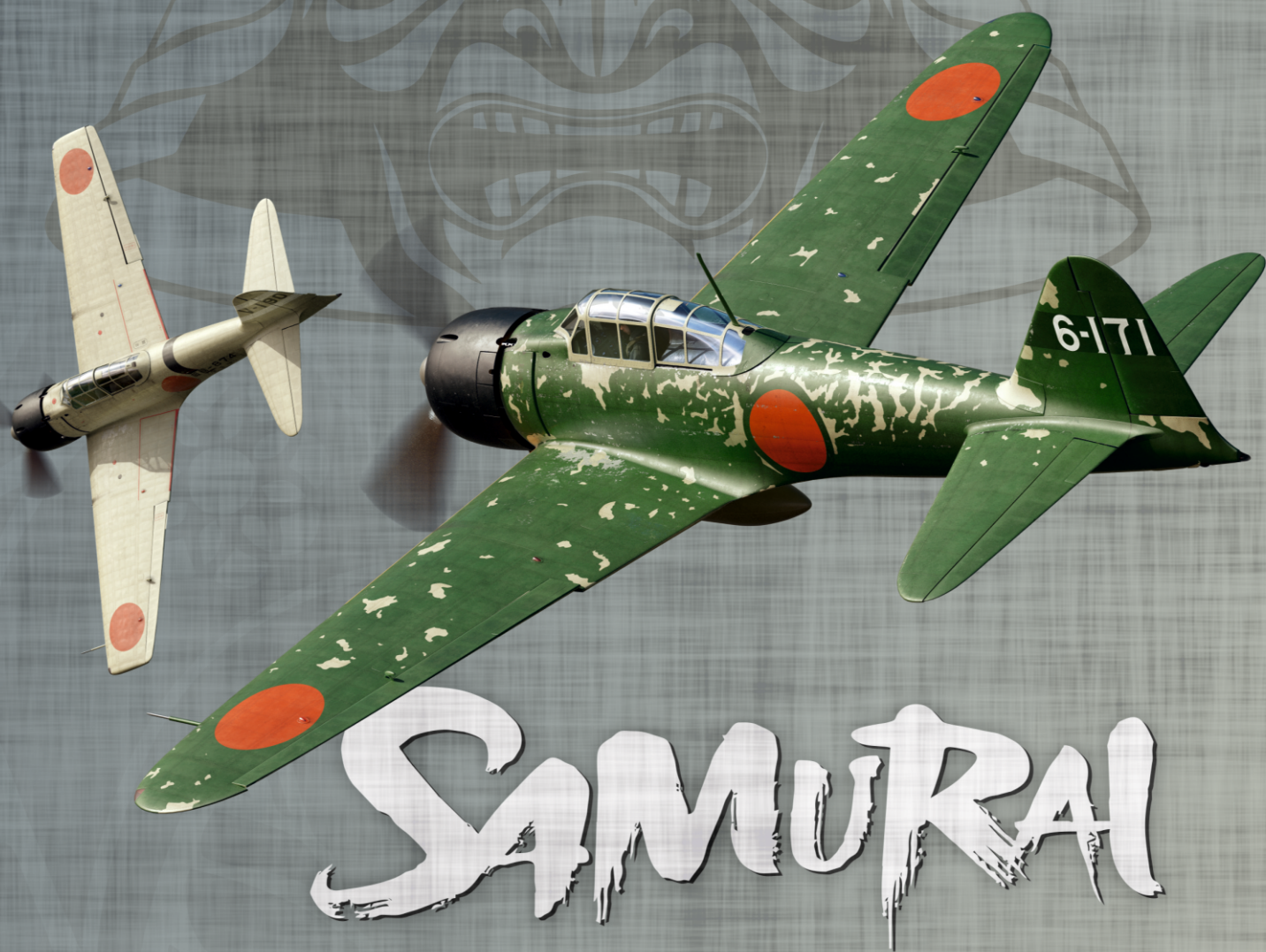


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SAMURAI

INSTRUCTION SHEET

1/48

11168-NAV1
DUAL COMBO

A6M3 Zero Type 32 and 22 1942–1944



A formation of A6M3 Type 22 fighters from Kōkūtai 251 near Rabaul in the first half of 1943. The aircraft bear green paint applied in field conditions on the upper surfaces.

Photo: SDASM

by Jan Bobek

The Mitsubishi Zero became the symbol of the Japanese air power during WWII. The A6M3 Type 32, introduced by the Japanese Naval Air Force in 1942, was initially considered a new type of aircraft by the Allied forces. It was soon followed by launch of A6M3 Type 22. Both versions of the Zero went through the most difficult phase of fighting in the South Pacific.

In October 1937, Mitsubishi and Nakajima were approached by Imperial Japanese Navy to develop prototype 12-shi Carrier-based Fighter. The requirements were so extreme, and in some cases contradictory, that the two design teams investigated whether they could be less stringent. Nakajima eventually withdrew from the project, while the criteria for the prototype were even raised based on experience on the Chinese battlefield. The new fighter had a powerful armament of two cannons and two machine guns, extremely long range (over 1,800 km) and excellent maneuverability. The new fighter reached top speed of 533 km/h at an altitude of 4,550 m. However, it lacked armor and other protective features and had a structural speed limit of 600 km/h.

The new aircraft entered service in 1940 with 940hp engine Sakae 12 and received the official designation Rei Shiki Kanjō Sentōki (Type 0 carrier fighter), with the "zero" being derived from the imperial year 2600 (1940). Japanese pilots usually abbreviated it as Rei-Sen. That was also the origin of the name Zero, often used by Allied pilots instead of the official code name, derived from the male name Zeke.

As part of the Navy's system, the new aircraft was given the designation A6M, where A6 meant that it was the sixth type of carrier fighter to enter service, and M stood for the Mitsubishi company name. Zeros, specifically the A6M2 Type 11, had been successfully deployed on the Chinese battlefield since the summer of 1940, but their existence eluded Western intelligence because no one wanted to believe reports from China that suggested the Japanese had a world-class fighter. Mitsubishi produced a total of 65 machines of this version, which was not yet intended for operation on aircraft carriers. Further modifications to its design were made during 1941, creating the A6M2 Type 21, which was modified for aircraft carriers. Total of 740 A6M2 aircraft were produced by Mitsubishi by June 1942 with additional 800 delivered by Nakajima by February 1944. The gun armament was improved and variants with magazines for up to 150 rounds could be used on the Type 21.

A6M3 Zero Type 32 and 22

In 1942, Mitsubishi started mass-production of Zeros with a two-stage compressor Sakae 21 engine, delivering up to 1,130 hp. The heavier engine required modification of the engine cowling and also fuselage had to be shortened as well as the wingspan. A new propeller gear allowed the installation of longer blades than the propeller used on Type 21. The speed was raised in horizontal flight and dive, as well as speed or roll, but the range was reduced. Total 340 examples were produced from June to December 1942. All were finished in grey camouflage on all surfaces. A small number of aircraft were completed with long-barreled gun armament, but this version is not known to have had a specific designation. The last Model 32 aircraft also got a rudder with a trim operated from the cockpit. The Navy initially designated this fighter as the Type Zero Mk.2 Carrier-Based

Fighter (Rei Shiki Ni Gō Kanjō Sentōki), but in late January 1943, when the aircraft was formally commissioned by the Navy, its designation was changed to the Type Zero Carrier Based Fighter Model 32 (Rei Shiki Kanjō Sentōki San Ni Gata). The Allies at first believed that this was a new type of fighter. Therefore, they gave it a separate codename Hap, in honor of US Air Force commander Gen. Henry H. "Hap" Arnold. When Arnold learned of this, he was less than thrilled, so the designation was quickly changed to the male name Hamp. This designation was used until May 1944, then captured Japanese documents revealed that it was an A6M3 Type 32, so it was changed to the definitive Zeke 32. At that time, however, Allied airmen rarely encountered this version of the Zero.

The Zero Type 32 was put into service on several aircraft carriers in the second half of 1942, but did not stay in that role for long. The backbone of the carrier force continued to be the Zero Type 21.

The main areas where the Zero Type 32 was deployed from mid-1942 onwards were New Guinea, Indonesia, and New Britain. Because of their shorter range, these aircraft were used primarily for airfield defense, bomber interception and, where possible, escort flights. Allied airmen encountered them over northwestern Australia, during the fighting over the Solomon Islands and the raids on Rabaul. After the Allied landings on Guadalcanal, the IJN fighter units came up with a request for a Zero with the Sakae 21 engine, but with the range comparable to A6M2. Designers at Mitsubishi modified the wing including design of fuel tanks. The wing looked similar to the one of Type 21, but the range was even 100 miles longer. A rudder with cockpit-controlled trim was already standard. This version was designated A6M3 Type 22, the extended gun barrels planes were designated Type 22a. Mitsubishi produced 560 A6M3 Type 22 and 22a airplanes from December 1942 to August 1943. The aircraft were initially produced with grey paint on all surfaces, but from May 1943 Mitsubishi began to finish the aircraft with green paint on the upper surfaces. To date, no evidence has been found that the Zero Type 22 was assigned to aircraft carrier service.

The fight for Guadalcanal

The Japanese started building an air base on Guadalcanal in July 1942, posing a serious threat to shipping between the US and Australia. The Americans therefore landed on Guadalcanal on August 7 and were soon able to begin air operations from the occupied Japanese airfield, and from new ones they subsequently built. In terms of fighter operations, for the first weeks it was main responsibility of Tainan Kōkūtai. During bomber escort flights to Guadalcanal and convoys patrols, pilots flew from Rabaul, a 1065 km distance. The Japanese command gradually deployed other fighter units in the area, primarily the 2nd Kōkūtai, part of the 3rd Kōkūtai, the 6th Kōkūtai and the Kanoya Kōkūtai. In September 1942, the Japanese managed to get the airfields operational on the islands of Buka and Bougainville, which were closer to Guadalcanal.

In mid-1942, a new version of the Zero designated the A6M3 Type 32 began arriving on the battlefield. Two naval engagements occurred during the Battle of Guadalcanal, with aircraft carriers deployed on both sides. Both battles involved the Zero Type 32 fighters, which formed part of the armament of some carrier-borne fighter units. The first was the Battle of the Eastern Solomons on August 24 and 25. Simultaneously with the Japanese convoy heading for Guadalcanal, a task force with the aircraft carriers Shōkaku, Zuikaku and Ryūjō headed for the same area. The Japanese had no intelligence on the location of the American carriers and therefore conducted a raid on Henderson Airfield on Guadalcanal. Aircraft from the USS Saratoga succeeded in sinking the Ryūjō and the Japanese later damaged the USS Enterprise. Some Zero fighters from the remaining carriers then briefly operated from ground bases.

During October 1942, the Japanese also deployed the carriers Zuihō, Junyō and Hiyō in the Salomon Islands in addition to Shōkaku and Zuikaku. During October 25 to 27, the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands occurred, in which only Hiyō did not participate. IJN carriers were confronted by the USS Hornet and Enterprise. American naval aircraft damaged the Zuihō and Shōkaku, but Hornet was lost, and Enterprise suffered damage. Although the Japanese achieved a tactical victory, their aircrew losses were higher than in the Battle of the Coral Sea. Therefore, even the carriers that were not damaged had to withdraw from the battlefield. The fighter unit of carrier Hiyō remained in the area. For almost the next two years, this was the last carrier engagement in the Pacific.

In early November 1942, the designation of naval air units with bases abroad was changed. They were now designated by a three-digit code that indicated,

negligible losses. After the operation ended, on April 18, a bomber with Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto on board was shot down over Bougainville Island during an inspection tour. Based on decoded radio intercepts, American P-38 fighters were in the right place at the right time. The commander of the Combined Fleet and one of the architects of the attack on Pearl Harbor died exactly one year after Doolittle's raid on Tokyo.

In May 1943, Kōkūtai 251 returned to Rabaul, just in time to join the attacks on Allied forces fighting their way from Guadalcanal farther northwest. The Japanese made a tremendous effort to stop the offensive, but their efforts were futile. The Japanese made their last raid on Guadalcanal on June 16, 1943. Of the 24 dive bombers, 13 crews were lost and the fighter escort of 70 Zeros had to write off 15 aircraft. The Allies suffered minimal losses.

Defense of Rabaul and retreat

In late June 1943, the Allies landed on New Georgia and captured Munda airfield. This was followed by the defensive battles of Vella Lavella in August and Buin during September and October. In this period Zero pilots met F6F Hellcat fighter in combat for the first time. Kōkūtai 201 returned to the battlefield from Japan and naval fighters in the area were reinforced by the carrier-based fighter units of IJMS Junyō and Ryūhō. The Zero pilots managed to keep their win-loss ratio at a reasonable level in combat with enemy fighters. However, bomber crews were constantly suffering high losses. It was a problem for which the high command had no solution. The Kate and Val bombers were already obsolete, and their design provided little protection against heavily armed Allied fighters.

Photo: SDASIM



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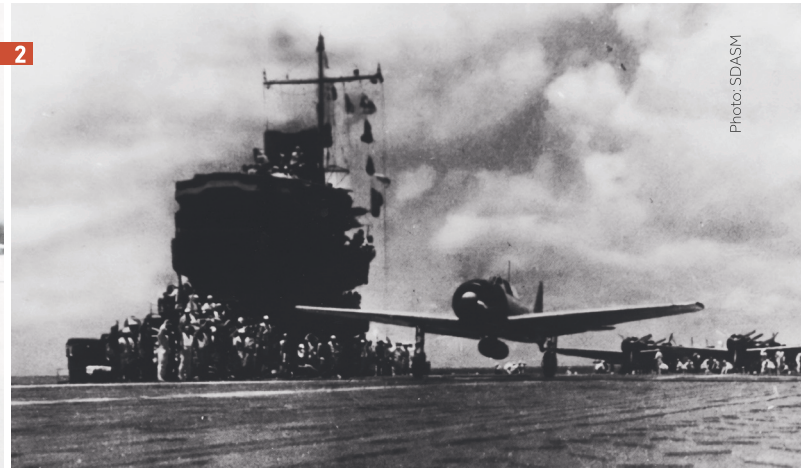


Photo: SDASIM

1 Captured Mitsubishi A6M3 Zero Type 32 during testing in the USA. **2** A rare photograph showing the launch of A6M3 Type 32 from the deck of the aircraft carrier Shōkaku during the Battle of Santa Cruz. The censor has retouched the ship's Type 21 radar antennae, as well as the anti-aircraft fire control directors.

among other things, their purpose and home naval district in Japan. If the first digit was 2 or 3, it was the Kōkūtai, whose specialty was exclusively fighter aircraft. The Tainan Kōkūtai became Kōkūtai 251, and similarly were designated Kōkūtai 201 (formerly Chitose Kōkūtai), Kōkūtai 202 (formerly 3rd Kū), Kōkūtai 204 (formerly 6th Kū), Kōkūtai 252 (formerly Genzan Kū), and Kōkūtai 253 (formerly Kanoya Kū. Fighter Squadron). The mixed purpose 2nd Kōkūtai was designated Kōkūtai 582 and retained both the single-engine bombers and the fighter unit. Most of the aforementioned units used both Zero Type 32 and Type 22, often in conjunction with the older Type 21. The former Tainan Kōkūtai moved to Japan in mid-November to replace losses, to train reinforcements, and to take over new equipment. Guadalcanal, which the Japanese called "Ga Shima", was a high risk target during any long distance flight due to unpredictable weather, possible engine failure, fatigue, or nausea caused by tropical diseases. At the same time, the Japanese faced an enemy that was constantly improving its technology, tactics, logistics, and infrastructure.

In late 1942, the Japanese attempted to open an airfield on Munda Island, just 300 km from Guadalcanal, but Allied air raids made using this base very difficult. In late January 1943, the evacuation of Japanese troops from Guadalcanal was completed. At that time, the fighter unit of the carrier Zuikaku began operating from Bougainville and withdrew to Truk after two weeks. A month later, a fighter unit from the carrier Zuihō was deployed in a similar way. This practice proved successful for the Navy and was used in the area for the following year.

The Japanese command decided in late March 1943 to achieve air supremacy in the New Guinea and Solomon Islands area. Therefore, the Operation "I-gō" was planned, in which raids were conducted between April 7 and 14 against Guadalcanal, Oro Bay, Port Moresby and Milne Bay. More than 200 A6M2 and A6M3 aircraft were available for fighter escort from Kōkūtai 204, 253, and 582 and from the fighter units of the carriers Zuikaku, Zuihō, Junyō and Hiyō. The result of the action was judged as a great success. However, both sides actually suffered

At the end of October 1943, the last fighter units withdrew from Bougainville to Rabaul. They began to face a systematic bombing campaign by aviation units of Marine Corps, Air Force and Navy as well as other Allied air forces. The core of the defense of this strategic base was Kōkūtai 201, 204 and 253. At the time, they used A6M fighters Type 22, 52 as well as good old 21. They were briefly supported or resupplied by carrier units. In November, for a short time fighters arrived from Zuihō, Shōkaku and Zuikaku. In late December 1943 they were followed briefly by Zero pilots from Hiyō and Ryūhō. From the Japanese point of view, during this period Rabaul could be likened to a meat grinder. In early January Kōkūtai 201 had to be withdrawn. After less than a month exhausted Kōkūtai 204 moved from Rabaul too. Losses were replaced by fighters from the carriers Jun'yō, Hiyō and Ryūhō, who together with Kōkūtai 253 held out for a month in defensive aerial battles. In late February 1944, fighter units began to withdraw from Rabaul to Truk. Although the high command promised to turn the units back, this never happened, and the Allies neutralized the base until the end of the war. With the end of the fighting over Rabaul, the Japanese naval air force lost most of its seasoned fighter veterans.

The Zero Type 32s served in operational training units until the end of the war. Some of the aircraft were overhauled and received green paint on the upper surfaces. A smaller number of Type 22s served with combat units in the Pacific Islands and Japan, but the vast majority of the remaining Zeros of this version were also assigned to training units. They were useful in training for the newer A6M5 Type 52. Ironically, the older A6M2 Type 21s were retained longer with combat units, and from 1944 they also began to be used as fighter-bombers, both with ground units and on aircraft carriers.

We would like to thank Ryan Toews for his invaluable help with preparation of this kit and with all the other Eduard Zero kits.

ATTENTION



UPOZORNĚNÍ



ACHTUNG



ATTENTION



注意



Carefully read instruction sheet before assembling. When you use glue or paint, do not use near open flame and use in well ventilated room. Keep out of reach of small children. Children must not be allowed to suck any part, or pull vinyl bag over the head.



Před započítím stavby si pečlivě prostudujte stavební návod. Při používání barev a lepidla pracujte v dobře větrané místnosti. Lepidla ani barvy nepoužívejte v blízkosti otevřeného ohně. Model není určen malým dětem, mohlo by dojít k požití drobných dílů.

INSTRUCTION SIGNS * INSTR. SYMBOLS * INSTRUKTION SINNBILDEN * SYMBOLES * 記号の説明

OPTIONAL
VOLBABEND
OHNOUTSAND
BROUSITOPEN HOLE
VYVRTAT OTVORSYMETRICAL ASSEMBLY
SYMETRICKÁ MONTÁŽREMOVE
ODŘÍZNOUTREVERSE SIDE
OTOČITAPPLY EDUARD MASK
AND PAINT
POUŽIT EDUARD MASK
NABARVIT

PARTS



DÍLY



TEILE

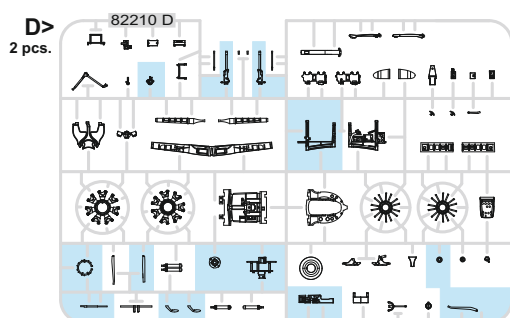
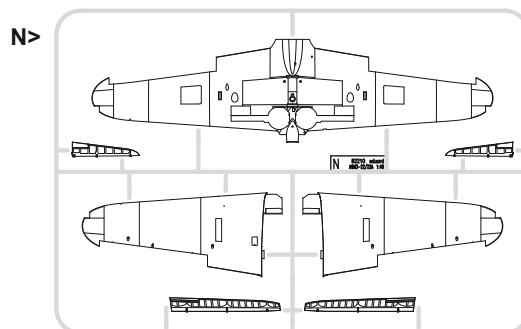
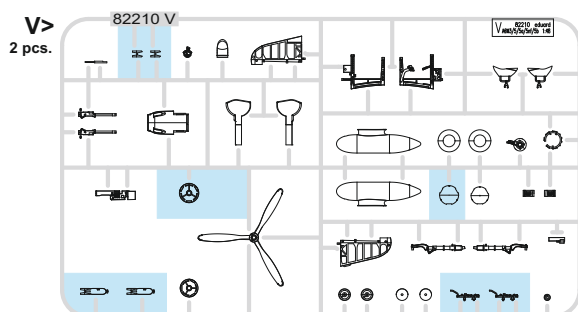
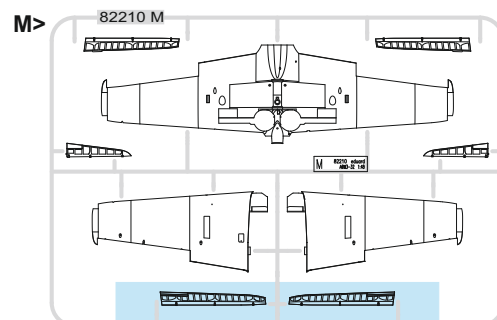
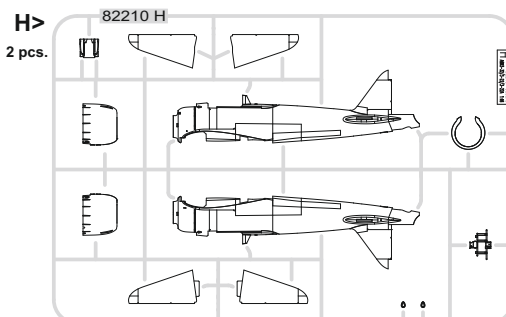
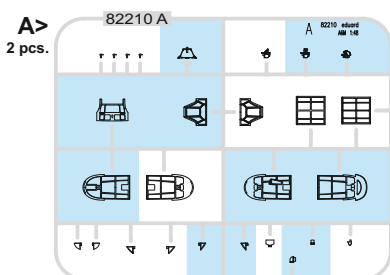
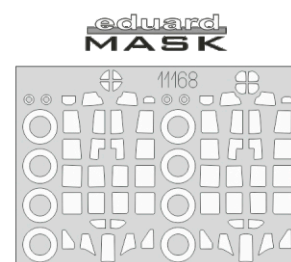
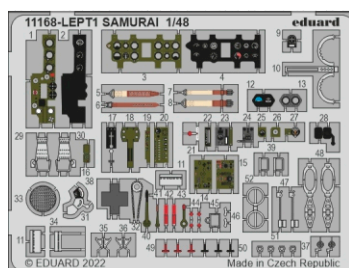


PIÈCES



部品

PLASTIC PARTS

2 pcs.
PE - PHOTO ETCHED DETAIL PARTS

-Parts not for use. -Teile werden nicht verwendet. -Pièces à ne pas utiliser. -Tyto díly nepoužívejte při stavbě. - 使用しない部品

COLOURS



BARVY



FARBEN



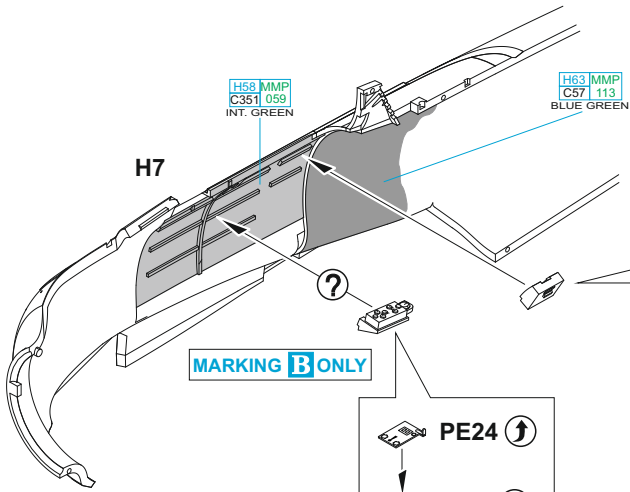
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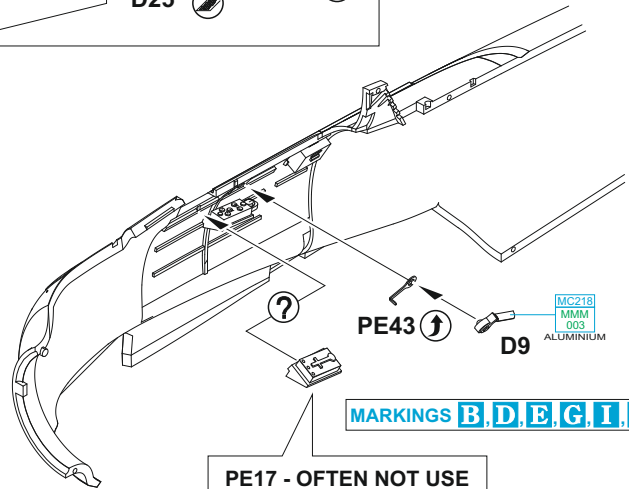
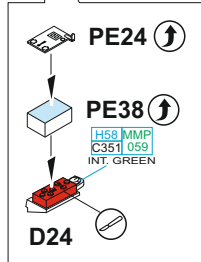
色

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AQUEOUS	Mr.COLOR	PAINTS	
H1	C1	MMP-001	WHITE
H2	C2	MMP-047	BLACK
H8	C8		SILVER
H12	C33	MMP-047	FLAT BLACK
H24	C58		ORANGE YELLOW
H25	C34		SKY BLUE
H47	C41	MMP-012	RED BROWN
H58	C351	MMP-059	INTERIOR GREEN
H63	C57		METALLIC BLUE GREEN
H70	C60	MMP-056	GRAY
H77	C137	MMP-040	TIRE BLACK
H90	C47		CLEAR RED

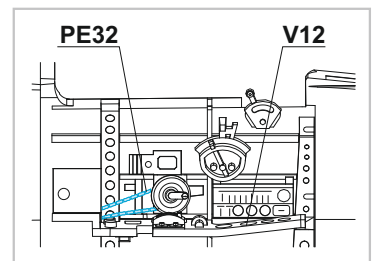
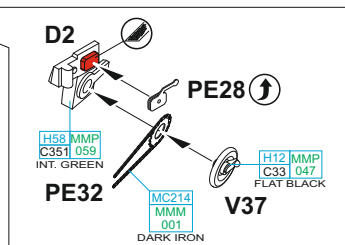
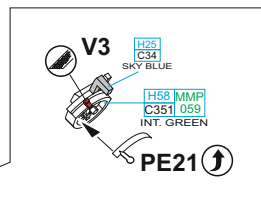
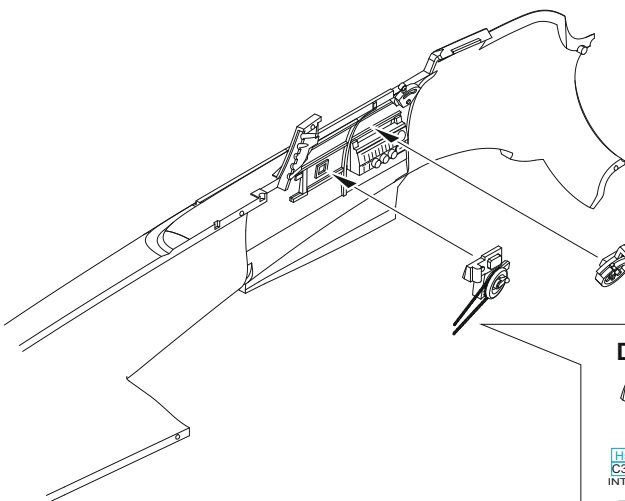
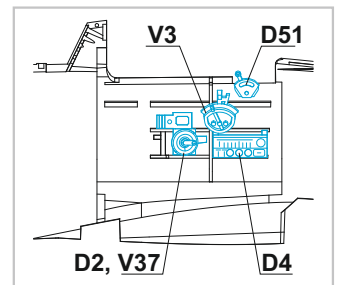
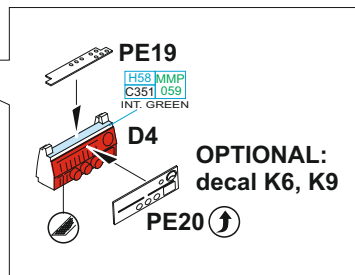
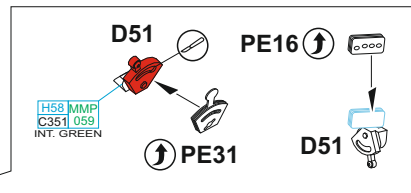
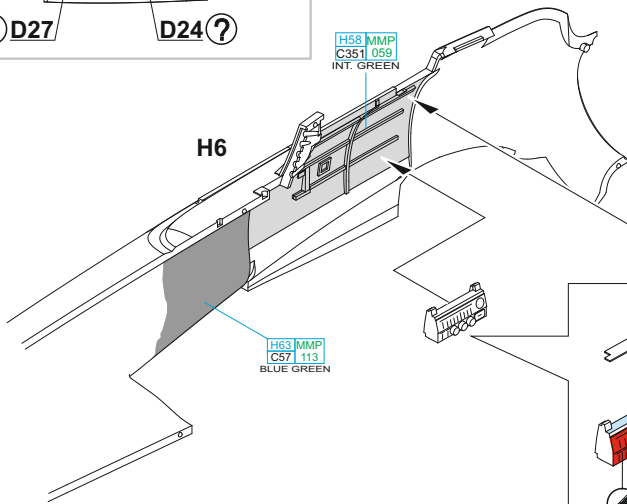
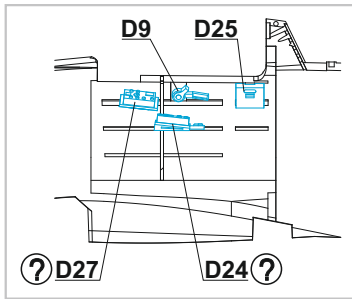
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	C124		DARK GREEN
	C125	MMP-108	COWLING COLOR
	C131	MMP-115	RED BROWN
Mr.METAL COLOR		METALLICS	
	MC214	MMM-001	DARK IRON
	MC218	MMM-003	ALUMINIUM
	MC219	MMM-009	BRASS
Mr.COLOR SUPER METALLIC		METALLICS	
	SM201	MMC-001	SUPER FINE SILVER

