

ASIAN AIR ARMS SIG

SEASONAL SPECIAL



圣诞快乐

Merry Christmas



ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021

It's been another challenging year for us all with the ongoing pandemic and unfortunately there does not appear to be any immediate relief but I hope this additional newsletter that Steve has crafted will bring an element of light entertainment during these difficult times.

Asia has, of course, remained in the news headlines during 2021 for many reasons including those that will be of specific interest to our group. The ongoing tensions between China and Taiwan have increased the amount of coverage on their respective Armed Forces. North Korea continues to flex its military muscle so we are treated to occasional but more frequent glimpses of their secretive Air Arms. In August, the world was focused on Afghanistan and the Taliban takeover with a considerable amount of speculation with regard to the future of the Afghan Air Force. I do not imagine that 2022 will be any different.

For the modellers among you, we have had a pretty good year. The hobby industry continues to produce some high quality kits, decals and accessories with which to create Asian Air Arm subjects, and one of the more positive aspects of the pandemic and lockdown is a resurgence of interest in the hobby that is now allowing manufacturers to be ever more creative with their releases, so I think we can look forward to more in the New Year. The shoots of recovery also appear to be emerging on the model show scene with the recent Scale Model World 2021 event at Telford being the most obvious indicator that some organisers are taking a bold and brave step in order to try to return us all to some degree of normality.

With model shows in mind, you will see the bulk of this special edition is dedicated to providing you with some images of the Asian Air Arms models that were on show at Telford during November. The SIG was not, of course, represented this year but I am indebted to Andy Binks and Ian Gaskell for taking the time to photograph many of the Asian themed models for your viewing pleasure!.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families and friends all the best for the Holiday Season and the end of this year, as we look forward to hopefully better times in 2022.

Enjoy some leisure time and, above all, stay safe.

Mark



Season's greetings to all our members!

Welcome to this 'Seasonal Special', which was largely inspired by the excellent series of photos taken by SIG members Andy Binks and Ian Gaskell at this year's Scale Model World. In fact, between them, they took so many great photos that it was very difficult for Mark to reduce them to a manageable number! We have also included a few articles that we already had to hand, to supplement the SMW report.

You will notice that, to maximise the space for the photographs, I have slightly changed the page format for this issue, so our familiar logo, page links and numbers, etc. are missing from this edition. Rest assured, the next edition will see a return to the more usual page layout.

A good number of you have now responded to Mark's repeated recent email appeals for confirmation that you wish to continue your membership, and I'm really gratified to say that any feedback we've received has been overwhelmingly positive, a sign that most of you feel that the newsletter is headed in the right direction. I know that 'no news is good news', but feedback, positive or negative (as long as it is also *constructive*), is always welcome. I would **strongly urge** those of you who have not yet responded to do so as soon as possible in order to give us a more accurate picture of where we are in terms of numbers.

Hoping Santa fills your stockings with all those models you've been coveting, have a wonderful Christmas,

See you in the New Year!

Steve

Scale Model World '21 report by Andy Binks

(all photo captions by Mark Attrill)

After two years of waiting, Scale Model World was upon us once more, thanks to the tremendous efforts of the IPMS UK committee and their faithful volunteers, not least in taking what was a large financial risk in running such a big event in these difficult times.

Thankfully, nothing was cancelled prior to the doors opening to members at 09.00 on the Saturday morning and those that attended were able to enjoy the sights of the world's largest model show once again.

Obviously there had been worries about the effects of Covid within the halls, and this had led to many clubs cancelling their attendance. However, this had an unforeseen positive effect in creating more space behind display tables as well as aisles wider than usual, which along with the reduced attendance, made for a very relaxed show indeed.

Some notable manufacturers were missing, namely Zoukei Mura, Airfix and Revell, but this did not detract from the enjoyment of the event. Sadly, many foreign traders were also unable to lend their colour to the weekend, which is something that both UK and European show organisers will have to get used to as Brexit rules are not going to change in the future. Hopefully, some brave souls will take the plunge, complete the paperwork and travel to foreign shores in coming years, then spread the word that life isn't as bad as the press make out.

The lack of foreign exotica and the kit-swap did not prevent hard earned cash from being spent aplenty on the many kits and accessories that were available. It was nice to see some new trade names, such as Bandit Resin Factory, using their 3D-printing design skills to produce interesting after-market products. This is surely a sign of things to come and should be welcomed with open arms as we have to move with the times, as we did when cottage industries bloomed into the likes of Eduard and Aires back in the day.

Writers, editors and book publishers in particular seem to have been busy during the Covid crisis, which is good news for those of us that love non-digital reference sources.

Whilst the quantity and variety of Asian air arms models on display was not great, there were many newly completed masterpieces. There could be no excuses as we all had plenty of time, right?

The standard of the models was very high indeed, especially so for those that were entered in competition. It is amazing that we modellers seem to find ways to aspire to even greater heights of glory as time progresses. I am sure that the photos shown here will provide much inspiration to us all, and encourage others to join our ranks.

