

DUAL COMBO 1/48



WILDE SAU Episode Two: Saudämmerung

INSTRUCTION SHEET

Limited Edition

11148-NAVI

WILDE SAU Episode Two: Saudämmerung

Over the first half of 1942, the RAF conducted three large raids, dubbed 'Thousand-bomber raids' against German industrial cities during Operation Arabian Nights. The first raid, coded Operation Millennium, was conducted by 1,047 bombers over a ninety-minute span on the night of the May 30 and 31, 1942. They carried some 1,480 tons of bombs, with about a third of them being incendiaries. Losses incurred by the RAF amounted to 41 bombers, which was to just under 4 % of the force, which is a value that Bomber Command would consider acceptable given the amount of damage inflicted. The latter aspect was significant, leaving behind the destruction of 3,330 structures, 2090 heavily damaged, with 7,420 lightly damaged. Loss of life was high, with 486 casualties and 5,027 injuries.

The second 'Thousand-bomber raid' was conducted by RAF Bomber Command two days later, on the night of the June 1 and 2, 1942, when 960 bombers attacked Essen. The results of this raid were much less favorable due to inclement weather conditions. Losses were put at 31 aircraft (3.24 %). The third raid under Operation Arabian Nights saw Bremen being targeted on the night of the June 25 and 26 by another 960-bomber force, with 5 % of them being lost in the process, corresponding to 48 aircraft. This raid saw the use of heavy, two-ton bombs, one of which literally dismantled one of the assembly halls of Focke-Wulf. Although only some 700 of the bombers managed to get over the primary target, this raid was deemed relatively successful.

On the limit of possible

Within the scope of this offensive campaign, which fell under British Air Ministry Directive No. 5 from February 14, 1942, RAF Bomber Command conducted several smaller raids. They were flown prior to and after the described thousand plane raids and included a well-known raid against Pilsen on the night of the April 23 and 24, 1942. Raids with such a high concentration of force as were seen during Operation Arabian Nights, could not be sustained by the RAF, because they required the services of virtually every available aircraft, including those of Coastal Command and training units. Notably, the training units that were pressed into service were ineffective and suffered high losses. For example, No. 91 (OTU) Group lost 23 of its 198 aircraft in the raid on Bremen, close to 12 %. In any case, Bomber Command diligently embarked on a mission to form new squadrons equipped with the most modern assets, namely the Stirling, Halifax and especially the Lancaster, and to develop new tactical protocols. In the spring of 1943, Bomber Command had around 65 squadrons equipped with heavy bombers, ready to ply their trade against Germany in a continuation of the night bombing campaign against her.

Night inferno

Night fighter units of the Luftwaffe under these new conditions were inadequate in terms of their numbers and also their effectiveness. This became abundantly clear over the course of the week that saw raids against Hamburg under Operation Gomorrah, initiated on the night of July 24, 1943, with 791 bombes. This raid was conducted chiefly by Lancaster bombers that dropped 2,400 tons of bombs for the loss of only twelve aircraft. Smaller USAAF raids followed on the July 25 and 26, and just before midnight on July 27, there was a raid by 729 Lancaster and Halifax bombers of the RAF. This raid also dropped some 2,400 tons of bombs on the city, a large number of which were M69 incendiary bombs that turned the centre of the city into a fiery hell. Further raids with fewer losses were conducted on the night of the July 29 and 30 and the August 2 and 3. The loss of life was monumental, and reportedly some 42,500 people lost their lives, the majority of them civilians. The event produced the first known firestorm, with flames reaching into the air several kilometers. The effectiveness of countering this raid was woefully inadequate partly because of, among other factors, the use of Window metal strips which severely limited the functionality of both ground and airborne radar systems. The result of the effect of the raid and the resulting ineffectiveness in countering it, as well as the firestorm, was that the door was opened to implementing new concepts of night fighting. This involved the use of traditional day fighters in free-roaming intercepts. The driving force behind this concept was the very successful and highly decorated bomber pilot, Oberst Hans-Joachim Herrmann, nicknamed Hajo Herrmann. He had proposed trying out this concept as early as the end of 1942. He also personally tested this concept in practical terms in the spring of 1943 and received the go-ahead to form an evaluation unit.

Kommando Herrmann

Stab/Versuchskommando Herrmann was officially activated on June 26, 1943 at Deelen. The unit was composed of experienced pilots, largely of former transport and bomber pilots with expertise in blind flying techniques. The aircraft were borrowed from JG 1 and JG 11. Herrmann's unit was based at Bonn-Hangelar and received its baptism of fire during a raid on Cologne on the night of the July 3 and 4, 1943. Herrmann's pilots brought down ten British aircraft for the loss of one of their own. Herrmann himself was credited with one kill. After the use of Window over Hamburg, they began to be considered the only effective combat element at the disposal of the Luftwaffe. The tactic, that involved interception without the use of ground control or airborne radar, where the fighters roamed at will and wreaked havoc among enemy bombers in any given operational area, much like wild boars, was dubbed 'Wilde Sau' (Wild Boar).

The evaluation unit's designation was changed to Jagdgruppe Herrmann in July 1943, and it was integrated into II./JG 1. I./JG 300 was activated in August 1943. In the first phase of its existence, the unit shared aircraft with day fighter units II./JG 11 and III./JG 11. Another two units, JG 301 and JG 302, were established later, during the fall of 1943, but the shortage of new aircraft dictated that only one Gruppe of each of these Jagdgeschwader units had their own equipment. The remaining groups (Gruppe), dubbed 'Aufsitzer', or, less flatteringly, 'Boar's Ass', were forced to continue to rely on borrowed aircraft from day fighter units. All three Wilde Sau units, the JG 300, 301 and 302, were, under Herrmann's leadership, integrated into the 30. Jagddivision and were subordinate to Luftwaffebefehlshaber Mitte.

Blind night predators

Kat. No. 11148

The Bf 109G-5 and G-6 fighters tasked with Wilde Sau missions carried minimal modifications for night flying. Pilots had to be specialized in blind flying and in firing at targets at night. To prevent being blinded by exhaust

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flames at night, the aircraft had visor plates, called Blendschutzleiste, mounted over the exhaust stubs on both sides of the engine cowl. In the vicinity of the bomber targets, typically a burning agglomeration, silhouettes of the attacking bombers were discernible, but the high level of contrast above these areas, the exploding shells of the anti-aircraft guns, searchlight beams, the glare of the fires below reflecting off clouds, smoke, and other effects, easily led to pilot disorientation. Important flight instruments were doubled and placed on a blind flying panel, ensuring important flight data in case of damage to the aircraft. Navigation and landing lights were usually left off, as were landing strip lights. Take-offs and landings were usually carried out in total darkness, and only in cases of emergency, there would be a light placed at the end of the runway, pointing straight up, that would indicate to a pilot the axis of the runway. The aircraft carried standard radio equipment, augmented by a FuG 16ZY navigation system, using directional beams to aid in navigating, and the FuG 25a IFF system. For acoustic identification of friendly aircraft, first and foremost among localized counter-air defensive units, exhaust mounted sirens were installed, called Eberspächer. This emitted a distinctive and easily identifiable tone. As an aid to visual identification, an infrared light was installed on the bottom surface of the wing, and in cases of emergency, a flare could be fired out from the cockpit.

Fuel carried by the Bf 109G-6, under normal conditions, allowed for around eighty minutes of flight time, fifteen of which were generally used up in reaching operational altitudes. A 300 litre drop tank increased this by an hour at cruising speed. Weapons generally included two MG 131 13mm machine guns with 300 rounds per gun, one MG 151/20 20mm cannon firing through the propeller hub, and two such weapons mounted inside of gondolas below the wings, each with 200 rounds. Often, the head armor was removed to save weight, as it was considered largely useless for night fighting. According to pilot memoirs, defensive fire from the bombers was seldom effective, and the gunners rarely were able to train their weapons on the attacking fighters under difficult lighting conditions as described earlier. In cases of hits to the aircraft or mechanical issues that rendered the aircraft unflyable, the pilots preferred to bail out rather than belly-land, because emergency landings at night were extremely difficult.

Mosquito chasers

At the end of summer, 1944, as a reaction to destructive raids conducted by De Havilland Mosquito light bombers of the Light Night Strike Force RAF, a specialized anti-Mosquito unit was formed, 10.(N)/JG 300, also called 'Mosquito Staffel', under the leadership of Karl Mitterdorfer. The unit flew out of Jüterbog and was tasked with intercepting lone Mosquitos bombing Berlin and other fast enemy aircraft attacking by night. Mosquito Staffel was equipped with the new high-performance Bf 109G-14/AS, built by Messerschmitt at Regensburg. Its high-performance characteristics came from its power plant, the DB 605D, coupled with the MW50 water injection system, boosting power output for temporary emergency situations. Thanks to its high maximum speed at high altitude, around 10,000 m, the Bf 109G-14/AS had at the very least, a theoretical chance of intercepting successfully the fast Mosquito, flying at these heights. Vectoring to the target was done through a modification to the Wilde Sau method, utilizing a hybrid of ground control, guidance using directional beams and ground--based searchlights, which brought some success.