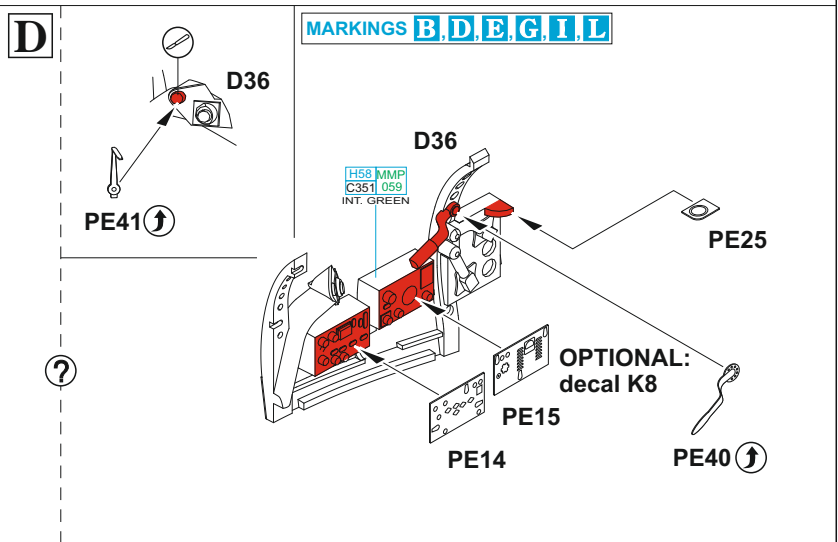
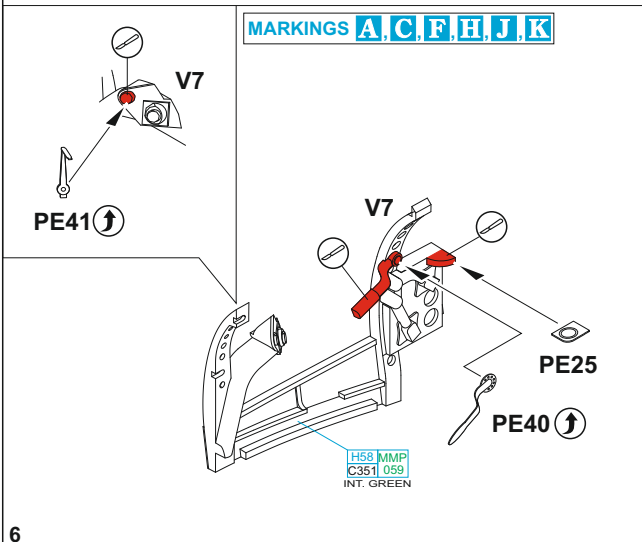
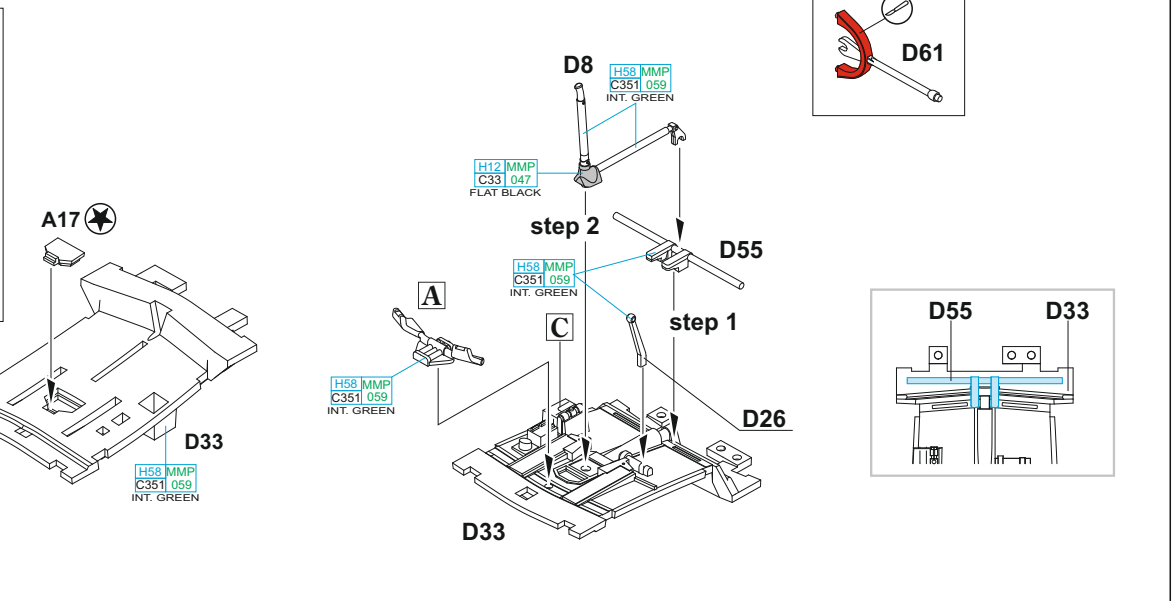
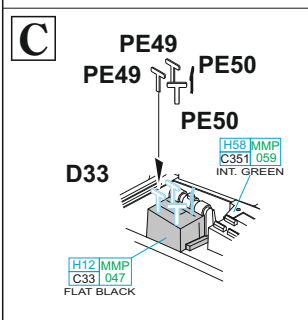
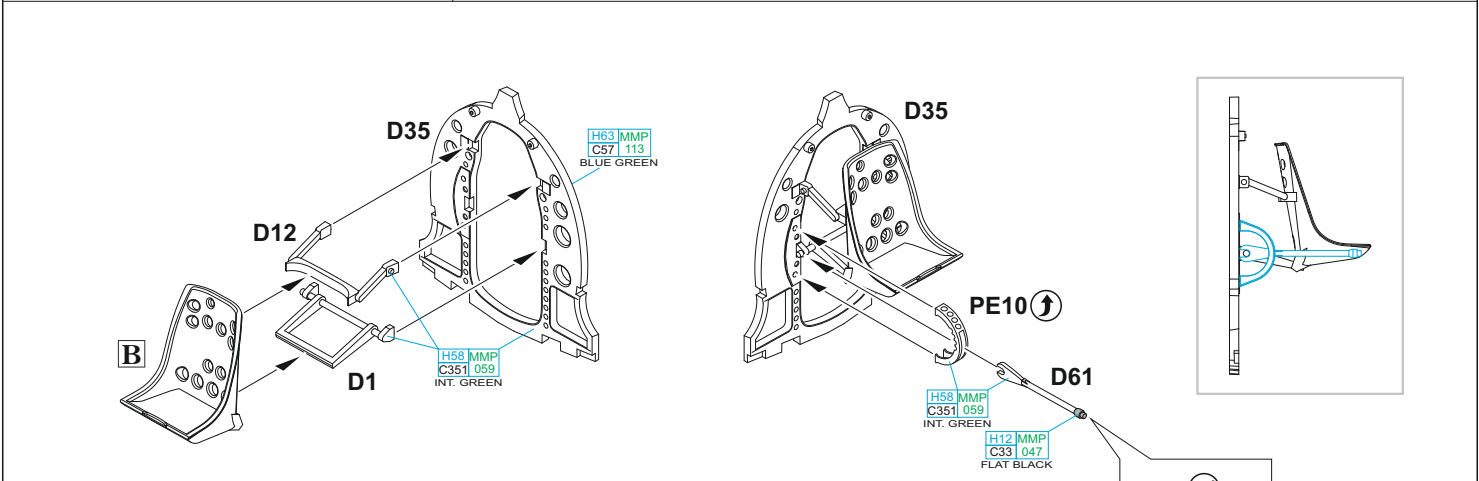
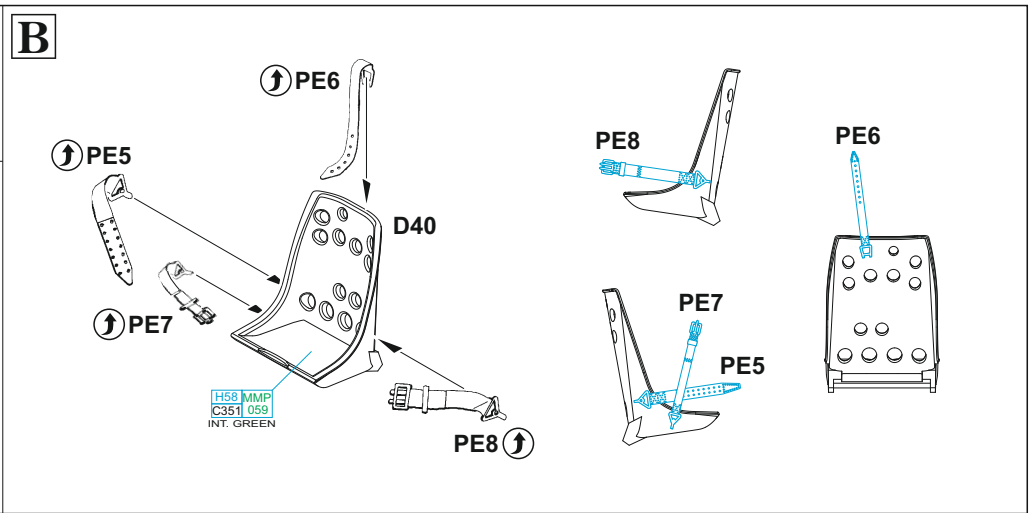
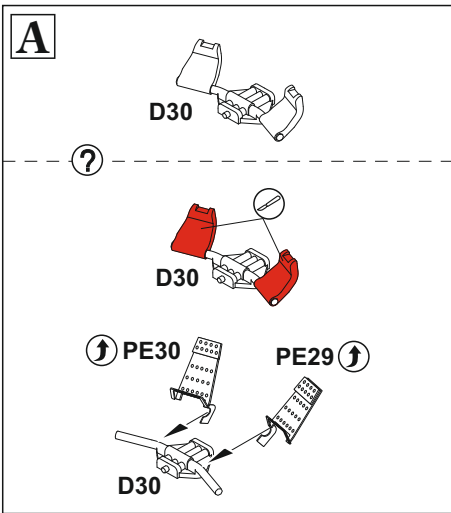


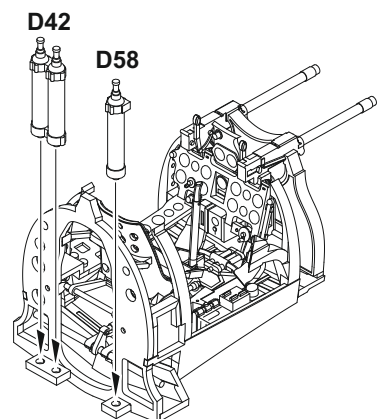
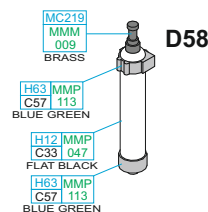
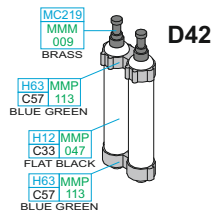
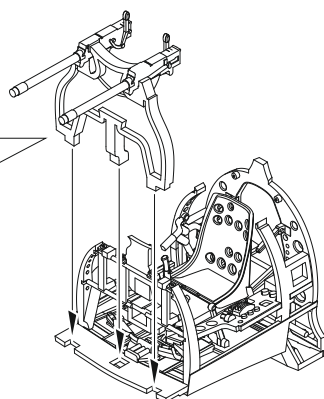
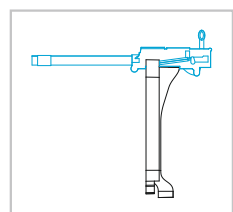
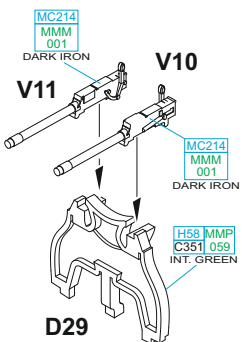
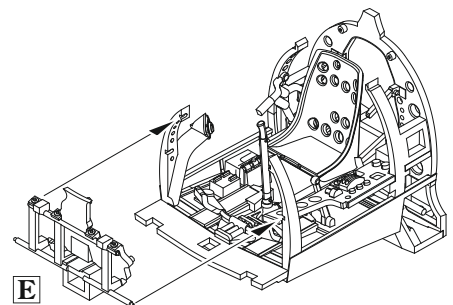
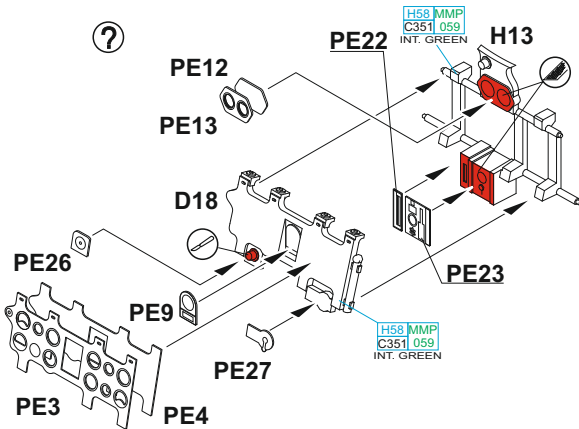
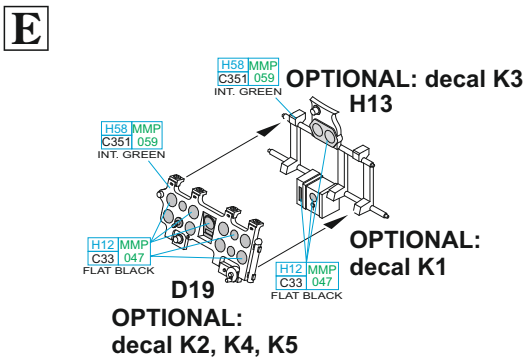
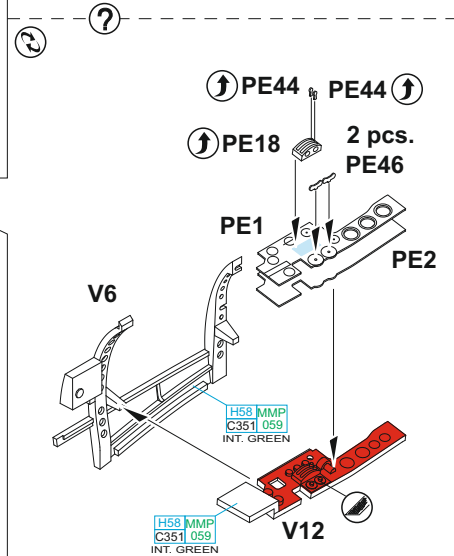
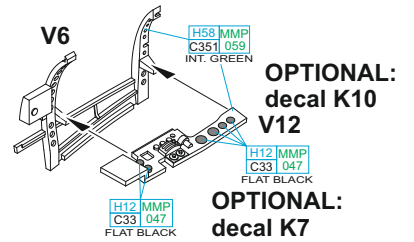
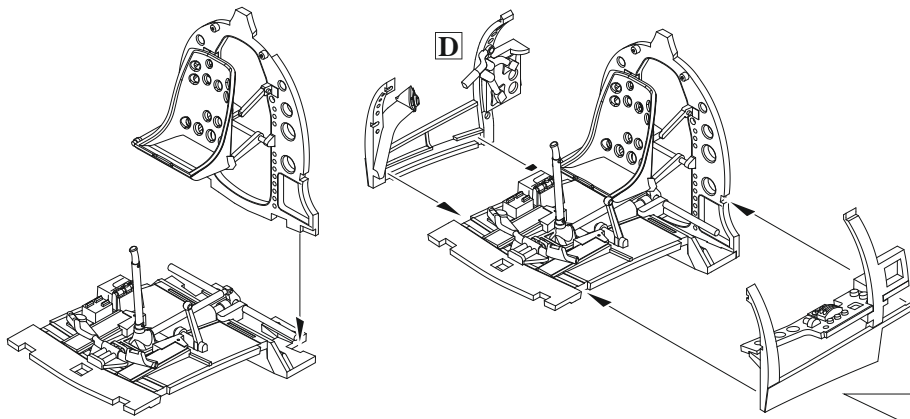
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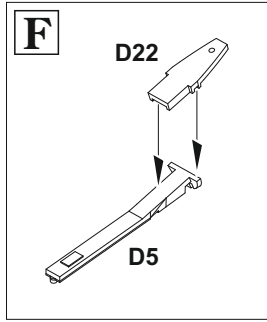


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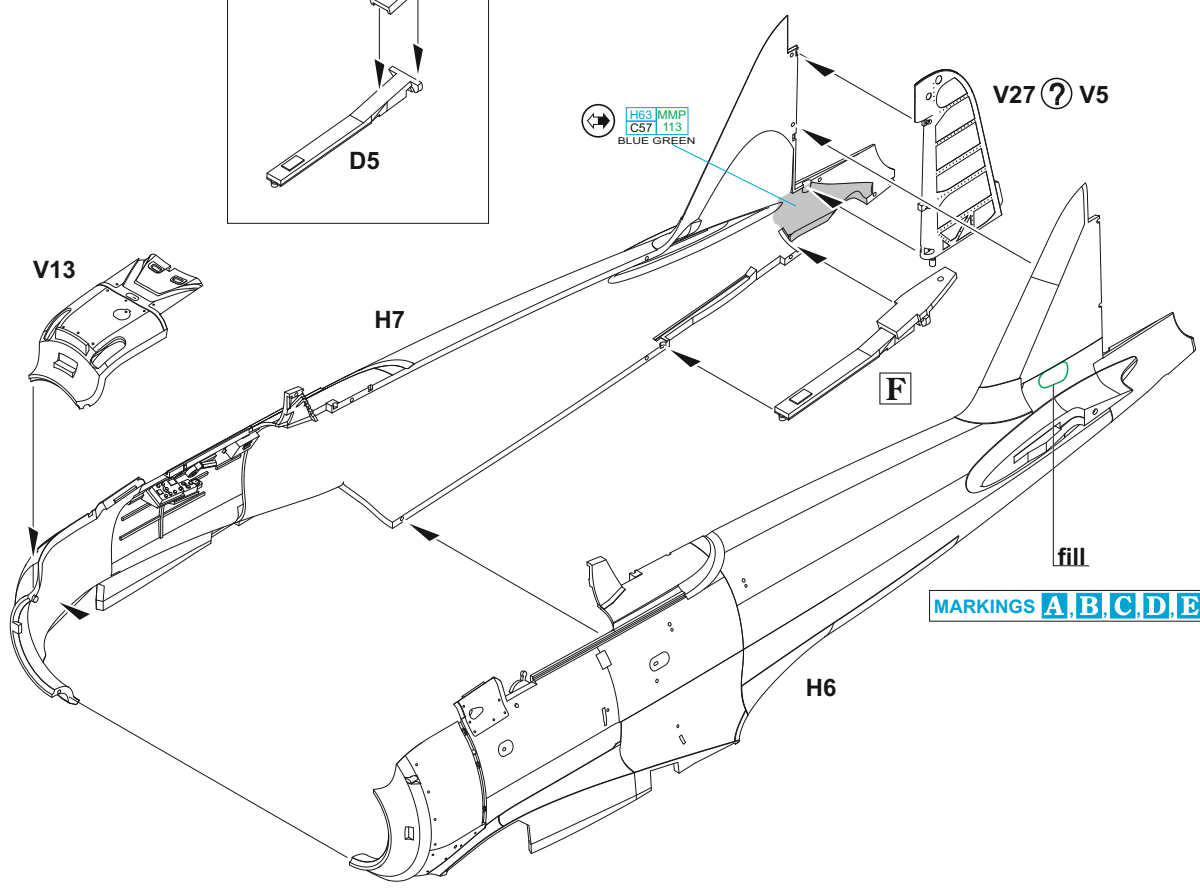




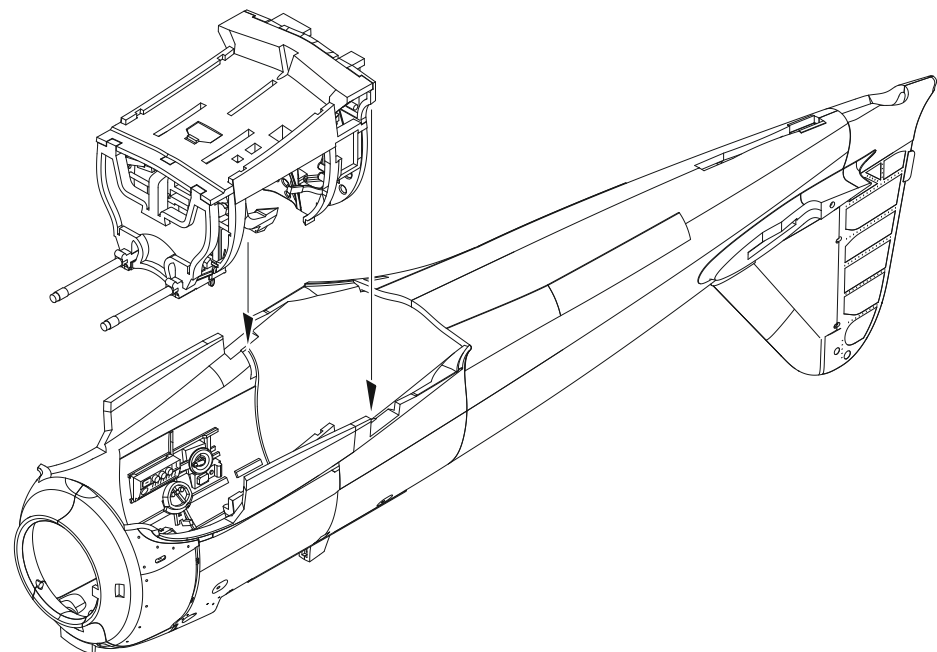




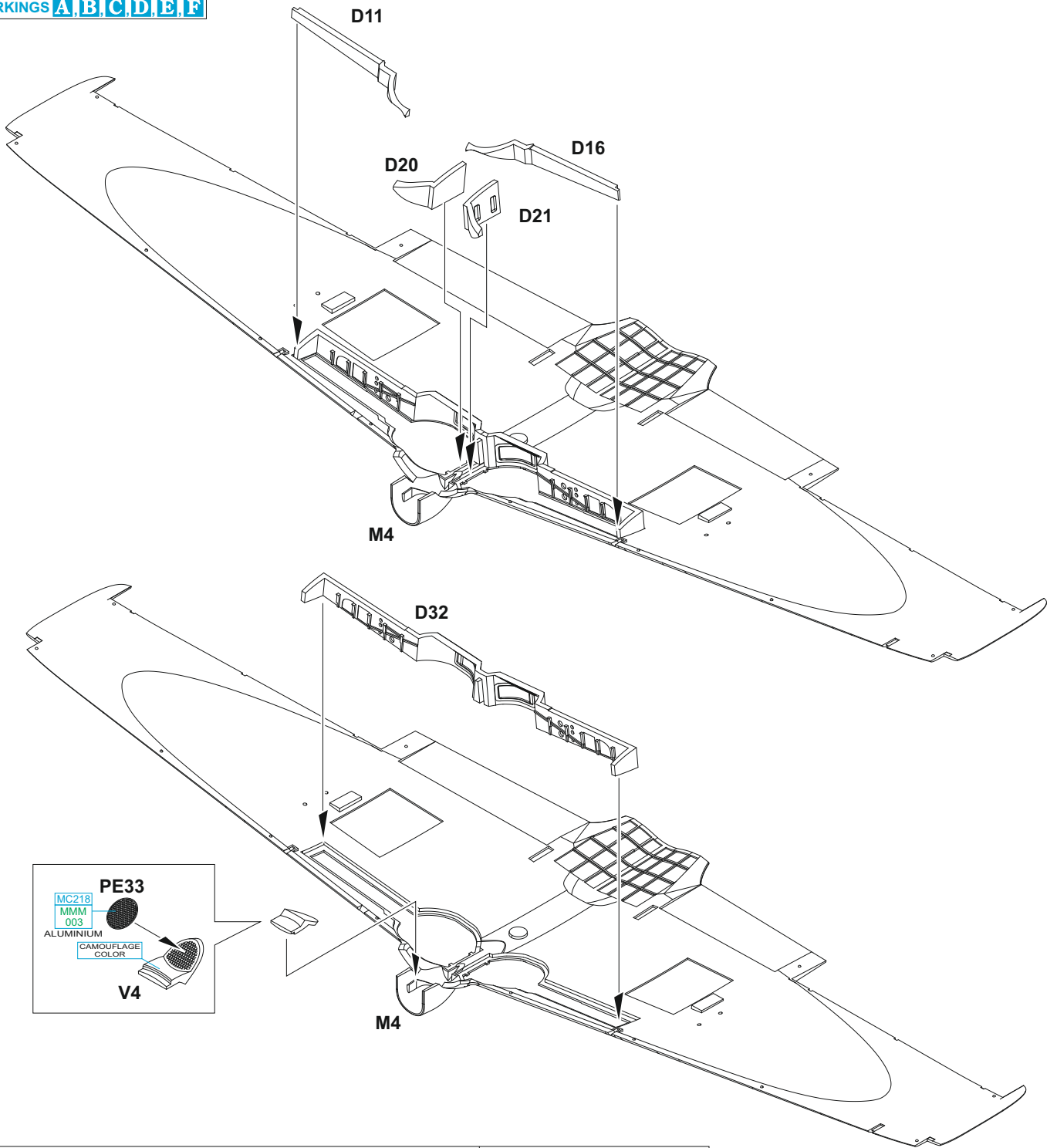
V27 - MARKINGS **A, B, C, D, E**
 V5 - MARKINGS **F, G, H, I, J, K, L**



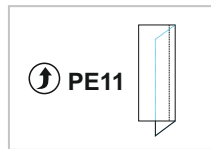
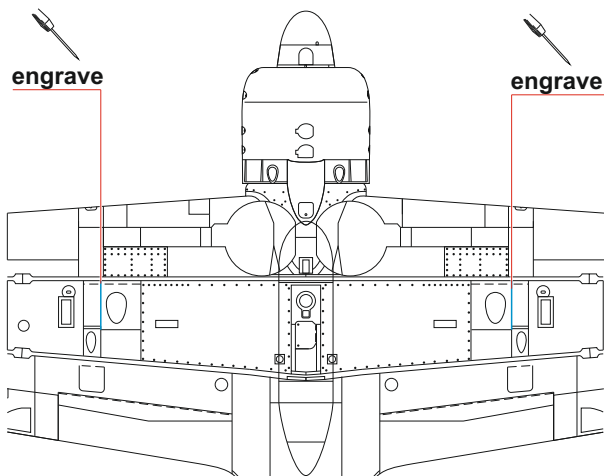
MARKINGS **A, B, C, D, E** ONLY



