## Peace Alps - Part Two





F-5E/F Tiger II



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1/48 scale

**Printed by Fantasy Printshop** 

40 years ago the F-5E/F Tiger was introduced into the inventory of the Swiss Air Force. The Tiger was the last ,inexpensive' mass fighter aircraft for the Swiss Airforce, 98 single-seaters and 12 two-seaters were purchased. It was also the last Jet Fighter that was to be crewed by the militia pilot system; men who followed normal professions but also were professional Fighter Pilots. The end of the ,Flying Baker' has been proclaimed for many years. The fleet reduction started already in 2002 when the US Navy became interested in the F-5 to beef up their ,Aggressor Squadrons'.



In the media, the Tiger got called old, night-blind and lame winged. A replacement was required, found and tested - the Saab 39 Gripen came out superior to the Dassault Rafale and Eurofighter. Not everybody liked this and in 2014, three million aviation experts voted not to purchase any new aircraft at all.

Peace Alps Part Two is the story of an aircraft that has reached 40 years of service in Switzerland against all odds and continues flying. This set offers decals for the very first aircraft up to some retirement schemes of today, but is not covering the end, as the final pages still need to be written.

Tigers delivered in the original first batch (J-3001 – J-3066 and J-3201 – J-3206) did not have the extended Leading Edge Wing Extensions (LERX) or the aerodynamically more streamlined shark shaped radar nose cones. However the second batch (J-3067 – J-3098 & J-3207 – 3212) delivered from 1982 onwards, were built from new with the LERX and the improved nose cone. The prominent VHF antenna was installed behind the cockpit. These modifications were also retrospectively introduced to the earlier Tiger fleet.

As has become an established tradition, the last aircraft off the production line received special nose art and J-3066 became Peace Alps I and featured a flying dove while J-3098 had Peace Alps II titles above a flying witch (both aircraft are featured on the 'Peace Alps Part Two' decal sheet). There is hardly any F-5 in Swiss service that did not receive a squadron badge at some time during its service life. Since the aircraft are not assigned to any specific squadron, some aircraft have more than one squadron badge applied or may have had a mix of various badges at different times. Tiger airplanes also participated in training missions and competitions abroad. Sardinia (SAKA) or Waddington (NORKA) in the United Kingdom created new badges. It is imperative to check photo references to get a picture of the exact look of a particular aircraft at any given time.

The paint scheme applied was similar to the USAF F-15's of the time. The original colors are F9453 Medium Grey and F9452 Light Grey, produced by the company Walter Mäder AG in Switzerland. The closest equivalent is a mix of FS 35237 Grey Blue and FS 36622 Grey in parts 33/67 and 50/50 respectively. With the introduction of the F/A-18 Hornet in 1998, things became easier and the colors were harmonized with FS 36320 Dark Ghost Grey and FS 36375 Light Ghost Grey. This is a matter of evolution, some aircraft were completely repainted, some merely received only a partial replacement while others simply received a touch up, thus leaving a 4 color mottled effect. While similar, the new Ghost Grays are a shade darker than the original colors; a very pleasing challenge to the modeler.

Research for this project was extremely interesting and creating the artwork for the decals placed a challenge. I'm aware, that I got carried away. This presents my biggest decal project and while preparing these instructions, I have not seen the finished product myself. I do know, that some registration numbers are missing... but they are easy made up with spare numbers. This said – with this sheet you will be able

to create almost any Swiss F-5 Tiger at some point in time. Extra squadron badges are provided. There is simply not enough space on the instruction sheet for the whole fleet.