Paradoxically, Mosquito Staffel became the last Wilde Sau unit operating at night in the fall of 1944. The remaining units were, under increasing pressure from the Allied bombing offensive, incorporated into the Defense of the Reich system and used in daytime intercepts of American bombers. As such, Individual Staffels of JG 300 and JG 301, equipped with the Bf 109G-14/AS and later (from December 1944), the Bf 109G-10, were used as cover for Fw 190A-8/R2 heavy fighters in September 1944. Combat with escorting fighters, that from the fall were almost exclusively thoroughbred P-51D Mustangs, which outclassed the Bf 109G-14/AS in just about every respect, caused Wilde Sau units heavy and increasingly irreplaceable losses. It was not even so much about the quality of individual aircraft as it was about other, subpar elements. For example, anti-g pants worn by fighter pilots of the USAAF were a big advantage. The same could be said of the new K-14 gyroscopic gunsight.

Inevitable end

Perhaps just as important was the high standard of training given to new Allied pilots and the corresponding drop in the training received by young German pilots. A large role was played by combat tactics. An offensive use of American fighters was where a part of the escort aircraft would operate ahead of its main force to flush out any enemy fighters from the area, and to blockade German airfields and their supply lines. This proved very hard on the Luftwaffe.

Further heavy losses were incurred by the Luftwaffe in January 1945, when just on the January 14 alone, JG 300 lost half of its combat ready aircraft. To top it off, the Soviet offensive began at the same time with the Vistula-Oder operation, during which Soviet forces advanced quickly through Silesia, on the right banks of the Oder. By the January 27, the Oder was crossed at Kostrzyn, and a bridge was established to the left bank. In an effort to halt the Soviet advance, elements of JG 300 and JG 301 were committed to the area, engaging ground attack aircraft and fighters of the VVS from the end of January and into February. They performed ground attack missions against the Soviet units, a mission much different from the one Wilde Sau units were originally formed for.

In March, heavy losses caused the disbandment of I. Gruppe JG 300, which at the time was down to fifteen combat-capable aircraft. Some pilots of the unit were invited by the founder of Wilde Sau, Hajo Herrmann, to join Sonderkommando Elbe, that was developing taran tactics that were nothing short of suicide, involving the ramming of incoming heavy bombers. A portion of the pilots were converted onto the jet powered Me 262 Schwalbe and were later integrated into units flying the type, such as Kommando Stamp and JG 7. The rest of the pilots and aircraft were integrated into III. and IV./JG 300, that were transferred to the Western Front in the area of southern Germany and from where they were gradually retreating eastwards.

By the beginning of May, they found themselves on their former home field of Reichenhall-Berchtesgaden in Ainring, on the German side of the German-Austrian border, some three kilometers west of Salzburg. Here, they received an order on May 3 to form an operational unit designated Jagdgruppe 300 Ainring, and to move through České Budějovice to Prague. At least a section of Jagdgruppe 300 managed to reach Prague immediately prior to the Prague Uprising, and with that, somewhat paradoxically, went from the relative safe of Ainring and the American area of operations to the extremely dangerous trap of the insurgent Prague and the Soviet sphere of influence.

Some of the pilots attempted to evade capture by the Soviets by fleeing to the west, but a large number perished in the trap. Mass of aircraft wrecks of Jagdgruppe 300 have been documented in photographs obtained after the end of the war scattered around Prague airfields. Photographs taken around the same time on west German airfields show wrecks of JG 301 aircraft.

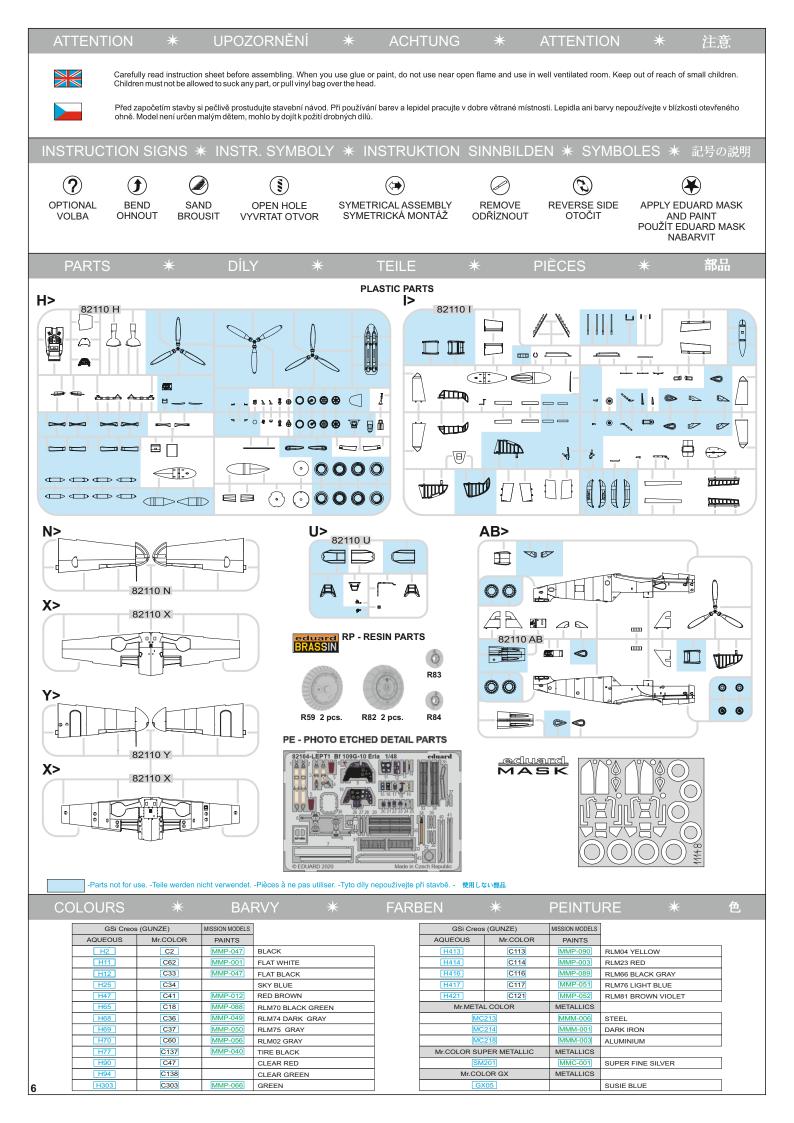
The last field of operation for JG 300 was the new base at Žatec. All the remaining Me 262A Schwalbes from JG 7 transferred to this field on May 7 and flew ground attack missions against Soviet columns advancing from Dresden to Most. The last kill and likely the last combat sortie undertaken by JG 300 was conducted by Uffz. Eugen Mayer from Zatec base at 1000 hours on May 8. He took off against a lone Pe-2 bomber, which he shot down near the Žatec field. In the afternoon, the remaining aircraft were sabotaged and the remaining pilots and groundcrews began an exodus to Cheb, where the remains of the unit surrendered to the Americans.

