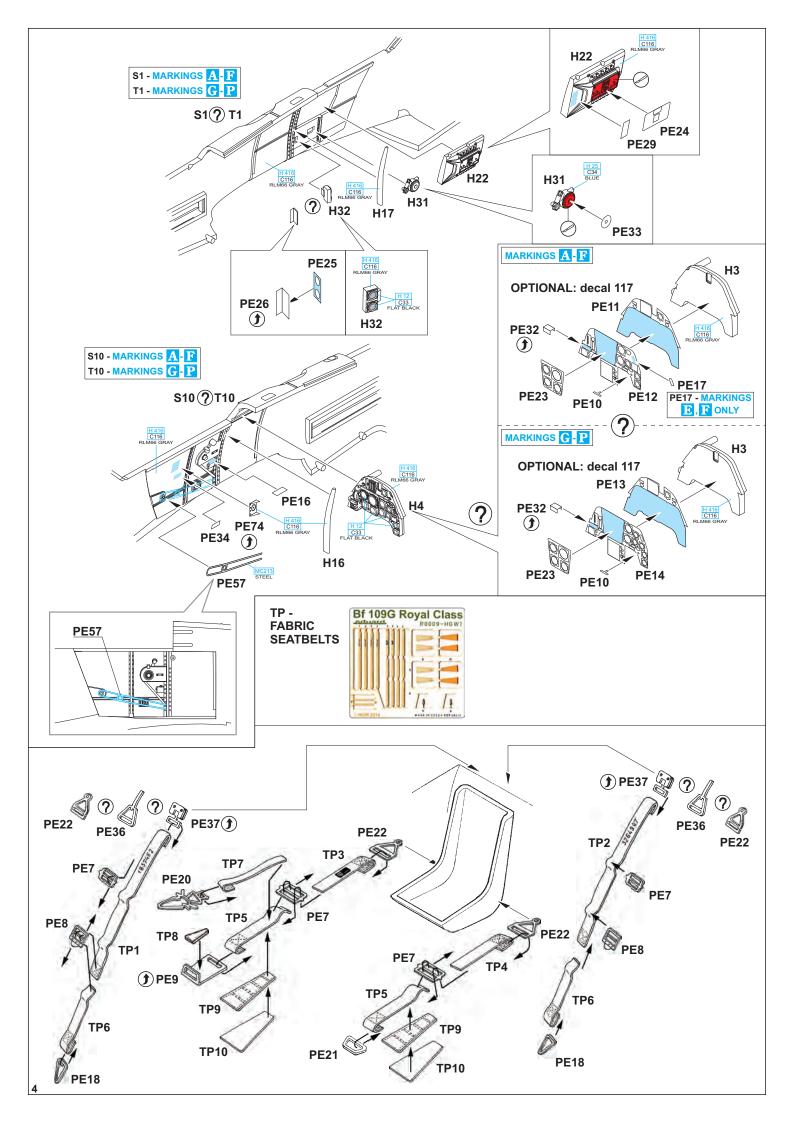
Žádný jiný stroj německé Luftwaffe není výrazněji spojen s jejím vzestupem a pádem ve 2. světové válce, než stíhací Messerschmitt Bf 109. Letoun, který svou koncepcí výrazně předběhl dobu, ve které vznikal, se stal tahounem stíhacího letectva od prvních válečných konfliktů nacistického Německa, až do jeho hořkého konce. Historie letounu se začíná v období let 1934-35, kdy Říšské ministerstvo letectví formulovalo specifikace zakázky na vývoj jednomotorové jednoplošné stíhačky. Projektu se zúčastnily firmy Arado, Heinkel, Focke-Wulf a Bayerische Flugzeugwerke. V poslední jmenované působil na postu technického ředitele profesor Willy Messerschmitt, jehož popularita se nesla na vlně úspěchu nedávno dokončeného kurýrního Bf 108. Jeho cílem bylo vytvořit letoun s co největším poměrem výkonu k celkové hmotnosti, velikosti a aerodynamickým vlastnostem. V průběhu následujících měsíců vzniklo několik prototypů, které sloužily zejména ke zkouškám a dalšímu vývoji. Letoun byl poměrně malý, oproti stávajícím zvyklostem relativně jemný, s revolučními konstrukčními prvky jako byla dolnokřídlá koncepce, použití zatahovacího podvozku, křídlo s velmi štíhlým profilem, pohyblivé sloty, vztlakové klapky, zbraně střílející osou vrtule, atd.

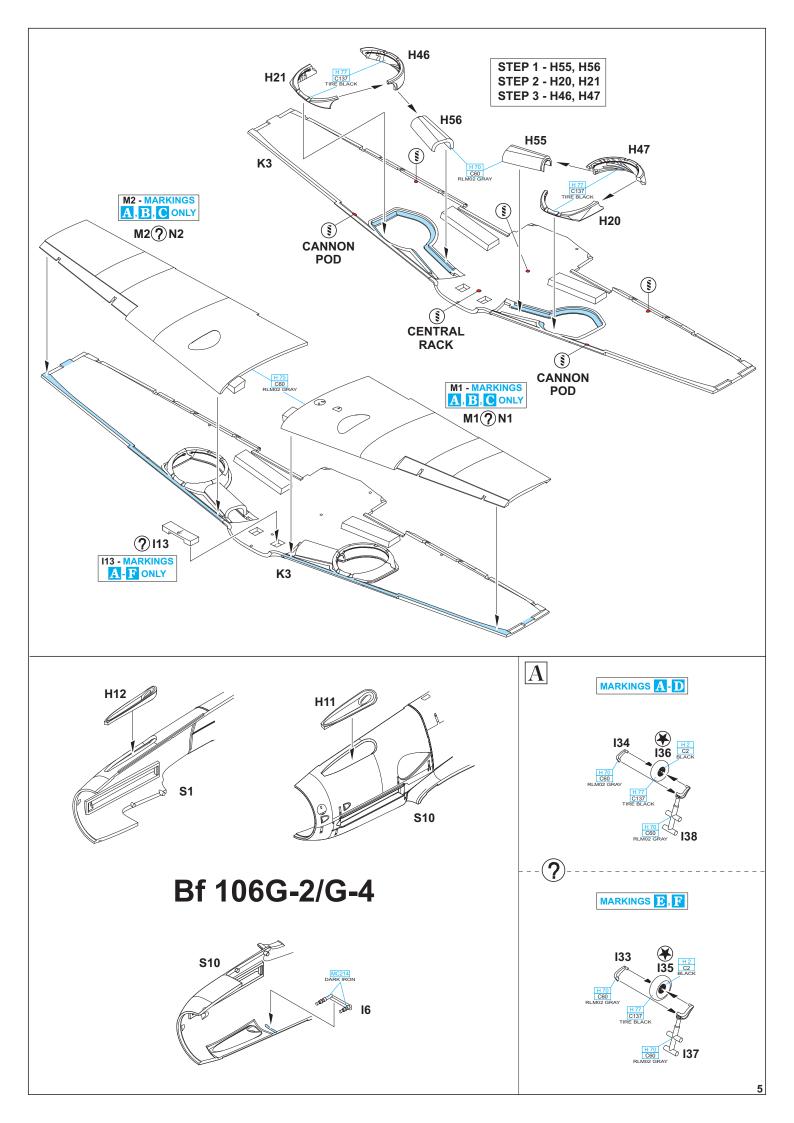
Dokonce uzavíratelný překryt kabiny nebo skořepinová konstrukce nebyly čtyři roky před začátkem 2. světové války tak obvyklým jevem, jak by se z dnešního pohledu mohlo zdát. Bf 109 byl již z počátku svého vývoje, i přes problémy s pohonnou jednotkou, velmi nadějným projektem. Problémy s pohonem vyřešila až zástavba motoru DB 601. Ten je spolu s pozdějším DB 605 neodmyslitelně spojen s úspěchy Bf 109. Řadový invertní dvanáctiválec do V poháněl několik desítek tisíc vyprodukovaných "stodevítek" ve více než 25 verzích a variantách. K prvnímu bojovému nasazení tří zkušebních kusů Bf 109 došlo za občanské války ve Španělsku, kam byly odeslány v prosinci 1936. Stroje z předsériové výroby měly především ukázat schopnosti letounu v moderní letecké válce. Následně se do bojového nasazení u 2./J.88 Legion Condor začaly dostávat i sériové stroje varianty Bf 109B-1. Snaze Německa ukazovat svou leteckou sílu potenciálním protivníkům napomáhala i sportovní klání. Triumf letounů Bf 109 na leteckém mítinku v Curychu v létě 1937 byl doplněn o několik měsíců později ustanovením rychlostního rekordu 610,95 km/h. Ve velmi krátkých časových úsecích následovaly verze C, D a E. Přesto však doplňování nových strojů k bojovým útvarům nepokračovalo tempem, který by si velení mohlo přát. Ještě v srpnu roku 1938 tvořila výzbroj letouny Bf 109 méně než polovinu z 643 stíhačů první linie. Ovšem během následujících měsíců roku se tempo dodávek k bojovým útvarům zrychlilo. V okamžik přepadení Polska (kterého se však zúčastnilo jen o málo více než dvě stě Bf 109) tak Luftwaffe disponovala zajisté nejlepší stíhačkou, jaká byla v kontinentální Evropě vyrobena. S technickou i množstevní převahou tak stíhací část Luftwaffe absolvovala polskou kampaň, první obranu Vaterlandu, Blitzkrieg proti západu i bitvu o Francii. S jednou nohou vykročenou přes kanál La Manche zahájila Luftwaffe v letních měsících roku 1940 útoky na Británii. V tu dobu se mj. projevil jeden vážný nedostatek Bf 109 - nepřipravenost konstrukce stroje na nesení přídavné nádrže, která by zvýšila dolet letounu při doprovodu bombardérů nad Británii. Tato zdánlivá maličkost byla jedním z faktorů, které zapříčinily porážku Luftwaffe v Bitvě o Británii. Zkušenosti z bojů v r. 1940 napomohly při vývoji verze F, která se začala k bojovým útvárům dostávat během předjaří 1941. Elegance Bf 109 u "Friedricha" dosáhla vrcholu. Po bojích nad Kanálem a severní Francií, spíše již defenzivního charakteru, se Bf 109F zapojily i do útočných akcí, a to zejména při operaci Barbarossa na východě nebo v severní Africe. Do pozdějších úkolů Jagdwaffe ve druhé fázi války na východě i do obrany Říše v letech 1943 - 1945 se zapojovaly především Bf 109 verze G a v posledních měsících války pak také verze K. Ačkoli na konci války bylo jasné, že koncepce letounu Bf 109 se po deseti letech služby dostala na hranici možností, po celou dobu své bojové činnosti dokázaly jednotlivé varianty držeť krok se svými stíhacími protivníky. Kromě svého prioritního určení stíhacího letounu se Bf 109 objevily i v rolích stíhacíbombardovací, průzkumná, noční stíhací, palubní stíhací, cvičné nebo jako rammjäger.