The overall impression of SMW 2021 was of a relaxed and well organised show that was thoroughly enjoyed by all those that attended. With luck more of us will be able and willing to attend next year, but for now, welcome back SMW. Roll-on next year!



Following our decision not to attend Scale Model World 2021, it largely fell to one of our 'relatives', the Japanese Aircraft SIG, to fly the flag for Asian Air Arm aircraft, with their impressive display of historical and contemporary Japanese aircraft and helicopters.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



An impressive JASDF Lockheed F-104J Starfighter from 207 Squadron, sporting a special colour scheme and markings from the 1984 Tactical Air Combat Meet (Senkyo).



Another JASDF F-104J, this time operated by 204 Squadron and sporting distinctive red & white markings over the standard overall natural metal colour scheme, which formed part of the centerpiece of the impressive Japanese Aircraft SIG display...

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...accompanied by this equally stunning F-4EJ Kai Phantom sporting 302 Squadron special markings during the Unit's final year of service with the mighty F-4



This is the brand new Finemolds 1:72 scale kit of the F-4EJ Phantom, portrayed as a 'Gate Guardian' outside a JASDF Base, as featured in a recent edition of Airfix Model World Magazine.



One of my all-time favourite JASDF F-4EJ Phantom specials!. The spectacular tactical digital scheme applied to a standard F-4EJ Phantom operated by the Air Development and Test Wing (ADTW).

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The all-new Zoukei-Mura 1:48 scale McDD F-4EK Kai Phantom adorned with the spectacular light grey and blue special markings applied by 301 Squadron to commemorate the final retirement of the F-4 Phantom from JASDF service.



This Boeing F-14DJ Eagle featured one of the special Dissimilar Air Combat Training colour schemes applied to aircraft operated by the JASDF Aggressor Squadron.



This JASDF F-15J Eagle sports an attractive low visibility digital camouflage scheme.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



Models of flying boats are something of a rarity so it was good to see these two Shinmeiwa variants on display. The UF-XS in the foreground is a Japanese experimental STOL flying Boat that was similar in size to the Grumman Albatross. This rare 1:144 scale A&W Models kit was one of several completed by SIG Member, Andy Binks.



The Hasegawa 1:72 scale Shinmeiwa PS-1 (US-1) Flying Boat was first released almost 50 years ago but is still an impressive model. This is a particularly nice example, finished in Air-Sea rescue colours.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



Another golden oldie from Hasegawa that has been regularly re-released over the years is the 1:72 scale Lockheed P-3C Orion. This one is finished in the later colour scheme applied to JMSDF aircraft and also features some of the more recent modifications applied to the original anti-submarine warfare and maritime-patrol aircraft.



The Antonov An-2 is another aircraft that is not often featured at model shows. This is a very nice North Vietnamese (VPAF) example, finished in a 'night intruder' colour scheme and fitted with rocket pods.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



The Kinetic 1:48 scale Dassault Mirage IIIE/O presented in the colours and markings of the Pakistan Air Force. The rather odd colour scheme stems from the origins of the aircraft. Pakistan purchased a number of secondhand examples from Australia and then retrofitted them with wing sets that originated from South Africa and were still sporting the 'bush' camouflage scheme applied to SAAF combat aircraft.



Another colourful Pakistan Air Force aircraft, this time a Shenyang F-6 (MiG-19) finished in special retirement markings. These decals are available on an *Iliad* decal sheet produced by SIG Member, Bob Migliardi.



Another Kinetic 1:48 scale kit, this time of the BAe/McDonnell-Douglas TAV-8S Harrier finished in the colours and markings of the Royal Thai Navy, which purchased a number of ex-Spanish Armada examples in the 1990s.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



The new-tool Airfix 1:72 scale kit of the Hunting Jet Provost T.4, nicely finished as a T.Mk.51 of the Sri Lankan Air Force.



The hugely impressive Trumpeter 1:32 scale Sukhoi Su-27B 'Flanker', finished by modeller Stuart Barry in the colours and markings of the Kazakhstan Air Force and seen on the IPMS Gloucester Branch stand.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



Another of Andy Binks' superb models, this time the Roden 1:48 scale T-28 Trojan, which has been enlivened with some nice figures and airfield equipment.



This very impressive 1:32 scale Trumpeter model of the Mikoyan MiG-21 'Fishbed' was featured in the main competition. Sporting a huge number of scratch-built modifications, it was finished in the markings of 5 Squadron of the Bangladesh Air Force.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



Models of North Vietnamese People's Air Force (VPAF) aircraft appeared to be very popular at SMW'21, with this nice trio appearing on the Mikoyan MiG Special Interest Group stand. My particular favourite is the MiG-19 (middle photo) sporting ad-hoc green camouflage over the natural metal airframe and two pilots scanning a map prior to their next mission, which was made, together with the MiG-21PFM, by SIG Member Ian Gaskell.



ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



This Shinmeiwa US-2 maritime patrol aircraft, sporting the attractive dark blue and light grey colour scheme of the JMSDF, is clearly based on the earlier Shinmeiwa PS/US-1 flying boat.