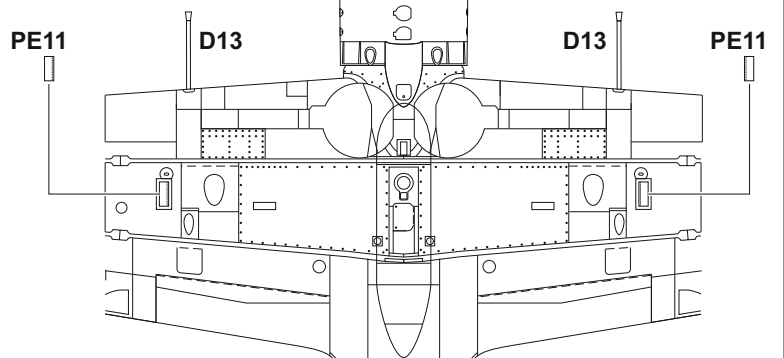
MARKINGS **A** **B** **C** **D** **E** **F**

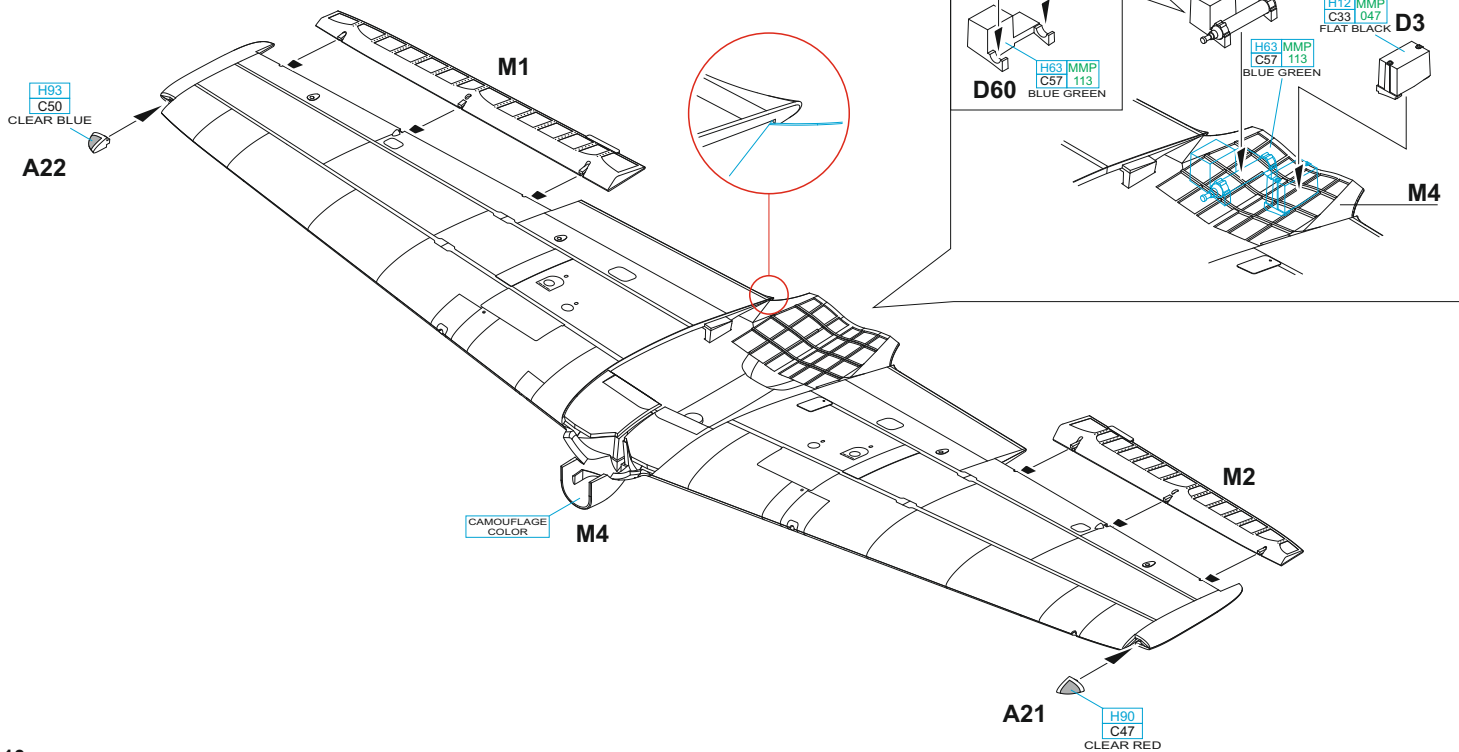
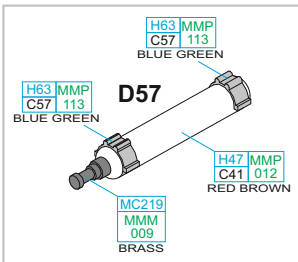
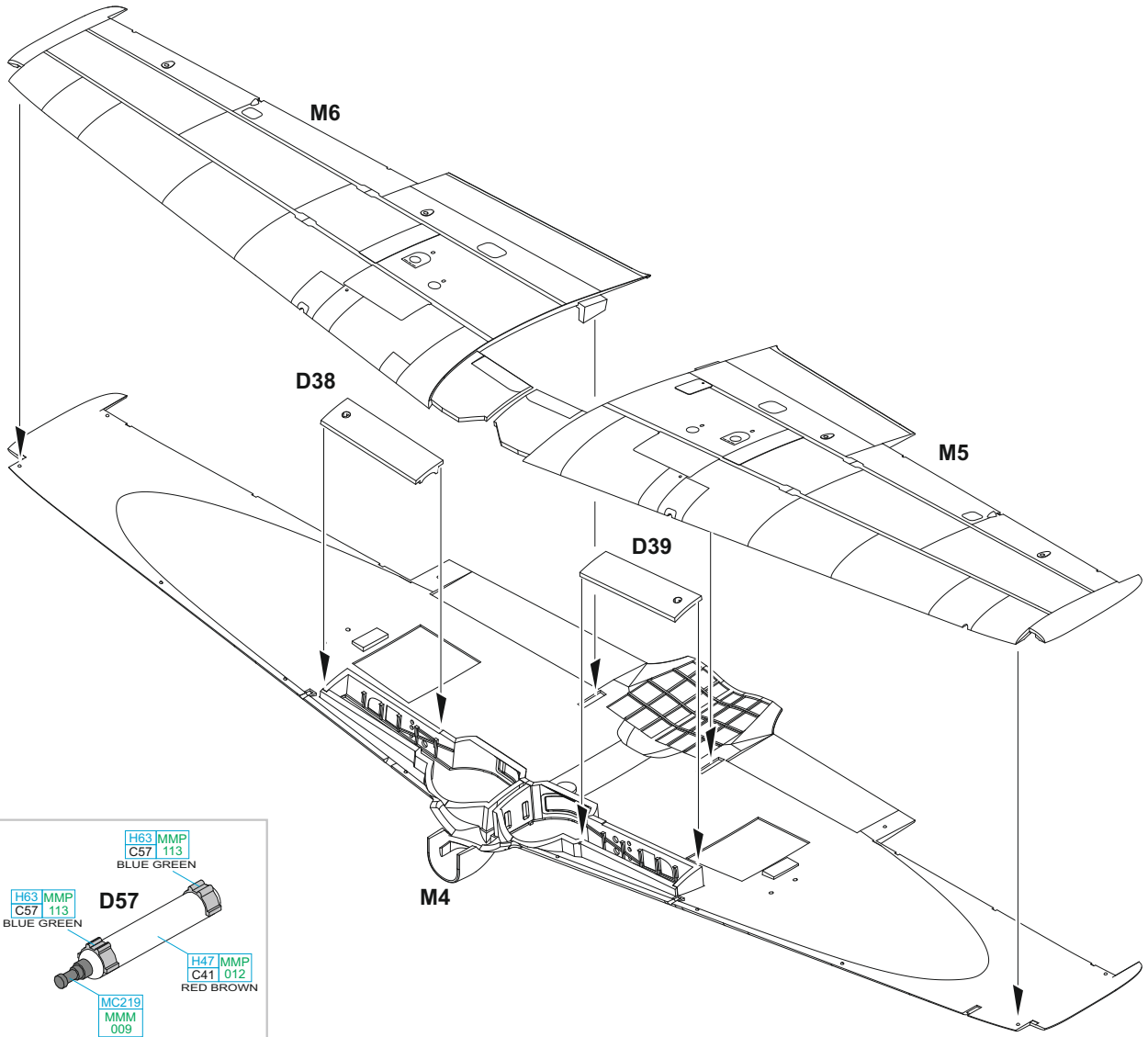


MARKINGS **A** **B** **C** **D** **E**

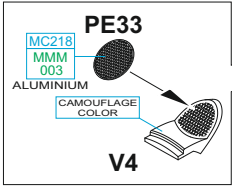
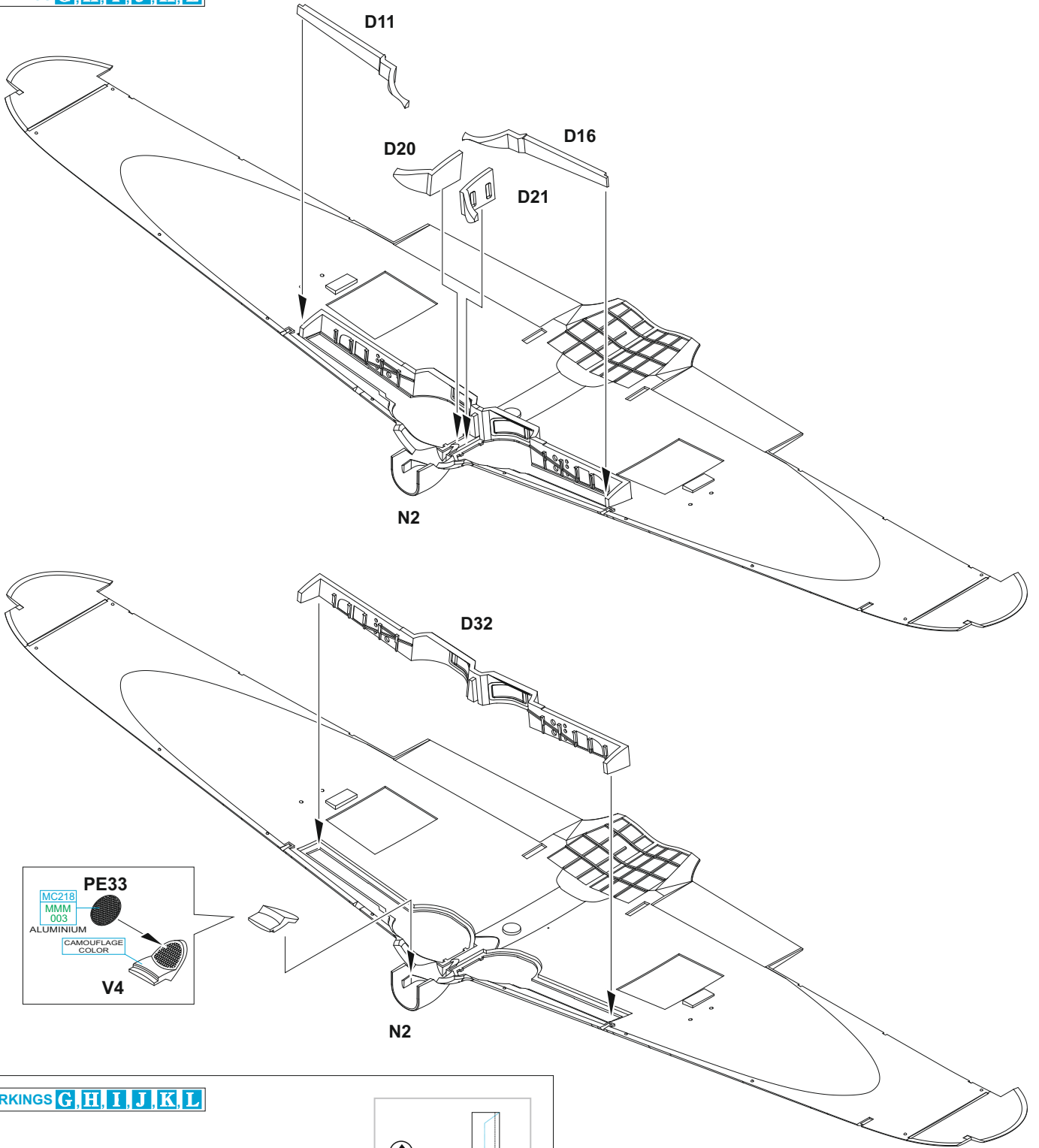


MARKING **F** ONLY



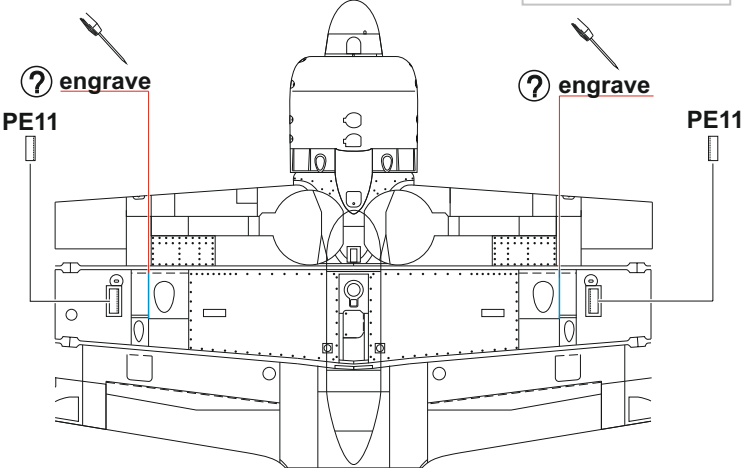


MARKINGS **G,H,I,J,K,L**

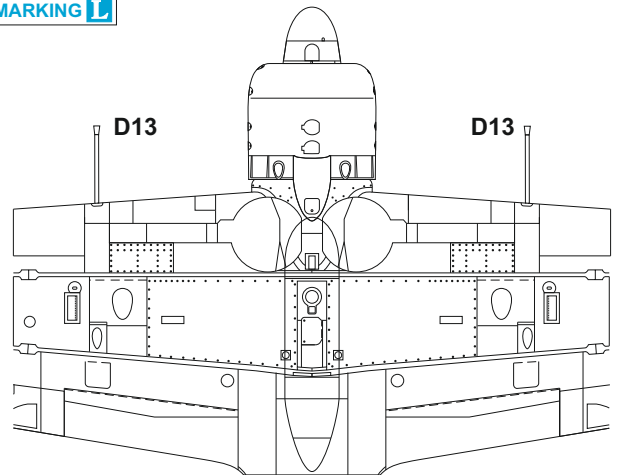


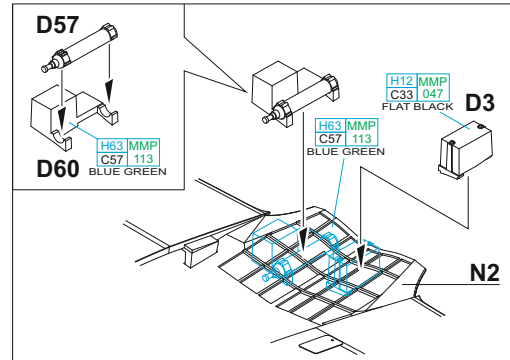
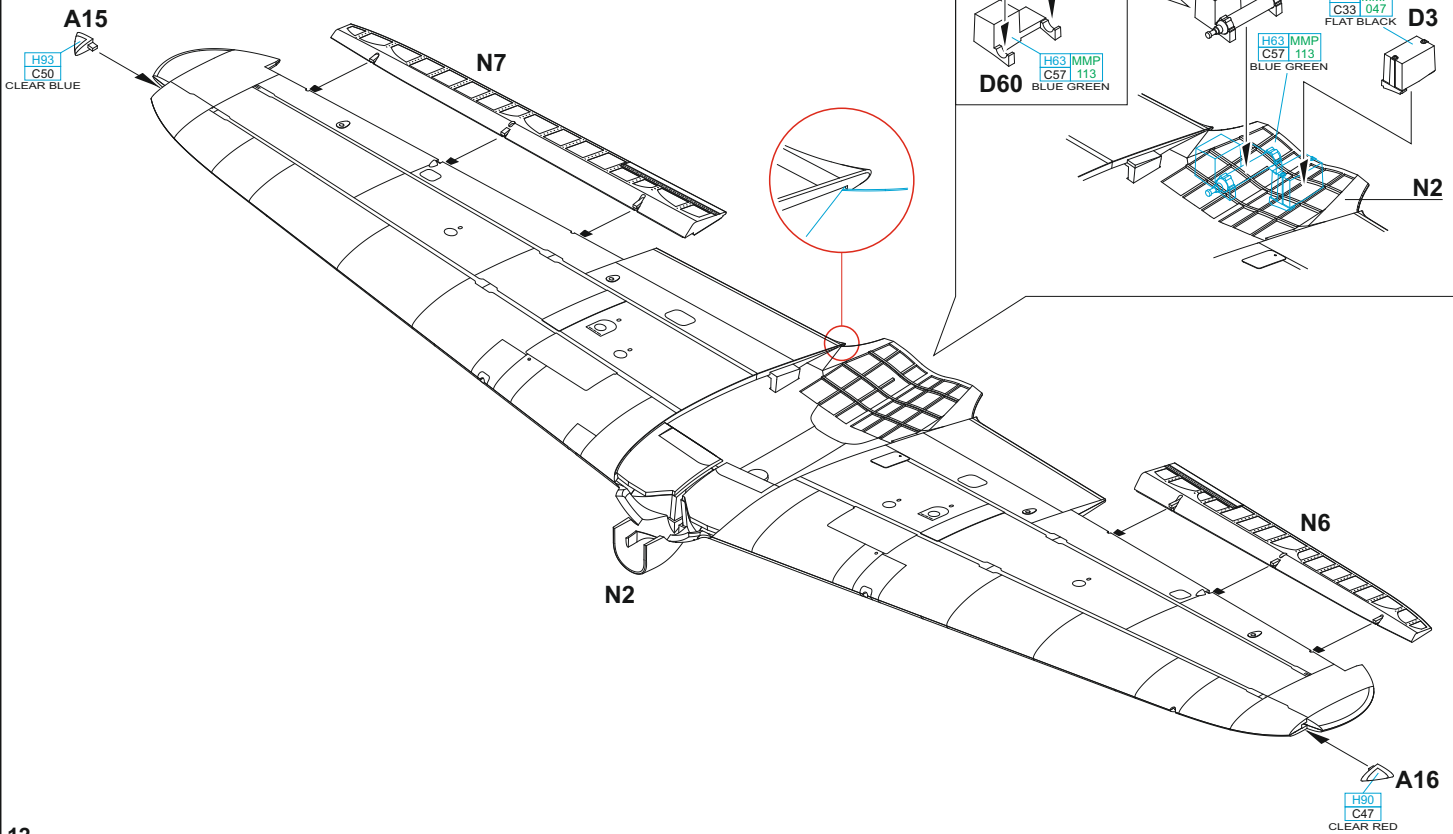
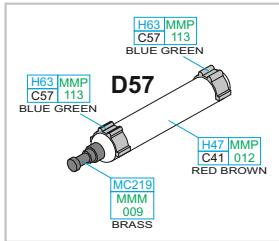
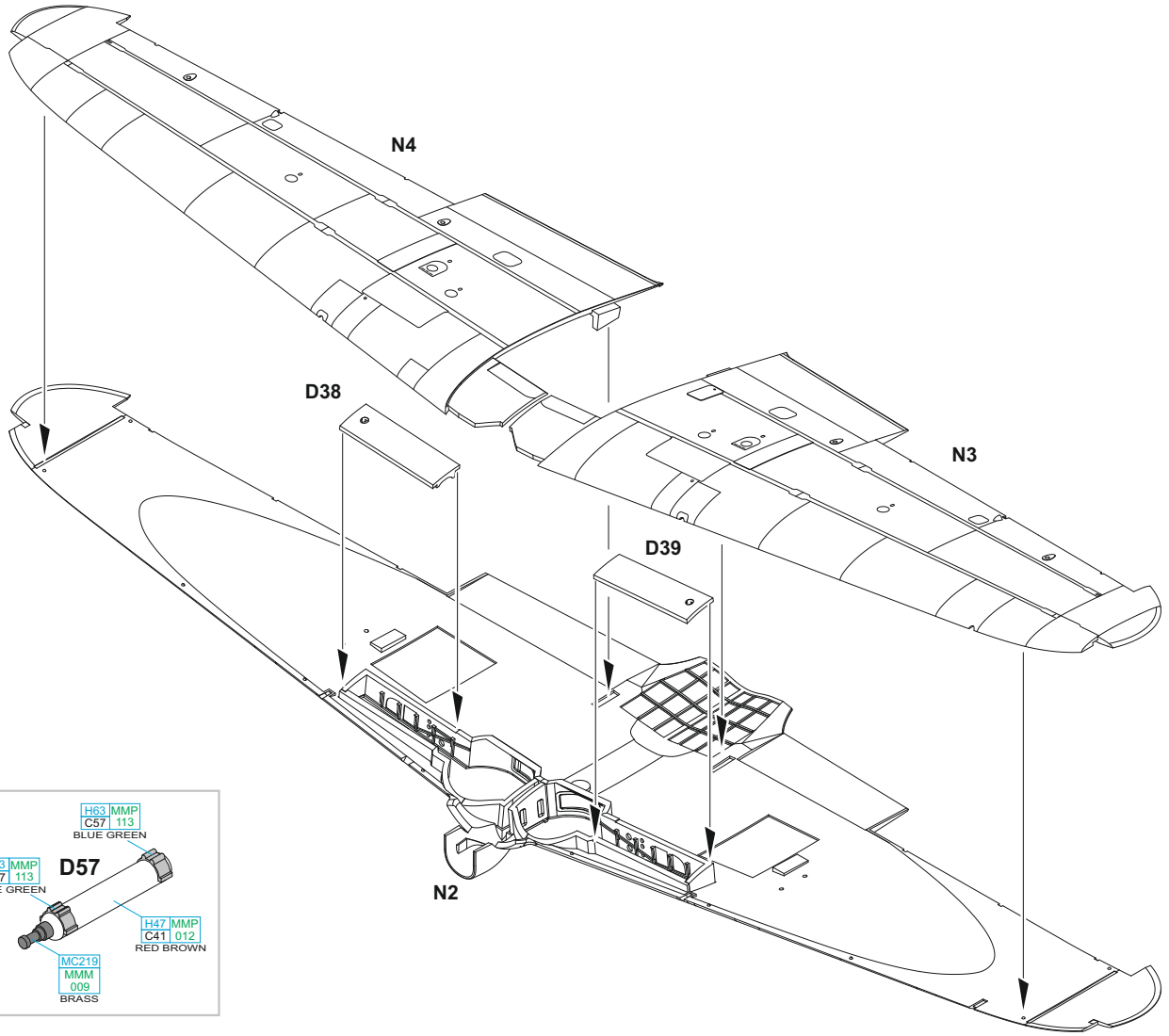
MARKINGS **G,H,I,J,K,L**

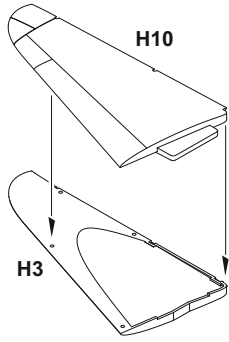
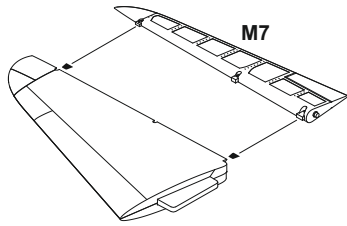
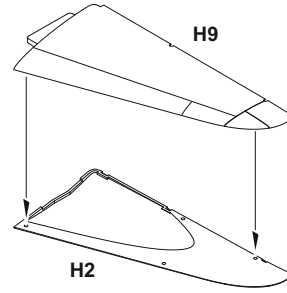
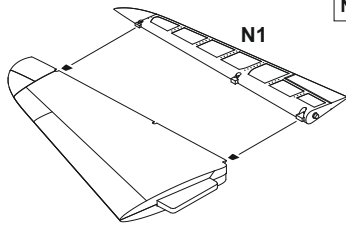
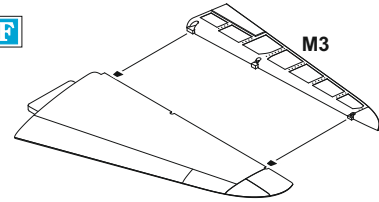
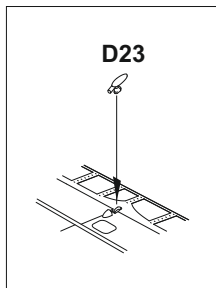
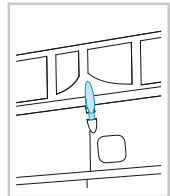
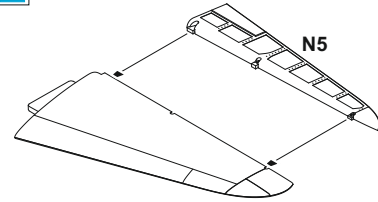
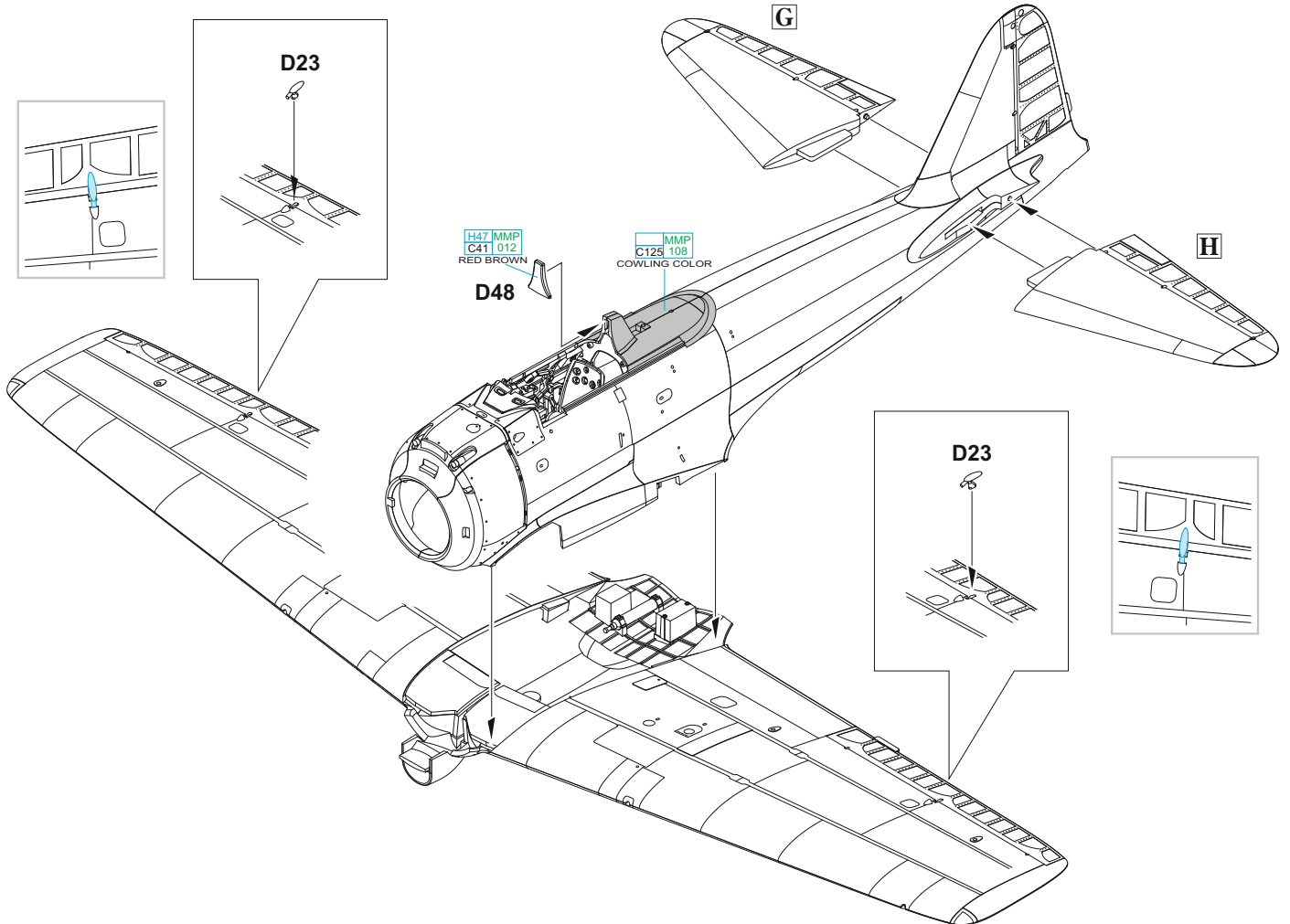
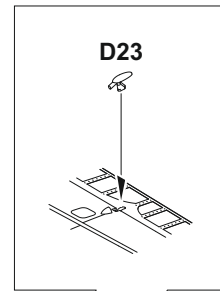
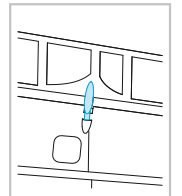
engrave - MARKINGS **G,H,I,J** ONLY