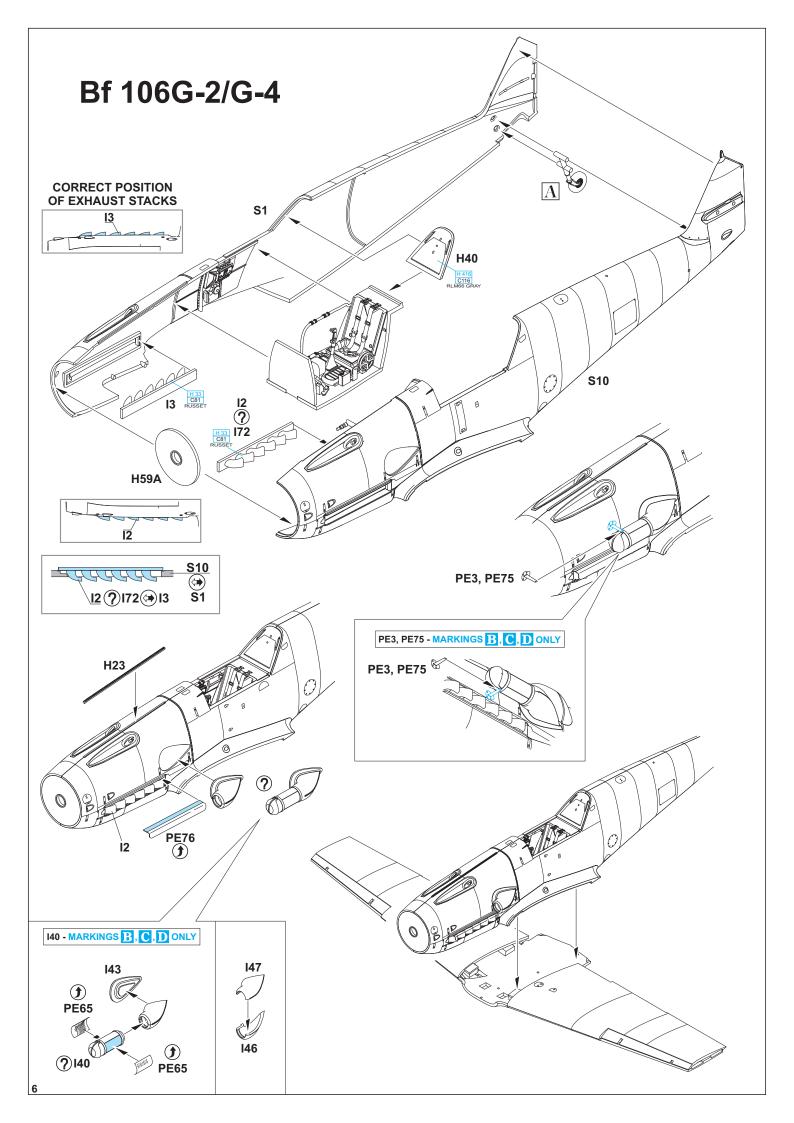
Nebe se pro Bf 109 nezavřelo ani po skončení války. Několik strojů sloužilo až do roku 1949 ve Švýcarsku, mnohé létaly v balkánských zemích, v osvobozeném Československu, a to jak v původní podobě s motory DB 605, tak v přestavěné variantě s motory Jumo 211. Zejména tyto stroje později tvořily základ letectva bránícího svobodu nově budovaného státu Izrael. Finsko zrušilo Bf 109 až v roce 1954 a Španělsko opustilo své HA-1109 a 1112 dokonce až v roce 1967.