This AFV Club ROCAF Northrop F-5F Tiger II was finished in attractive low and high-visibility tiger markings supplied by Taiwanese decal manufacturer W&D Decals.



Another ROCAF fighter, this time a Kinetic 1:48 scale single-seat Dassault Mirage 2000-5, was observed on the Dassault Mirage SIG stand, led by fellow Asian Air Arms SIG member Mark Ascott.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



A very neat and clean-looking NAMC YS-11 twin-turboprop transport aircraft that looks remarkably like the H.S Andover, by virtue of using the same powerplants.



A fine example of the domestically-designed and manufactured Kawasaki C-1 twin-jet medium transport aircraft shown in the early overall natural metal colour.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



Another Hasegawa 1:72 scale JMSDF P-3C Orion, although this particular model is finished as one of the more specialized experimental UP-3Cs operated by the Air Arm.



SIG Member Ian Gaskell had a number of models on display at Scale Model World '21. This very nice looking Pakistan Air Force Nanchang Q-5 Fighter-Bomber was produced from the rather basic 1:48 scale AA Models kit released in the 1990s.



A very nice looking 1:72 scale Tupolev Tu-22 Backfire bomber which was presented as operated by the Indian Air Force, in this unusual camouflage scheme.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



A Chinese Peoples' Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) MiG-21 in an unusual and attractive three-tone camouflage scheme.



The JASDF Mitsubishi F-2A 'Viper Zero' Multi-Role Fighter has appeared in a number of very attractive special markings over the years, but I will readily admit that this rather bizarre commemorative scheme is not one of my personal favourites. That said, it was a very nicely-completed model presented on an equally nice display base.



Two models that clearly demonstrate export success for Chinese aircraft manufacturer Chengdu with Asian Air Arms. The F-7 Airguard is shown in the markings of 5/35 "Thundercats" Squadron of the Bangladesh Air Force, with a rather garish two-tone blue camouflage. The Chengdu JF-17 Thunder is presented in a far more practical low-visibility colour scheme and as operated by No. 26 'Black Spider' Squadron of the Pakistan Air Force.



Another of Ian Gaskell's excellent models from the Mikoyan MiG stable; this time a MiG-29UB Fulcrum portrayed in the markings of the Turkmenistan Air Force.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



SIG Member Andy Binks is another modeler who has been busy during 2020/21, during which time he produced this impressive example of the mighty Sikorsky MH-53E Sea Stallion in JMSDF markings.



Another of Andy Binks' models, the lovely Great Wall Hobby Lockheed T-33A Shooting Star, which saw widespread service as a jet trainer with a multitude of Air Arms including the JASDF.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



Some of the models on display were not quite what they appeared to be at first glance. This nice model of a Curtiss C-46 Commando was, in fact an EC-36D ECM Trainer, converted by the JASDF and operated in the role between 1973-78.



Another model of a specialist JASDF aircraft. This is a Kawasaki EC-1 ELINT aircraft that is based on the C-1 twin-engined tactical transport aircraft. Two have been operated by the JASDF since 1987. The model, completed by Andy Binks, is from specialist Japanese manufacturer North Wing Model Craft and is a true heavyweight, being entirely resin in construction and to 1:72 scale!

Hasegawa 1/72 F-4EJ Kai Phantom II



The McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom family of aircraft can arguably be considered the greatest [post-WW2] warplane in the west. Having outfitted all three of the U.S. air arms, both air arms of the UK, and ten other foreign operators, the Phantom has served in almost every role and carried a myriad of weapons, radar and counter-measure configurations.

In 1968, Japan made public its choice of the Phantom as its new air defense fighter and became one of the few countries that license-produced this aircraft. The *Nihon Koku Jietai* (Japan Air Self-Defense Force, JASDF) received a total of 154 F-4EJ and RF-4Es. While the F-4EJs were built almost entirely by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, the RF-4Es were bought directly from McDonnell-Douglas.



F-4EJ Kai was the designation applied to existing Japanese-built F-4EJ fighters that were upgraded in a modernization program initiated in July of 1984. The goals of the program were to bring JASDF F-4EJs up to standards appropriate for the 1990s and to extend their service lives well into the 21st century. Plans to fit slatted wings to the Kai were ruled out on the basis of cost.

The F-4EJ Kai (the suffix "Kai" means "extra" or "augmented") is fitted with the Westinghouse AN/APG-66J pulse-Doppler radar, which is much smaller and lighter than the original APQ-120, but has more operating modes with better lookdown, shootdown capability. Externally, the installation of the new radar can be distinguished by the presence of a new radome which has fore and aft strengthening ribs. The Kai had a new central computer, a Kaiser heads-up display, a Hazeltine AN/APZ-79 IFF system, and a license-built Litton LN-39 inertial navigation unit.