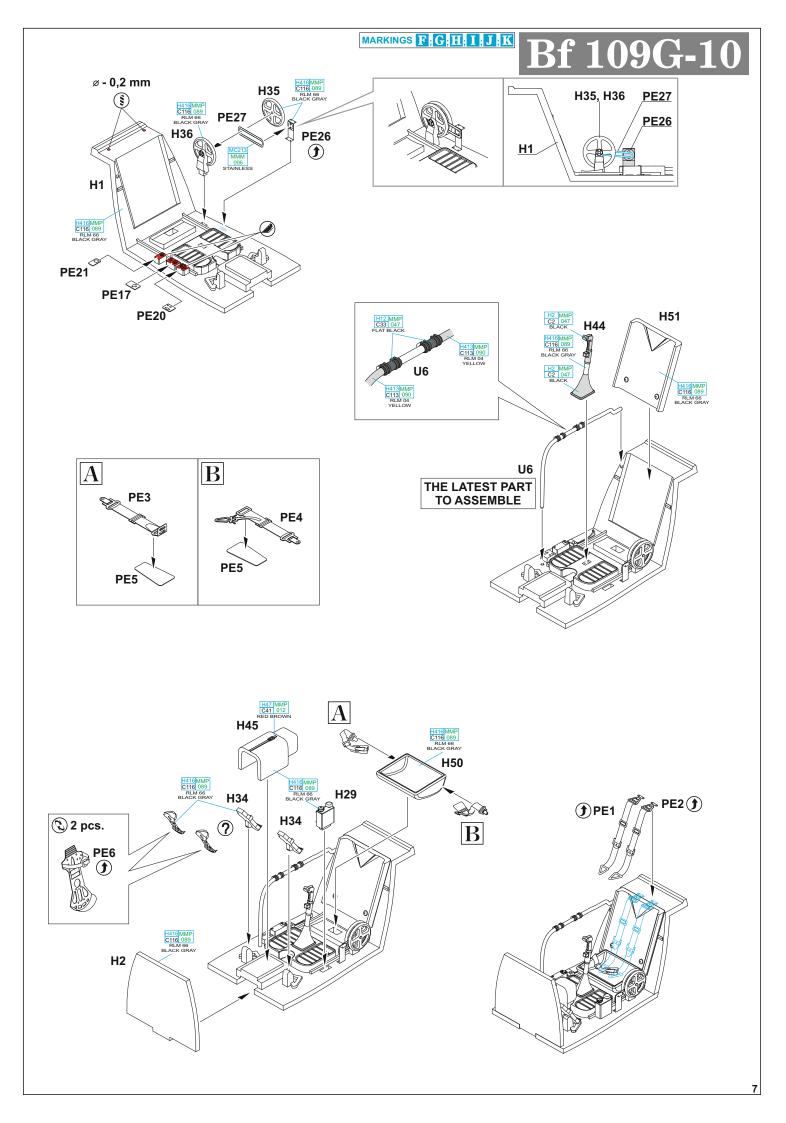
A few words about the colors

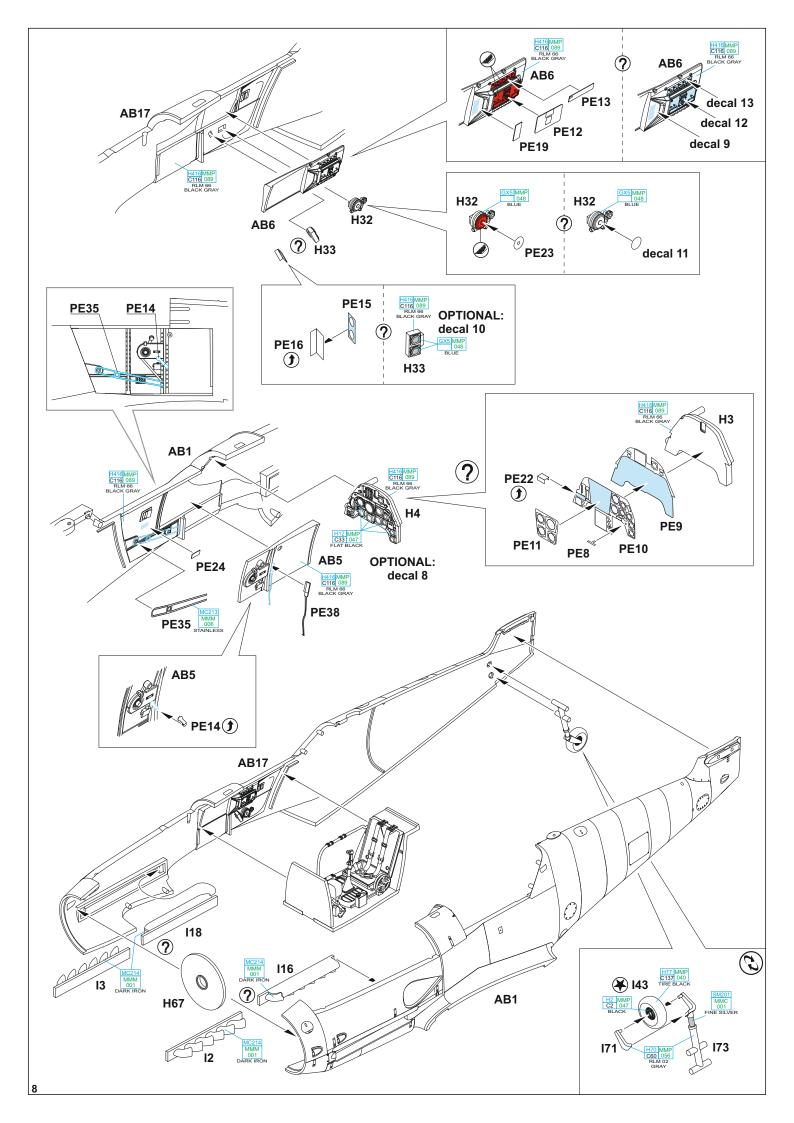
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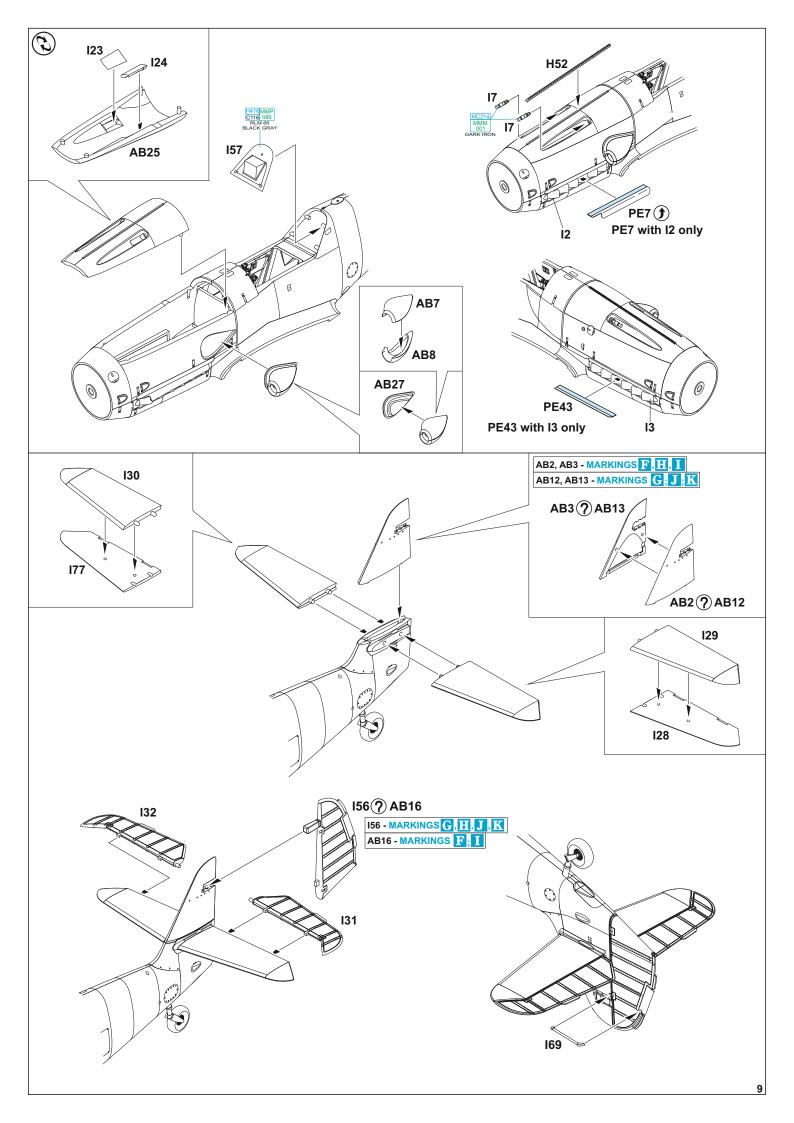
A final word on the camouflage schemes depicted in the profiles of this kit. Schemes of later Bf 109Gs are interpreted in different ways by different sources. Because there are inconsistencies in the descriptions of actual shades used, we have gone with the standard scheme of RLM 74/75/76. Should you have references that convince you of different colors, by all means, go with your own research on these.

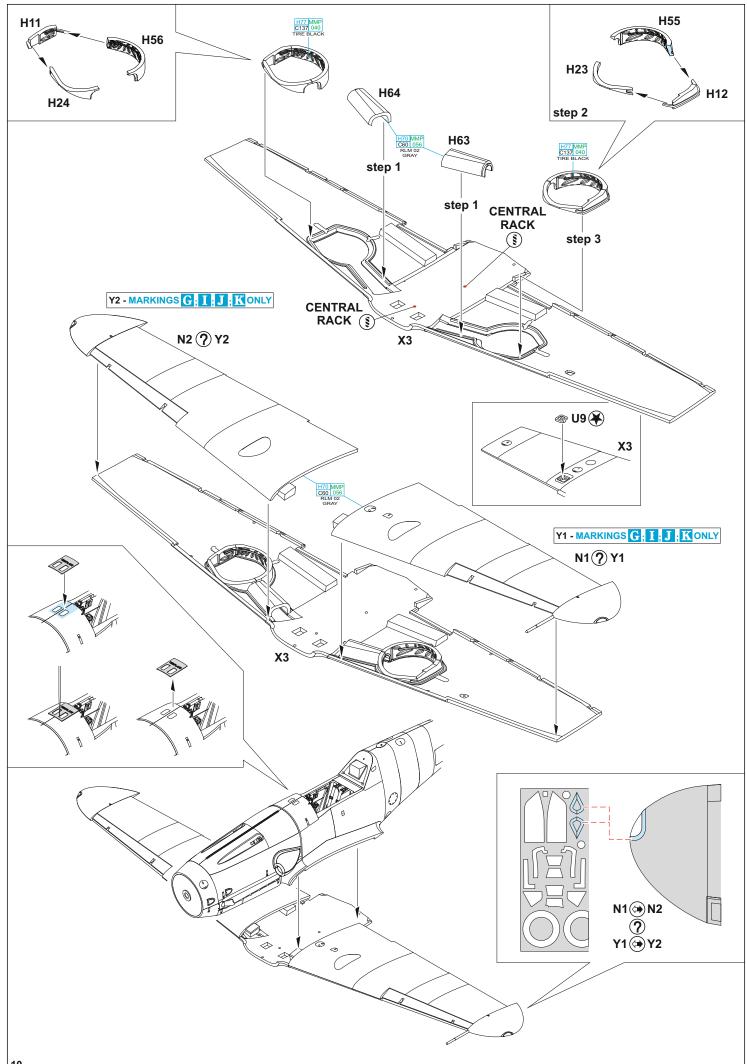
And that ends our recounting of the Wilde Sau units, utilizing various types of the Messerschmitt Bf 109G. The final volume of the Wilde Sau trilogy of kits will focus on units that flew the Focke-Wulf Fw 190s.