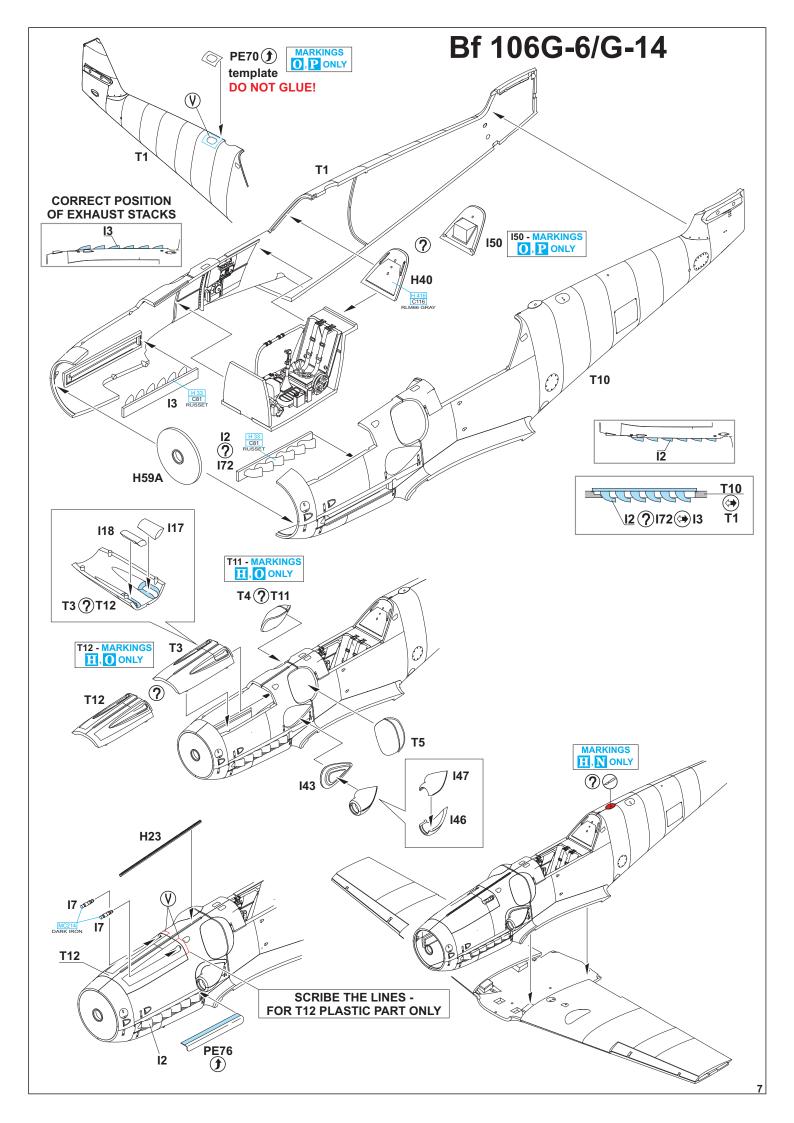


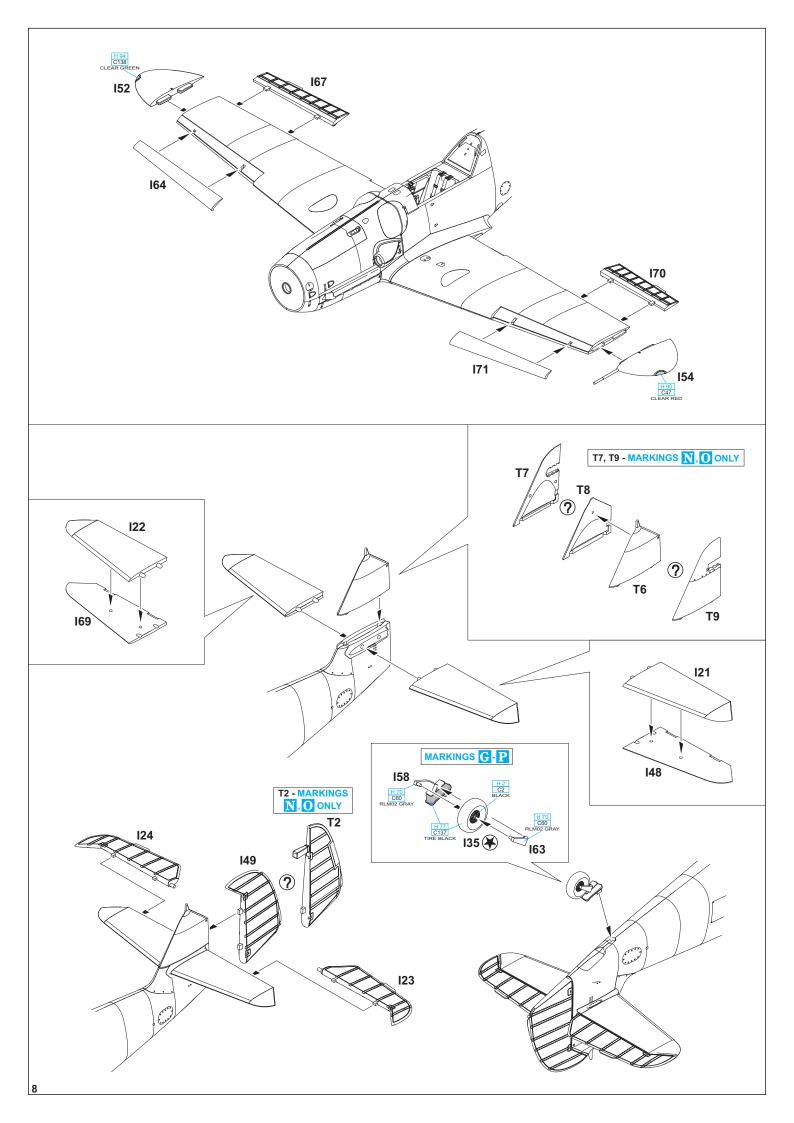


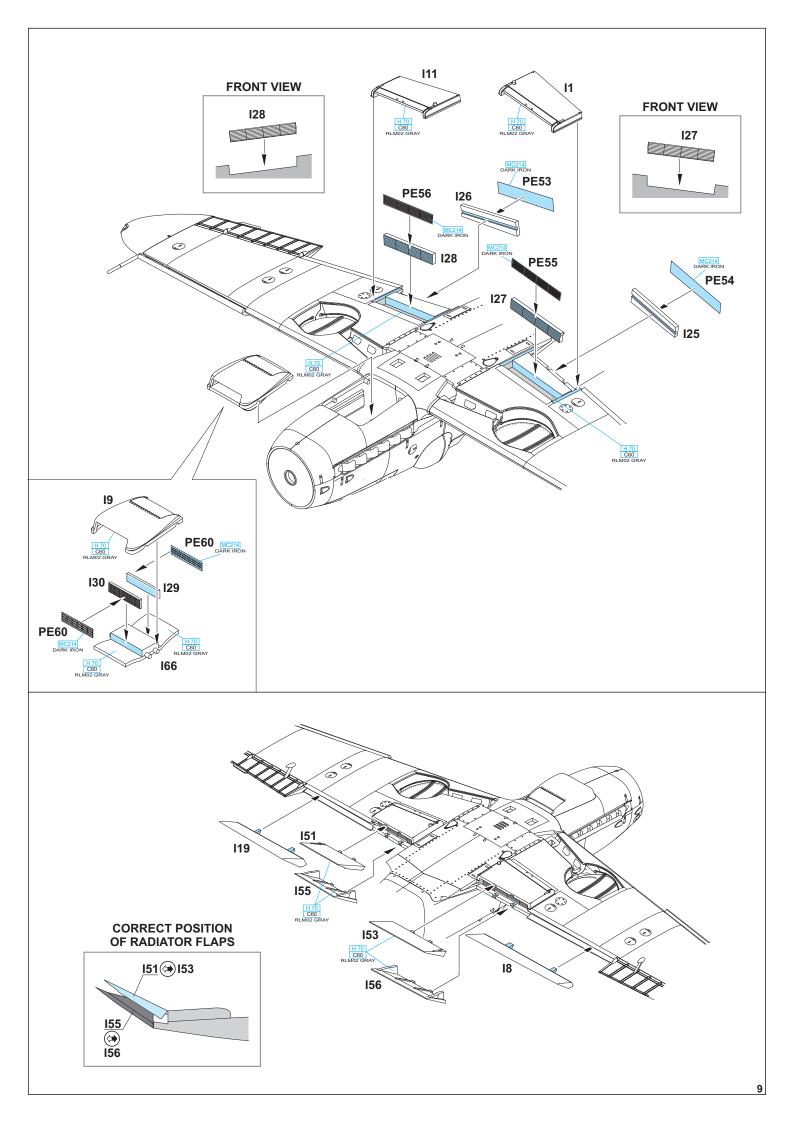


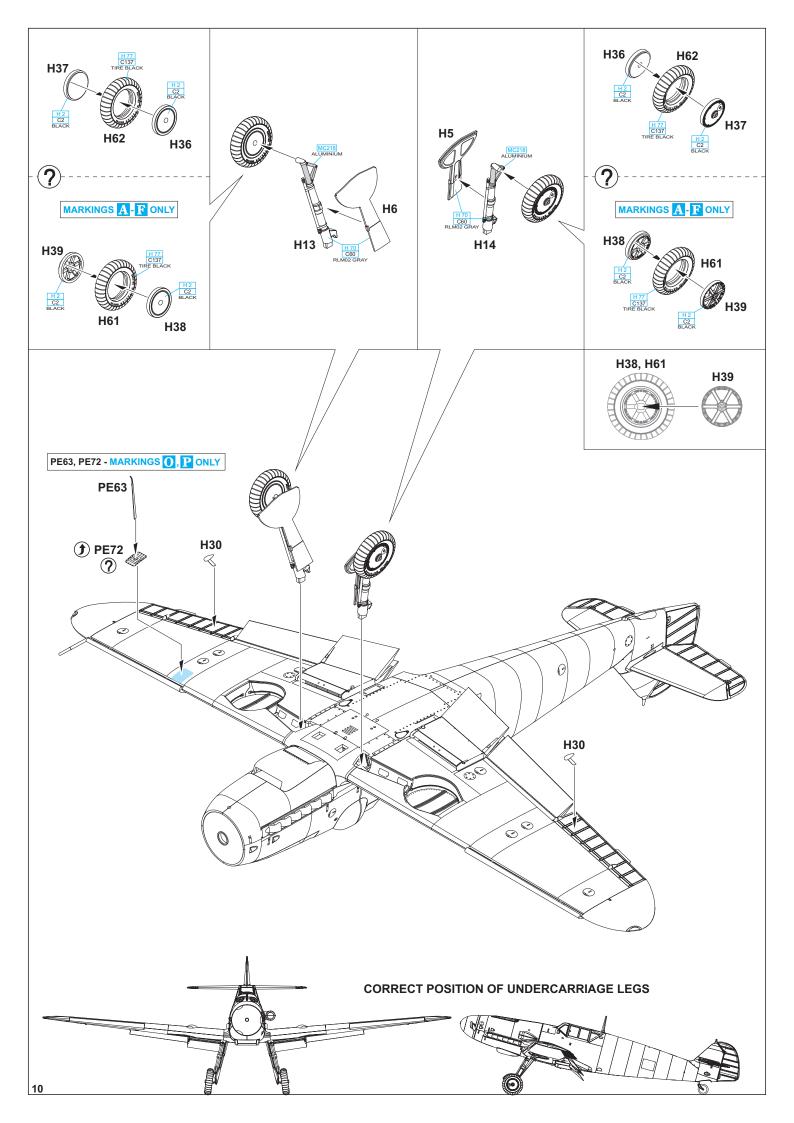


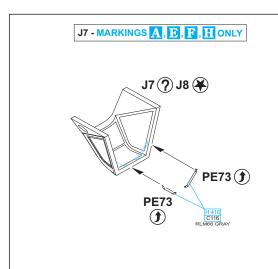


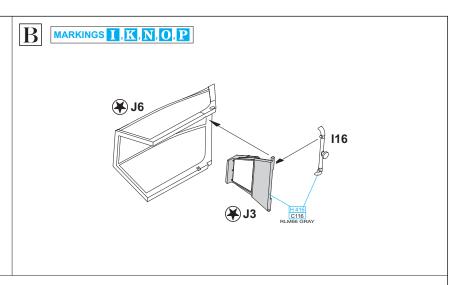




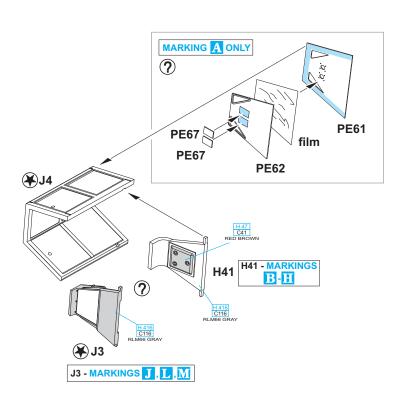


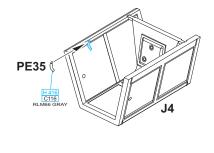


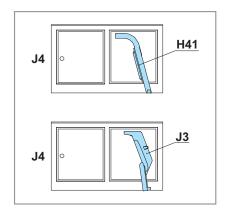




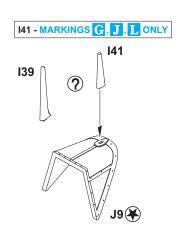




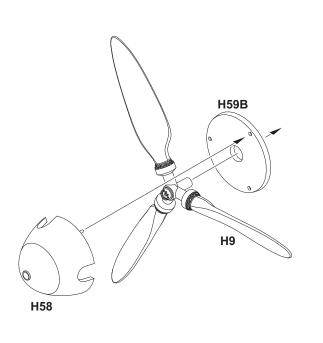




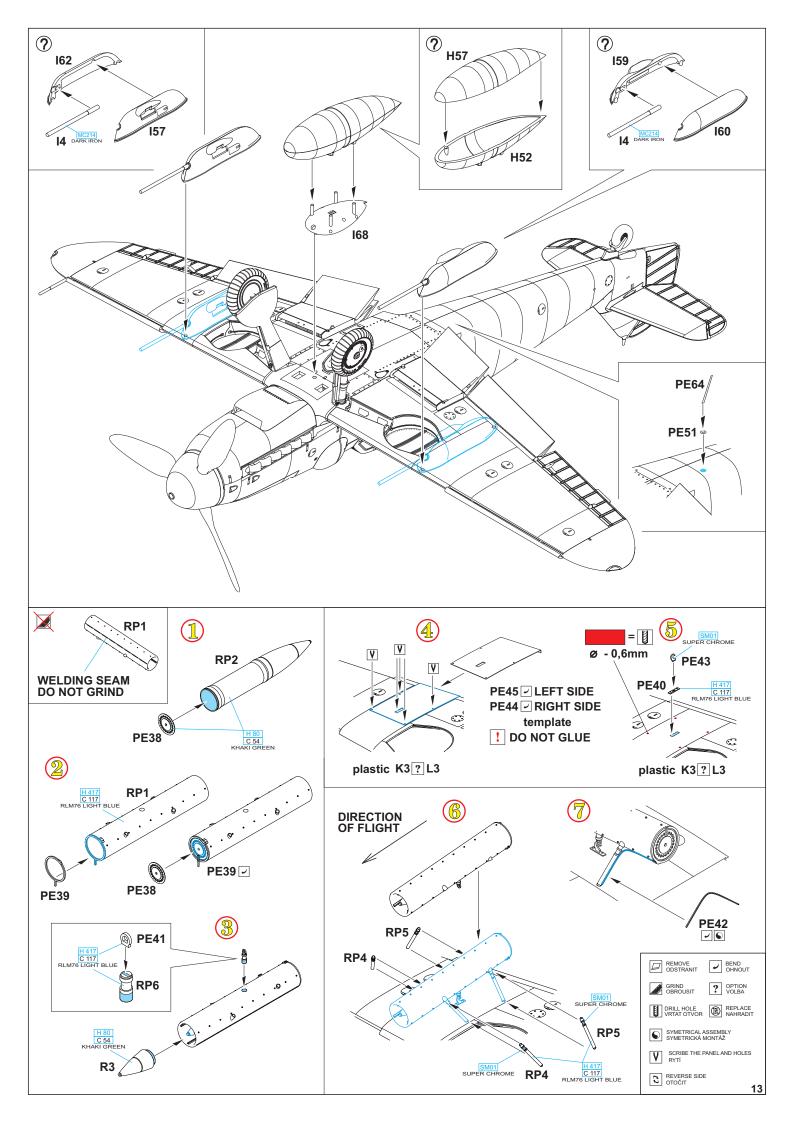


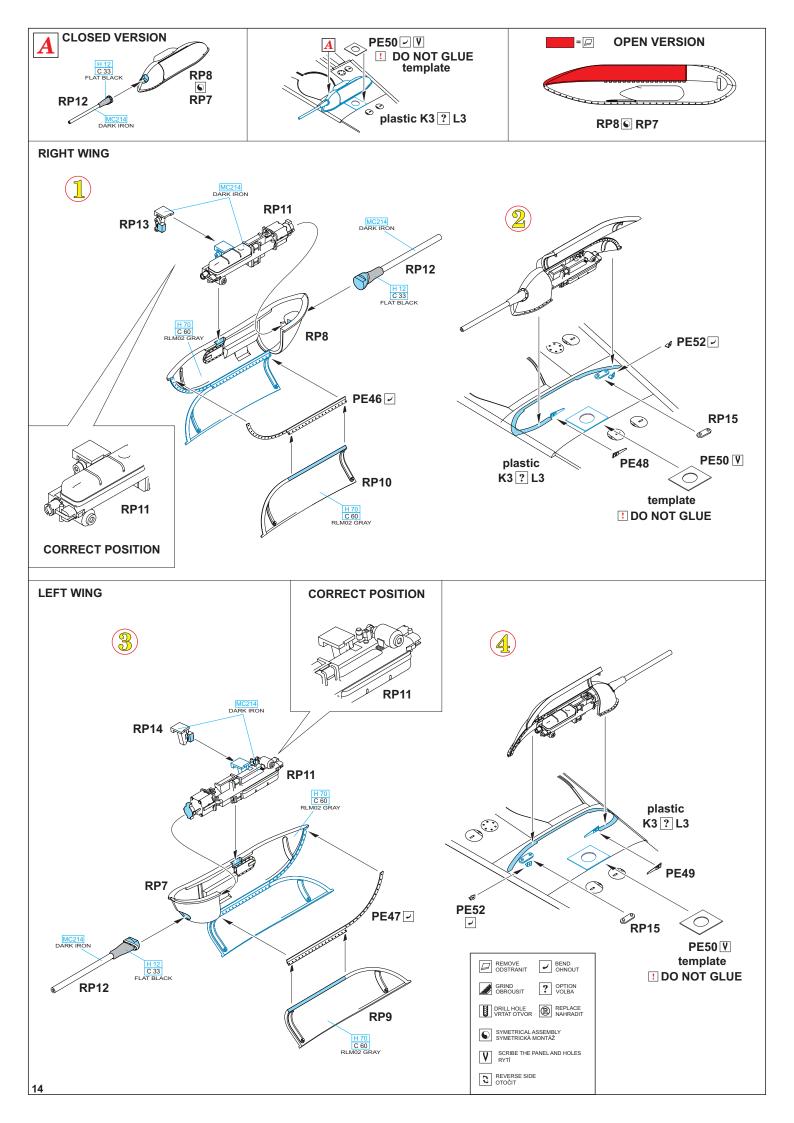


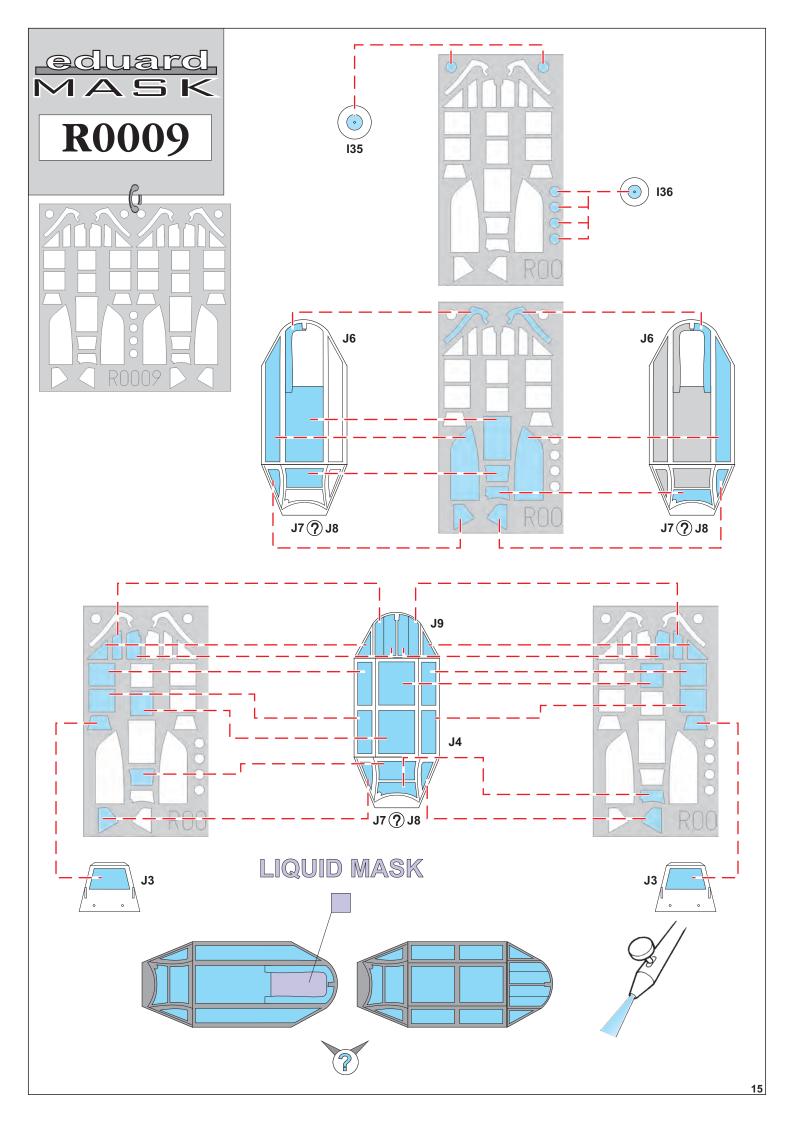






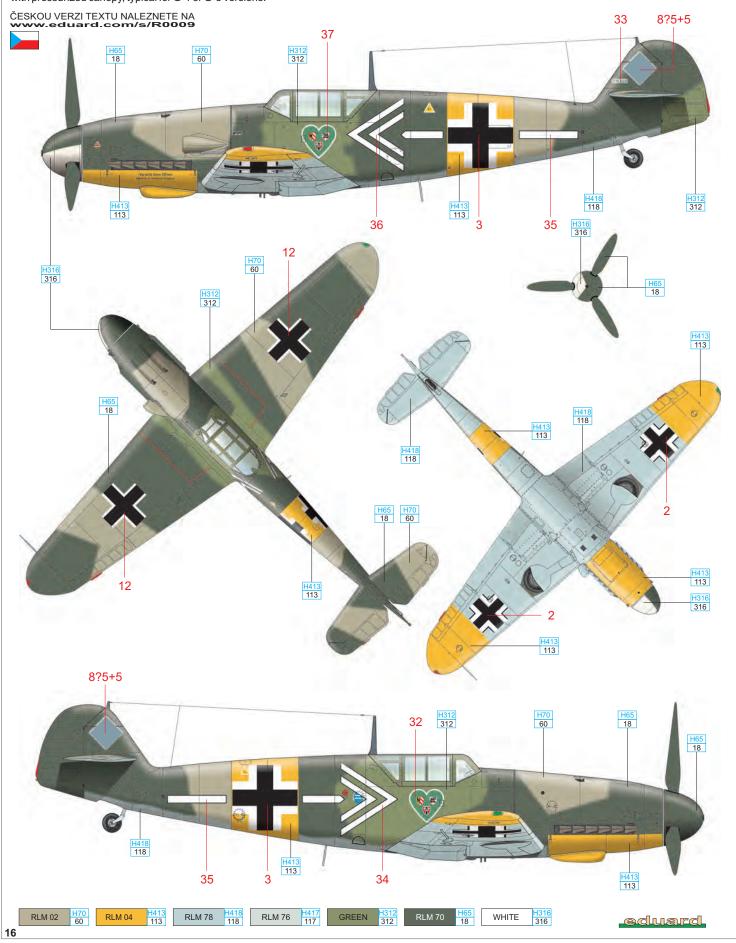






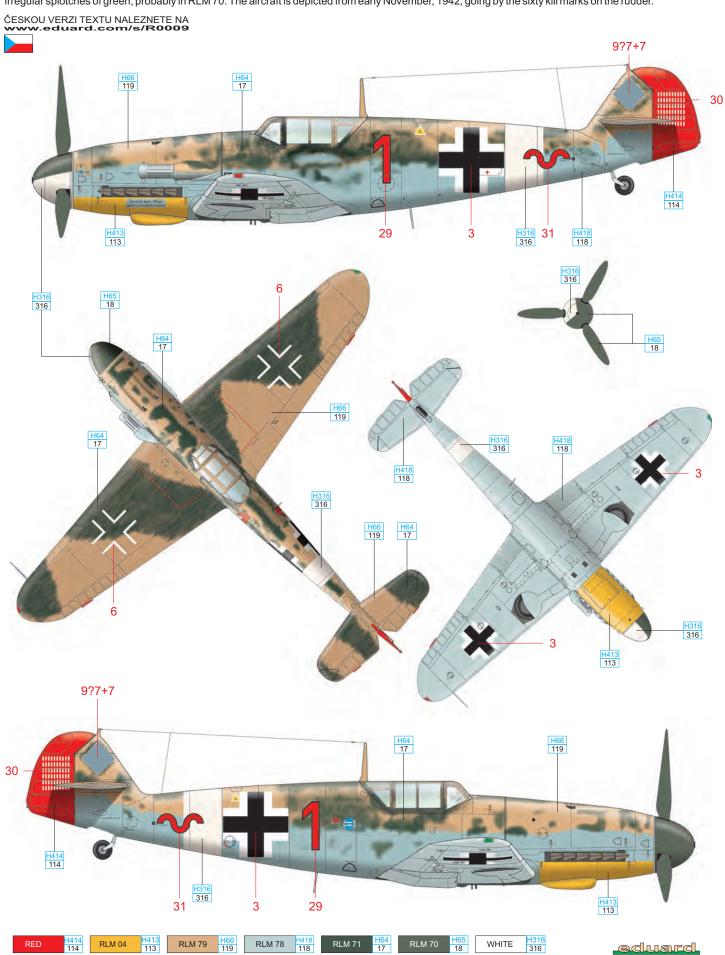
A Bf 109G-2, flown by Maj. Hannes Trautloft, CO of JG 54, Eastern Front, summer, 1942

Hannes Trautloft entered combat in the Spanish Civil War. He flew the Bf 109 and participated in the development of tactics for this fighter. He fought in the Polish campaign as well as in France and managed to achieve at least one victory in every campaign. On August 25, 1940 he assumed command of JG 54. He led this fighter unit through Operation Barbarossa, the attack on the Soviet Union, and in subsequent combat til July 5, 1943. Trautloft is credited with 58 victories, and he was awarded the Knight's Cross on July 27, 1941. His personal aircraft wore a non-standard camouflage scheme. It is not clear which colors were used by JG 54 during its deployment to the Soviet Union. One theory supports the notion that the scheme consists of RLM 70, 02 and 76. The 'middle green' color was mixed from 70 and 02 colors. Note the remnants of RLM 76 color around the swastika and Werk Nummer. This aircraft was equipped with pressurized canopy, typical for G-1 or G-3 versions.