A new J/APR-6 radar homing and warning system was fitted. Twin aft-facing radomes for this system were mounted on the fin tip and forward-facing antennae are mounted on the wingtips. A new, much taller UHF blade antenna was mounted on the dorsal spine, and the lower UHF antenna on the undercarriage door was larger in size. These are about the only externally-visible distinguishing points between the F-4EJ and the F-4EJ Kai.

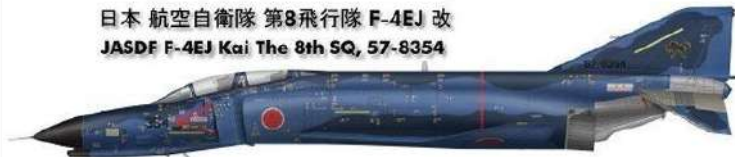
The aircraft often carried a 610-US gallon F-15 fuel tank on the centerline. This tank was stressed to take higher g-loads than was the original F-4 centerline tank. The



Kai also carried the Westinghouse AN/ALQ-131 advanced multimode electronic countermeasures pod. The Kai could launch the AIM-7E/F Sparrow and the AIM-9L/P Sidewinder air-to-air missiles. In addition, it could carry and launch the Mitsubishi ASM-1 anti-ship missile.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021

日本 航空自衛隊 第8飛行隊 F-4EJ 改
JASDF F-4EJ Kai The 8th SQ, 57-8354



JASDF F-4EJ Kai The 8th SQ, 47-8331



JASDF F-4EJ Kai The 8th SQ

この模型は、日本航空自衛隊第8飛行隊のF-4EJ Kaiを模したものです。機体は青い塗装で、機首には赤い丸と黒い文字の迷彩があります。機体には多くのステッカーとパネル番号が貼られています。機首には「JASDF」の文字が見えます。機体は、日本航空自衛隊第8飛行隊のF-4EJ Kaiを模したものです。

JASDF F-4EJ Kai The 8th SQ

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The first F-4EJ Kai flew in 1984, and the 306th Hikotai accepted its first example on November 24, 1989. The JASDF has now retired its last F-4EJ Phantoms after almost 50 years in service, with the aircraft officially leaving service on November 20, 2020 in a ceremony at Hyakuri Air Base.

The Model

These newer Hasegawa kits are interesting in that they are designed in a modular way with all kinds of optional parts (fin tips, wing tips, aerial blades, fuselage inserts, etc.) so that you can make a variety of models of the Phantom from each box. Unfortunately the trade off is really awkward assembly procedures. Not as clean a build as a single-model designed set of molds. You have to pay a lot more attention to lining up each sub assembly, and still there's extra sanding and putty work required. This was pretty much an OOB build, except for a metal pitot probe that came with the stencils set, pilots, and the PE face curtain pulls.



I have several JASDF Phantoms to build, but the one that caught my eye most was the Ocean Blues scheme. I used the Gunze JASDF Ocean Blues set to achieve the camo, and Vallejo metals for the metal work on the tail section.

I used a set of dry transfers for the stenciling and panel numbers (at least 50 hours of effort to get them on!). Phantoms are known



for the copious amount of stencils, and the JASDF birds take the prize for quantity. It seems that there are not only the typical stencils, but each panel has a set of panel numbers as well. These were so small that I had to use my cell phone camera zoomed in tight, and then my lighted magnifier, to get the right transfers in the right place! Don't know that I want to do that again!

I had used dry transfers one other time, and have learned a few things about them that I'll pass on here if you want to give them a try. If you are using dry transfers with standard waterslide decals, be sure to overcoat the waterslide decals in advance if any of the dry transfers overlap the waterslides. Even then you are not guaranteed that the process of burnishing down the dry transfers won't pull up the decal – caution is recommended! I actually ended up using some of the kit waterslide decals for instances where the stencils laid down over other waterslides.

Cut the dry transfer leaving enough edge [on the backing] to allow you to get some tape on each side (I used the typical Tamiya tape in thin widths). You

need to make sure that as you are burnishing the transfer down it doesn't move around. Once taped into position, I used a toothpick to start rubbing on the transfer. There are burnishing tools, but these particular stencils were so small that the tip of a toothpick was about all I could get on them.

It helped to start at an edge or corner of the transfer and then once you could tell it was beginning to adhere, work your way across the transfer. Generally you'll notice the transfer look lighter beneath the backing where it is beginning to adhere to the model. I would then carefully start to lift one side of the tape and edge of the backing to see if it was fully adhered, and if I could see it wasn't, carefully lay it back in place and keep working on it. As you're burnishing, be careful about catching the edge of the backing, as you can move it and possibly smudge the transfer or break it. Ask me how I know...!

Some transfers seemed to adhere more easily than others, and I noticed for my set that color seemed to have an impact. Some of the yellow transfers took a long time, more pressure, and in some cases I could never get them to release from the backing.

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ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021



Once the transfer is off the backing and on the model, I took a larger piece of the backing (which is a thin plastic), laid it over the transfer, and then burnished it down just a bit more, this time with a burnishing tool. Also, once the transfer is on the model you have to handle the model carefully, as you can scratch or snag a transfer.