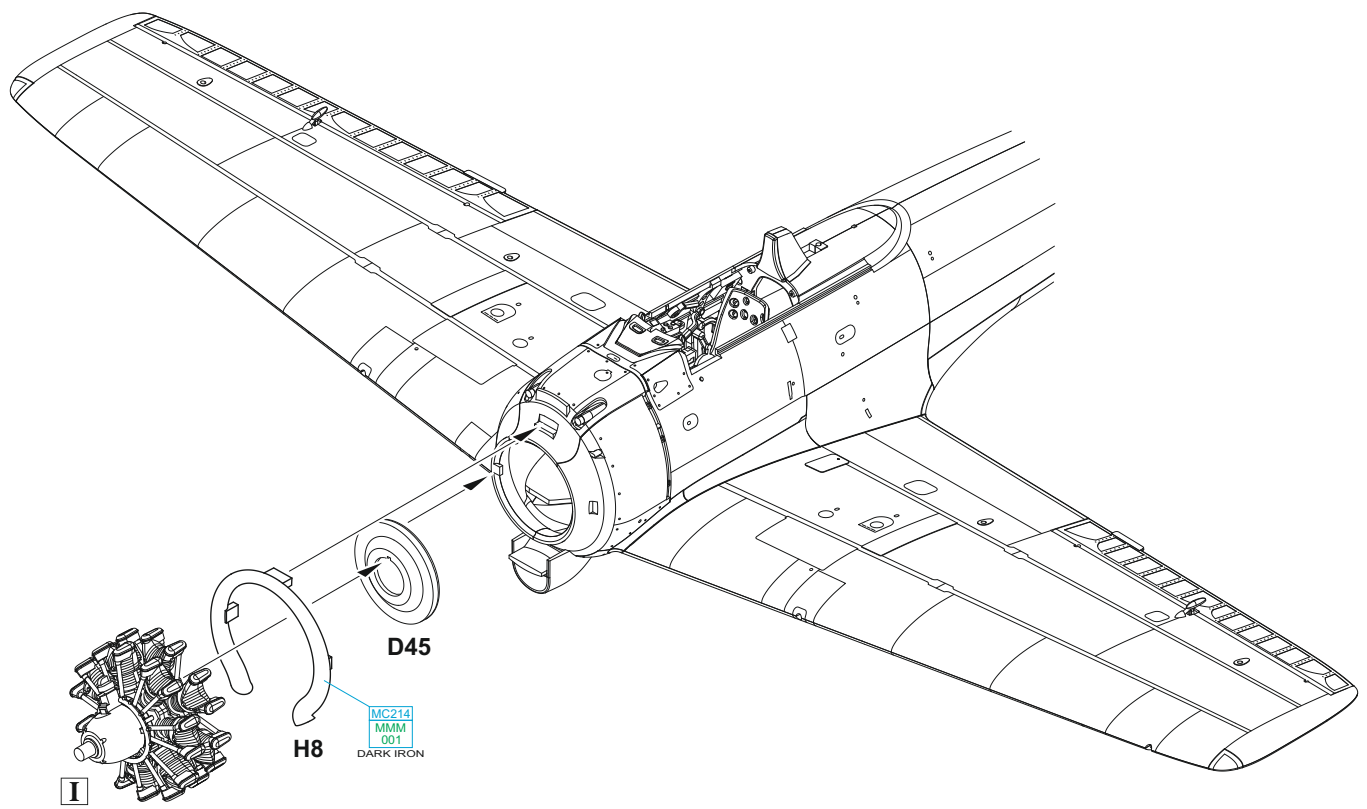
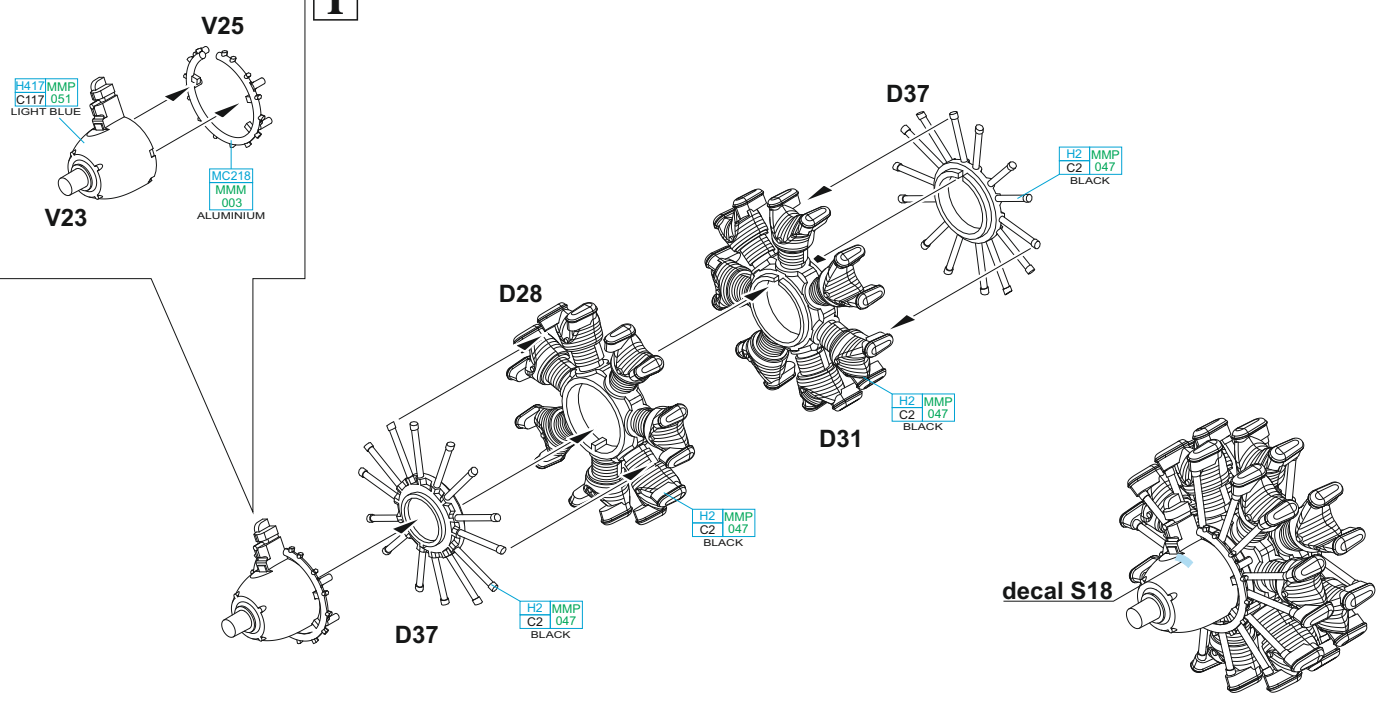
MARKING **L**



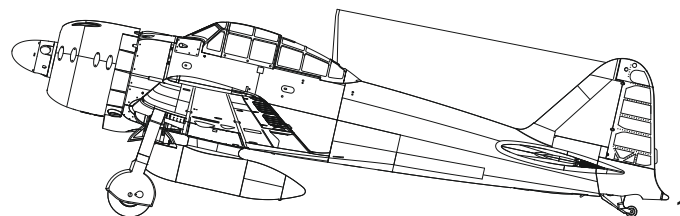
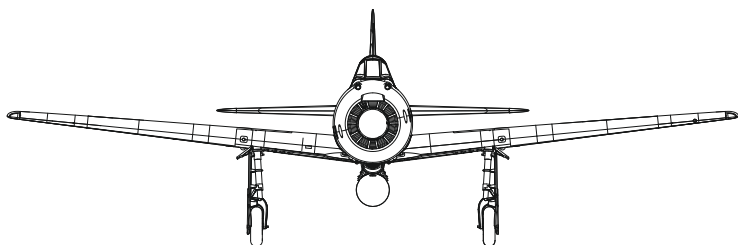
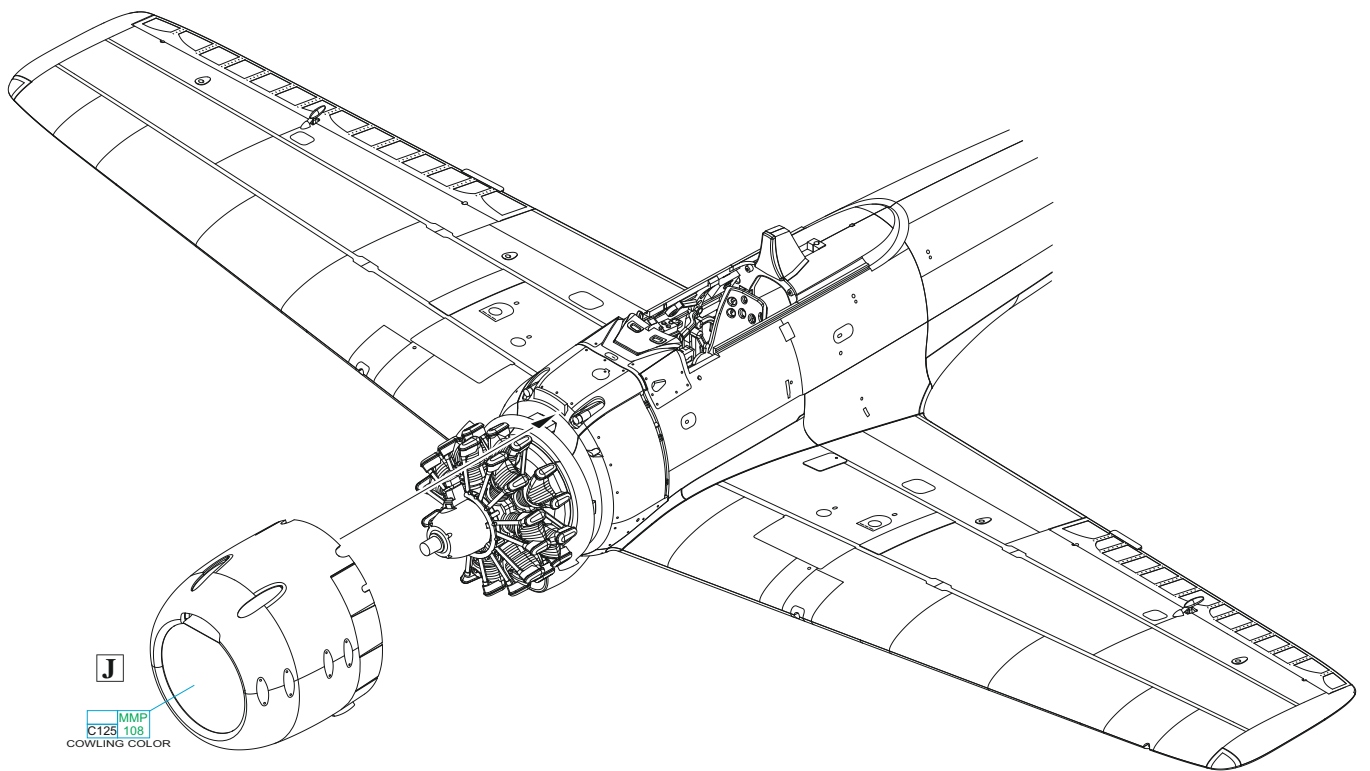
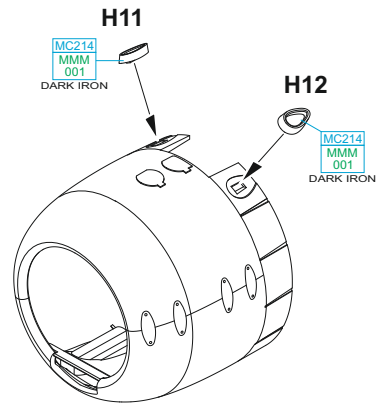
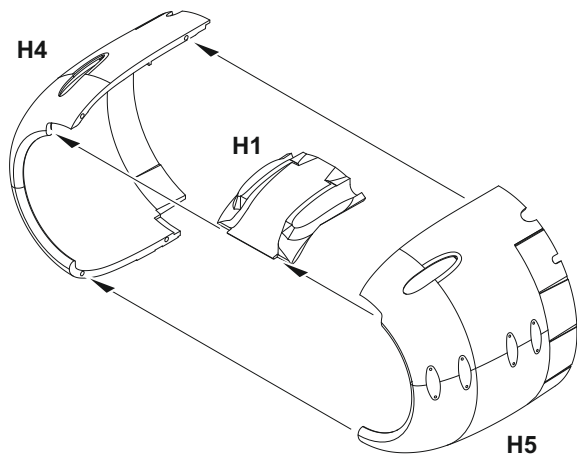


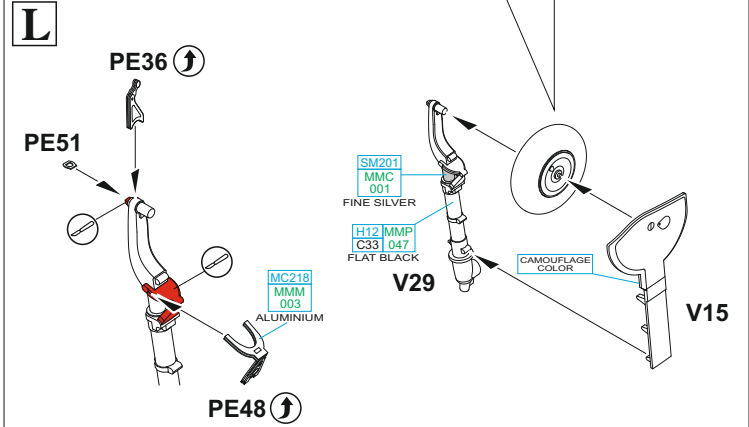
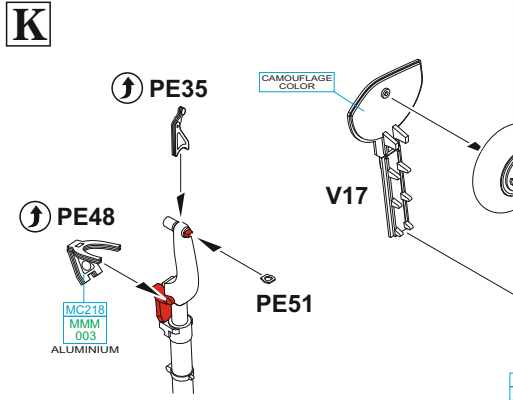
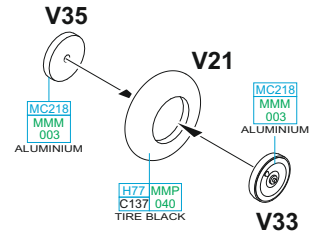
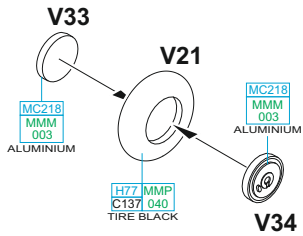
G**H****M3, M7 - MARKINGS A, B, C, D, E, F****N1, N5 - MARKINGS G, H, I, J, K, L****D23****H47 MMP
C41 012
RED BROWN****D48****MMP
C128 108
COWLING COLOR****G****H****D23**

I

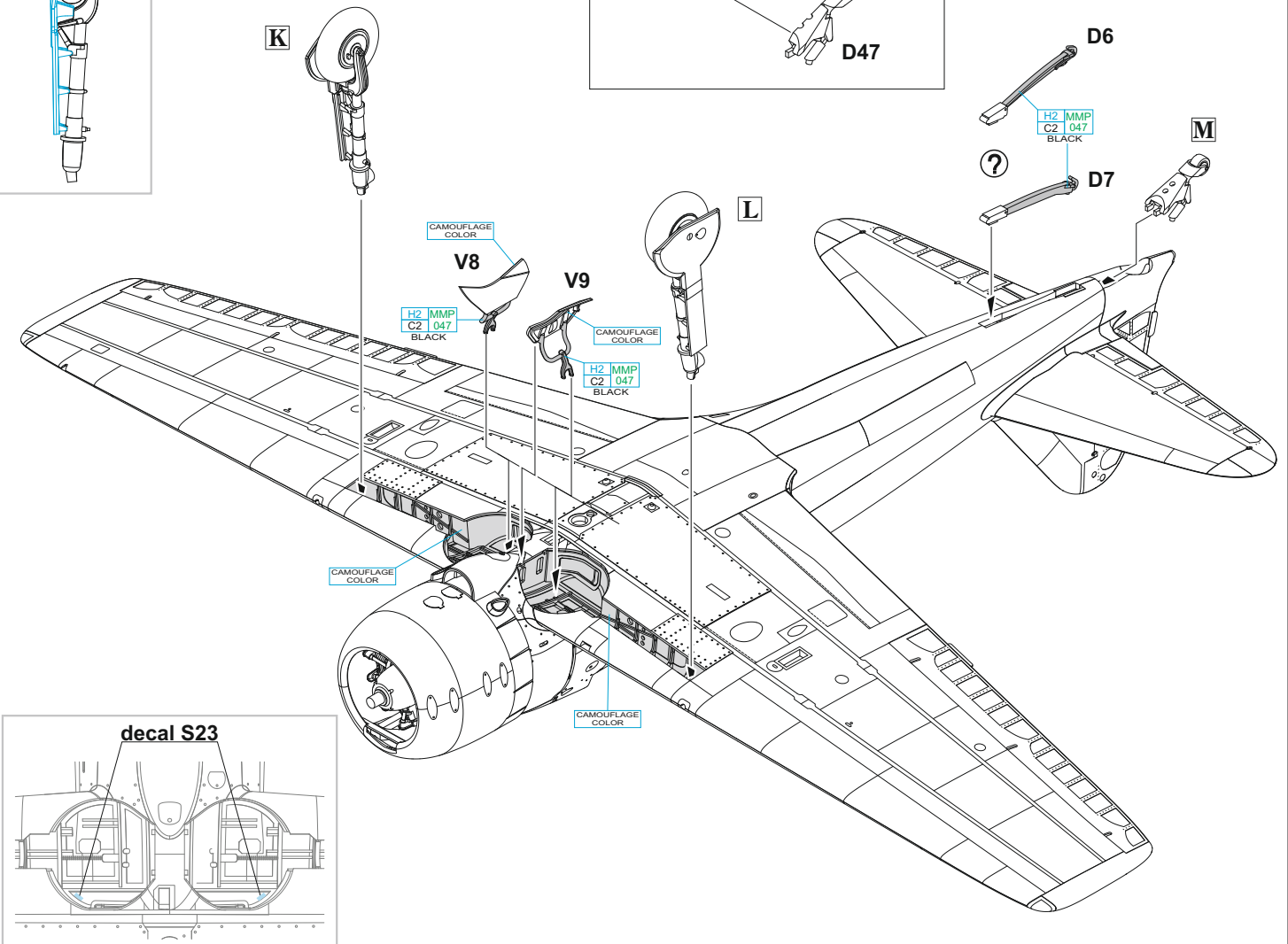
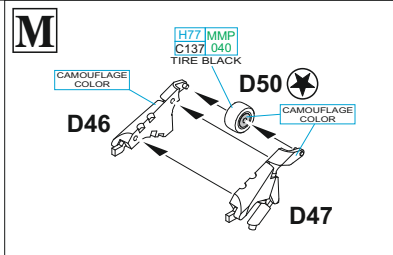
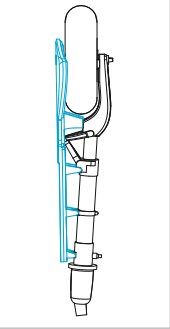


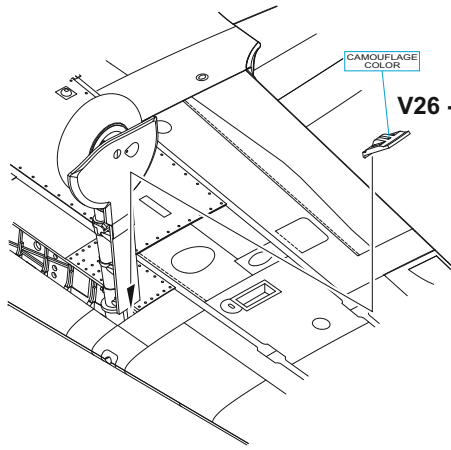
J



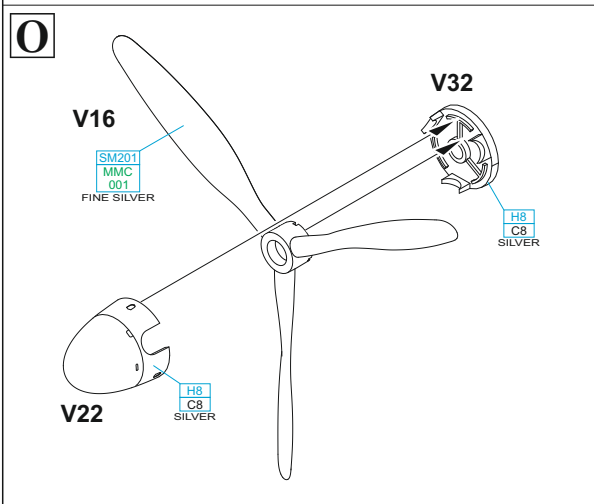
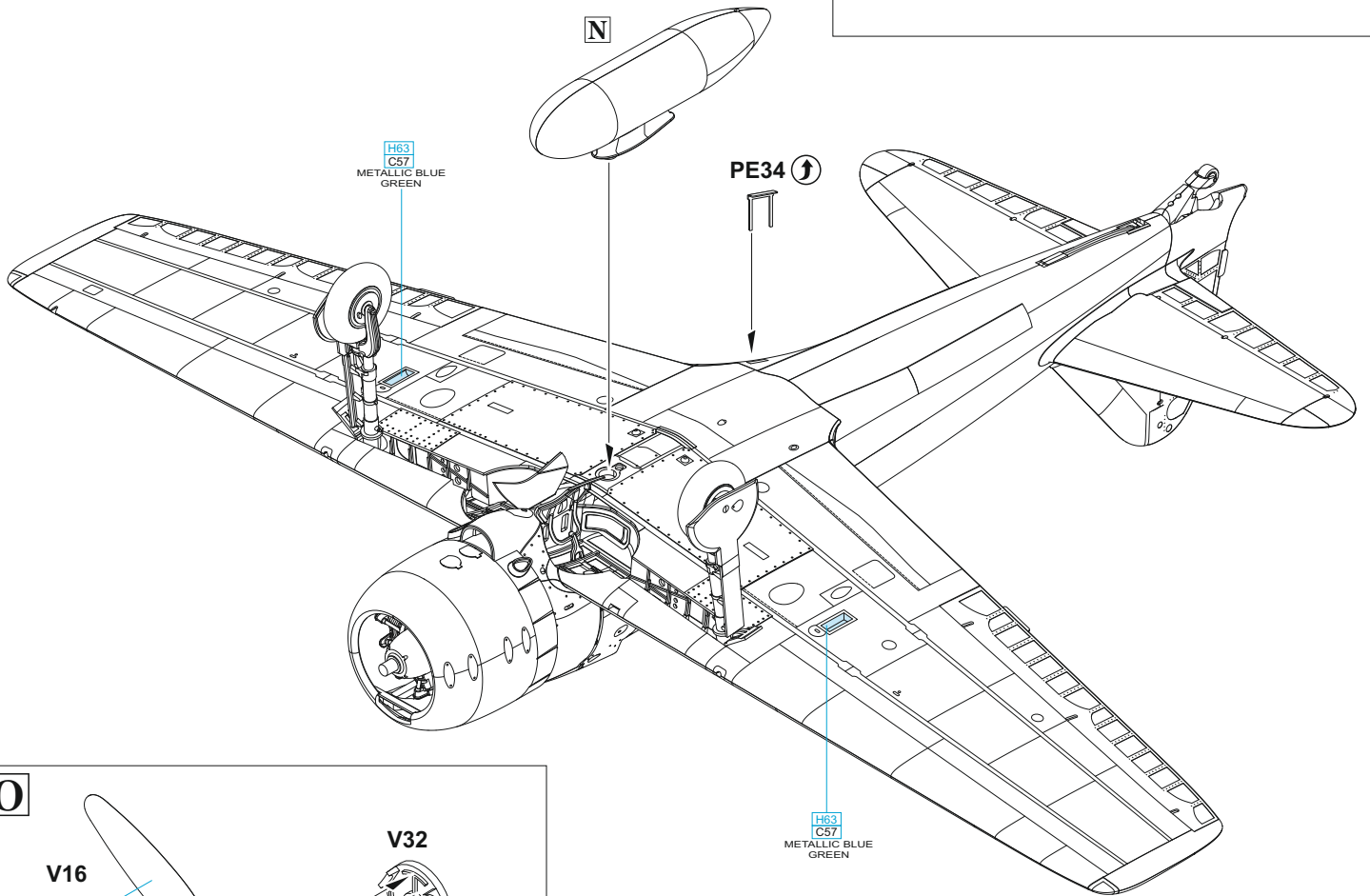
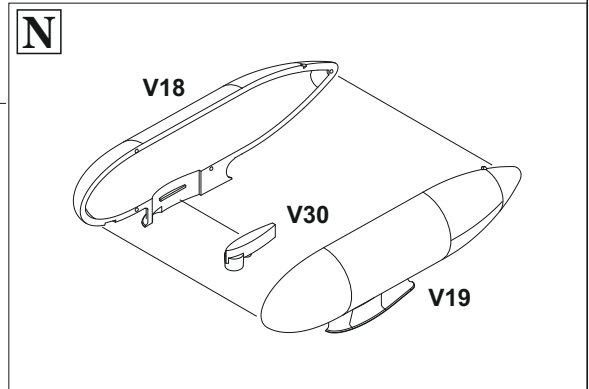
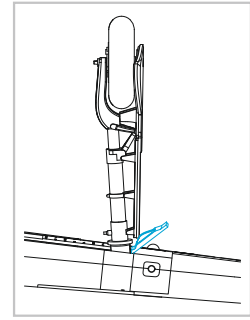


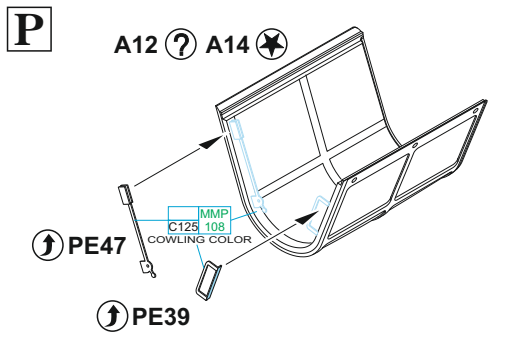
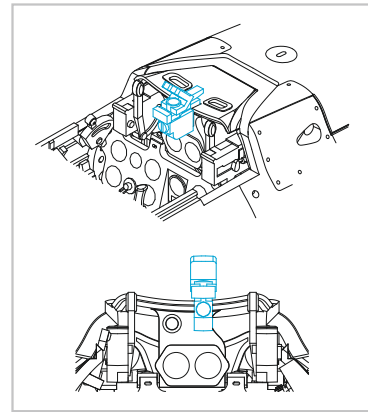
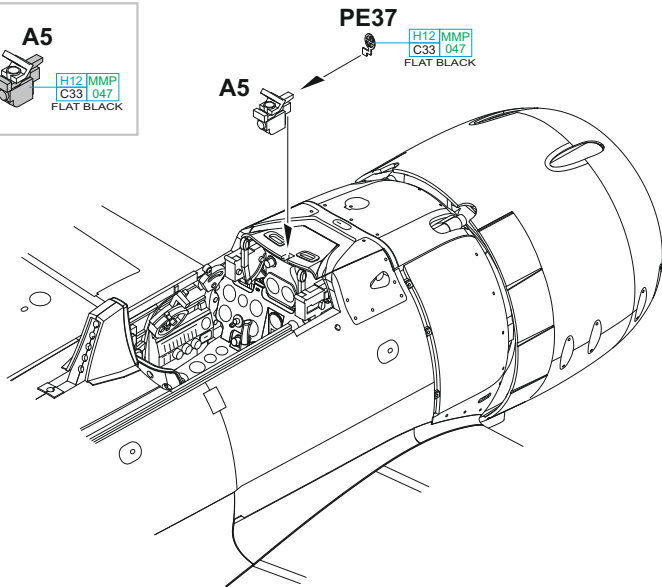
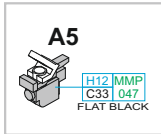
FRONT VIEW