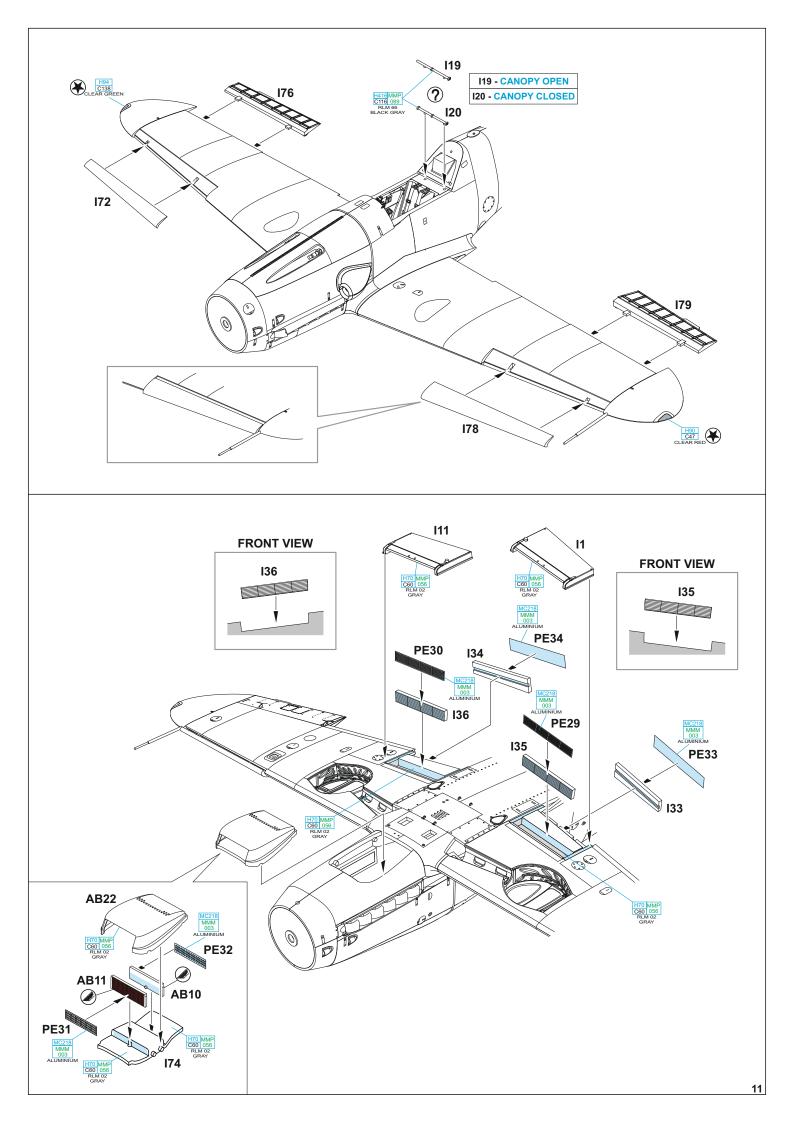


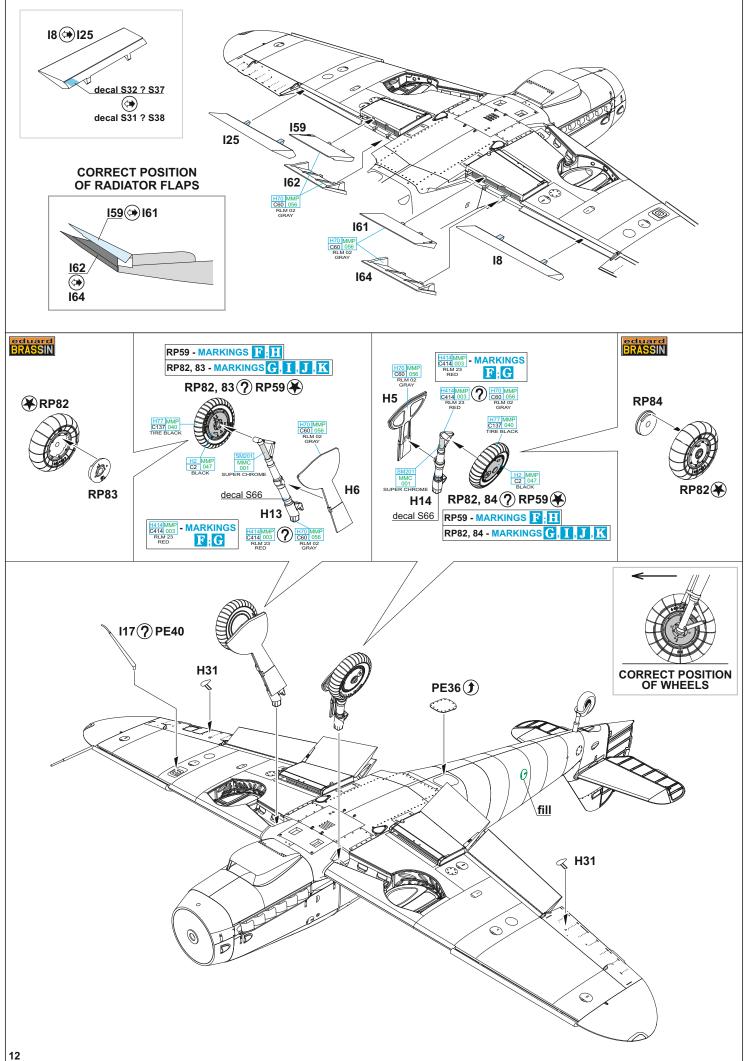


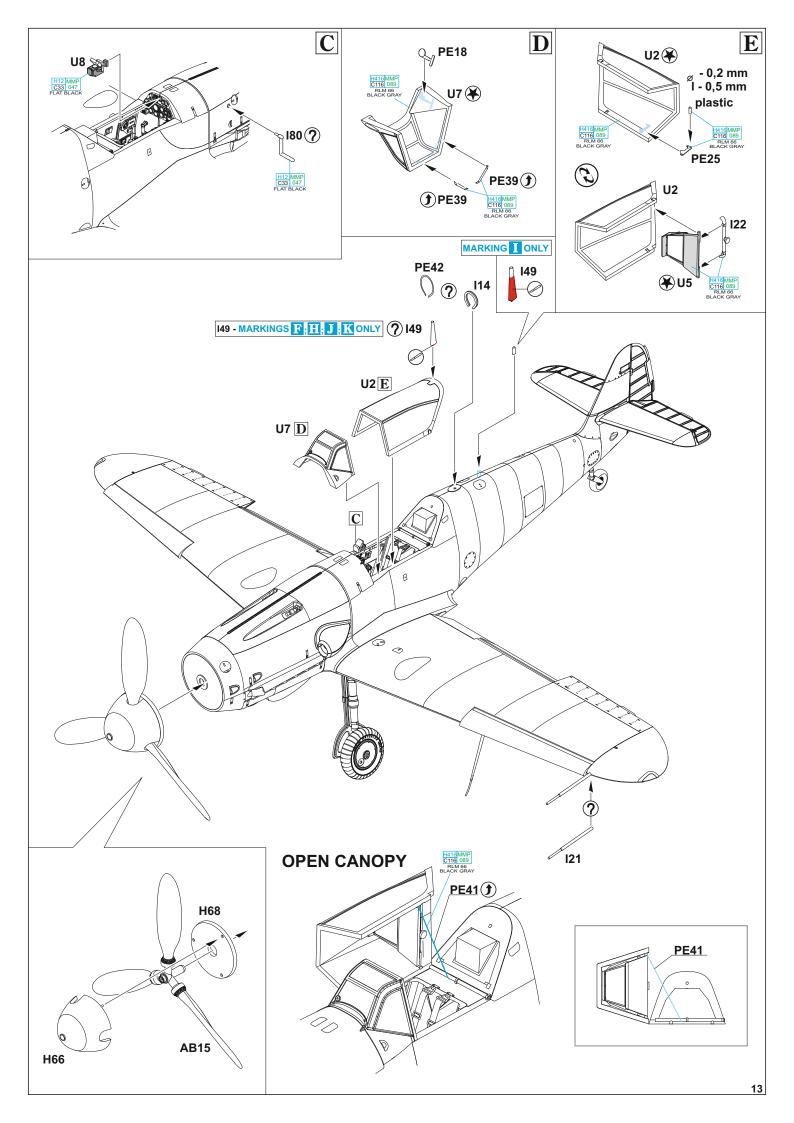


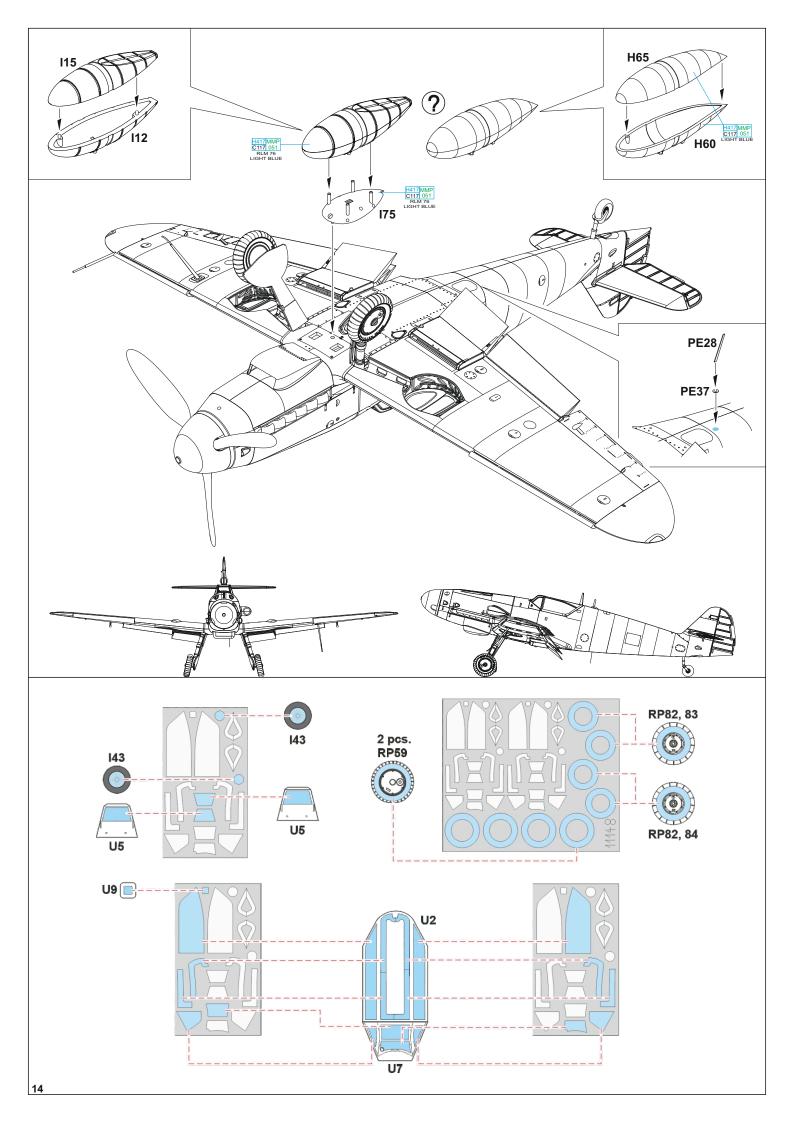


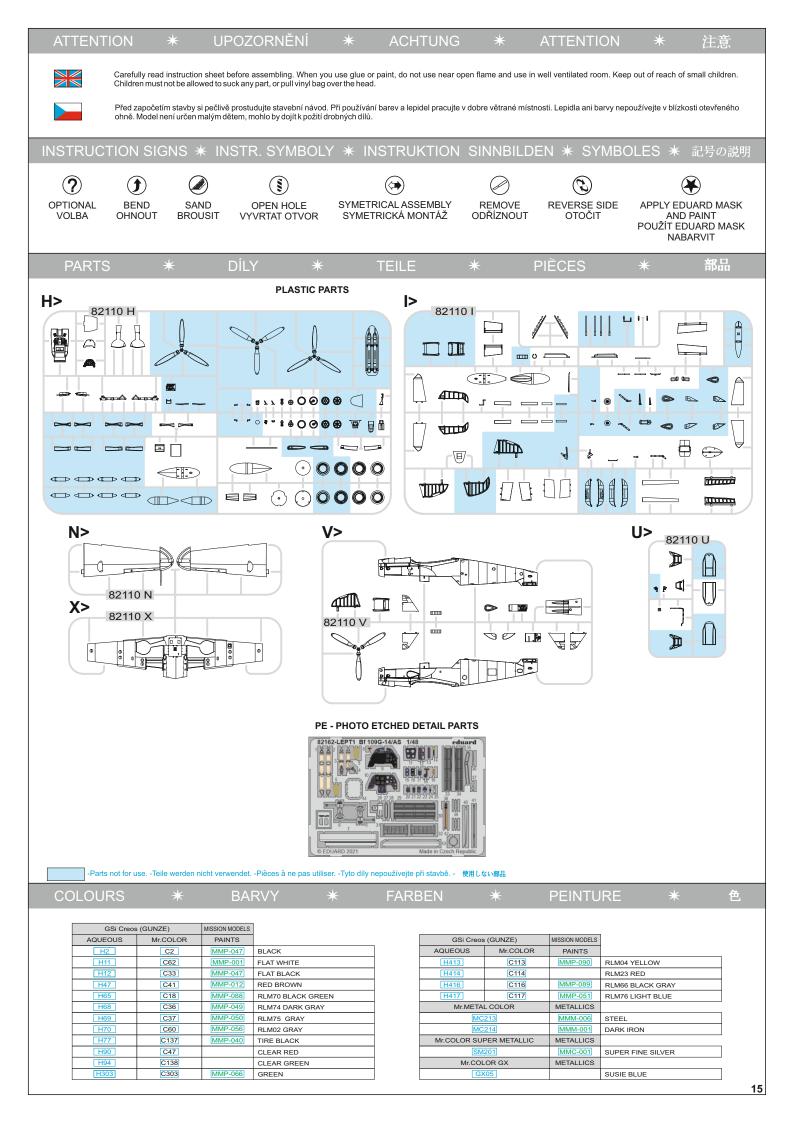


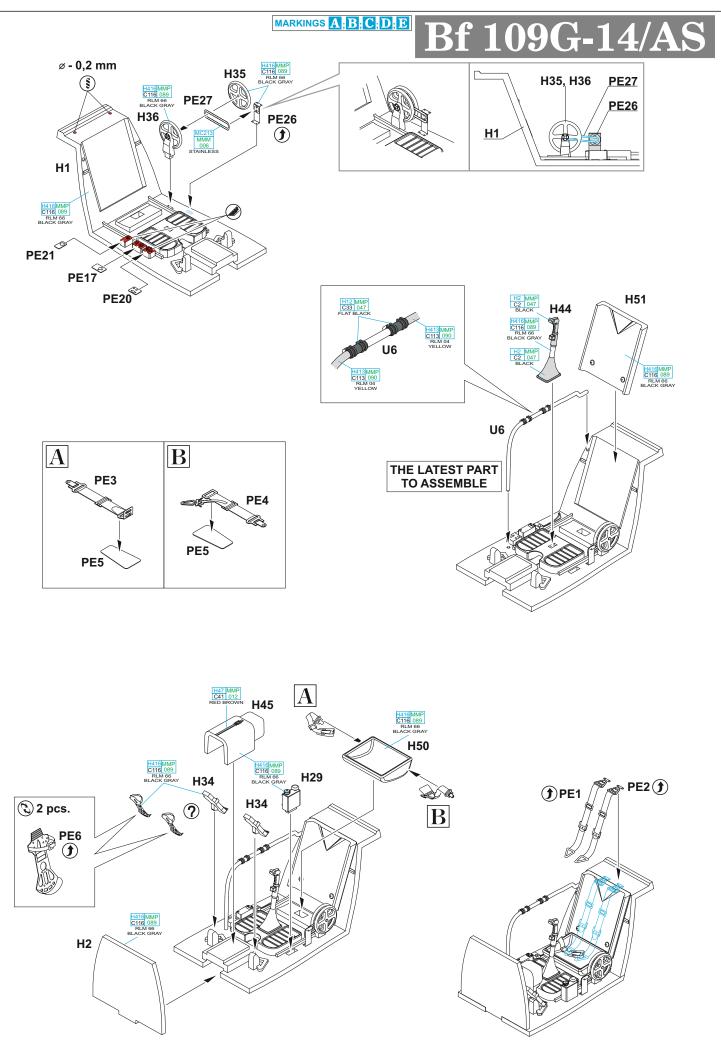


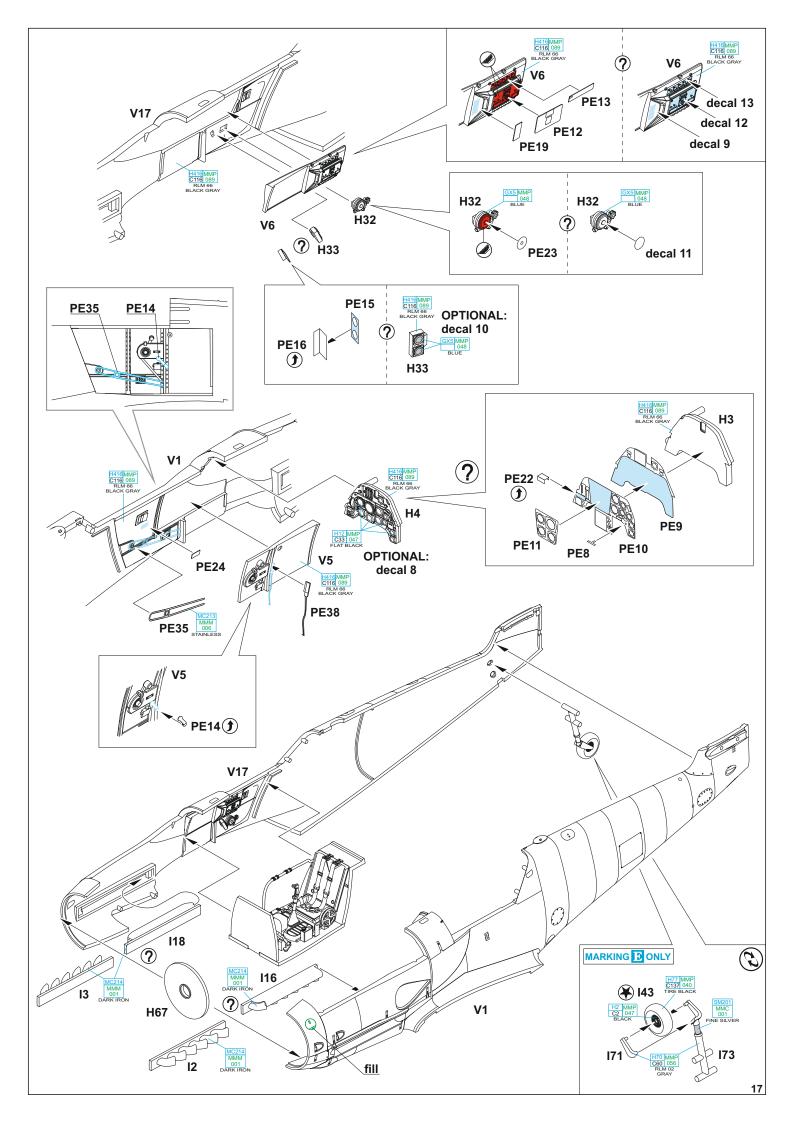