It seems like a lot of effort, but using dry transfers eliminates any silvering issues. With an aircraft like the Phantom that contains so many stencils, most model and decal manufacturers tend to put multiple stencils on a single large sheet of decal film. This obviously makes it faster to get all the markings laid down, but then you have to get them to conform to compound surfaces, bumps and panel lines and watch for silvering. I experienced this with an AirDoc set for my Luftwaffe RF-4E. They were really nice decals, but I didn't completely get them down without some silvering issues.

I have to say I think this bird is one of the prettiest Phantoms in existence (though it's kinda hard to use that word about the Rhino!). With all the gray and camo schemes, this scheme just stands out in my mind. I chose the gray tanks to add some additional color to the blues (from reference photos).

I used a water-based panel line wash, though the engraved lines of the Hasegawa kit are pretty shallow. Some of my stenciling work actually pulled the dry "plastic" panel lines out of some of the grooves when I pulled the tape off, so had to touch up a bit - last time I'll use that brand of water-based wash (I've now secured some Mig washes). I used an oil filter to dirty up the underside rear, and oils and pastels to add more dirt, grime and weathering. I tried to restrain a tad, because the JASDF folks tend to keep their charges pretty clean. I did use oil



dot filtering to fade the paint, as fading does seem to become noticeable on these birds.

With some of the great reference works I recently acquired from Andy Binks (one of our AAA SIG Experts) I am eager to add a few more JASDF Phantoms to my collection soon!

Greg Kittinger

(An abbreviated version of this article first appeared on Greg's iModeler page in June 2020)



The F-4EJ Kai Phantom II by Andy Binks

The story of the Phantom in Japan began in 1968 when the McDonnell Douglas type was selected for the JASDF, an order being placed for 140 of the F-4EJ variant, based closely on the USAF's then-standard F-4E. All but the first two F-4EJs were completed under license by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI), a considerable effort for Japan's aviation industry.

The initial pair from the production line in St Louis, Missouri, touched down in Japan on July 25, 1971, with 301 *Hikotai* declared fully operational in 1973. The Japanese production run also included the last of more than 5,100 Phantoms built anywhere in the world, namely F-4EJ 17-8440, which rolled off the Mitsubishi production line on May 21, 1981.

In 1982, Japan started a major upgrade programme for its F-4EJ fleet, eventually bringing 96 aircraft up to F-4EJ *Kai* standard, with *Kai* meaning 'modified'.

One year ago, after 48 years, the days of the Japan Air Self Defense Force flying F-4 Phantom II fighters in a combat role, came to an end on Friday 20 November 2020. This was the day that 301 *Hikotai* ceased to exist, prior to its future re-establishment as the second squadron to fly the new F-35A for the JASDF.

301 squadron was the first JASDF combat unit which received the F-4EJ in August 1972, being first named *Rinji* F-4EJ Hikotai, then *Rinji* 301 *Hikotai*, and finally 301 *Hikotai* in October 1973. The unit moved from Hyakuri Air Base to Nyutabaru Air Base in March 1985, returning to Hyakuri in October 2016.

In the days prior to 20 November, both specially marked Phantoms (37-8315 and 07-8436) made farewell flights to most JASDF fighter bases. On the final day of service, the last flights performed live to a vast Japanese TV audience, and were carried out by the two specially marked aircraft, together with a standard F-4. In a hangar ceremony later in the day, the unit officially stood down as a Phantom unit.

Apart from possible ferry flights in the coming weeks, taking Phantoms to other bases for preservation, it is the end of the Japanese frontline operational era for this classic jet.

However, the Gifu-based Air Development and Test Wing will still operate several non-modified F-4EJs and one F-4EJ *Kai* for a few more months. It is thought that the *Hiko Kaihatsu Jikkendan* will probably say goodbye to the F-4 towards the end of March 2021.



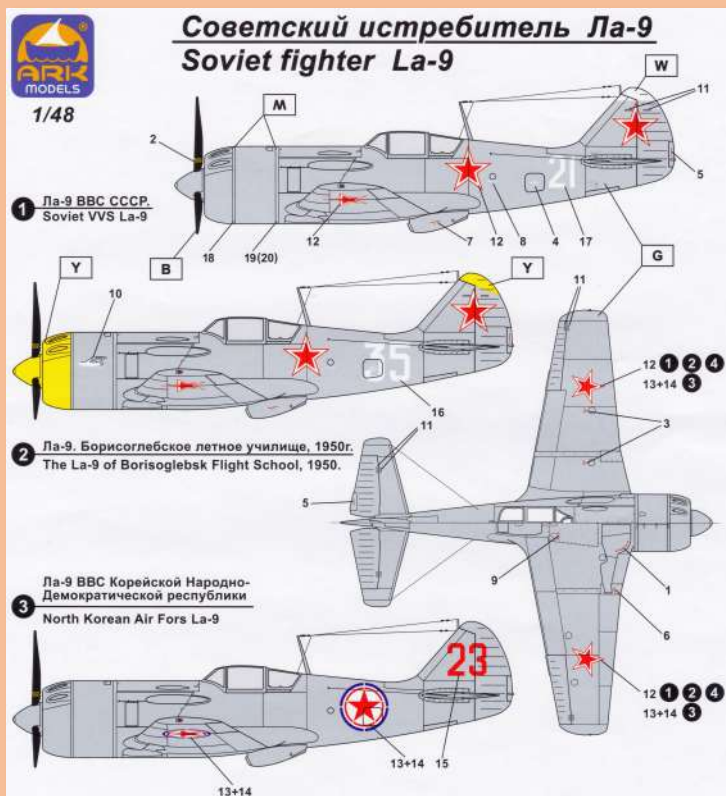
ARK Models – 1:48 Lavochkin La-9 ‘Fritz’