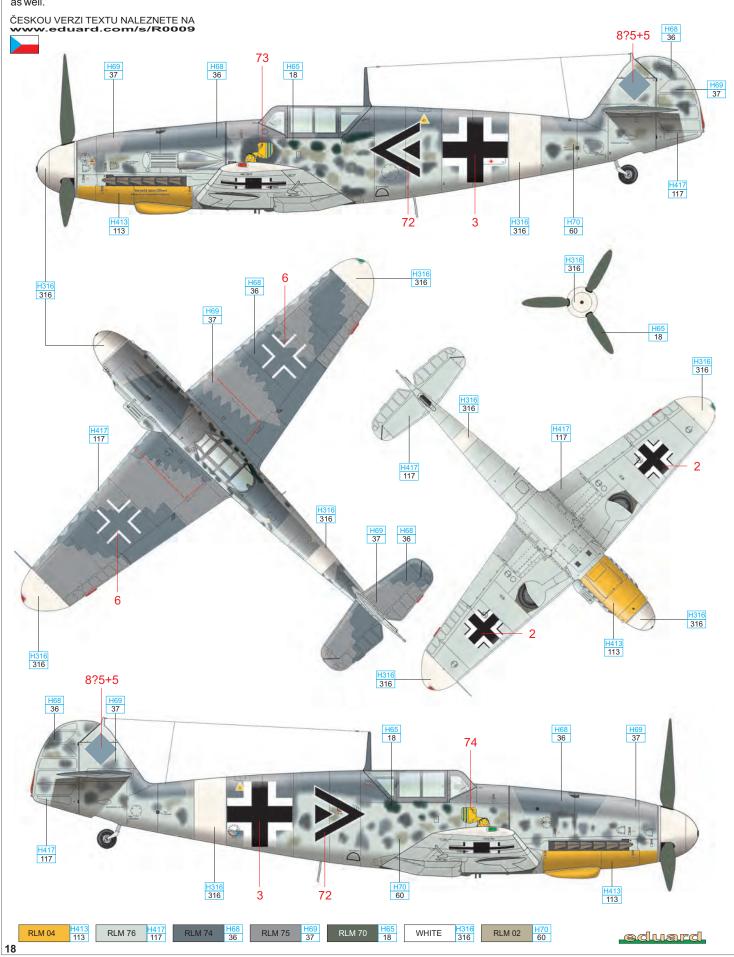
B Bf 109G-2 trop, Flown by Oblt. Werner Schroer, CO of 8./JG 27, Rhodes, early November, 1942

Werner Schroer achieved 61 kills in the skies over Africa., the first of which was a Hurricane downed on April 19, 1941 over Tobruk, Libya. Later, Schroer served as a Gruppenadjutant of I./JG 27. He assumed command of 8th Staffel JG 27 and in April, 1943, assumed command of the entire II./JG 27. He ended the war as Geschwaderkommodore of JG 3 with 114 kill to his credit (including 26 four-engined bombers). He was awarded the Knight's Cross on October 21, 1942 and on April 19, 1945 he became the recipient of the Swords as well. The typical desert camouflage scheme of RLM 79 and RLM 78 is topped off with irregular splotches of green, probably in RLM 70. The aircraft is depicted from early November, 1942, going by the sixty kill marks on the rudder.



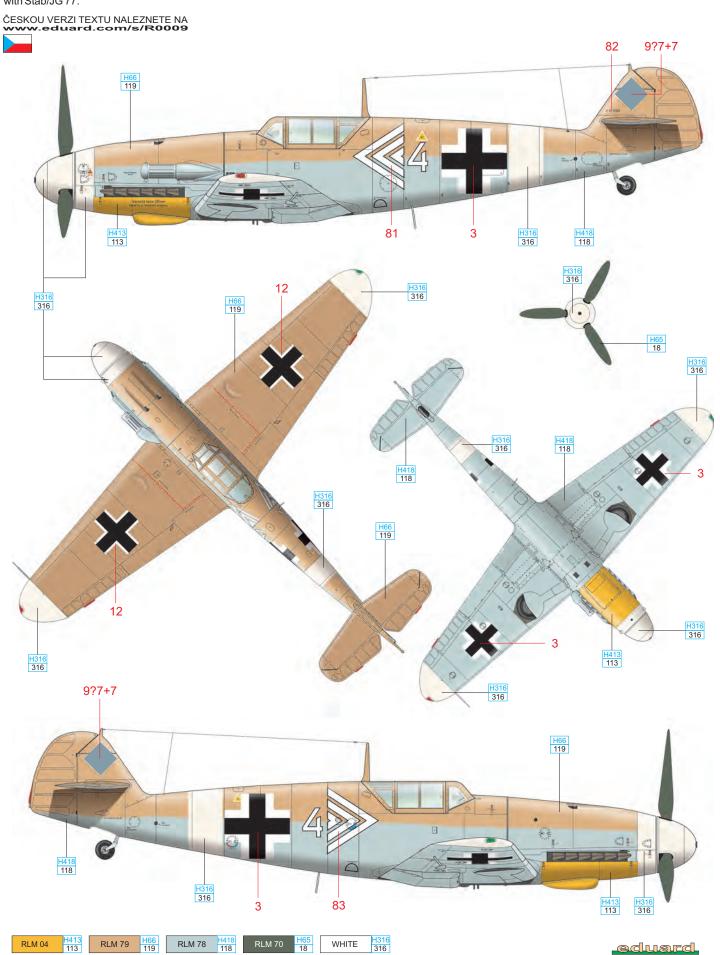
C Bf 109G-2 trop, Flown by Maj. Heinz Bär, CO of I./JG 77, Comiso airfield, Italy, September, 1942

Heinz Bär is credited with 221 aerial victories, including 16 achieved flying the Me 262 jet fighter, ranking him in eighth place among German WW2 fighter aces. As a fighter pilot, he entered combat in September 1939 and downed his first victim over the French – German border. Progressively Bär fought in the Battle of Britain, over the Eastern Front, in the Mediterranean and took part in the defense of the Third Reich. He commanded I./JG 77 from May 1942 to theend of July, 1943 when he left JG 77 after disagreements with Hermann Göring. Note the city of Leipzig badge under the canopy. The city of Leipzig was in touch with Bär's I./JG 77 and the Leipzig zoo presented the lion cub to the members of the unit. The unusual pet was depicted on Bär's personal aircraft as well.



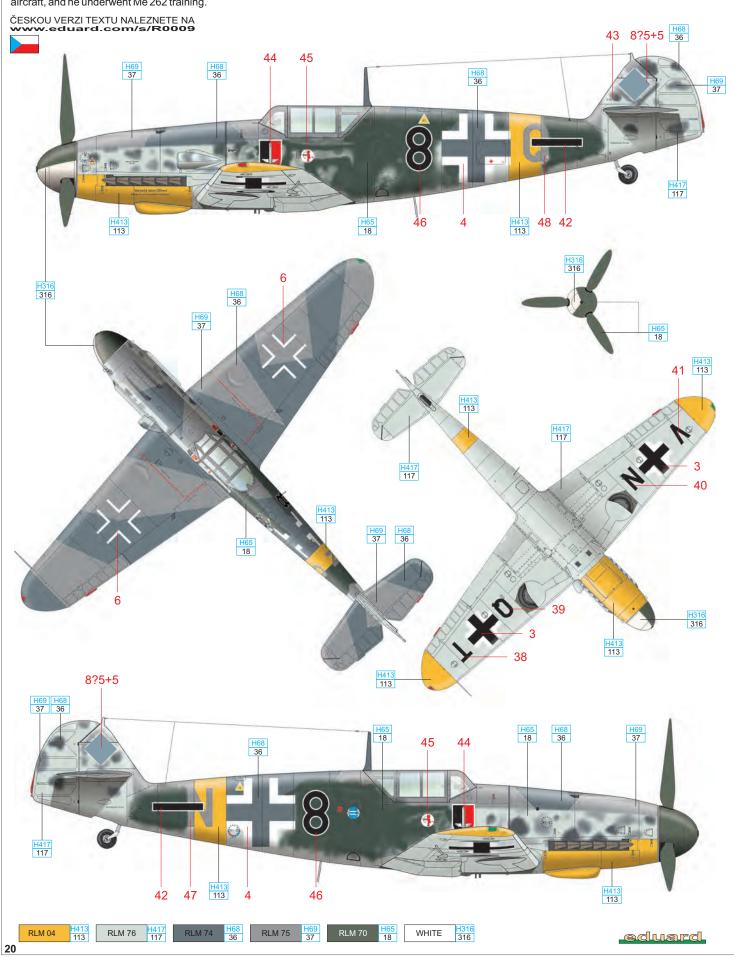
Bf 109G-2 trop, W.Nr. 10 501, Stab/JG 77, Bir el Abd airfield, North Africa, early November, 1942

This aircraft was abandoned at Bir el Abd Air Field by retreating German forces. According to German wartime documents, this aircraft had suffered undercarriage damage and was blown up on November 4, 1942...which obviously never happened and the aircraft was captured by allied forces. The typical desert camouflage scheme consisted of RLM 79 Sandgelb on the upper surfaces and RLM 78 Hellblau on the lower surfaces. The white nose and wingtips were the theatre marking used by the Luftwaffe on aircraft deployed in the Mediterranean area. The triple chevron and the digit '4'place this aircraft in service with Stab/JG 77.



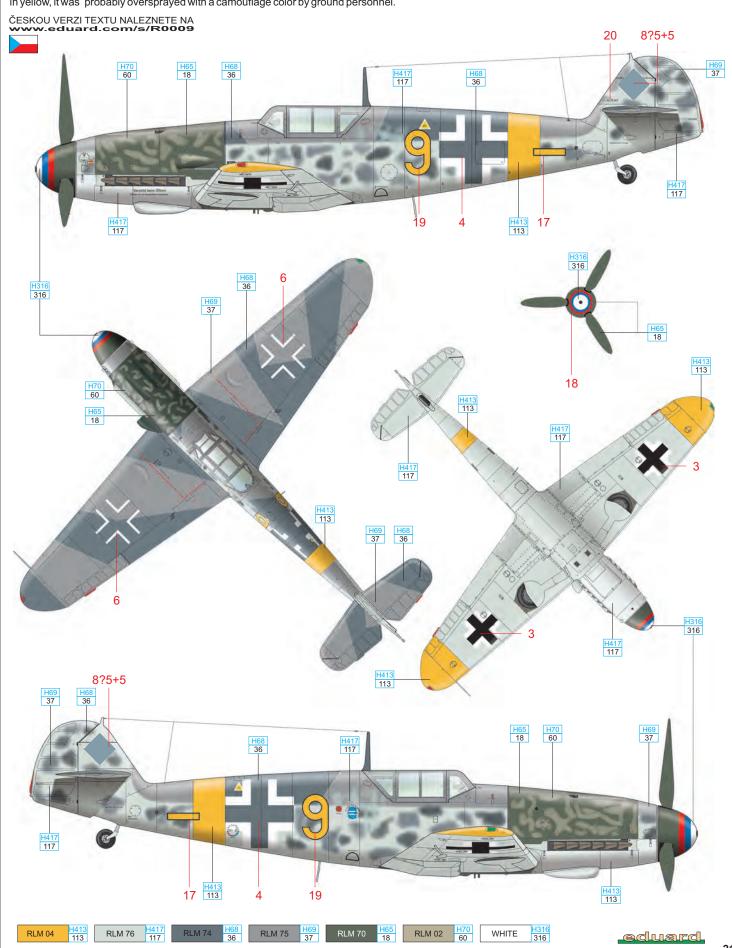
Bf 109G-4, W.Nr. 19 257, Flown by Fw. Viktor Petermann, 5./JG 52, South Part of the Eastern Front, June, 1943

Viktor Petermann, flying this aircraft, was shot down by a Soviet fighter on June 6, 1943. The combat took place over Petrowskaya village in the Kuban, Soviet Union. The Stamkennzeichen code VN+QT was overpainted on the fuselage – but is still partially visible. This code was probably left on the wings. The JG 52 badge was painted below the canopy, the small devil is the badge of the 5th Staffel. Petermann, a native of Weipert (Vejprty), Czechoslovakia, achieved 64 aerial victories and was awarded the Knight's Cross on February 29, 1944. On October 1, 1943 his Bf 109G was hit by friendly AA fire. Petermann was wounded, belly landed and his left forearm had to be amputated. Despite his handicap, he managed to fly further combat missions, downing four enemy aircraft, and he underwent Me 262 training.