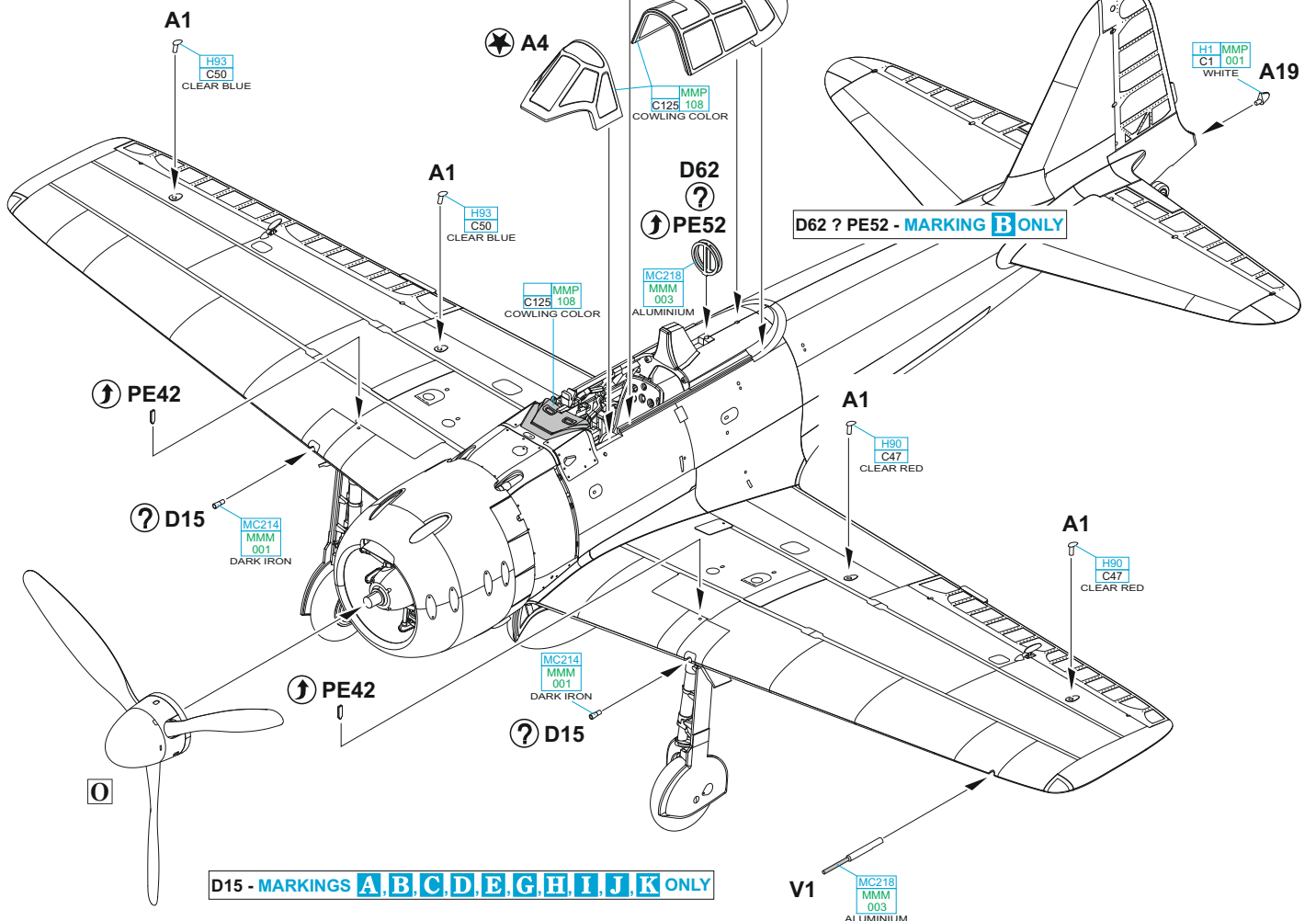
V26 - starboard ↔ V24 - port side





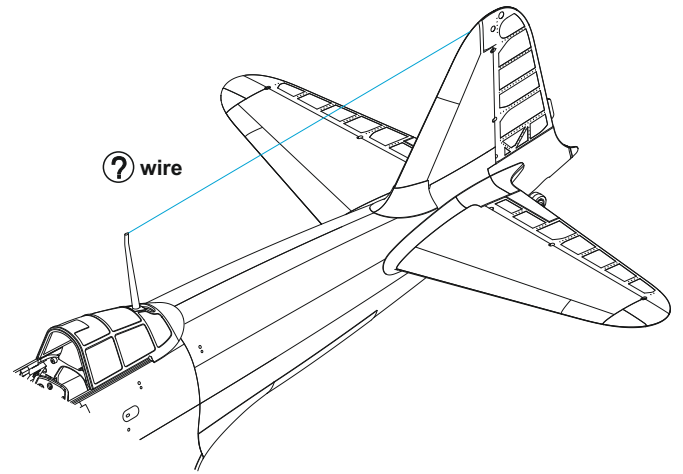
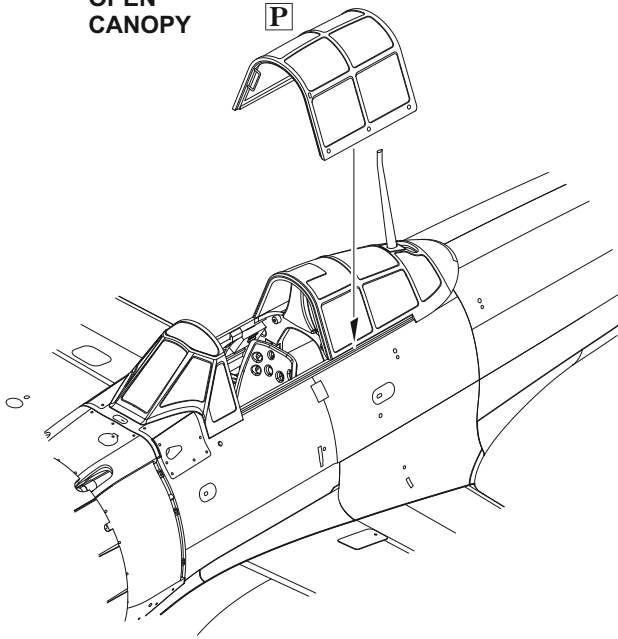
CLOSED CANOPY

D53 ? D53 - MARKINGS B, D, E, G, I, L ONLY



D15 - MARKINGS A, B, C, D, E, G, H, I, J, K ONLY

OPEN
CANOPY



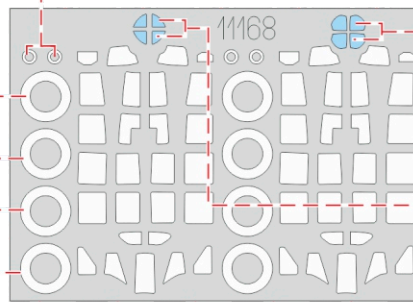
eduard
MASK

11168

D50

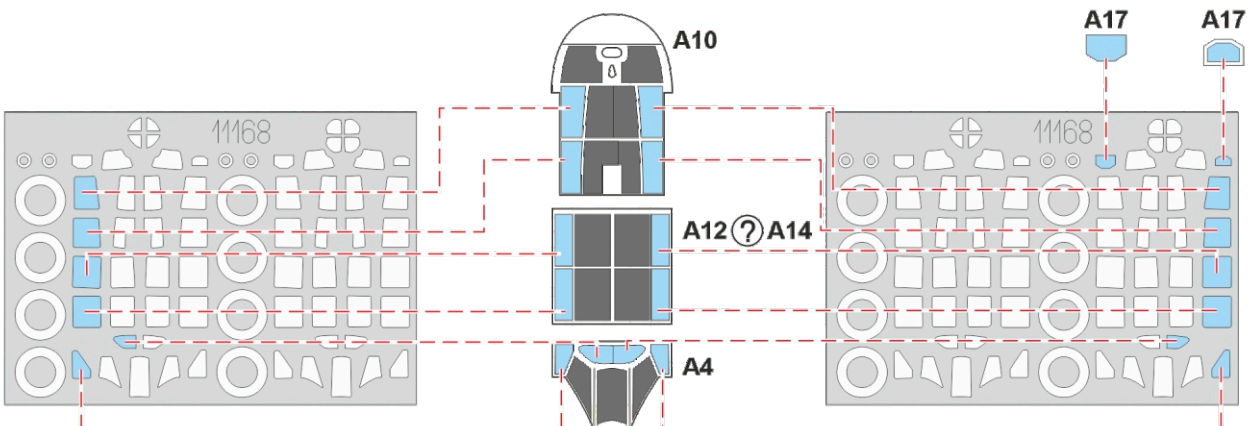
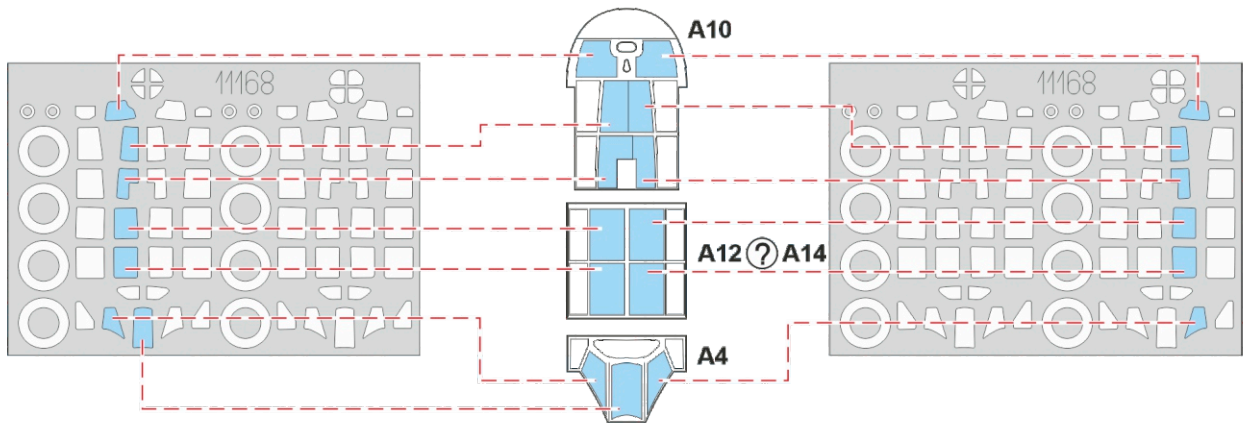
V33, V34, V35
2 pcs.

LIQUID MASK



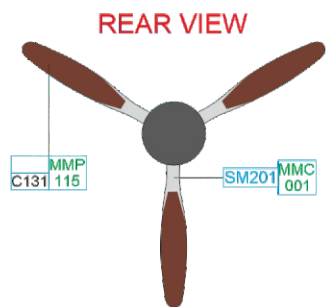
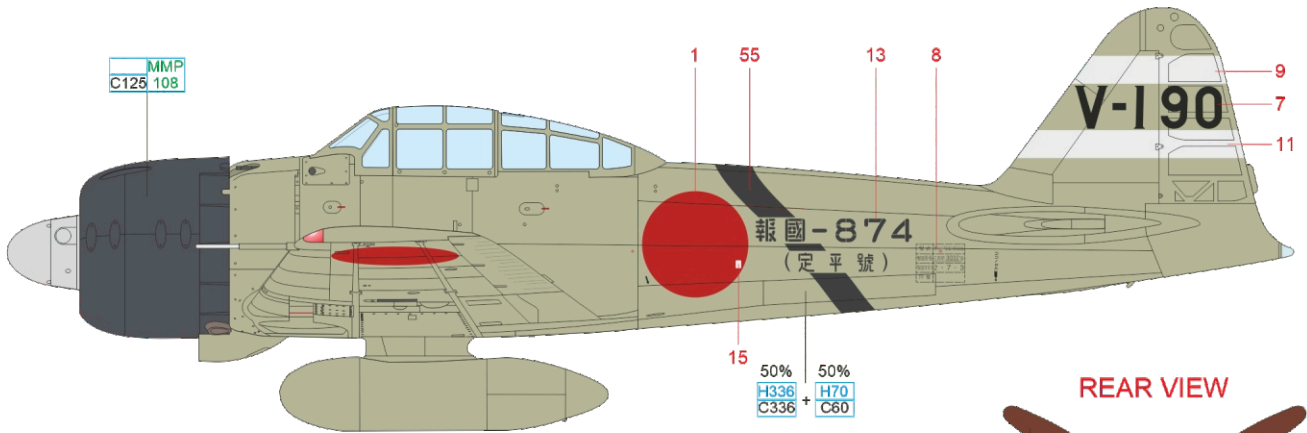
A22 A21

A15 A16

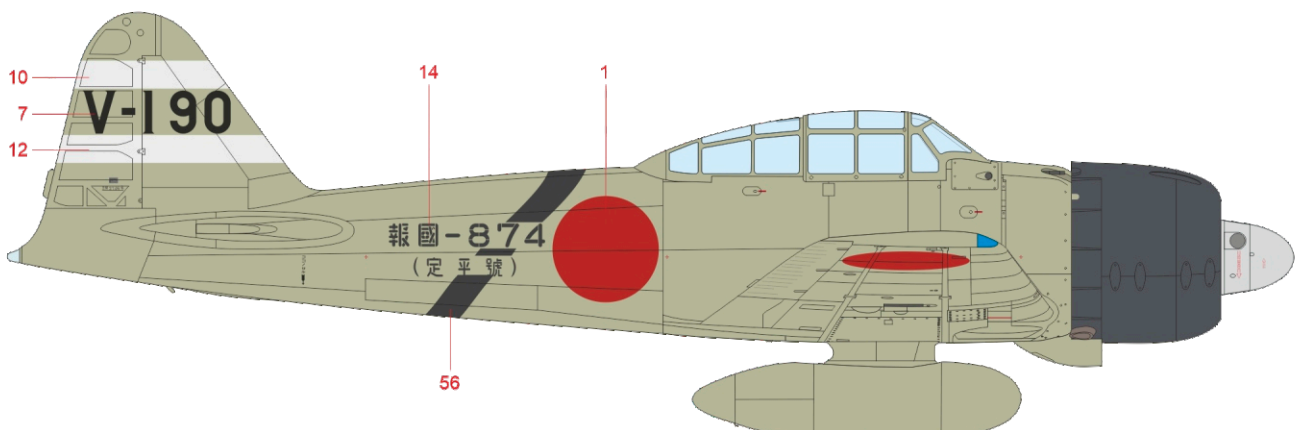
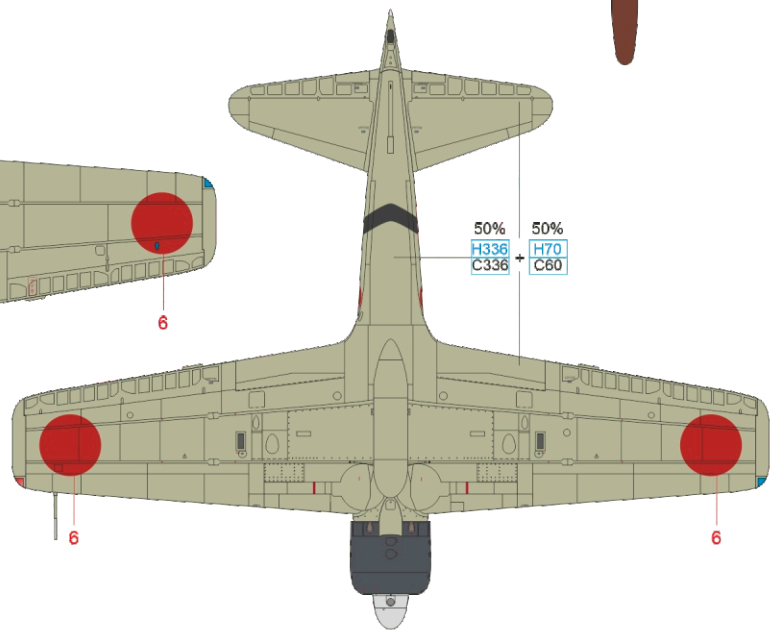
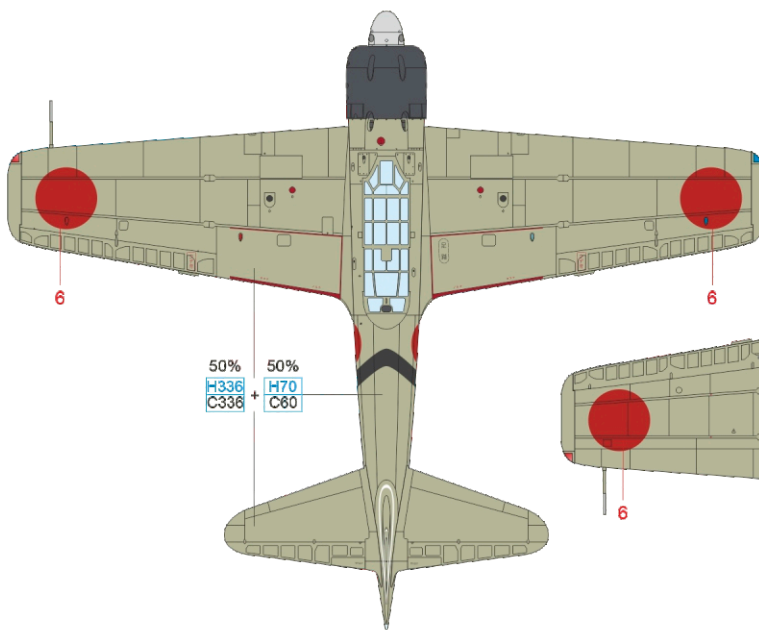


A c/n 3032, Lt. Kiku-ichi Inano, Tainan Kōkūtai, Buna airfield, New Guinea, August 1942

This aircraft, released by Mitsubishi on July 3, 1942 was assigned to Lt. Inano, commander of Buna detachment of Tainan Kōkūtai. It was donated by citizens of Chongpyong County in North Korea. At some point between the mid August 1942 and early September 1943 this Zero sustained damage that tore off part of the right wing, possibly from a landing error. This Zero was captured by Allied units at Buna on December 27, 1942 and selected for further evaluation and a rebuild. Allied personnel at Eagle Farm Field built a flyable A6M3 Zero using parts of three Zeros transported from Buna Airfield, including this aircraft. Inano's surname was originally Takabayashi, but he changed that before mid 1941. In late November 1941 smaller part of Tainan Kōkūtai under the his command was transferred to French Indochina and temporarily became part of 22. Kōkū Sentai HQ fighter squadron. Lt. Inano returned to Tainan Kōkūtai in July 1942, participated in combat over New Guinea and Guadalcanal. From January 1943 he was involved in evaluation of weapons used for new naval aircraft. From October 1944 served as Hikōtaichō of Tainan Kōkūtai (II) in Taiwan.



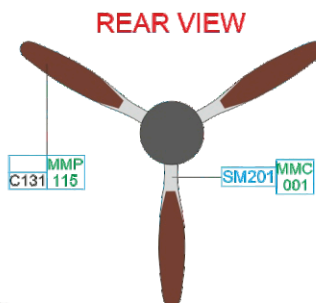
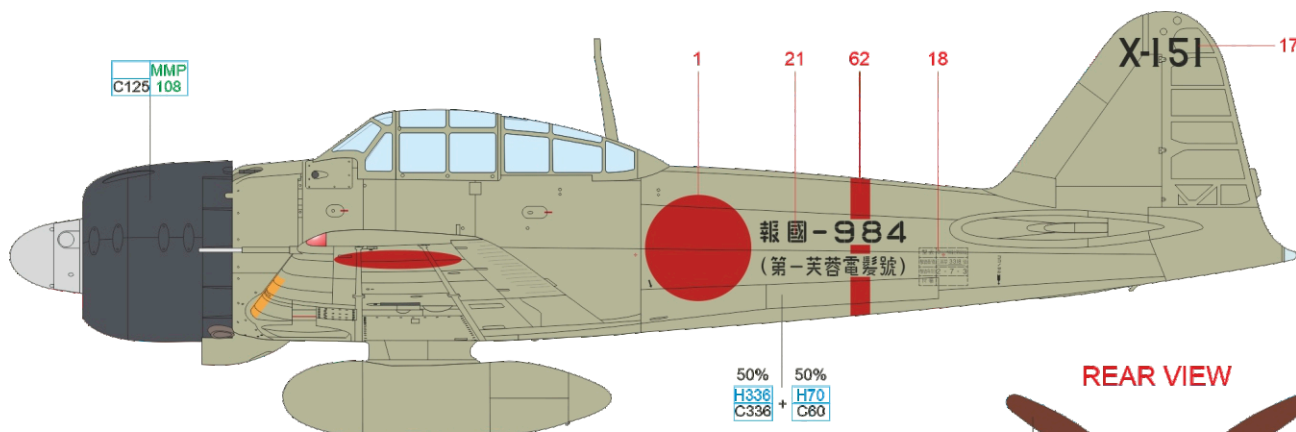
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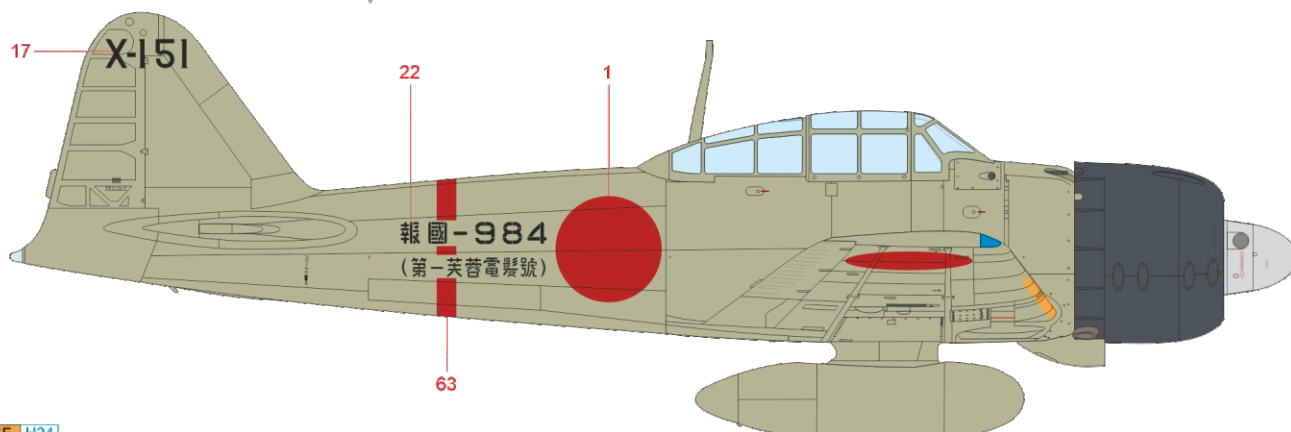
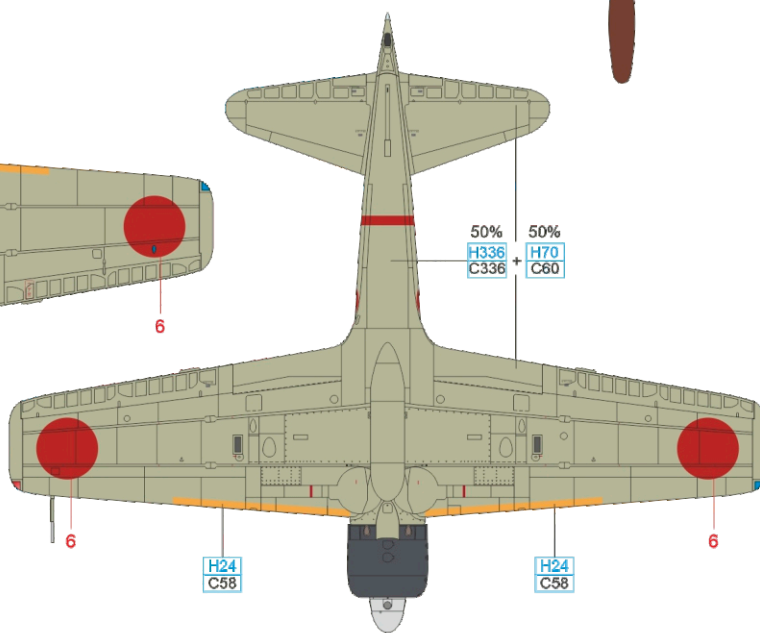
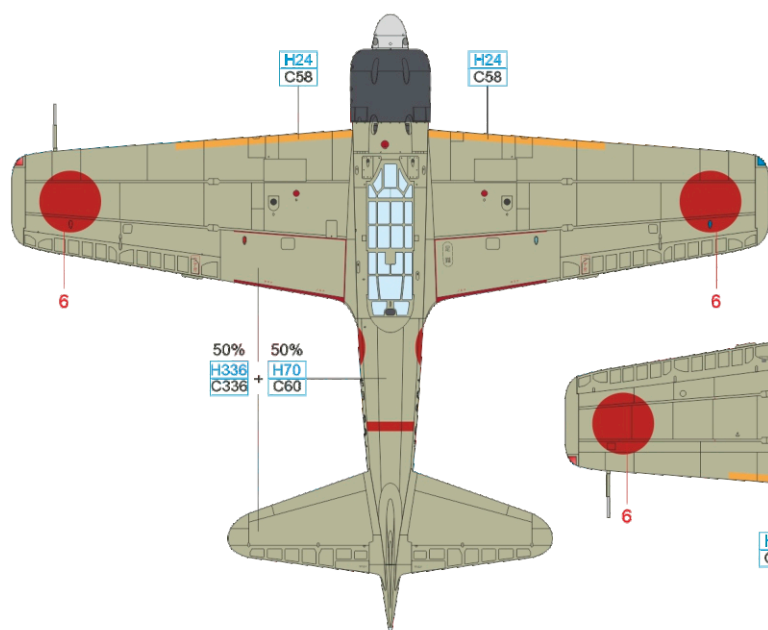
HEMP H336 C336 GRAY H70 C60 COWLING COLOR MMP C125 108 RED BROWN C131 115 SUPER FINE SILVER SM201 MMC 001

B P01c Kyoshi Itō, 3. Kōkūtai, Koepang airfield, Timor Island, September 1942

This aircraft was purchased by Electric Perm Machine co., whose name (Daiichi Fuyo Dengami) is listed on the patriotic donation inscription (Hōkoku) No. 984, usually identified wrongly as 994. It was flown by Kyoshi Itō, who used also Zero X-152 with Hōkoku No. 1000. Itō was born in November 1921 in Murakami, Niigata Prefecture. He served on the torpedo boat Ōtori in 1939, in late 1940 got flight training at Tsuchiura Kōkūtai and in November 1941 was assigned for combat duty to 3rd Kōkūtai. With this unit he fought in the Philippines and Indonesia and took part in raids on Australia. In September and October 1942, with most of the 3rd Kōkūtai, he was involved in the fighting over Guadalcanal. In November his unit was redesignated Kōkūtai 202 and returned to Koepang. From the spring until September 1943, unit conducted combat flights over Australia, also with Zero Type 32 fighters. In November 1943, Itō received a written command commendation stating that he had shot down 23 aircraft and destroyed nine on the ground. He then served as an instructor in Japan with the Ōita and Tsukuba Kōkūtai and joined the air combat in February 1945. After the war, he married the eldest daughter of the owner of the family construction company Katō in Murakami and adopted the family name Katō. Under his leadership, the company rose to the top position in Murakami, and he received the Medal with Purple Ribbon and the Minister of Construction Award. Kyoshi Katō retired in 1992 and died in July 2012.