I recently reviewed the Ark Models release of a 1:48 scale Lavochkin La-11 (NATO Codename ‘Fang’), and not surprisingly, given the lineage of these Post-war Lavochkin piston engine fighters, discovered that they have also released the earlier La-9 (NATO Codename ‘Fritz’) from which the La-11 was derived. As before, Ark Models’ release of a 1:48 scale Lavochkin La-9 is not the first example of the type on the market with Russian kit manufacturers, both Scale Bureau and MikroMir having previously released full resin and limited production injection moulded plastic kits respectively. Like the later La-11, this aircraft saw action during the Korean War where it was operated covertly by pilots from the Soviet Air Force and Communist China’s Peoples’ Volunteer Army (PVA), and later by the Korean Peoples’ Air Force (KPAF).

The kit is, once again, presented in a fairly sturdy box featuring some rather dramatic and somewhat patriotic artwork of a brace of Soviet Air Force La-9 ‘Fritz’ strafing US Army or Marine Corps positions ‘somewhere in Asia’. Inside the box, the modeller is presented with three sprues containing 57 finely moulded light grey

and 4 clear parts, which is a relatively modest parts count for a 1:48 Post-War piston-engined subject. The decal sheet includes markings for no less than four aircraft; three in Soviet markings and the fourth in Korean Peoples’ Air Force markings, which I will return to later. A full set of comprehensive and clear assembly instructions, which also include full colour camouflage and marking diagrams complete a nice package. Prospective buyers may wish to note that some Russian and Ukrainian mail order companies (mainly operating via EBay) are including a full set of superb Quinta 3D instrument panel/side console and seatbelt decals with the kit, which can make this purchase extremely good value for money.



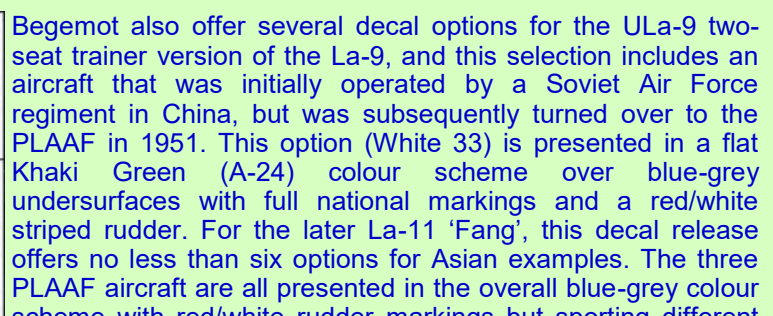
Assembly is rather conventional and starts with a nicely detailed cockpit although the addition of the aforementioned Quinta set is thoroughly recommended; apart from everything else, the Quinta set also includes a set of seat harnesses which are omitted from the original kit. I will not dwell too much on the kit parts and assembly sequence since they are very similar to those described in my previous review of the La-11 from the same manufacturer, as you may imagine. The majority of the kit sprues and parts are common to both kits, apart from that which houses the main fuselage halves and caters for the revised cowling contours and the most obvious visual difference between the two types, the large intake on the underside of the fuselage. The parts are all nicely moulded with no flash present; some internet forums have highlighted the deep panel lines, which are a little reminiscent of those found on Matchbox kits, although I suspect they would respond well to a light application of filler and/or paint. As before, my only other minor complaint with the kit parts concerns the mainwheels, which are split; this often leads to misalignment issues during assembly and it may be necessary to resort to aftermarket resin replacements. On the positive side, the kit does include two identical canopies so the modeler could experiment with producing an open canopy to show off the Quinta enhanced cockpit, safe in the knowledge that one has a spare in case of an accident.

The decal sheet is nicely printed although the decals appear rather thick and have a matt finish, but these factors do not always indicate problems with their application. There is a potential issue with the KPAF option since the large buzz number ‘23’ on the tail surfaces is presented in red although several other references suggest it was

black. There is, for example, a photograph of this particular aircraft on Page 26 of the excellent book ‘Fury from the North’ by Douglas C Dildy in the excellent Asia@War series by Helion & Company (again reviewed in a previous edition of our newsletter), backed up with a Colour Side Profile in the same publication that appears to show the number in the darker colour. If this particular option does not take your fancy then help is at hand with the newly released Begemot decal sheet for both the La-9 & La-11 which is featured elsewhere in this newsletter and includes several other Asian examples.