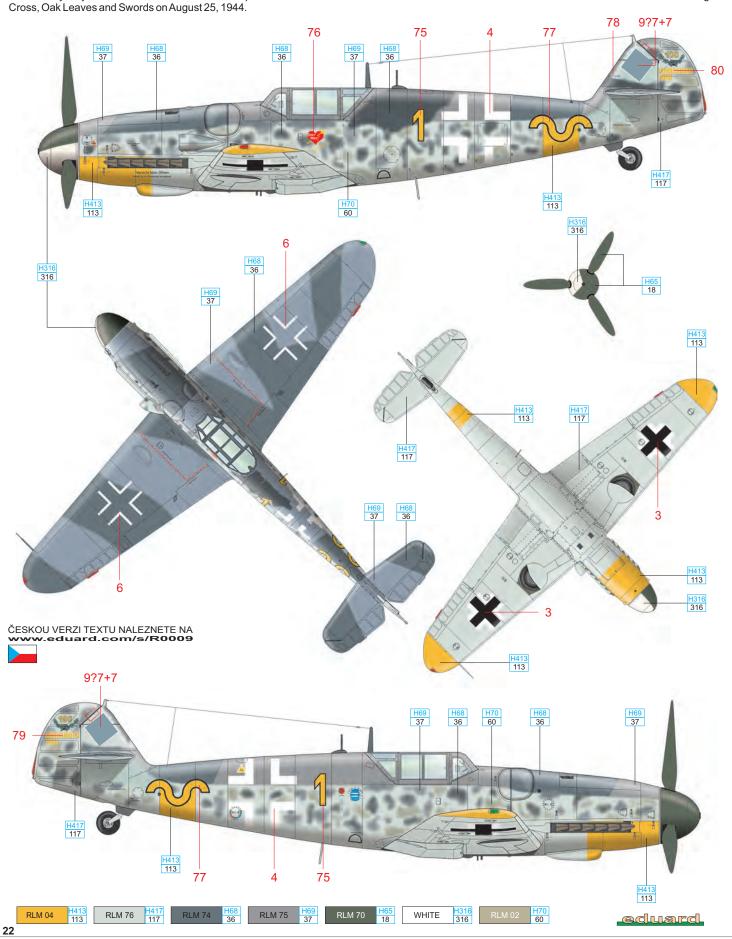
Bf 109G-4, W.Nr. 19 347, Flown by Fw. Jan Reznak, 13. (Slowaken)/JG 52, Anapa airfield, Soviet Union, April / May, 1943

Jan Reznak launched his military career as a member of Czechoslovak Air Force. He became a member of Slovak Armed Forces in 1939 when the independent Slovak State was formed. As a Third Reich ally, Slovakia participated in the war against the Soviet Union. Slovak Letka (flight) 13 fought under the command of JG 52. Reznak achieved a total of 32 aerial victories over the Eastern Front, making him the most successful Slovak, and respectively Czechoslovak, fighter ace. Seven opponents out of his total score were flamed flying W.Nr. 19 347 in late April / early May, 1943. The trikolor on the spinner is typical for Messerschmitts flown by Slovak pilots. Note the unusual color of the cowling that doesn't match the rest of the camouflage. Originally painted in yellow, it was probably oversprayed with a camouflage color by ground personnel.



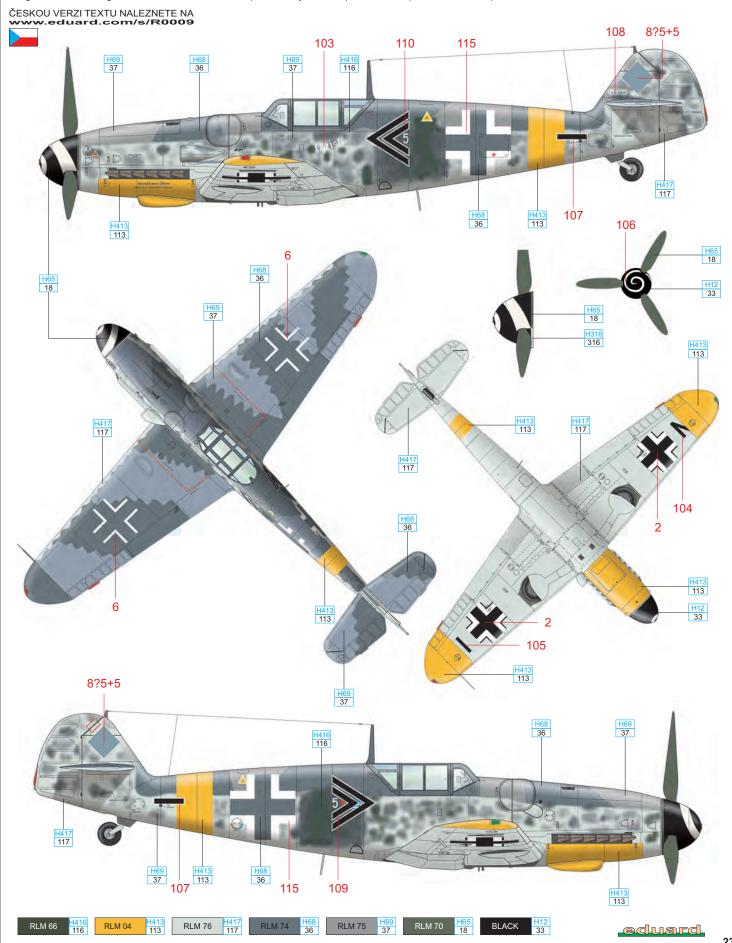
G Bf 109G-6, W.Nr. 20 499, Flown by Lt. Erich Hartmann, CO of 9./JG 52, Nove Zaporozhye, October, 1943

Erich Hartmann downed his 121st victim on October 2, 1943 while flying this aircraft. His score is painted on the rudder. The red heart and Karaya inscription is a 9th Staffel JG 52 badge. The words 'Dicker Max' can be translated as 'The Big Show'. The aircraft was produced by Wiener Neustat Werke as a trop version as can be seen from the sun umbrella mounting below the canopy. Erich Hartmann is the most successful fighter ace not only of the Luftwaffe but in the history of the aviation. His first victim was downed on November 5, 1942 and his 352nd and last was a Yak-9 shot down on May 8, 1945 near Brno, Czechoslovakia. All his kills were scored in the eastern Front. He was captured by US soldiers after the German surrender but was handed over to the Soviets shortly after. A Russian court sentenced him to 25 years of hard labor. Hartmann retured to Germany after 10 years spent in Russian captivity. After his return to Germany he joined the Bundesluftwaffe and helped in the resurrection of the air force and led JG 71. Hartmann received the Diamonds to his Knight's Cross, Oak Leaves and Swords on August 25, 1944.



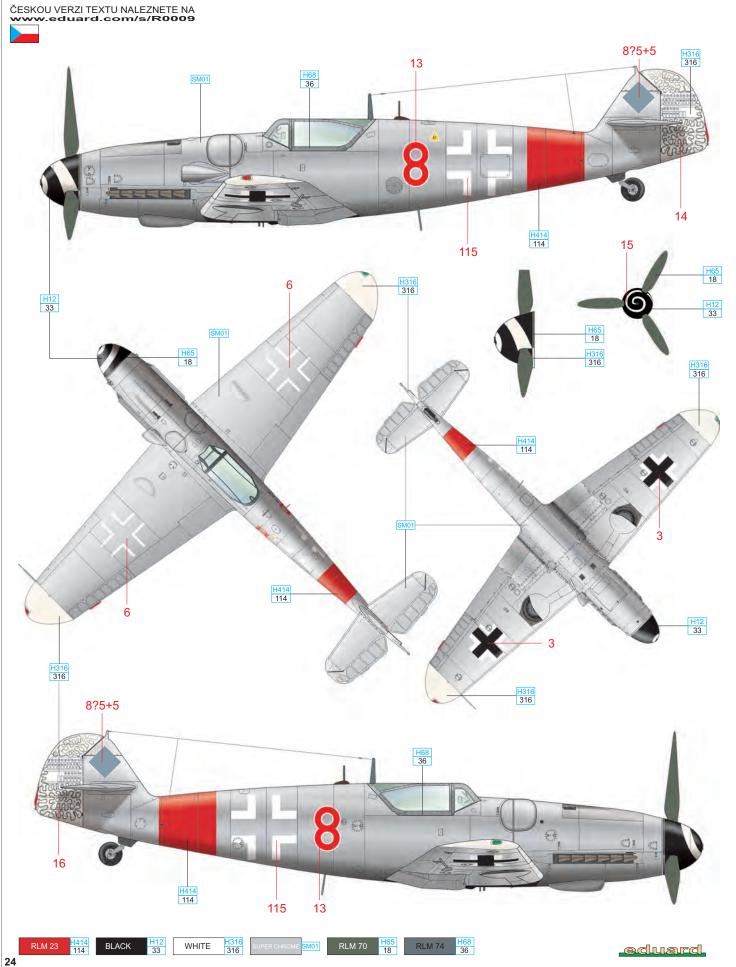
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The personal aircraft of Gerhard Barkhorn, the CO of II./JG 52, was manufactured by the Erla fatory. At least a part of Erla G-6 production utilized the cowling designed for the G-5 version with an additional small bump on the right side. The name 'Christl' is a reference to Barkhorn's wife Christa. The black double chevron identifies the Gruppe's CO aircraft. Barkhorn achieved 301 aerial victories during WWII, all of them as a member of JG 52, putting him in second place among German fighter aces. The first victim was downed on July 2, 1940 and the last on January 5, 1945. In 1945, Barkhorn became the CO of JG 6 and flew Me 262 jet fighters as a member of JV 44 shortly before the German surrender. In the post war era he joined Bundesluftwaffe. Barkhorn was awarded the Knight's Cross on August 23, 1942 with Oak Leaves (on January 11, 1944) and Swords (on March 2, 1944).