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ORANGE H24
 YELLOW C58

HEMP H336
 C336

GRAY H70
 C60

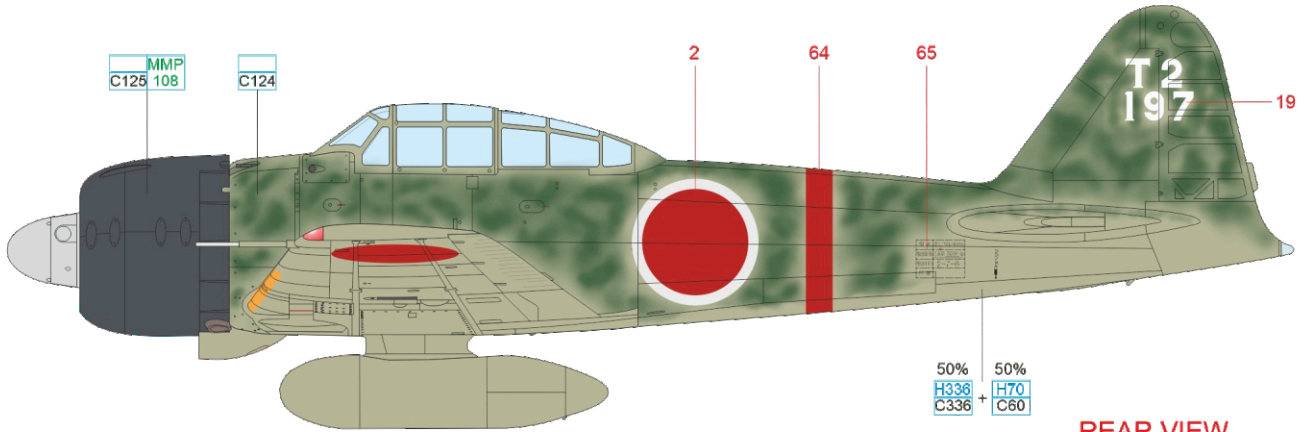
COWLING
 COLOR MMP
 C125 108

RED
 BROWN MMP
 C131 115

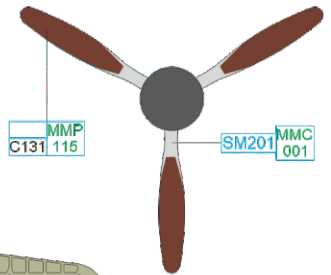
SUPER
 FINE SILVER SM201
 MMC 001

C Kōkūtai 204, Vunakanau airfield, Rabaul, New Britain, April 1943

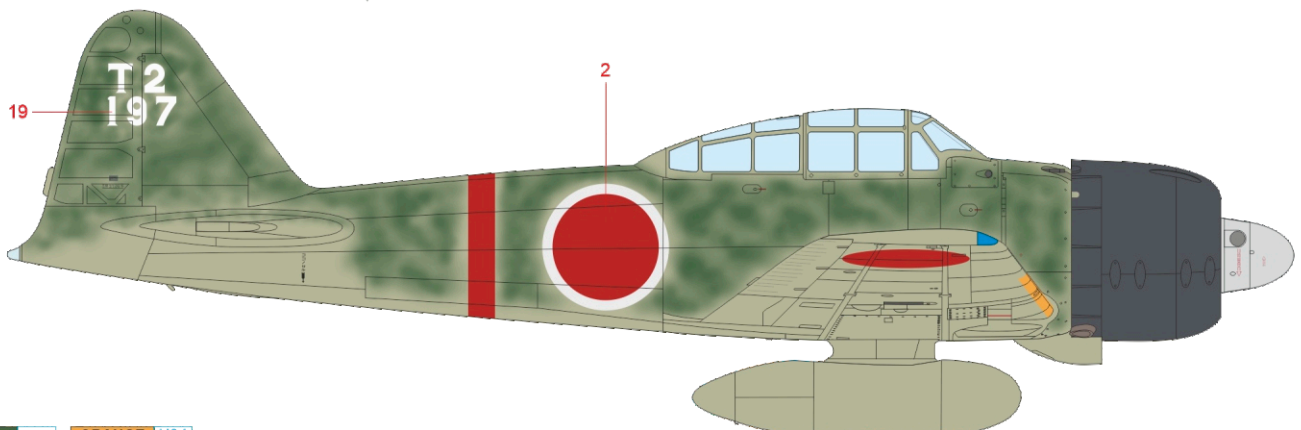
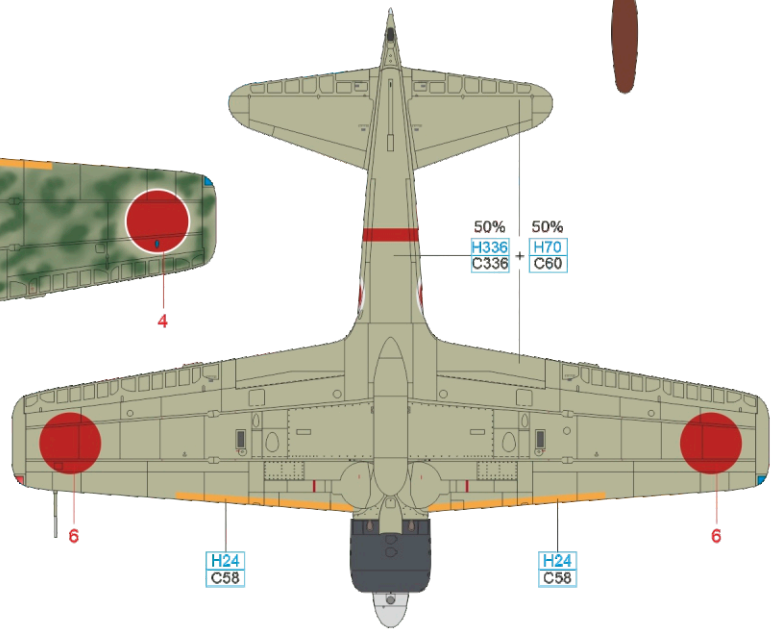
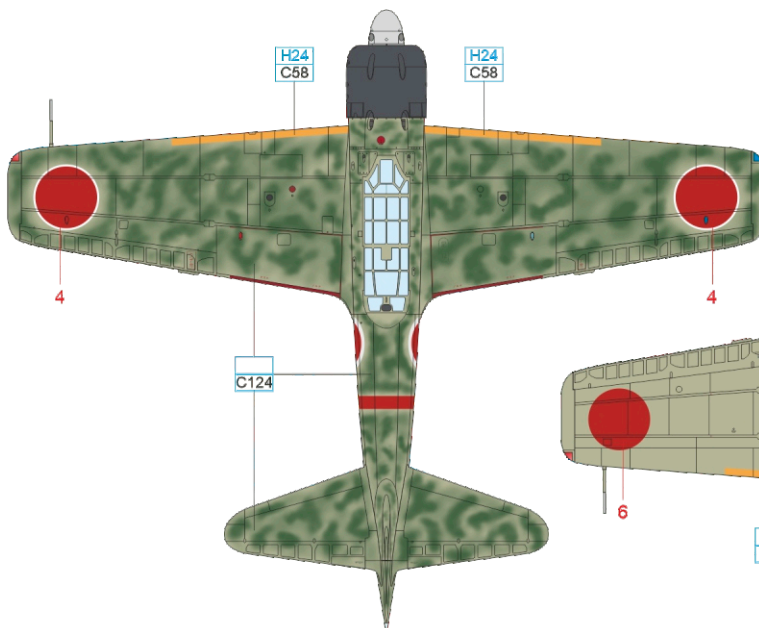
This machine wears green camouflage applied in field conditions and has radio equipment removed to reduce weight. Kōkūtai 204 appears to have been the only unit in the area to apply with green field camouflage also white outline of hinomaru on fuselage and upper wing surface. This unit was formed in April 1942 and was designated the 6th Kōkūtai. It was to be based at Midway Atoll after its capture. During the attack on Midway and the Aleutians, its airmen participated in both combat operations. The unit made its first combat flight on June 4, 1942 under the command of Lieutenant Zenjirō Miyano during the attack on Dutch Harbor. In August, it moved with the Zeros Type 32 to the Solomon Islands area, but its operational deployment was limited by the available bases and the smaller range of this version of the Zero. In early October, the unit moved to a new airfield at Buin and was able to deploy in combat over Guadalcanal. In early November it was renamed Kōkūtai 204. It was the only unit to be deployed continuously in the South Pacific for 16 months from August 1942. During this period unit gained approximately 1,000 air victories.



REAR VIEW



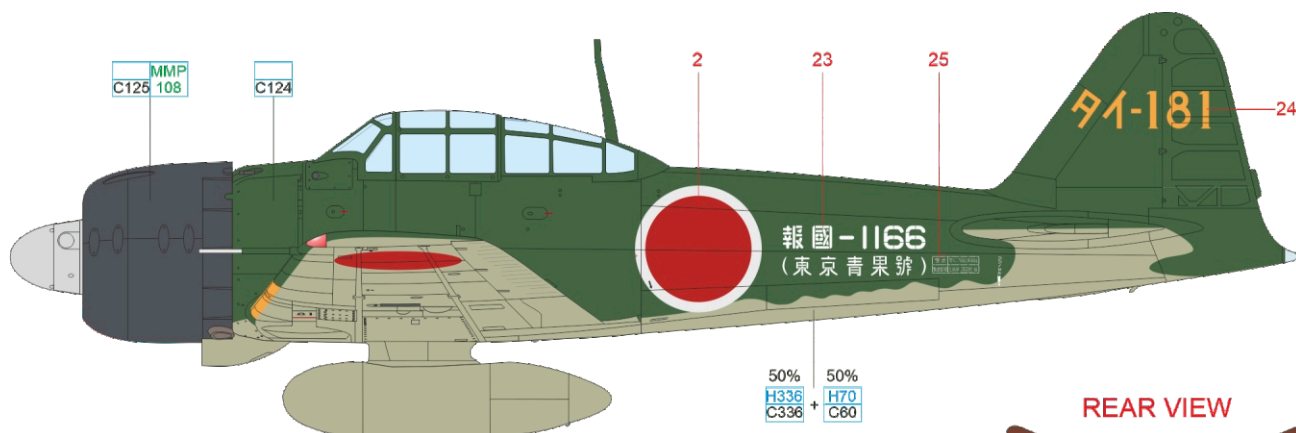
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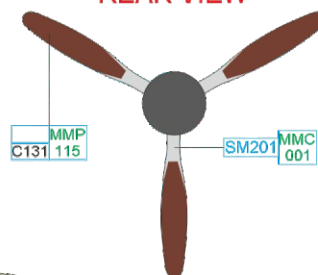
GREEN	C124	ORANGE	H24
		YELLOW	C58
HEMP	H336 C336	GRAY	H70 C60
COWLING COLOR	MMP C125 108	RED BROWN	MMP C131 115
		SUPER FINE SILVER	SM201 MMC 001

D Tainan Kōkūtai (II), Tainan airbase, Taiwan, summer 1944

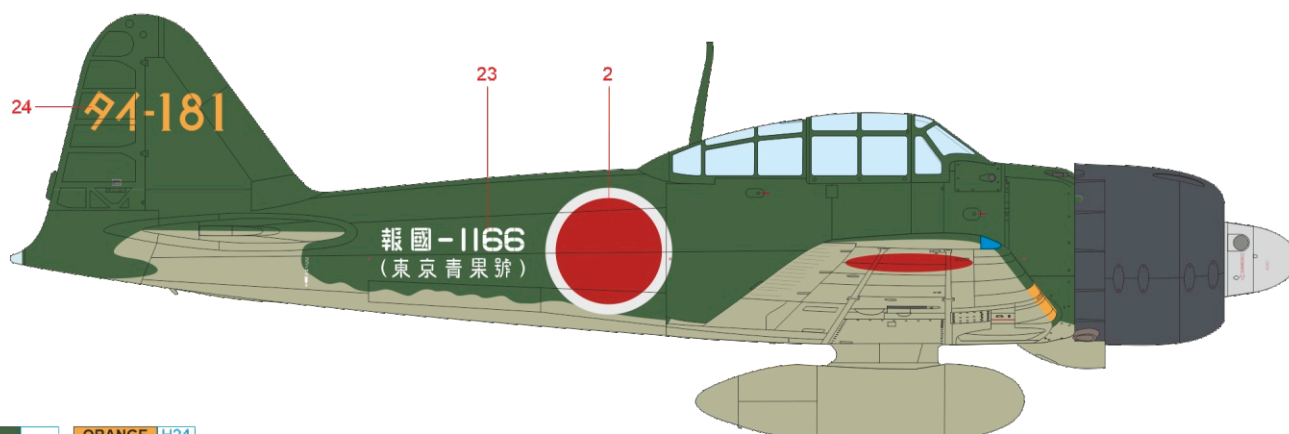
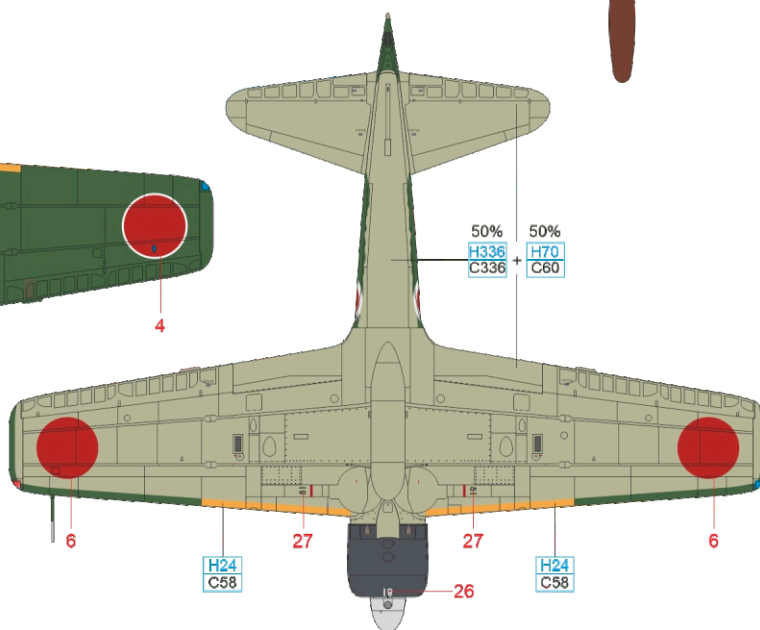
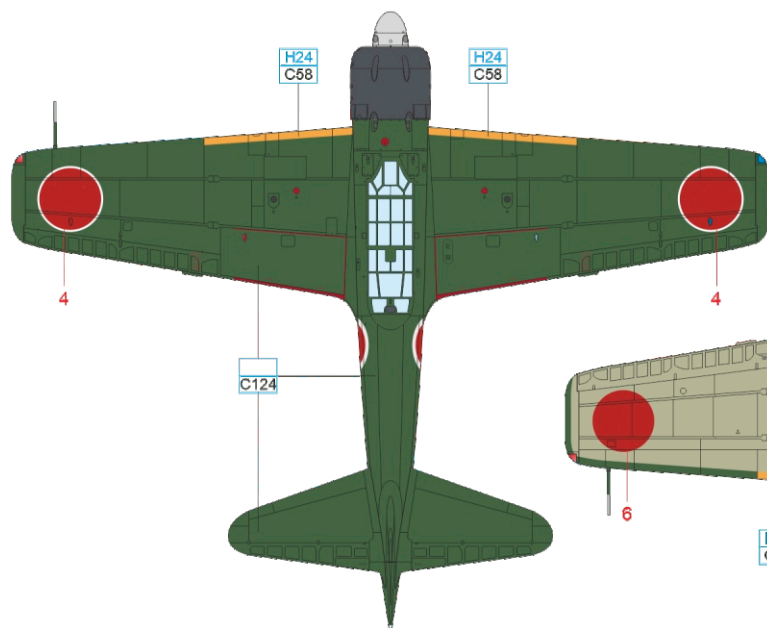
The designation of this training unit is the Katakana characters "Ta" and "I". The dark green paint on the upper surfaces indicates that the aircraft has been overhauled. The machine was acquired from a funds raised by the Tokyo Fruit and Vegetable Commercial Association. The second Tainan Kōkūtai was established in April 1943 as an operational training unit. Its home base was again Tainan, as with the previous unit of that name, which became Kōkūtai 251 in late 1942. When Allied air raids on Taiwan began in the second half of the war, the airmen of Tainan Kōkūtai (II) joined in its defense. They fought both four-engine bombers and escort fighters based in China and US Navy aircraft. Its first commander was Capt. Shigematsu Ichimura, who was commander of the 14th Kōkūtai in China in 1940. The most famous instructor who served with the unit was CPO Takeo Tanimizu, an ace with 18 kills to his credit. In January 1945, a special attack unit was organized from part of the Kōkūtai and participated in Kamikaze missions.



REAR VIEW



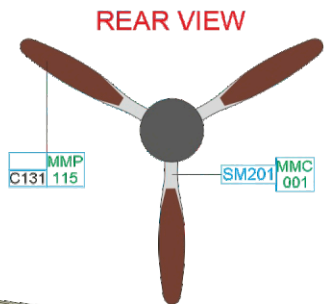
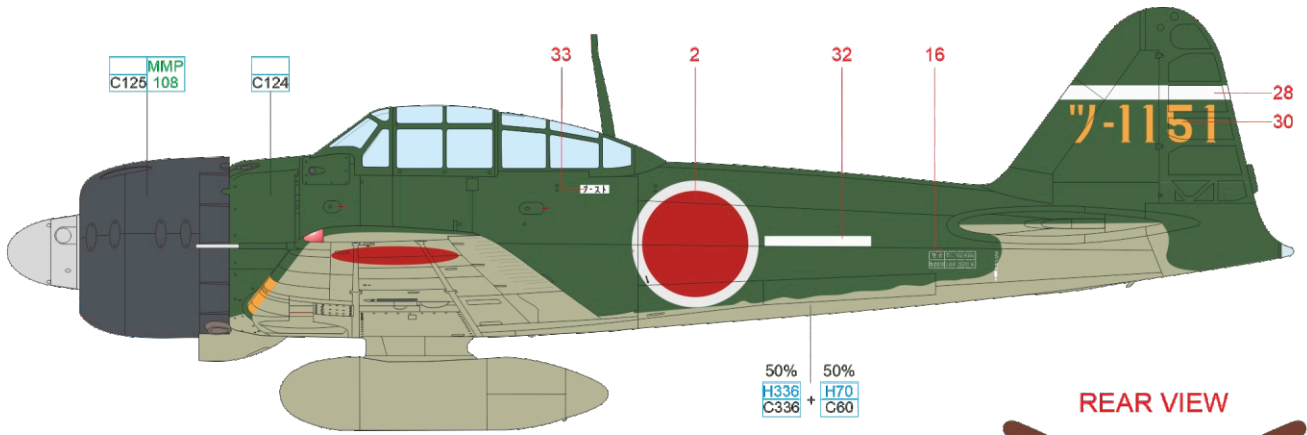
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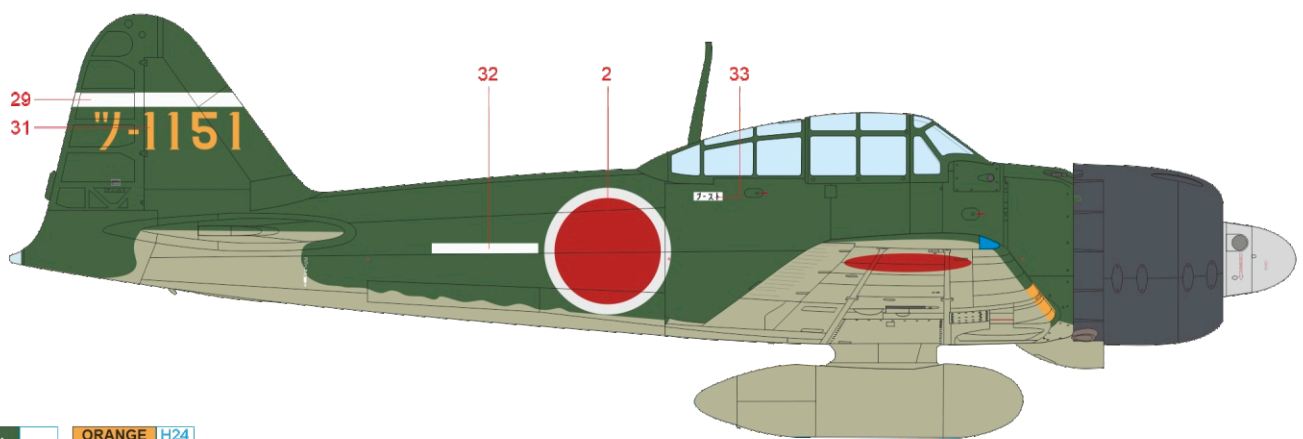
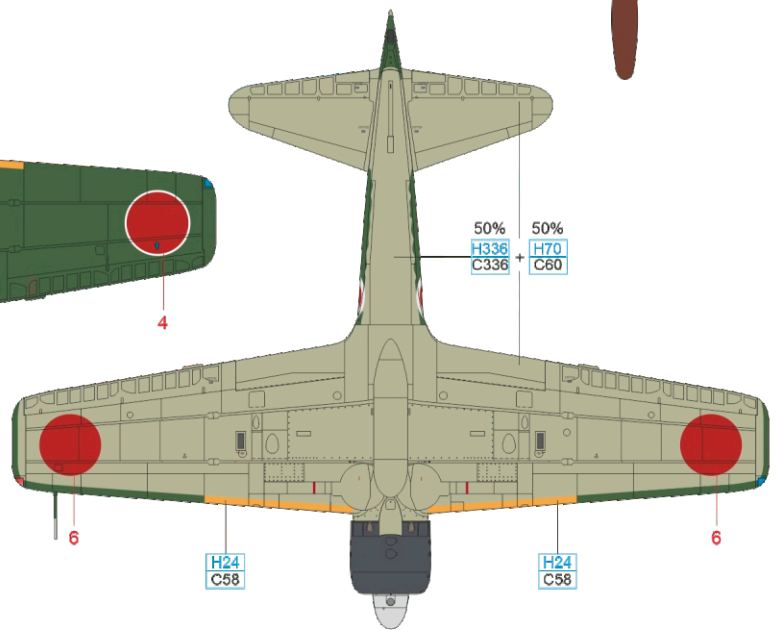
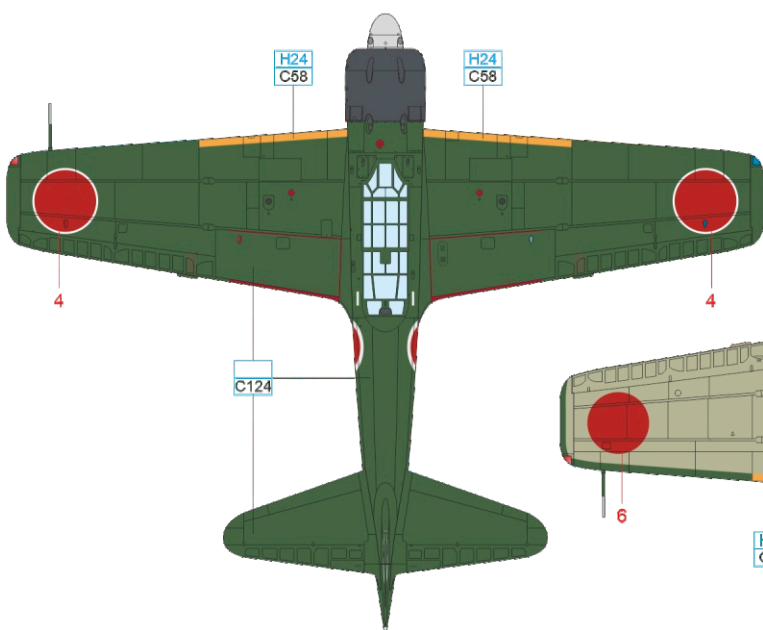
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		YELLOW	C58
HEMP	H336 C336	GRAY	H70 C60
COWLING COLOR	MMP C125 108	RED BROWN	MMP C131 115
		SUPER FINE SILVER	SM201 MMC 001

E Tsukuba Kōkūtai, Tsukuba airbase, Japan, 1944

The marking of this training unit is the Katakana character "Tsu". The dark green paint on the upper surfaces indicates that the aircraft has been overhauled. The horizontal white markings on the fuselage were probably to facilitate formation flight training. Originally a purely training Tsukuba Kōkūtai, which was established in 1938, became part of the Japanese air defence system from 1944. It engaged in combat against B-29 bombers, US Navy aircraft and long-range P-51 escorts. At the end of the war, unit was involved in the Kamikaze missions during the fighting for Okinawa as part of Operation Kikusui. Pilots who served as instructors with the unit included Ensign Kazu-o Sugino, who had 32 victories to his credit and had previously served on the aircraft carrier Zuikaku and with Kōkūtai 253. Among the airmen who joined the unit at the very end of the war was Lt.(jg) Shigeo Sugi-o. He had more than 20 victories to his credit and had also fought over Australia with the 3rd Kōkūtai.