I am not an expert on this family of early Post-War Lavochkin fighter aircraft, but the general consensus of opinion seems to indicate that this new Ark Models release is now the most accurate rendition of the type in this scale. Out of the box, the kit will make up into a nice replica, although I have little doubt that one of the aftermarket manufacturers will produce some resin improvement sets in due course, with which to enhance the new Ark Models kit; in the meantime, I would recommend investment in one of these kits and especially if you can source one with the very nice Quinta 3D cockpit decals, since it will make a nice comparison sitting alongside its later cousin.

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and manufacturer's logos. Two KPAF examples are also offered. The 4th Fighter Aviation Regiment of the PLAAF on behalf of the PAF in November 1951. The second La-11 (Red 31) again in KPAF markings, was actually operated by the 315th Fighter Aviation Regiment of the Soviet Air Force from an airbase on the Chinese border with North Korea. This aircraft was employed in a night fighter intruder/interception role and as such had flat black applied to the undersurfaces of an otherwise overall blue-grey colour scheme. Last, but not least, is an Indonesian Air Force example, one of a dozen aircraft donated by the Chinese in 1958 and operated by the 2nd Aerial Squadron. These aircraft also sported the overall blue-grey colour scheme with national insignia in six positions and black serial numbers applied to the fuselage sides.

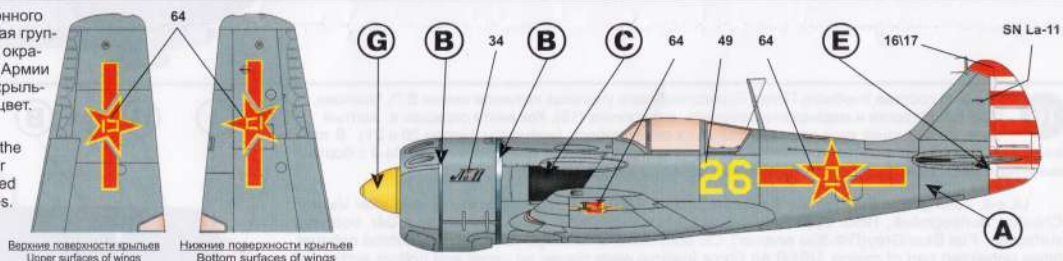
reensively presented over two A5 sized sheets. As one would the Chinese Peoples' Liberation Army Air Force examples, are codes to cater for all of the different styles found on the aircraft operated by the three Asian Air Arms. There is also an impressive number of stencil and maintenance markings for the La-9 and La-11 sub-variants, so the modeller will not need to source anything from the kit decals or other aftermarket decal sheets. In keeping with the more recent releases from Begemot, the original matt finish decals have given way to noticeably thinner decals with a semi-gloss sheen. It is not clear which company actually prints these decals but the quality is equal to that found on similar sheets from the BOA Agency or Cartograf, so their quality is assured. The decals are all in perfect register with excellent colour saturation although care piped rudder decals for the PLAAF examples. Begemot have Placement Instructions (DPIs) and this release is no exception.

ASIAN AIR ARMS SEASONAL SPECIAL 2021

24

Ла-11 из состава 351го Истребительного Авиационного Полка ВВС СССР, аэродром Цзяньвань, Шанхайская группа ПВО, Китай, март-октябрь 1950 года. Самолет окрашен аналогично 20, ОЗ ВВС Народно-Освободительной Армии Китая расположены на верхних и нижних поверхностях крыльев и по бортам фюзеляжа, кок винта окрашен в желтый цвет.

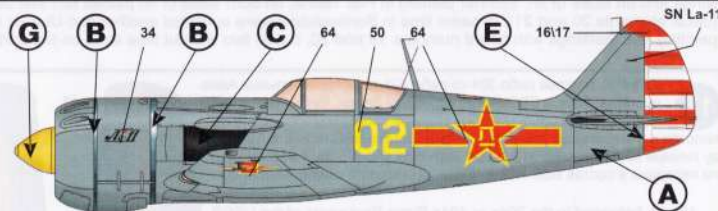
Ла-11, belonged to the 351th Fighter Aviation Regiment of the USSR Air Force, Shanghai Air Defence Group, March-October 1950. Aircraft painting similar to (20), Chinese insignia placed on upper and bottom surfaces of wings and on fuselage sides. Spinner painted in Flat Yellow.



25

Ла-11, пилот - командир 1ой Авиационной Эскадрильи 351го Истребительного Авиационного Полка ВВС СССР, капитан Н.И. Гужов, аэродром Цзяньвань, Шанхайская группа ПВО, Китай. Гужов с ведомым ст. лейтенантом Лыфарем 20 марта 1950 года перехватил и сбил два F-51 Mustang ВВС Тайваня вторгшихся в воздушное пространство КНР. Окразка и маркировка самолета полностью аналогична 24.