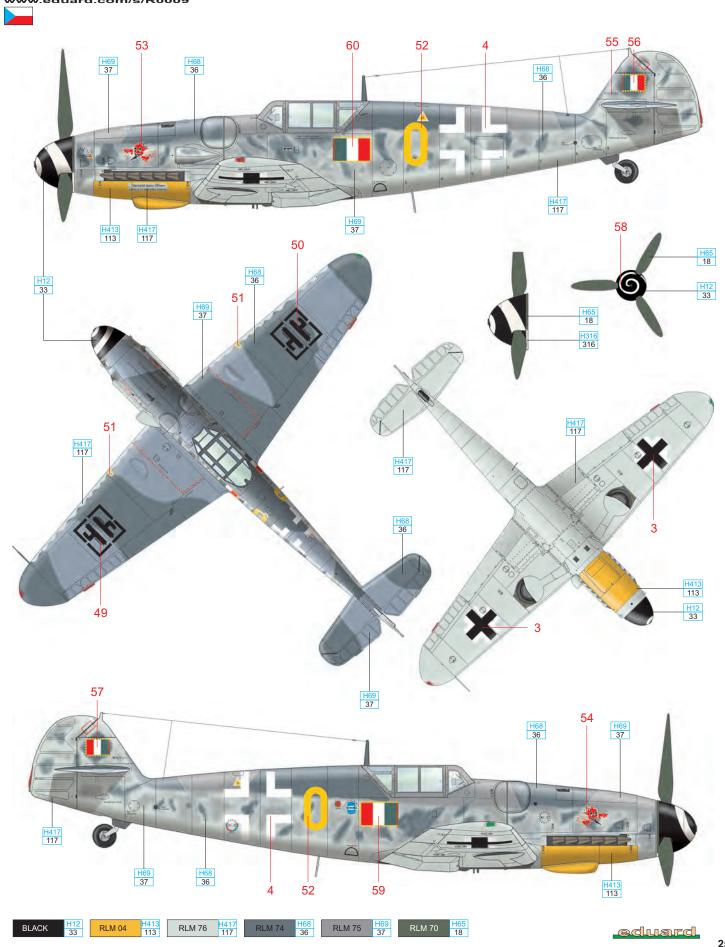
Bf 109G-6, Flown by Oblt. Kurt Gabler, 8./JG 300, Jüterbog – Waldlager Air Base, Germany, July, 1944

The personal mount of Oblt. Kurt Gabler flew without camouflage. It saved on weight, reduced drag, and made the aircraft more effective in the pursuit of fast Mosquitos. The white tail and wingtips identified the leader's aircraft since Gabler provisionally led III./JG 300 from June 20, 1944. The wide red tailband was common to JG 300 aircraft at the time. Gabler's tally of 17 kills is depicted on the rudder. Gabler was wounded in action in late September, 1944 and flew no further combat sorties through to the end of the war.



Aeronautica Nazionalle Repubblicana (ANR), the air force of the Italian Socialist Republic, was established in late September, 1943 in the north part of Italy on the side of th axis and fought against the allies. ANR flew Italian fighters at the beginning, but these were replaced by the Bf 109G delivered from Germany. From October, ANR fighters were a combination of German and Italian marking. The artwork on the nose depicts a Red Devil and corresponds to the name of the 2nd Squadriglia - Diavoli Rossi.

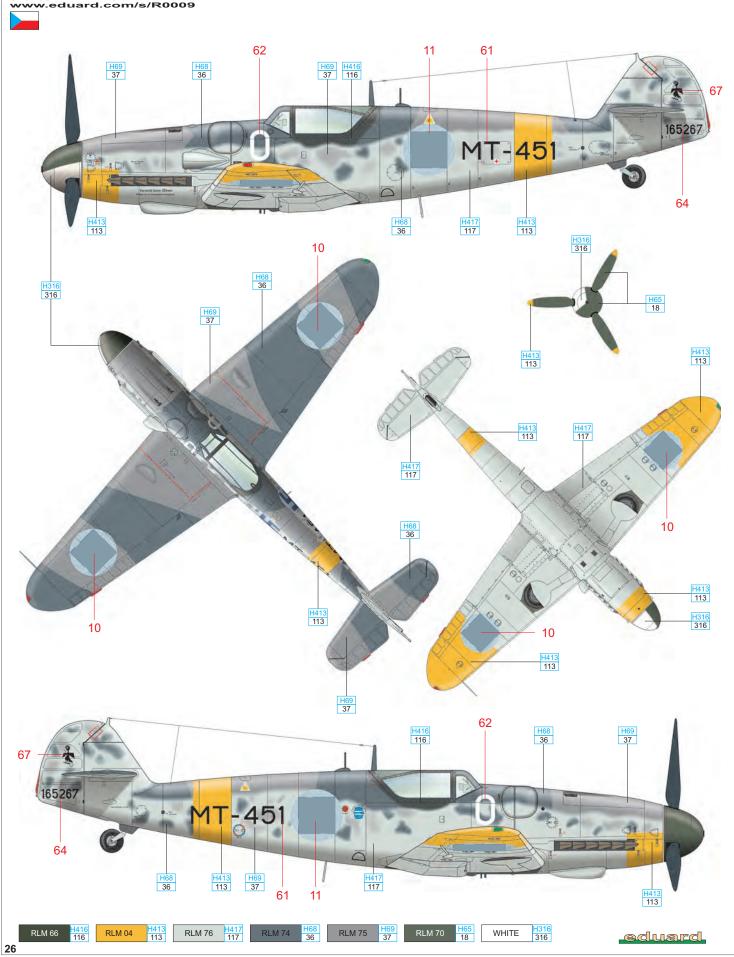
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Bf 109G-6, W.Nr. 165267, 1/HleLv 34, Taipalsaari airfield, July, 1944

Eino Luukkanen was in the cockpit of this airplane while achieving his 56th confirmed victory. He downed a Soviet Yak-9 fighter flown by Lt. G. F. Nizhnik on August 5, 1944 over Narva Bay. This Yak was the only aircraft downed by the guns of MT-451. The aircraft was delivered to Finland on June 23, 1943. The former German Werk Nummer is visible on the rudder. Two underwing cannon pods were mounted and there was no artwork on the rudder at that time. The fledgling eagle was painted later on. MT-451 was written off after an accident on August 25, 1947.

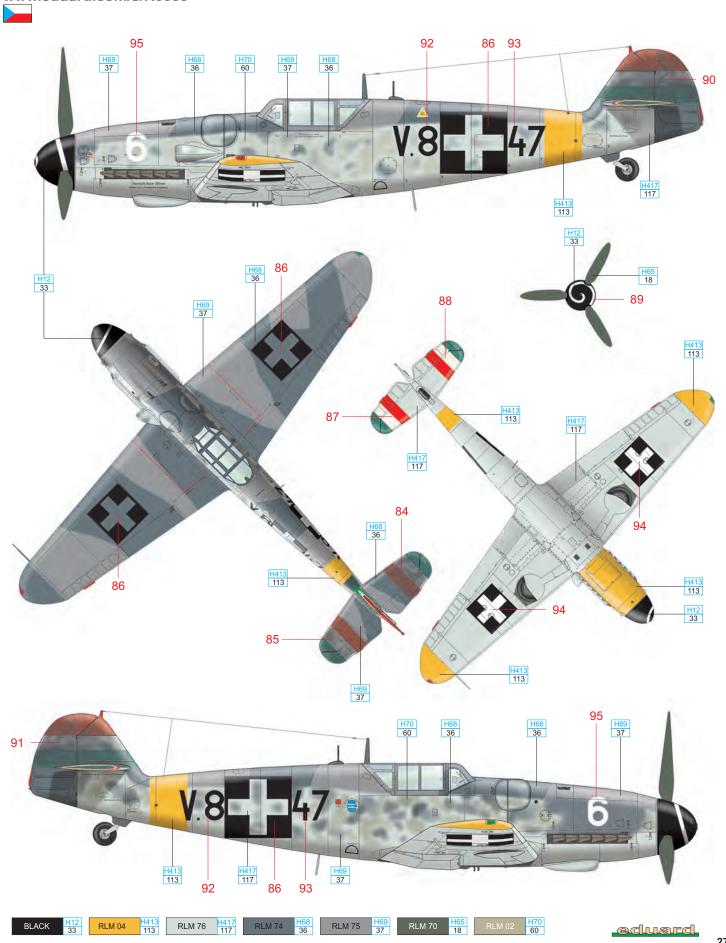
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Bf 109G-6, W.Nr. 95 417, Flown by Lt. Pál Bélavári, 101/3. vadászszázad, Veszprém Air Base, Hungary, August, 1944

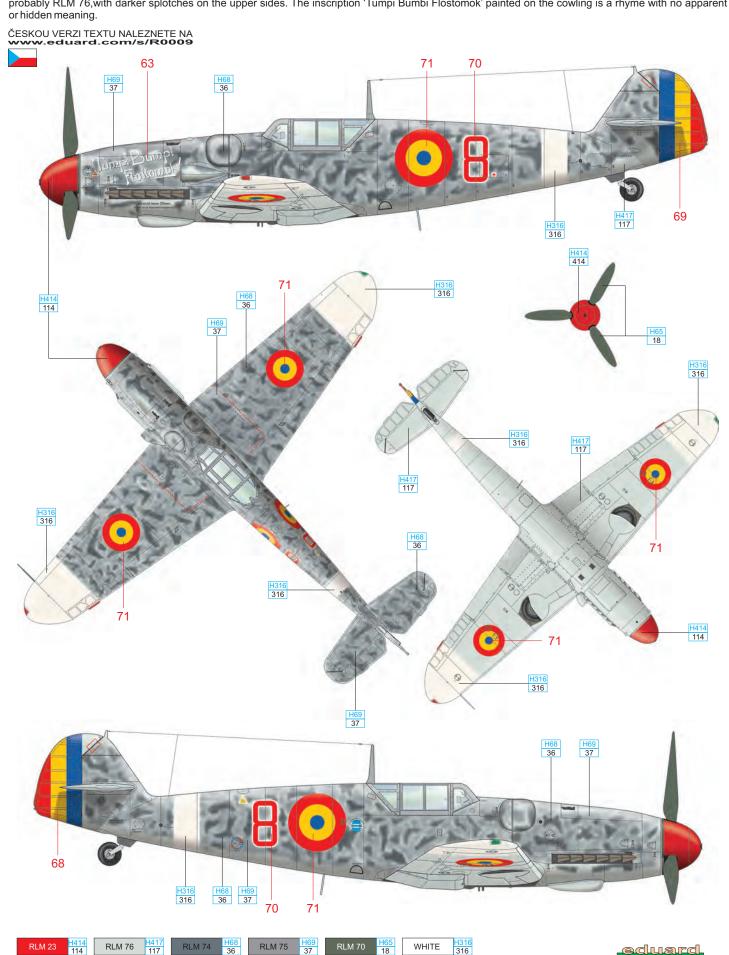
This aircraft was produced at Györ, Hungary under licence. It was flown by Pal Belavari in August, 1944 in a mandatory test flight prior to delivery to the Royal Hungarian Air Force. The white crosses of the national insignia on the fuselage and uppper wing surface were ovesprayed with RLM 76 or RLM 75. The bright colors on the tail were toned down as well to afford the aircraft better camouflage. Pal Belavari was credited with one aerial victory. He was killed on October 12, 1944 when bounced by Mustangs during landing at Veszprem Air Field.