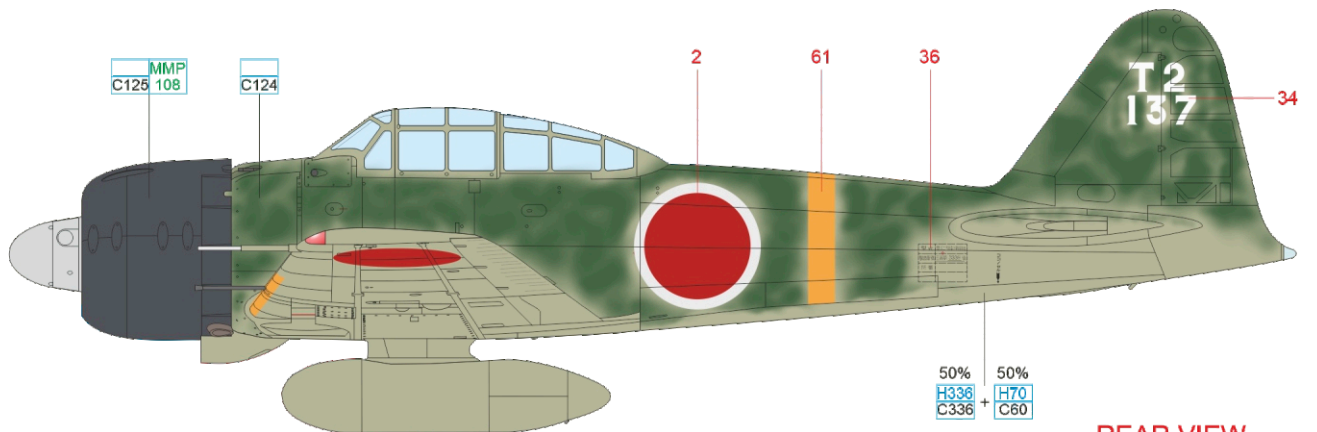
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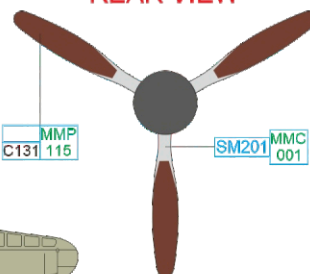
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		YELLOW	C58
HEMP	H336 C336	GRAY	H70 C60
COWLING COLOR	MMP C125 108	RED BROWN	MMP C131 115
		SUPER FINE SILVER	SM201 MMC 001

F Kōkūtai 204, Rabaul, New Britain, April 1943

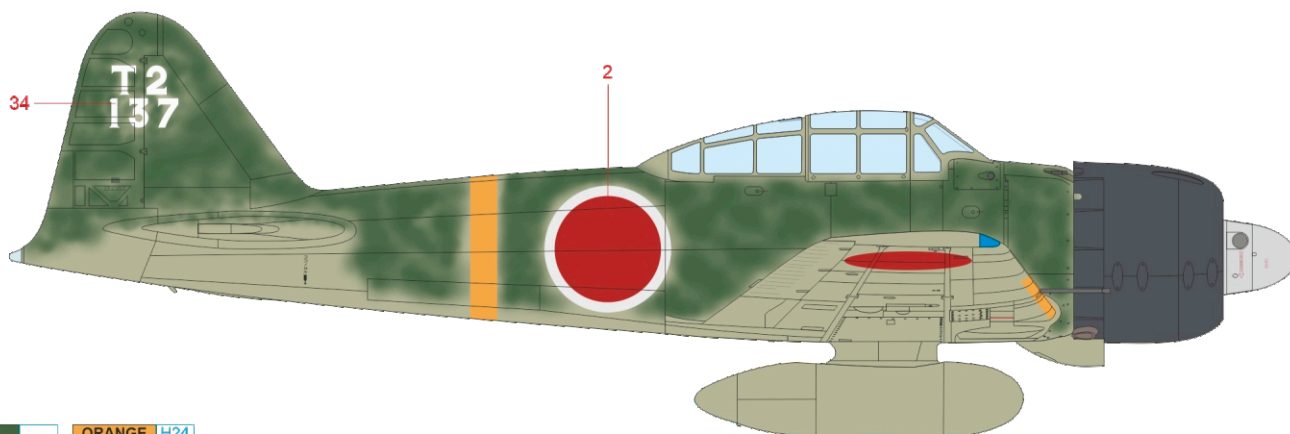
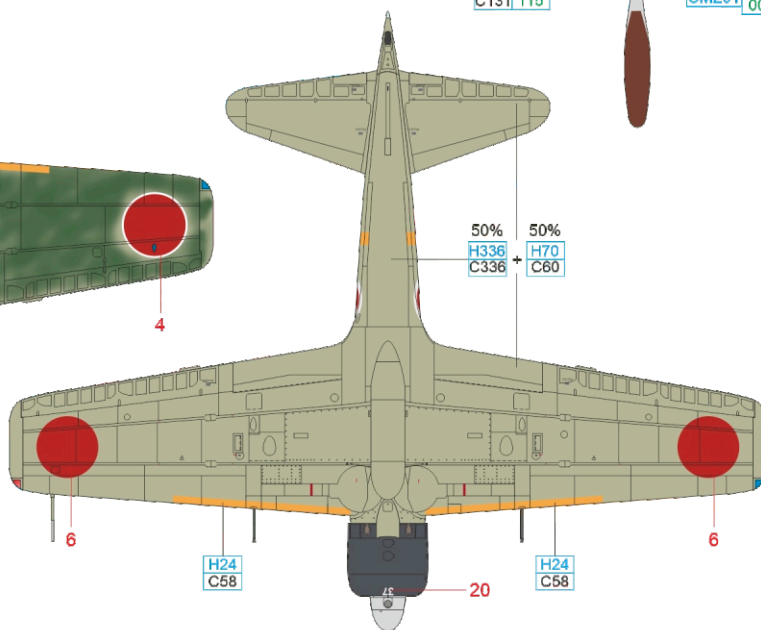
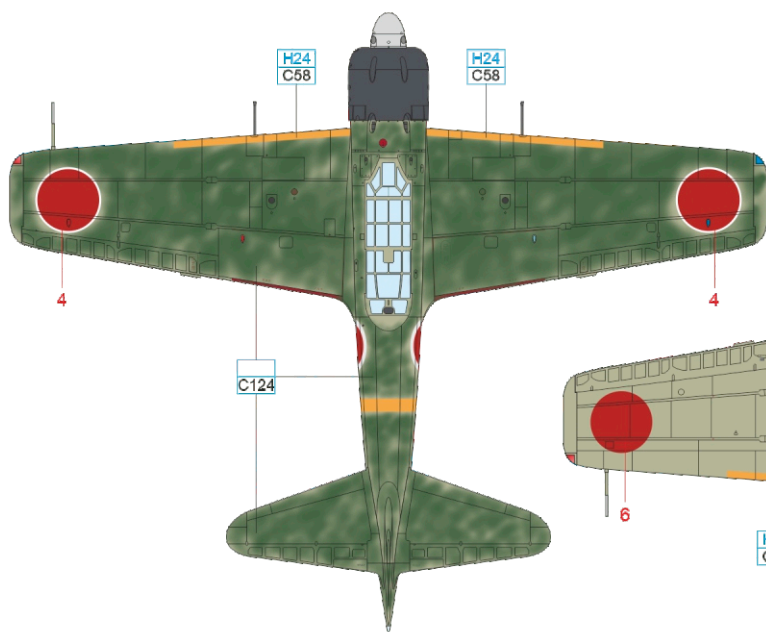
This machine wears green camouflage applied in field conditions and has radio equipment removed to reduce weight. It is also equipped with long-barrelled guns and a newer rudder trim that could be operated from the cockpit. Known aircraft of this unit that have yellow fuselage markings have identification numbers below 148. In March 1943, Lieutenant Zenjirō Miyano took over position of Hikōtaichō of this unit. He sought to modernize combat tactics and therefore introduced four-man formations to the unit instead of three-plane formations. He also considered deploying Zeros in the role of fighter-bomber with 30kg bombs under the wing. The unit was in heavy combat during the first half of 1943. In the last raid on Guadalcanal, on June 1943, thirteen Val bombers were shot down and the fighter escort from Kōkūtai 204 lost four pilots and three others were wounded. Among the dead were Lieutenant Miyano and his deputy. This left the unit without flying officers. Miyano had a total of 16 victories to his credit, was posthumously promoted to Commander, and his name was cited in the All Units Bulletin. Miyano's position was taken over the following month by Lt. Cdr. Saburō Shindō of Kōkūtai 582.



REAR VIEW

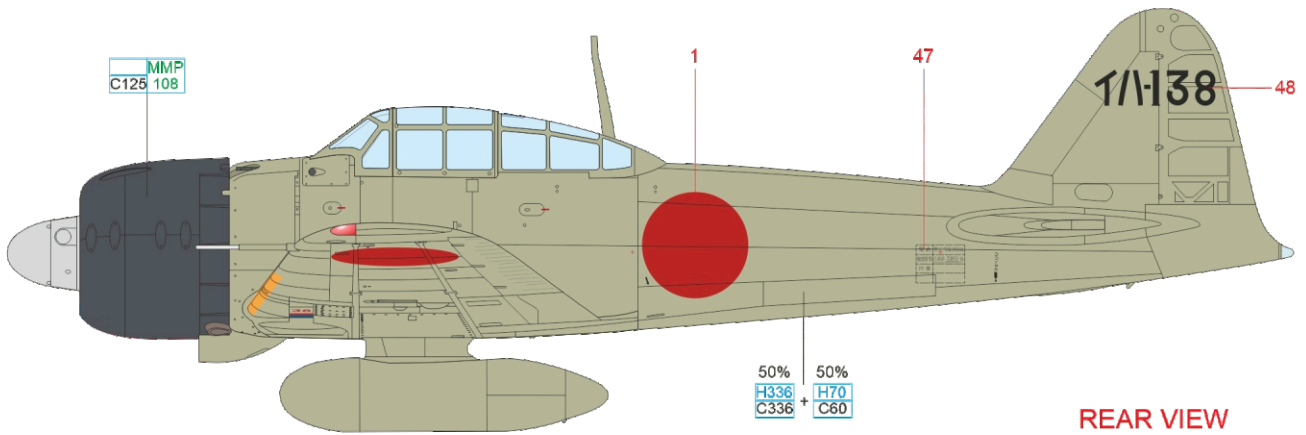


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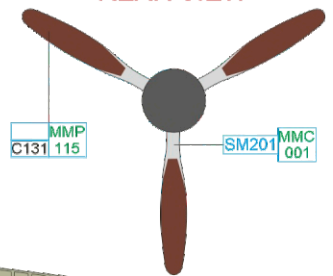


GREEN	C124	ORANGE	H24
		YELLOW	C58
HEMP	H336 C336	GRAY	H70 C60
COWLING COLOR	MMP C125 108	RED BROWN	MMP C131 115
		SUPER FINE SILVER	SM201 MMC 001

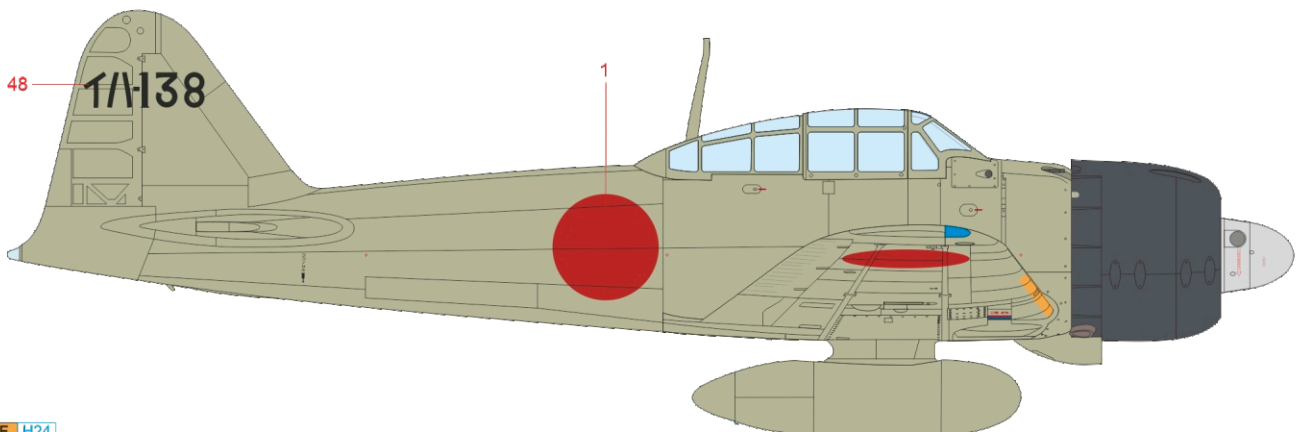
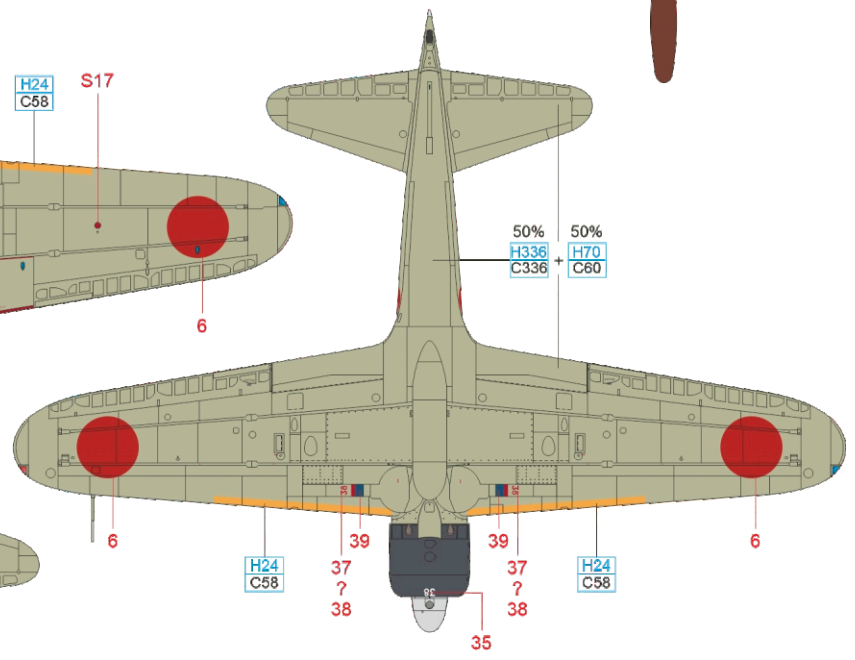
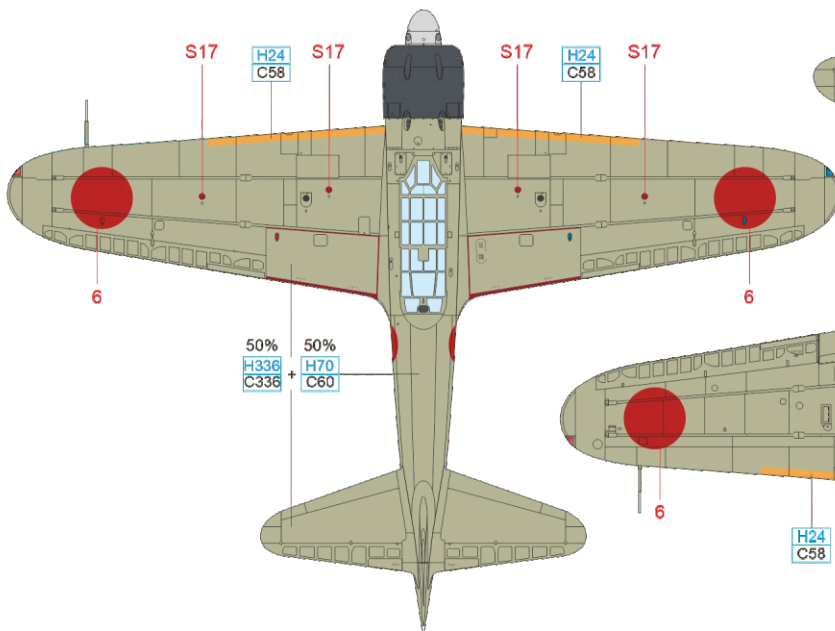
The markings of this training unit are the Katakana characters "I" and "Ha". The Iwakuni Kōkūtai was established in July 1940 and was used to train pilots for naval units operating from land bases until August 1944. It was then disbanded and re-established in March 1945. Fighter aces Akio Matsuba (18 victories), Momoto Matsumura (13 v.) or veteran of the aircraft carrier veteran Sōryū Ki-ichi Oda (9 v.) passed through its ranks as instructors. Hiroshi Shibagaki came through the unit as a student pilot, achieving thirteen victories in Rabaul with Kōkūtai 201 and 204. Another successful graduate became a Lt.(jg) Kagemitsu Matsu-o. In August 1943, he was assigned to Rabaul to Kōkūtai 253 and, with more than ten kills to his credit, became the only Naval Reserve officer to achieve ace status.



REAR VIEW



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ORANGE H24
YELLOW C58

HEMP H336 C336

GRAY H70 C60

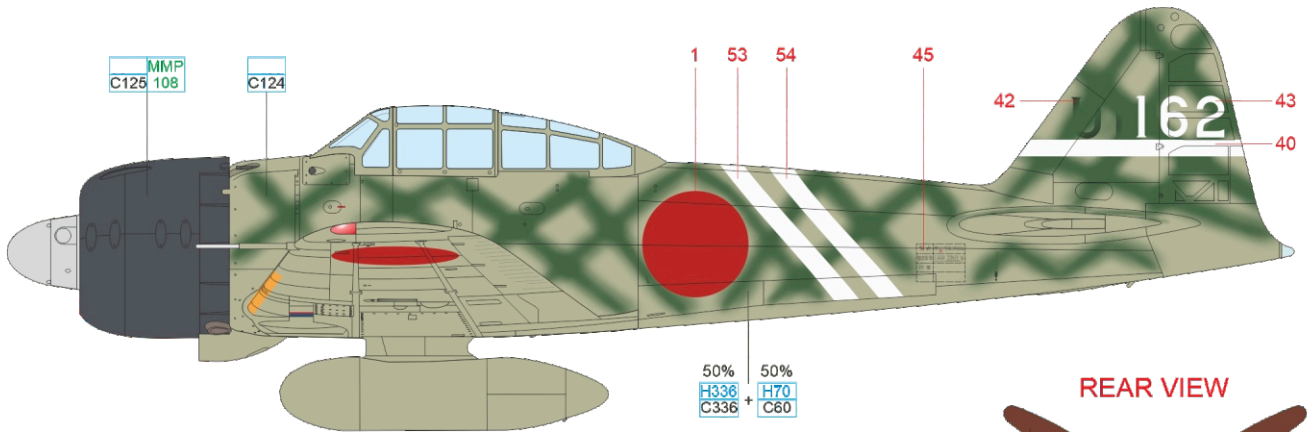
COWLING COLOR MMP C126 108

RED BROWN C131 115

SUPER FINE SILVER SM201 MMC 001

H Lt.(jg) Takeyoshi Ôno, Kōkūtai 251, Rabaul airbase, New Britain, May 1943

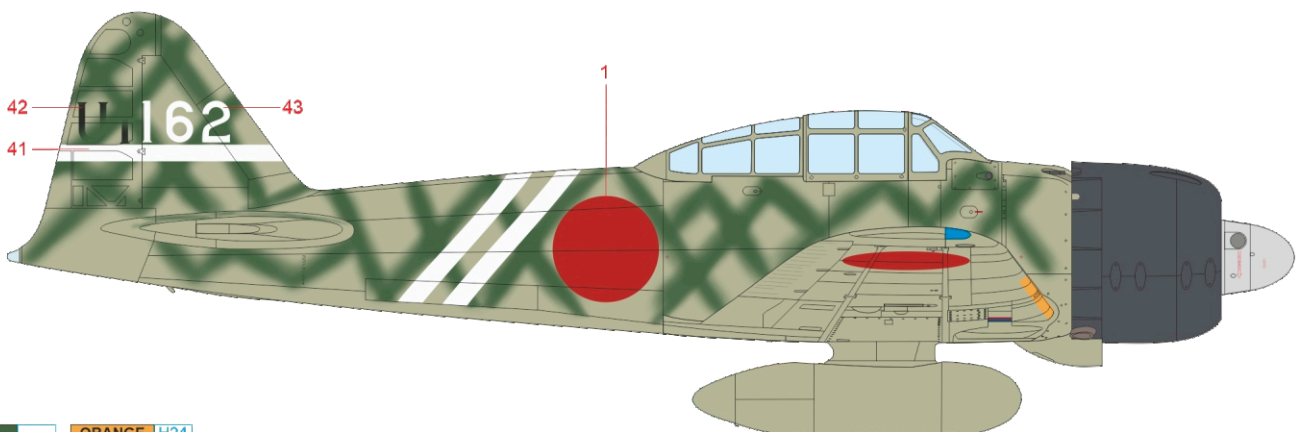
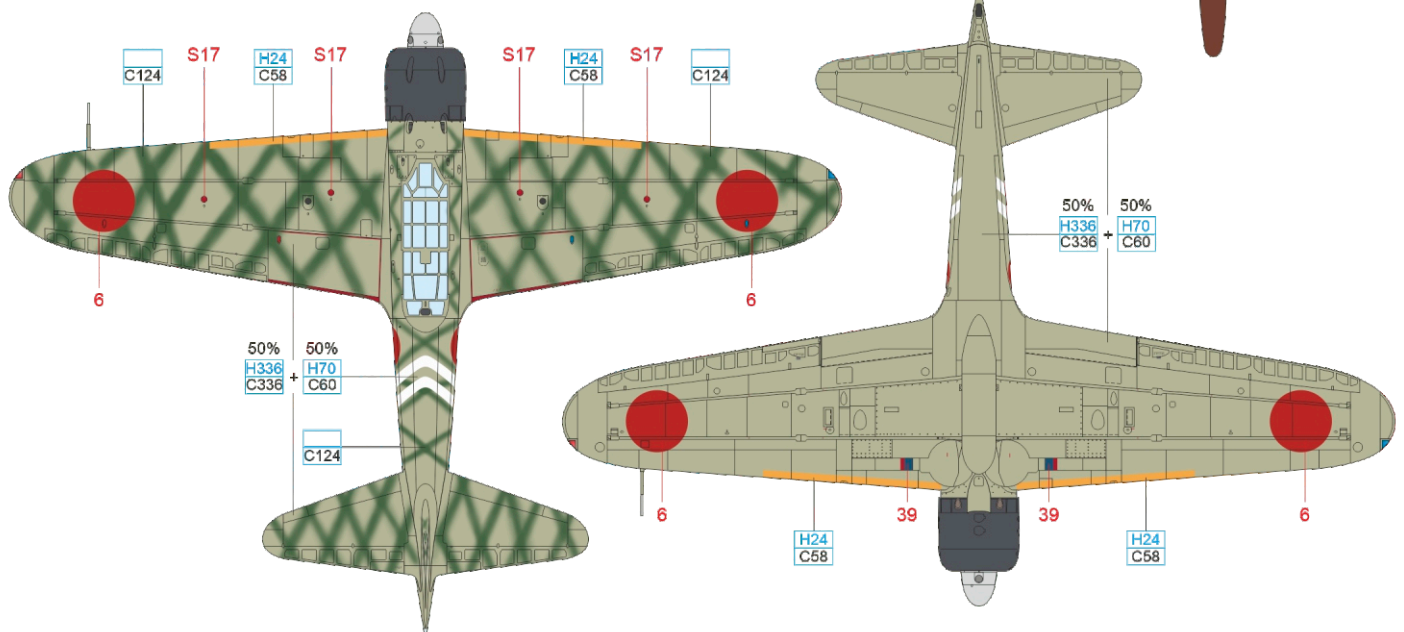
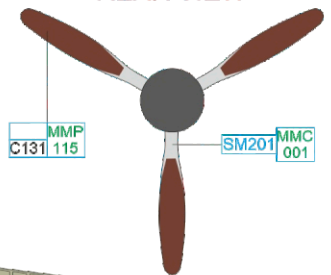
Originally manufactured with grey paint on all surfaces, the machine carries a specific design of green camouflage applied in field conditions. The green paint was probably applied with a mop or broom. Kōkūtai 251 was renamed in November 1942 from the legendary Tainan Kōkūtai fighter unit. However, due to heavy losses, it had to be withdrawn to Japan at the end of the year. When it prepared for another combat deployment to Rabaul in the spring of 1943, only 11 of its original pilots remained. However, the Allied airmen were an even tougher opponent than in 1942, and Kōkūtai 251 lost 17 aircraft during its first three combat sorties in May and June. The commander of the 1st Chūtai was Lt.(jg) Ôno. He was born in 1921 in Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture. He graduated from the 68th Naval Academy Class in 1940 and after pilot training was assigned to Tainan Kōkūtai. He achieved his first victory on August 27, 1942 at Buna in combat with a P-39 and added four more victories by the end of 1942. By the time he returned to Rabaul in May 1943, he had already been appointed as Buntaichō and often led the entire unit in combat. He achieved a total of eight victories, but was killed in aerial combat at Rendova on June 30, 1943.



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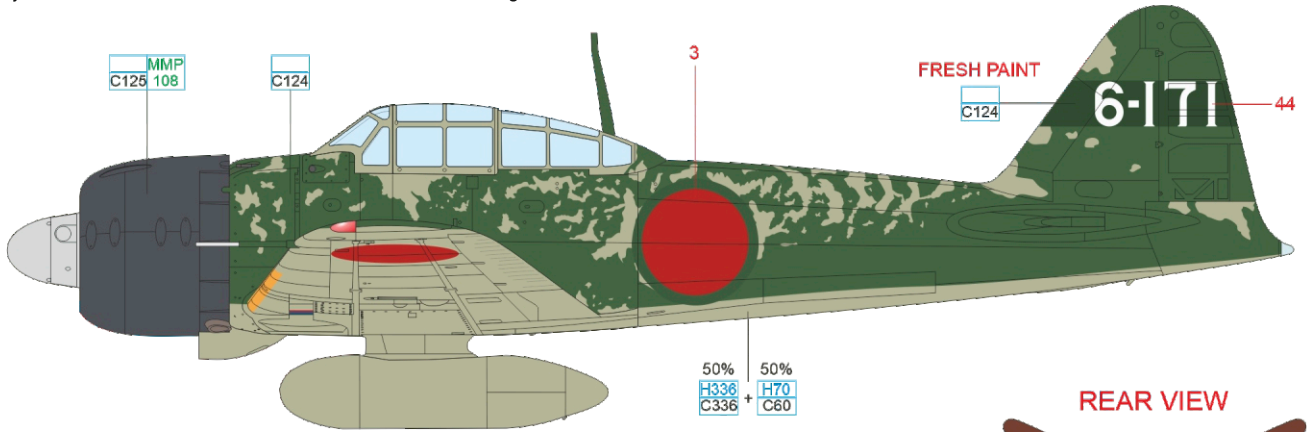
REAR VIEW



GREEN	C124	ORANGE	H24
		YELLOW	C58
HEMP	H336 C336	GRAY	H70 C60
COWLING COLOR	MMP C125 108	RED BROWN	MMP C131 115
		SUPER FINE SILVER	SM201 MMC 001

Rabauru Kōkūbuntai, Lakunai airfield, Rabaul, New Britain, second half 1943

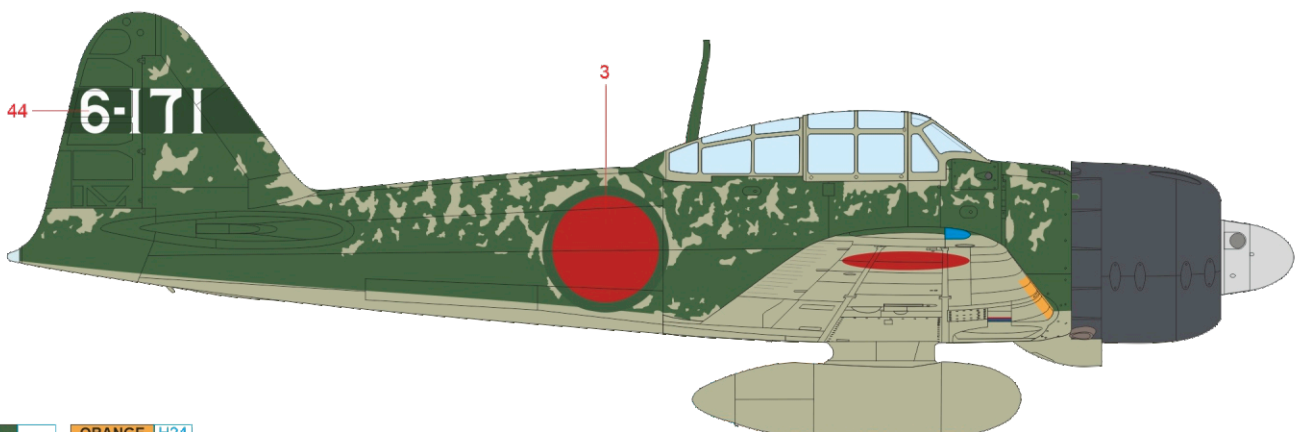
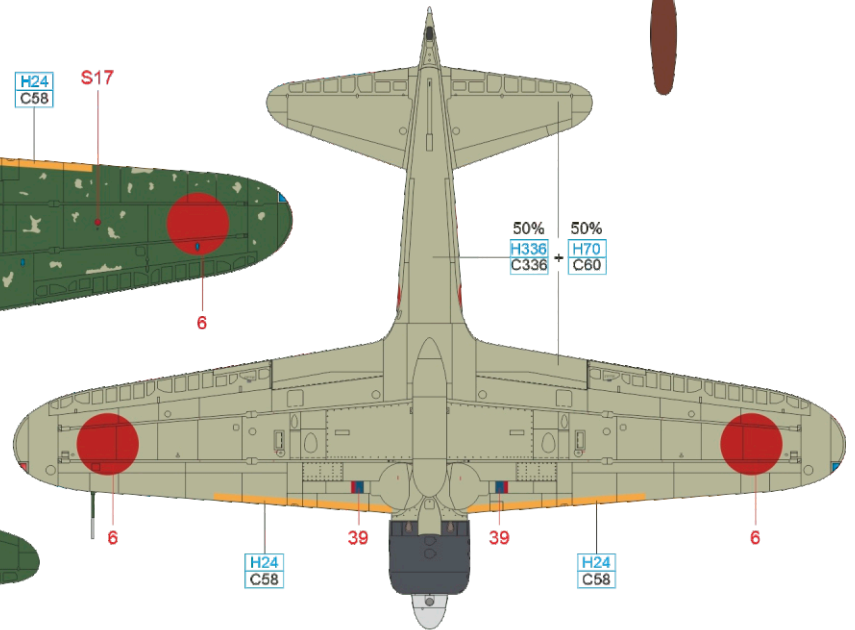
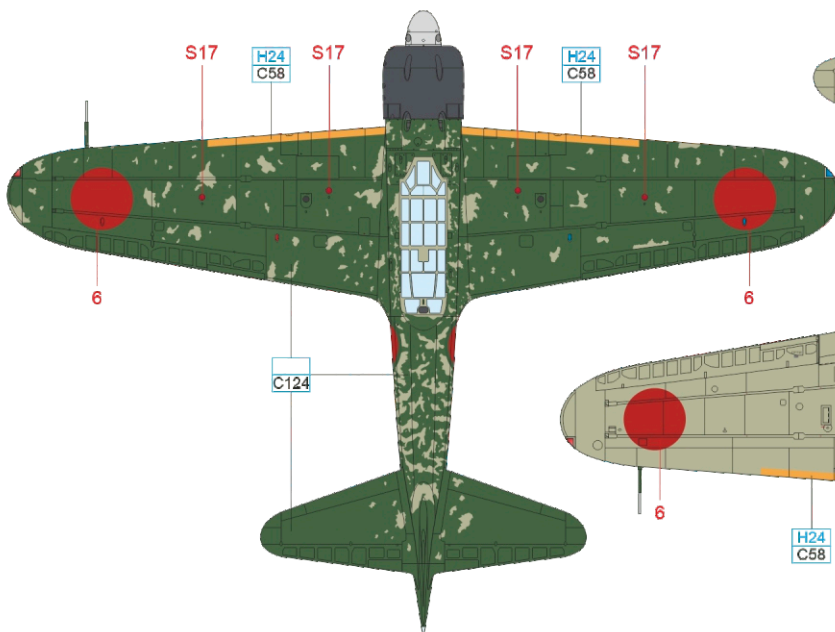
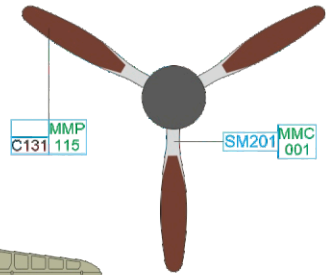
This aircraft was finalized with grey paint on all surfaces. On the combat unit level, it was supplemented with dark green paint, which had peeled off in many places during operational service. When green paint was applied in field conditions, it may not have been the only paint used for Japanese aircraft. At Rabaul it may have been paint from captured RAAF stocks, or paint intended for Japanese warships. In the second half of 1943, the markings of fighter units at Rabaul changed, and numerals ranging from 1 to 9 began to be used, the assignment of which to individual units has not yet been reliably determined. Aircraft with these markings are unofficially assigned to a combat group called Rabauru Kōkūbuntai (Rabaul Air Force). There are several theories to explain the meaning of these numerical designations. One is the assignment of numerical codes to the parts of the fighter units operating in Rabaul at the time. These were Kōkūtai 201 (code designations 1 to 3), Kōkūtai 204 (4 to 6) and Kōkūtai 253 (7 to 9). According to this theory, machine 6-171 would therefore belong to the third Buntai within Kōkūtai 204. But other explanations are also possible. There is an indication that the Zeroes filmed in January 1944 at Rabaul with code 9 on the tail surfaces belonged to Kōkūtai 204.