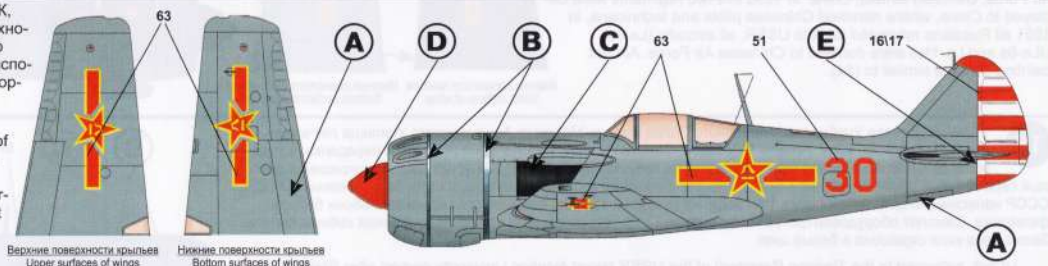
Ла-11, pilot - captain Guzhov, commander of 1st Squadron of the 351th Fighter Aviation Regiment of the USSR Air Force, Shanghai Air Defence Group. March 20, 1950 two La-11s (pilots captain Guzhov and senior lieutenant Lyfar) intercepted and shot down two Taiwanese F-51 Mustang fighters. Aircraft painting similar to (20), Chinese insignia placed on upper and bottom surfaces of wings and on fuselage sides. Spinner painted in Flat Yellow.



26

Ла-11 из состава неуставленной части ВВС НОАК, конец 1951-январь 1952 г. Самолет по всем поверхностям окрашен в светлый серо-голубой цвет эмалью А-36г, ОЗ ВВС Народно-Освободительной Армии Китая расположены на верхних и нижних поверхностях крыльев и по бортам фюзеляжа, кок винта окрашен в красный цвет.

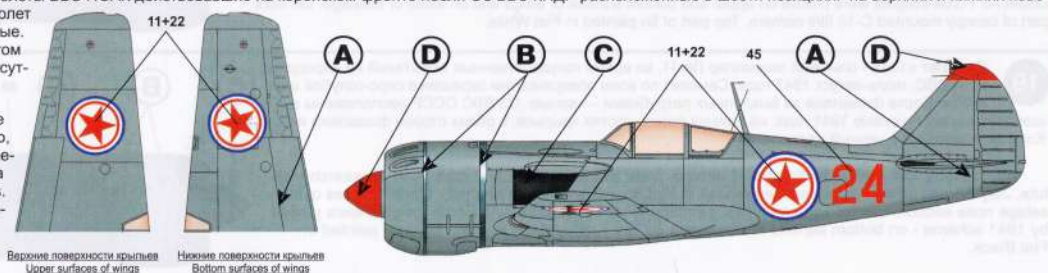
Ла-11, belonged to unknown Fighter Aviation Regiment of the Chinese People Liberation Army Air Force, end of 1951 - early 1952. Aircraft painted overall in Flat Blue/Grey (A-36r enamel). Chinese insignia placed on upper and bottom surfaces of wings and on fuselage sides. Spinner painted in Flat Red.



27

Ла-11 из состава 4го Истребительного Авиационного Полка 2 ВВС НОАК, пилот - Вань Тень Бао, осень 1951 года. 30 ноября 1951 г. сопровождая группу Ту-2, на этом самолете летчик сбил реактивный истребитель F-86 Sabre ВВС США. Самолеты ВВС НОАК действовавшие на корейском фронте несли ОЗ ВВС КНДР расположенные в шести позициях: на верхних и нижних поверхностях крыльев и с обоих бортов фюзеляжа. Самолет окрашен аналогично 20, кок винта и законцовка кили красные. Такой же по окраске и маркировке Ла-11 является экспонатом авиационного музея в Пекине, но у музейного экспоната отсутствует красная законцовка кили.

Ла-11, belonged to the 4th Fighter Aviation Regiment of the Chinese People Liberation Army Air Force. Pilot - Van Ten' Bao, November 30, 1951 shot down USAF F-86 Sabre fighter. Chinese La-11, which used in Korean war had North Korea insignia on upper and bottom surfaces of wings and on fuselage sides. Aircraft painted overall in Flat Blue/Grey (A-36r enamel). Spinner and fin tip painted in Flat Red. La-11 in similar marking (but without red fin tip) exhibited at Beijing aviation museum.



Colour Side Profiles and, in some cases, scrap views of upper and lower wing surfaces are provided for all of the decal options, along with full information on the colour or camouflage scheme with references to Soviet Numbers where appropriate. The DPLs also include full directions for the placement of all of the various stencils and maintenance markings, so top marks to Begemot for maintaining their usual standards in this area.

This is another great and very topical release from Begemot, timed nicely to compliment the new kits referred to above, and will allow those interested in reproducing one of the Asian examples to add a unique aircraft to their collection.

Highly recommended – Review sample courtesy of my credit card.

Mark Attrill – November 2021