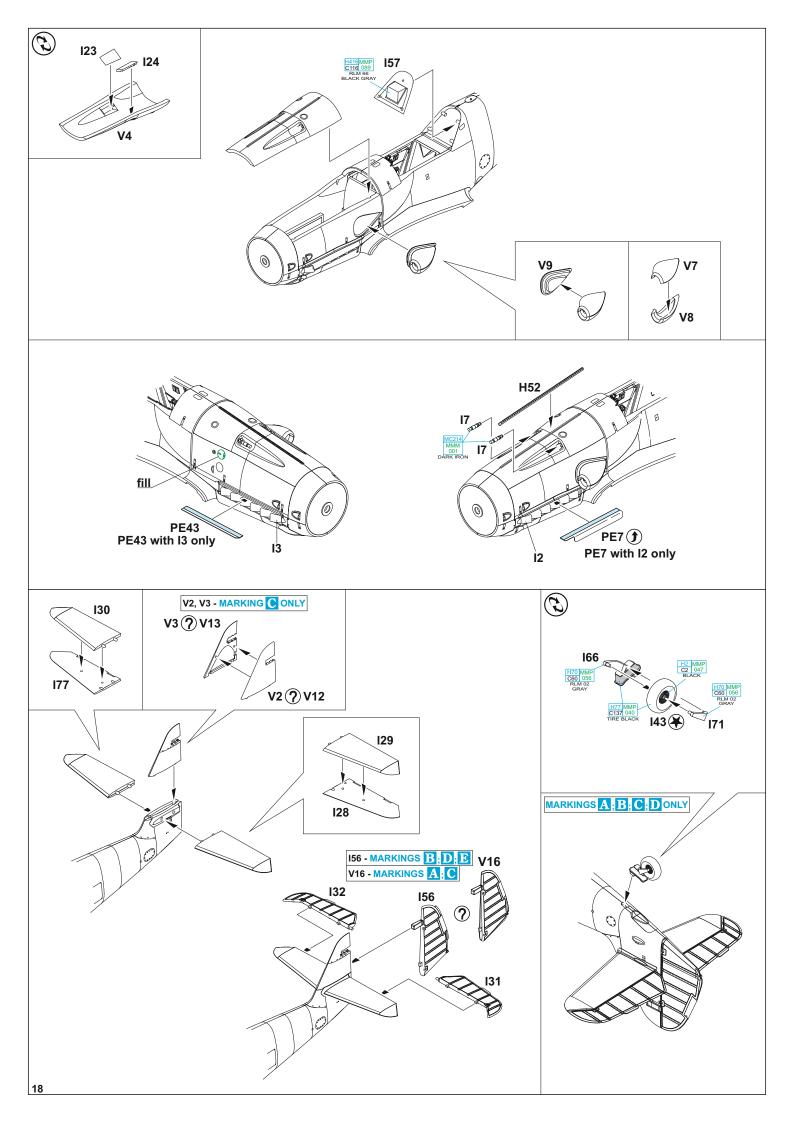


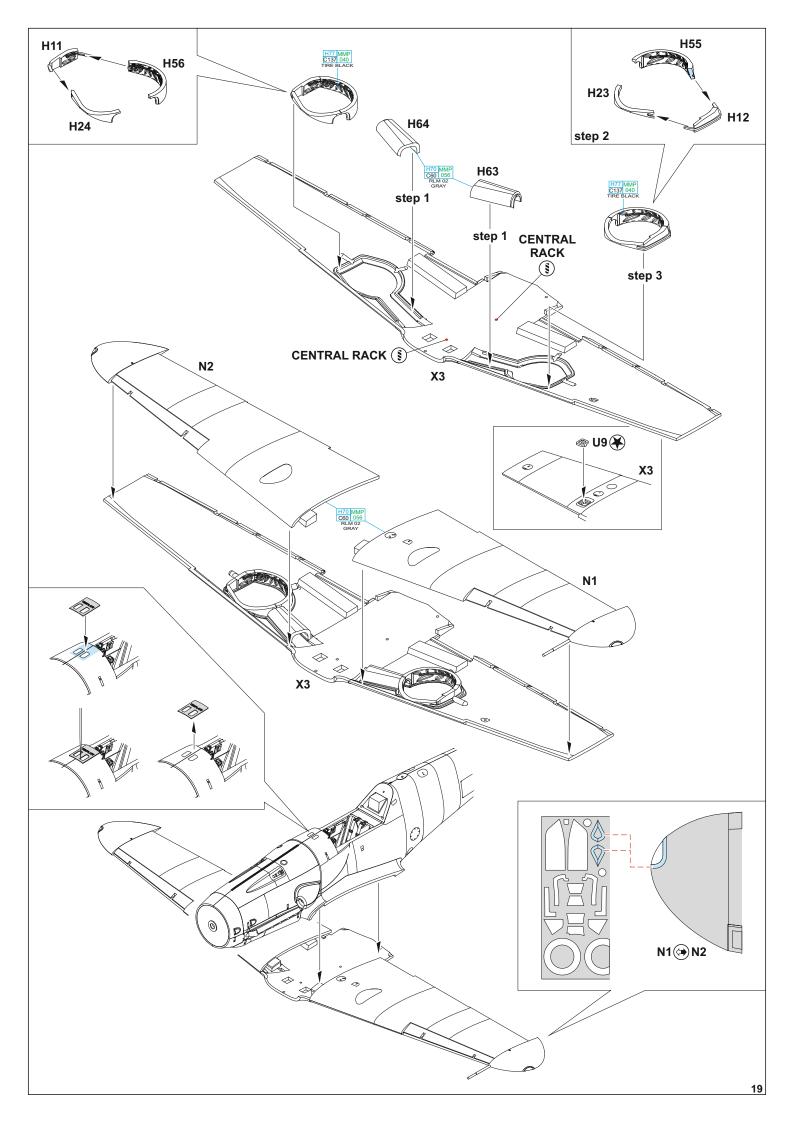


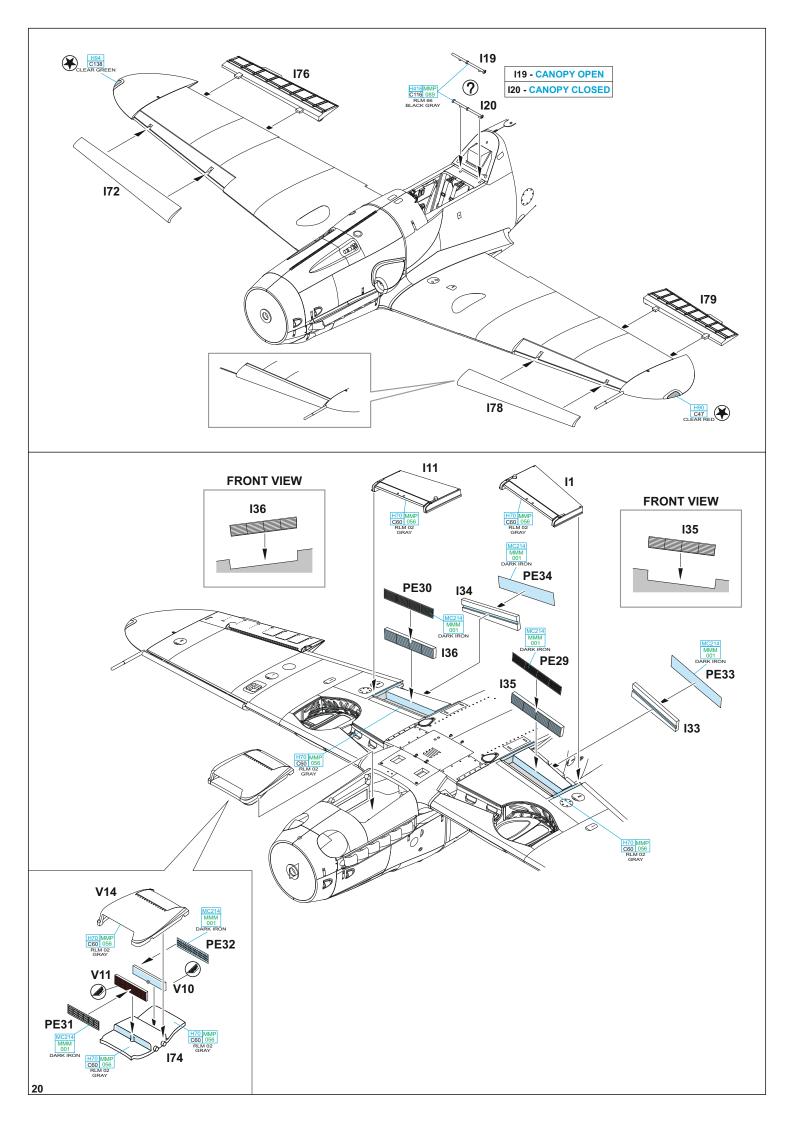


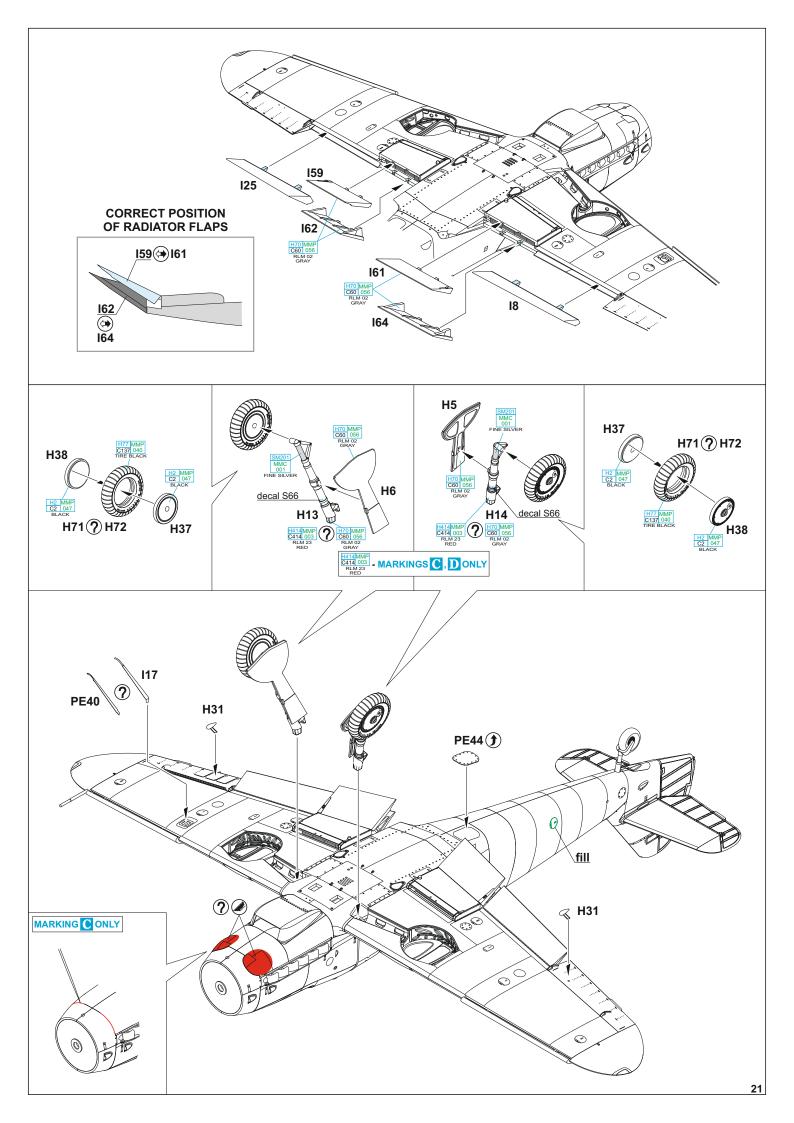


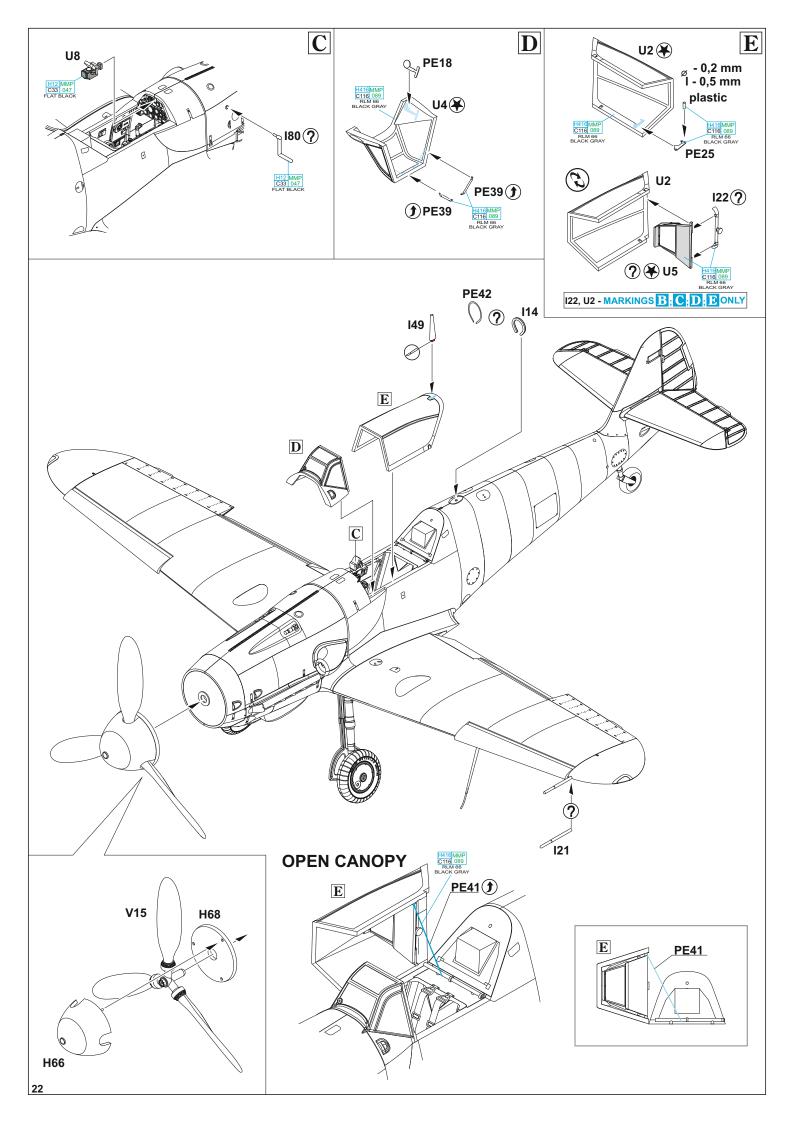


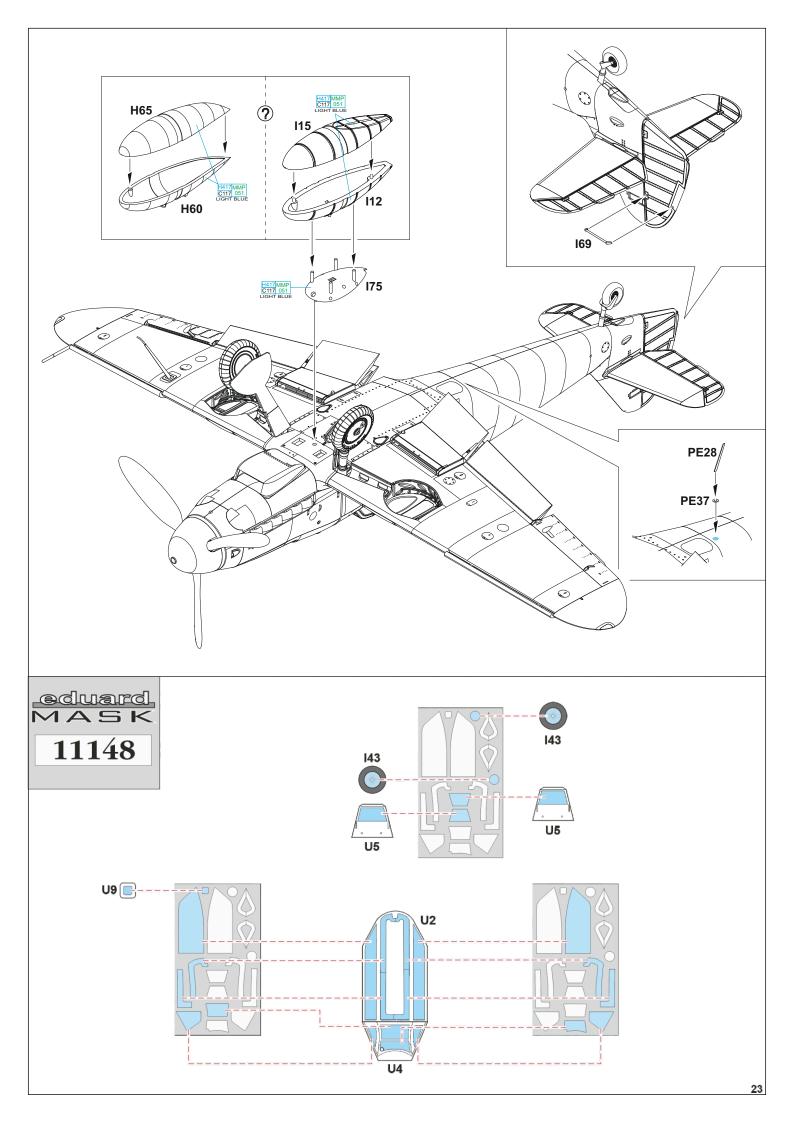




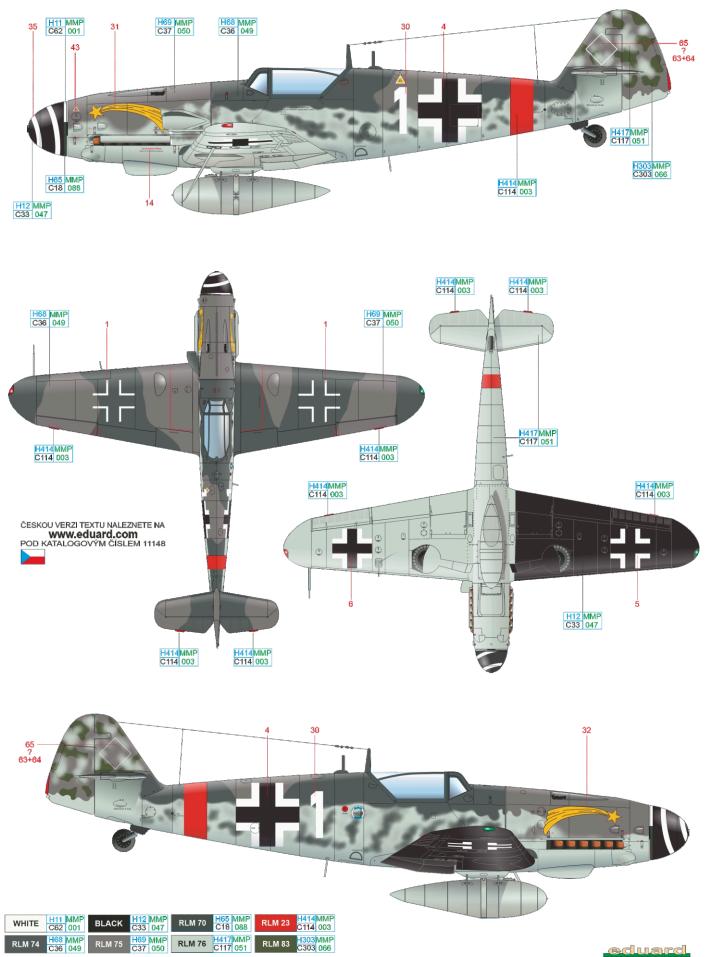




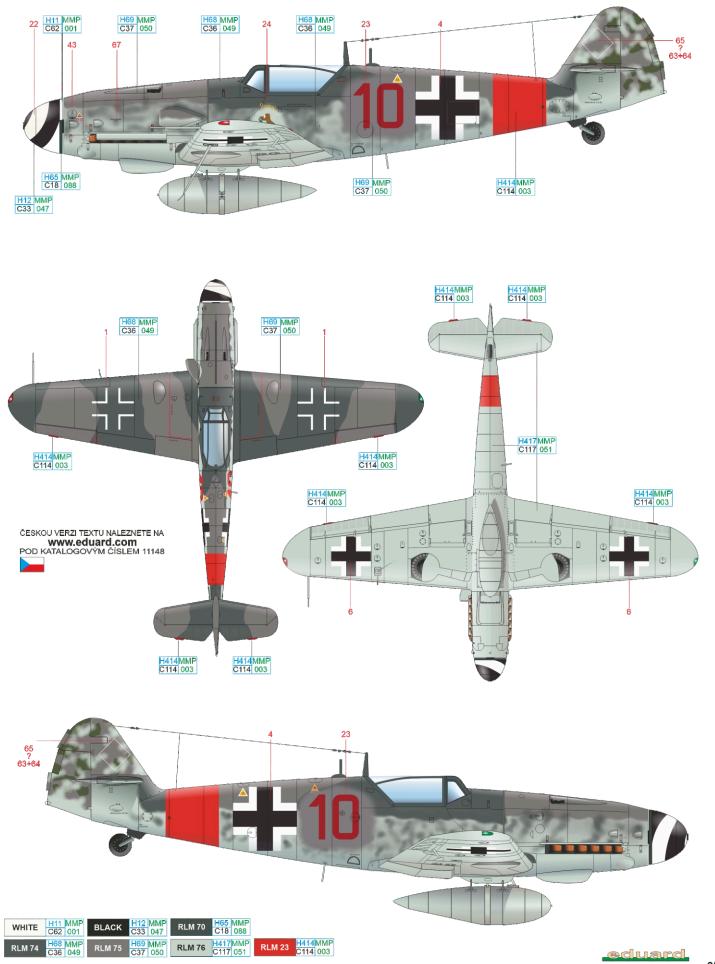