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M Bf 109G-6, Flown by Lt. Baciu Dumitru, Grupul 1 Vânănatoare, early May, 1945

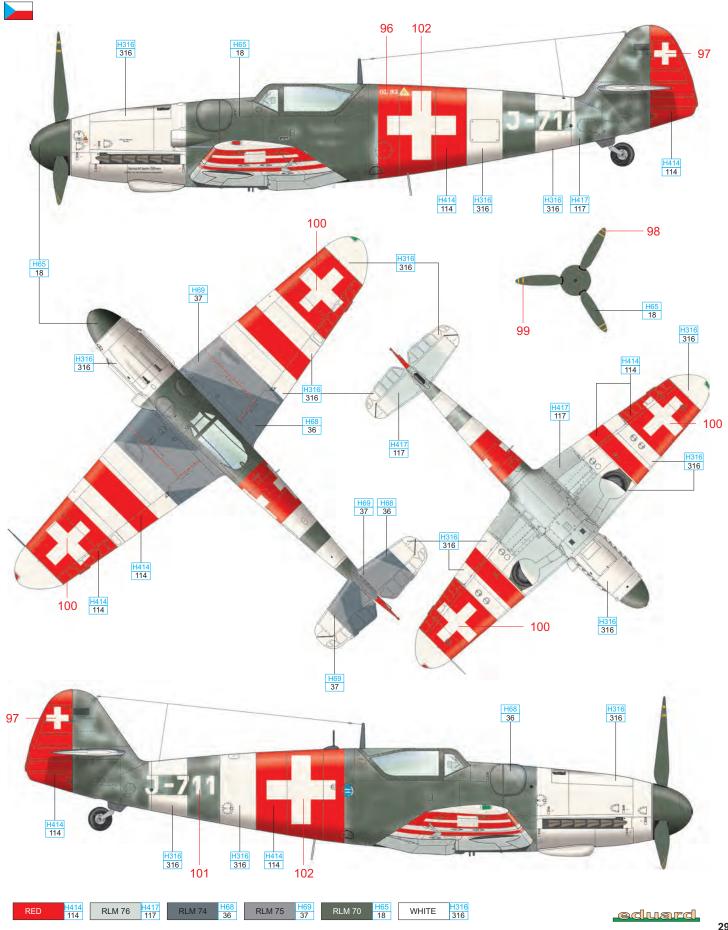
The Rumanian air force used a cross as their national insignia through almost the entire WWII period. In the last months of the war Rumania joined the Allies and the new style of national insignia was adopted along with other changes. Despite the switch, Rumanian aircraft were sometimes mistaken for the enemy by allied forces. This G-6 was on a combat mission over Czechoslovakia with Lt. Baciu Dumitru in the cockpit on May 4, 1945. He was attacked by Soviet Yak fighters by mistake and Dumitru managed to shoot one of them down but was forced to make an emergency landing. The aircraft wore a light blue color, probably RLM 76,with darker splotches on the upper sides. The inscription 'Tumpi Bumbi Flostomok' painted on the cowling is a rhyme with no apparent or hidden meaning.



Bf 109G-6, W.Nr. 163815, Fliegerkompagnie 7, Flugwaffe, Interlaken Air Base, June, 1945

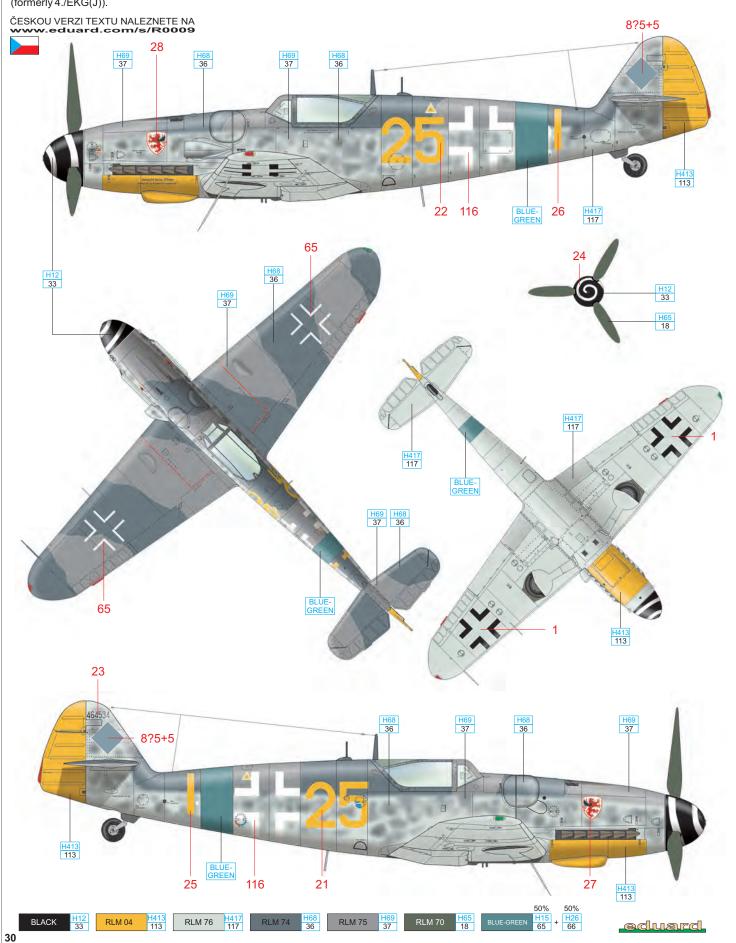
Bf 109G-6s were delivered to the Flugwaffe, the Swiss Air Force, in 1944. On April 28, 1944, Wilhelm Johnen, a German nightfighter ace with 34 victories to his credit, made an emergency landing with his Bf 110G-4 at Zürich - Dübendorf Air Base. Johnen's aircraft was equipped with Secter equipment, including the FuG 220 Liechtenstein radar. The Germans asked the Swiss representatives to destroy the Bf 110, including the radar. The Swiss agreed but took the opportunity to request the purchase of twelve brand new Bf 109Gs from the Germans. The aircraft bearing the W.Nr. 163815 was one of them and was flown to Switzerland in late May, 1944. The red & white stripes on the fuselage and wings were quick identification markings.





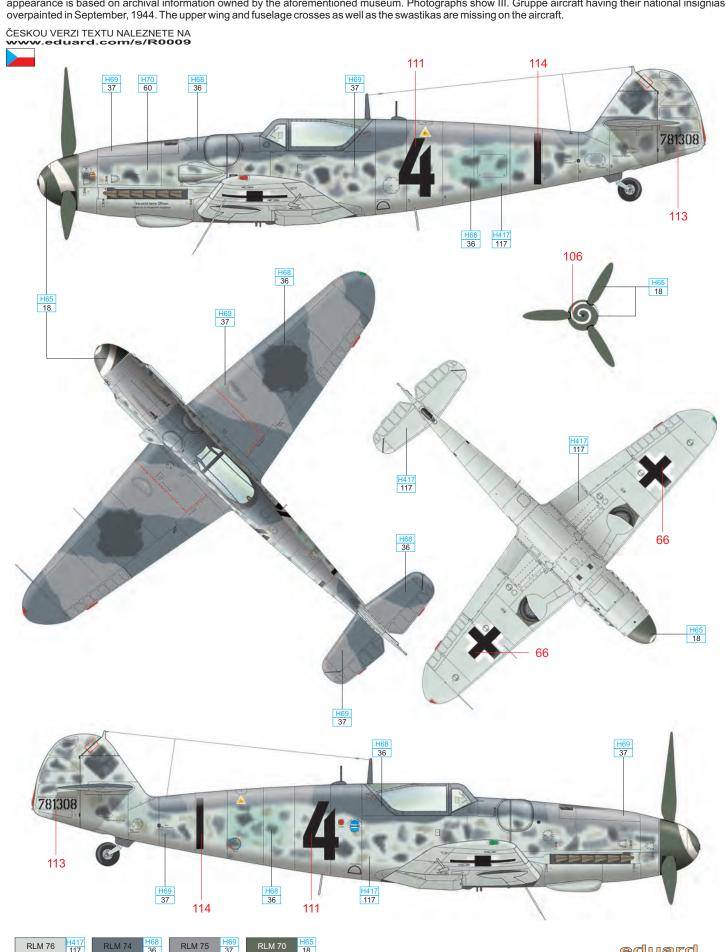
Bf 109G-14, W.Nr. 464534, 19./EJG 2, Pilsen airfield, May, 1945

This Bf 109G-14 was one of the aircraft captured after the war at Pilsen (Plzen), Czechoslovakia. The Luftwaffe unit that flew this aircraft is unclear. The previous markings are still visible under the more recent ones and the KG 55 badge is painted on the cowling. This former bomber regiment used the twinengined He 111. The Luftwaffe found itself in a bad position in the second half of 1944 and bomber units became less and less of a priority. Thus the three Gruppes of KG 55 were redesignated KG(J) 55 in September/October 1944 and were supposed to be equipped with Me 262 fighters. This never happened and Bf 109Gs and Fw 190As were delivered instead. Only the IV. Gruppe was based in Pilsen and it was subordinate to Erg.KGr(J). This unit was redesignated I./EKG(J) in January 1945 and then V./EJG 2 in March. The only part of this unit that stayed in Pilsen through to the end of the war was 19./EJG 2 (formerly 4./EKG(J)).



Bf 109G-14, W.Nr. 781308, Flown by Lt. Hans-Helmut Linck, 10./JG 4, Alteno airfield, Germany, September 11, 1944

Hans-Helmut Linck failed to return to his home base after the air battle over the Ore Mountains on September 11, 1944 as well as more than forty other JG 4 pilots. Linck's aircraft hit the ground near the city of Cheb, in the present day Czech Republic, and the pilot saved his life by taking to his parachute. The place of the aircraft crash was identified in late nineties and the aircraft remnants are displayed in the exhibition of the Museum of the Air Battle Over the Ore Mountains on September 11th, 1944 in Kovarska, the Czech Republic. This kit contains a fragment of Linck's G-14. No photos of this aircraft are known, the appearance is based on archival information owned by the aforementioned museum. Photographs show III. Gruppe aircraft having their national insignias



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Bf 109G

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