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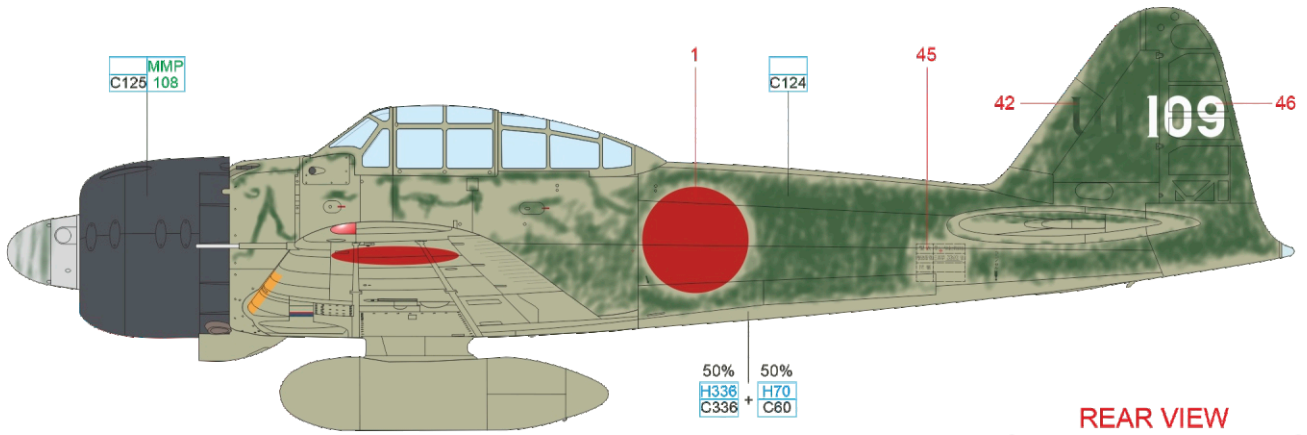
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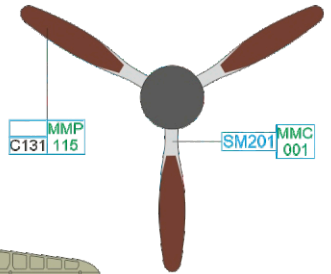
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		YELLOW	C58
HEMP	H336 C336	GRAY	H70 C60
COWLING COLOR	MMP C125 108	RED BROWN	MMP C131 115
		SUPER FINE SILVER	SM201 MMC 001

J Kōkūtai 251, Rabaul airbase, New Britain, May 1943

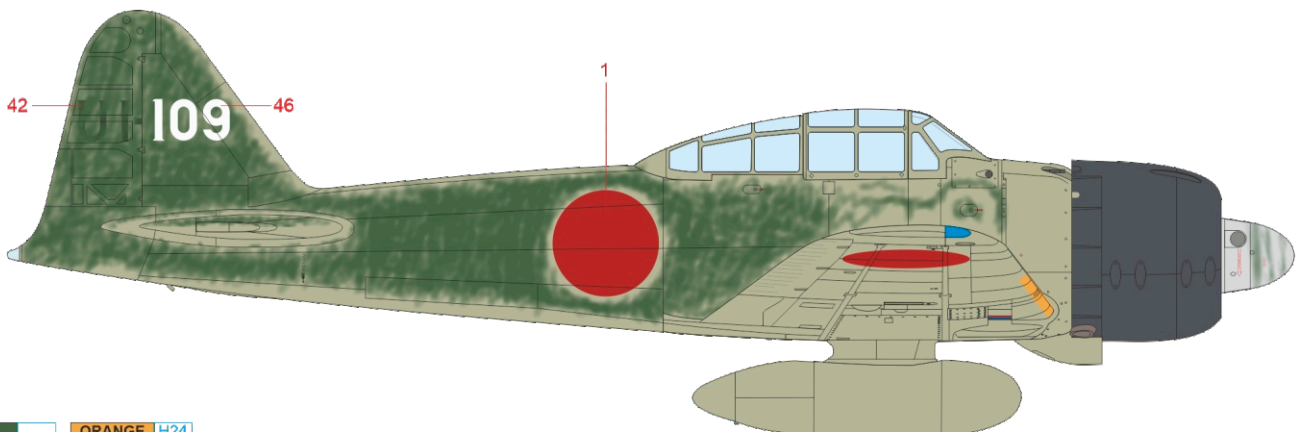
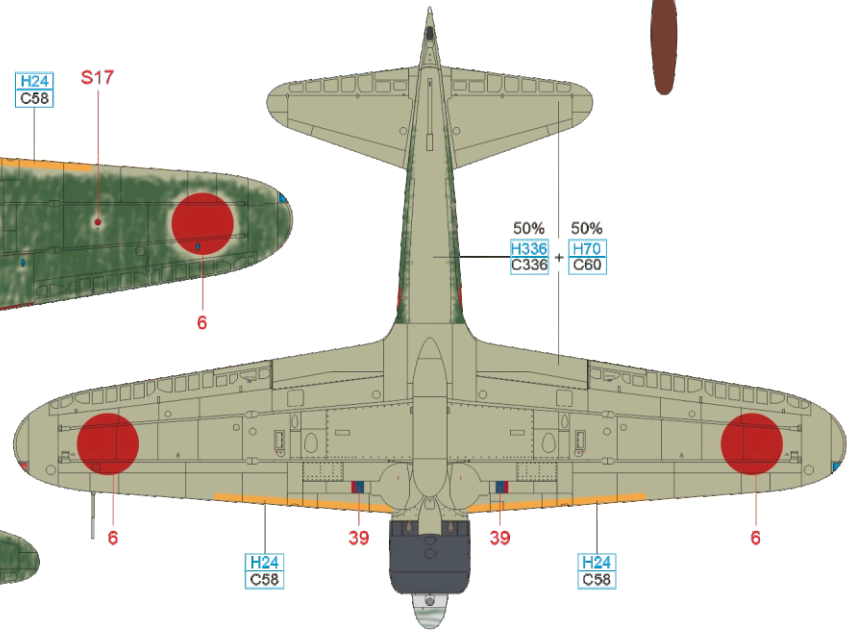
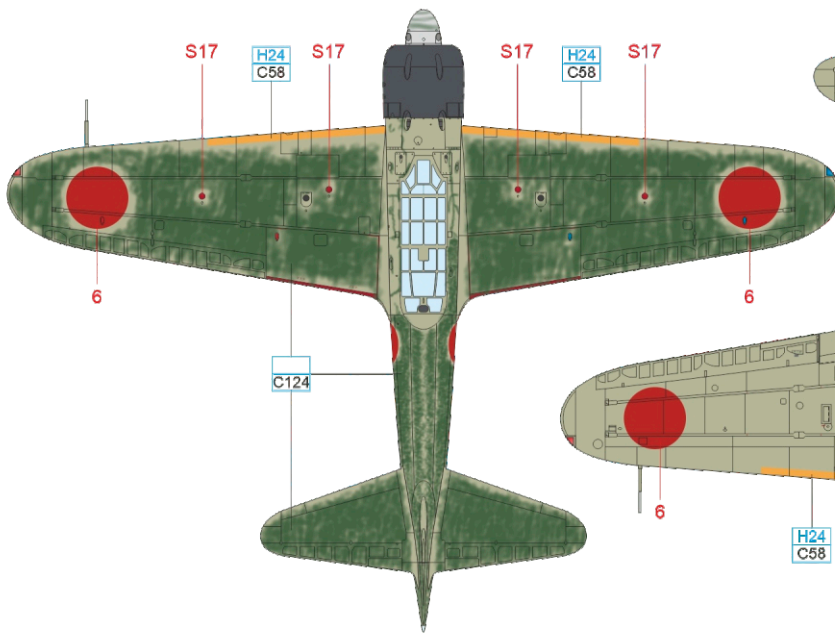
For most naval fighter units that applied green paint in field conditions, the method of painting was similar within the unit. The exception is Kōkūtai 251, which used very varied patterns of green paint. The unit designation code was U1, but this was repainted on the machines at the time of deployment to Rabaul. U1-109 was photographed on May 23, 1943 flying in a formation of six Zeros during a patrol over New Britain. The photographs were taken by war correspondent Hajime Yoshida. The U1-109 flew as the wingman of the first Shōtai leader, who was the controls of U1-105, which is incorrectly attributed to Nishizawa. Kōkūtai 251 lost a total of 34 pilots during its deployment to the Rabaul and Solomon Islands area from May to the end of August 1943. In September 1943, its status was therefore changed to a night fighter with twin-engine Irving aircraft, and its remaining Zer pilots were assigned to other units in Rabaul.



REAR VIEW



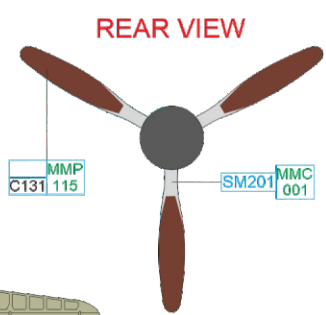
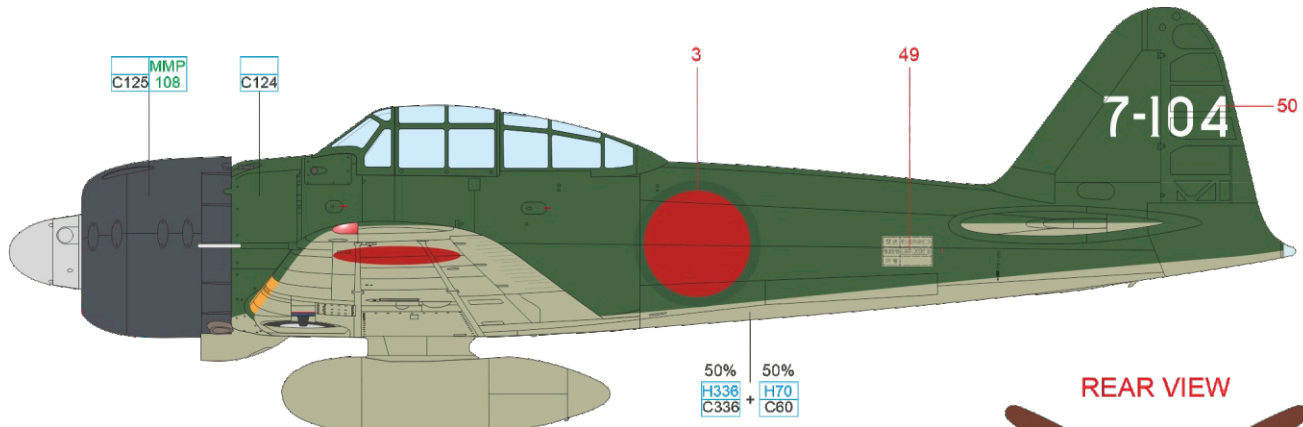
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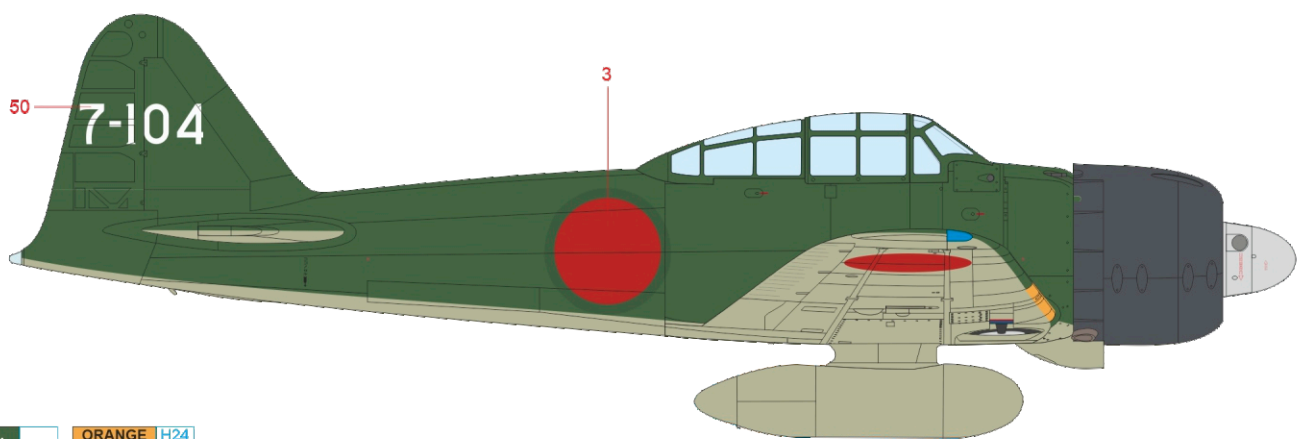
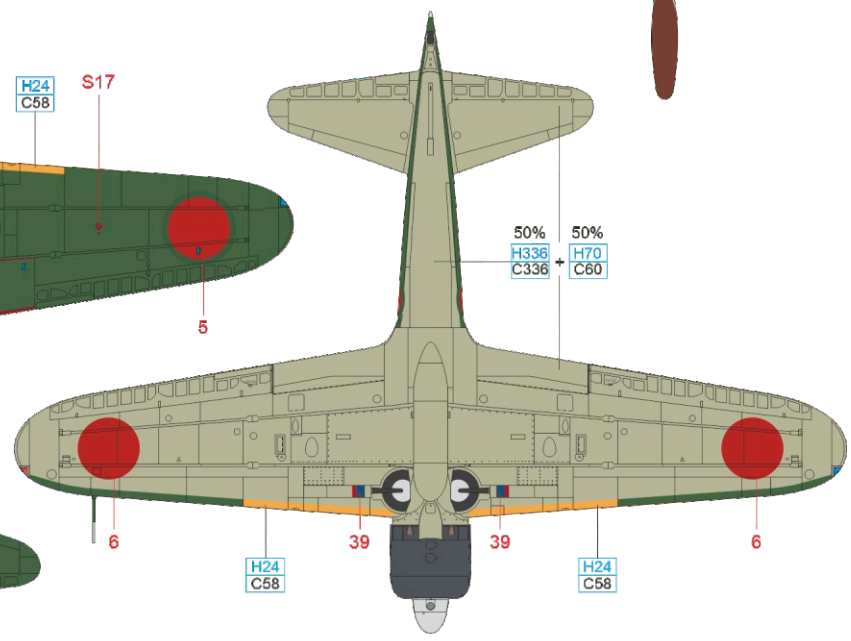
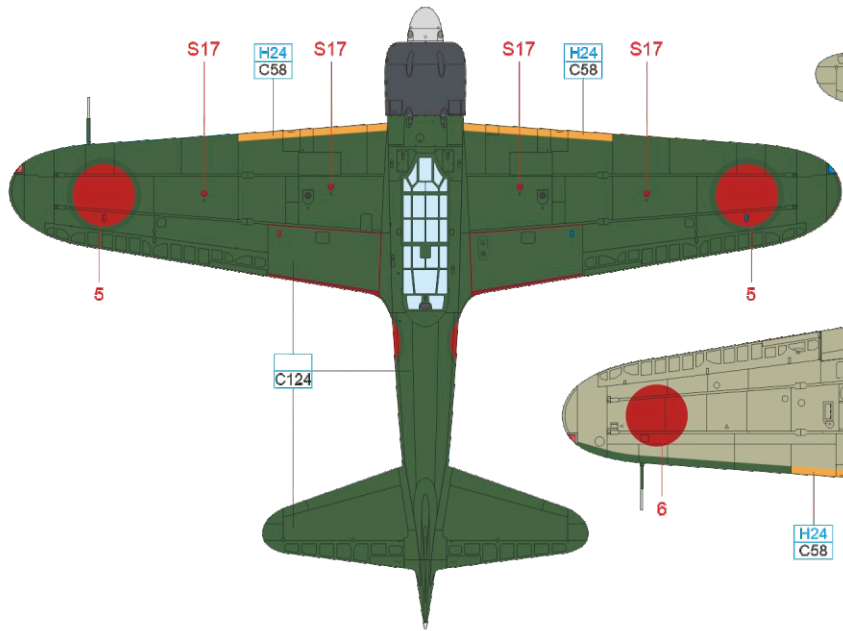
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		YELLOW	C58
HEMP	H336 C336	GRAY	H70 C60
COWLING COLOR	MMP C125 108	RED BROWN	MMP C131 115
		SUPER FINE SILVER	SM201 MMC 001

K Ensign Tetsuzō Iwamoto, probably Kōkūtai 253, Rabaul, New Britain, late 1943/early 1944

This aircraft has repainted white trim of hinomaru on the fuselage and upper surfaces. Tetsuzō Iwamoto was the most successful naval fighter ace with 14 victories from combats over China with 12th Kōkūtai. As a member of fighter unit of HIJMS Zuikaku during the Pearl Harbor attack he took part patrol the vicinity of the carriers during first wave. In 1942, he took part in battles in the Indian Ocean and Coral Sea with his plane E11-102. From the summer of 1942 he served as an instructor in Japan. From March 1943, he participated in patrolling in the Kuril Islands with Kōkūtai 281. In November he was transferred to Rabaul to Kōkūtai 204 and later to Kōkūtai 253. At that time he used machines number 102 and 104. It is possible that machine number 7-104 is his personal mount. In February 1944 he participated from Truk Atoll in the interceptions of B-24 bombers. In June 1944 he was transferred to Japan and from the autumn of that year as member of Kōkūtai 252 he he took part in battles from bases in Taiwan and the Philippines. By the end of the war, he was serving with Kōkūtai 203 and participated in the battle for Okinawa. He achieved rank Lieutenant (junior grade) and passed away in 1955. Iwamoto is credited with 80 victories, but in his war diary, there were 202 successful attacks on enemy aircraft recorded by him.



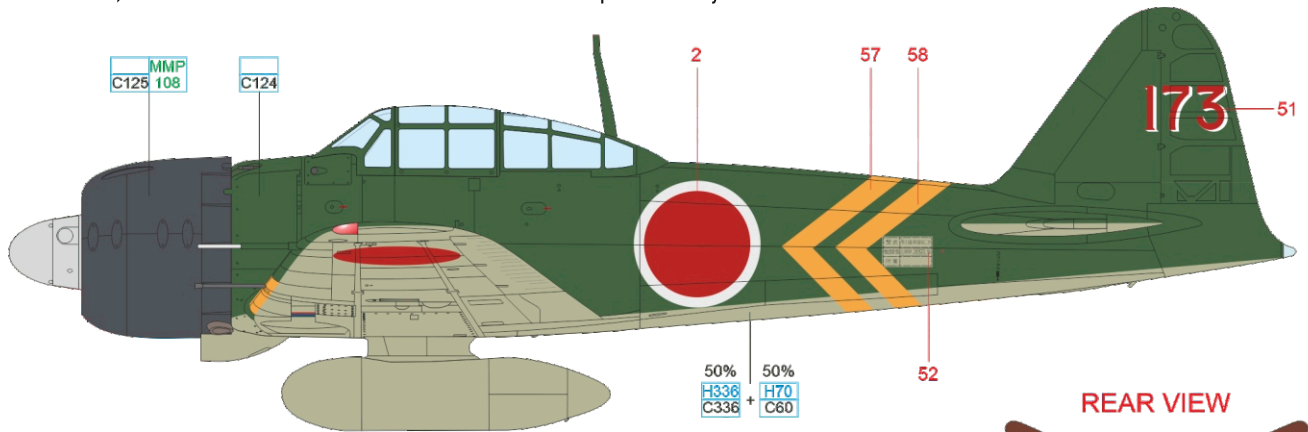
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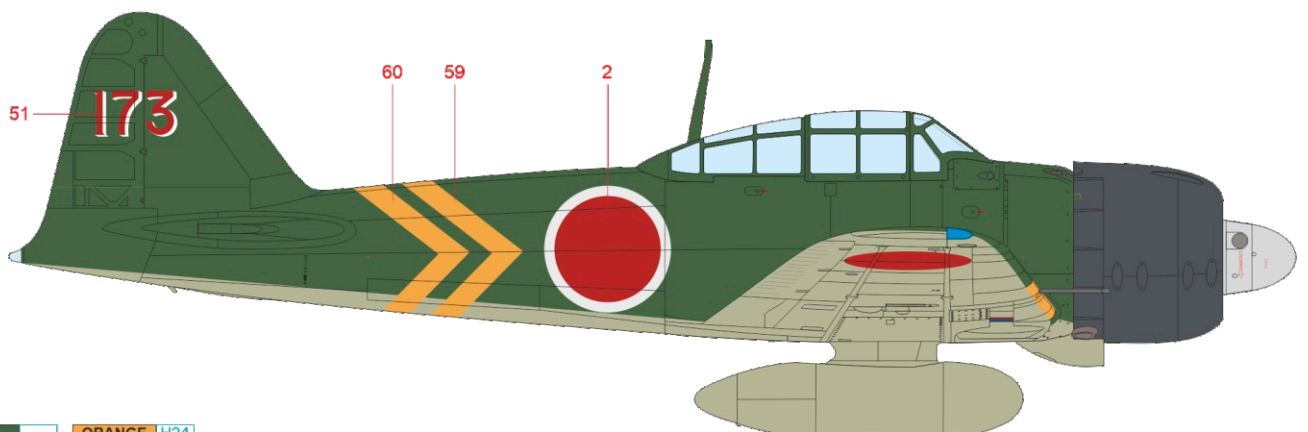
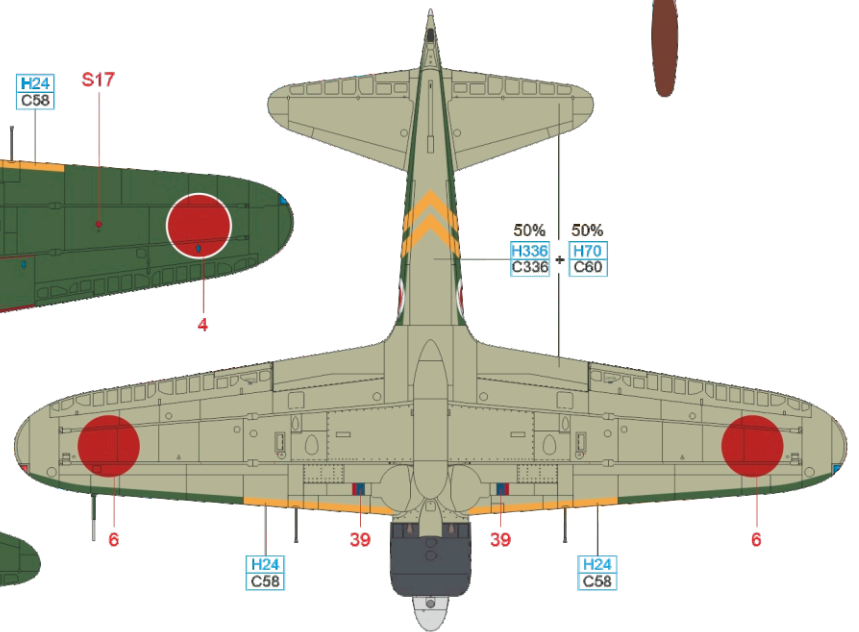
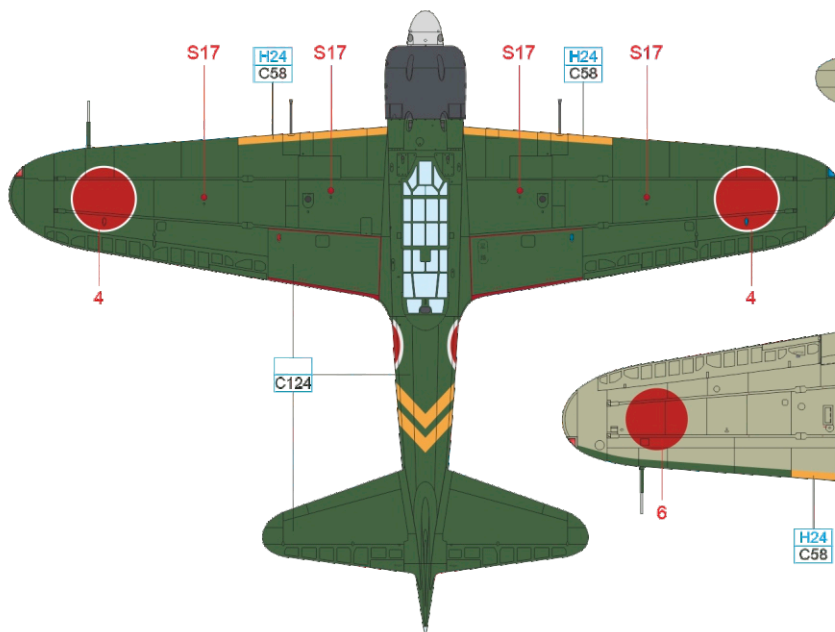
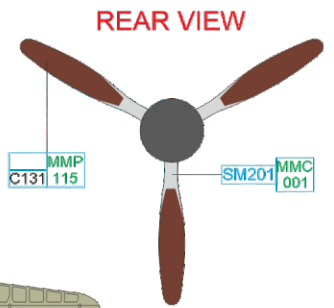
GREEN	C124	ORANGE	H24
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		SUPER FINE SILVER	SM201 MMC 001

Lt. Cdr. Saburō Shindō, Kōkūtai 582, Buin airfield, Bougainville Island, June 1943

This plane with factory applied green camouflage and long cannon barrels was personal mount of Lt. Cdr. Shindō. He was born in 1911 and graduated from the Naval Academy in 1929. He was assigned to the Ōmura Kōkūtai in 1935 and a year later went to the aircraft carrier Kaga. In 1940, he served in China with the 12th Kōkūtai during combat trials of the A6M2 fighter. Under his command, the first combat engagement occurred on September 13, resulting in 27 victories without loss. In November 1940, Shindō was transferred to the 14th Kōkūtai in Hanoi. From April to December 1941 he was the Buntaichō of the Akagi fighters, but had to be hospitalized after the attack on Pearl Harbor. During the Pearl Harbor attack Shindō led fighter escort of thirty-six Zeros in the second wave. After recovering, he was appointed commander of Tokushima Kōkūtai in April 1942. From November 1942, as Hikōtaichō at Kōkūtai 582, he was involved in the fighting over Guadalcanal. From July 1943, he was Hikōtaichō with the Kōkūtai 204 in the same area. In late 1943 and early 1944, he led fighters of the aircraft carrier Ryūhō and later served with Kōkūtai 653 and 203 in the defense of Taiwan, the Philippines, and Japan. At the end of the war, he was Hikōtaichō at Tsukuba Kōkūtai. Shindō-san passed away in 2000.



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GREEN	C124	ORANGE	H24
		YELLOW	C58
HEMP	H336 C336	GRAY	H70 C60
COWLING COLOR	MMP C125 108	RED BROWN	MMP C131 115
		SUPER FINE SILVER	SM201 MMC 001

SAMURAI

STENCILING POSITIONS

INSTRUCTIONS APPLY TO BOTH TYPES