In the late summer and early autumn of 1944, the JG 300 established a special Mosquito-Jagdstaffel to combat the night incursions over Berlin conducted by de Havilland Mosquito bombers of the RAF's Light Night Strike Force. The 10.(N)/JG 300 operated out of Jüterbog under Staffelkapitän Karl Mitterdorfer. His White 1 featured the unit's comet emblem on both sides of the cowling and a narrower-than-usual red band around the rear fuselage. The aircraft's lower starboard wing surfaces were black.

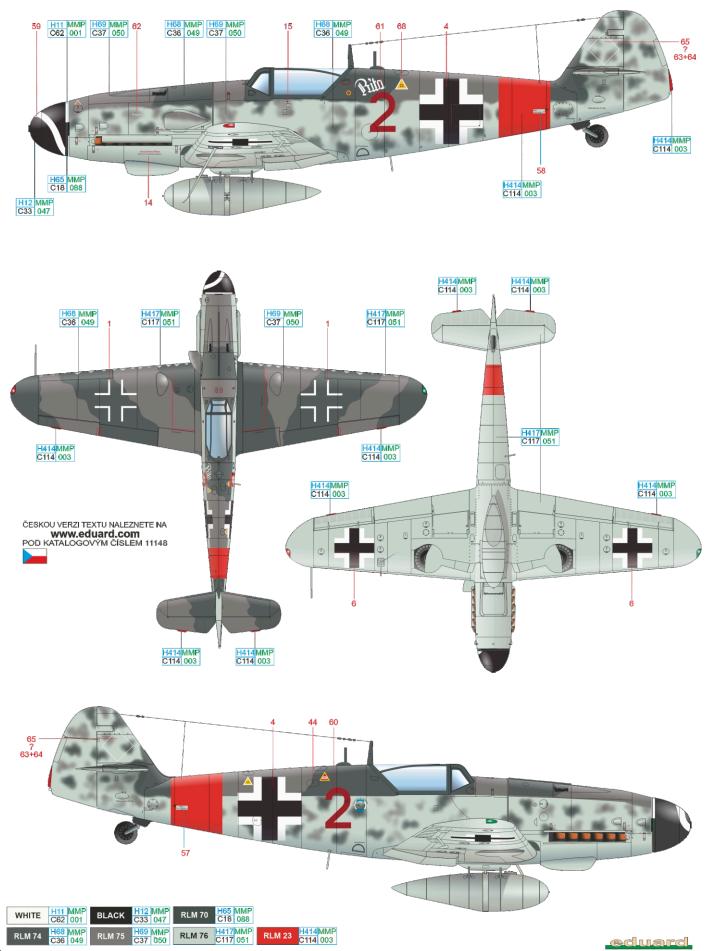


There was the emblem of a dog cartoon with a B-17 in its mouth and the inscription Lumpi on the fuselage side below the cockpit of this aircraft. Lumpi was the pilot's, Wolfgang Hundsdörfer's, nickname. On the fuselage, in front of the tail surfaces was a red stripe, the designation of JG 300 aircraft within the Reichsverteidigung system. In December 1944 was this marking changed to blue-white-blue stripes.

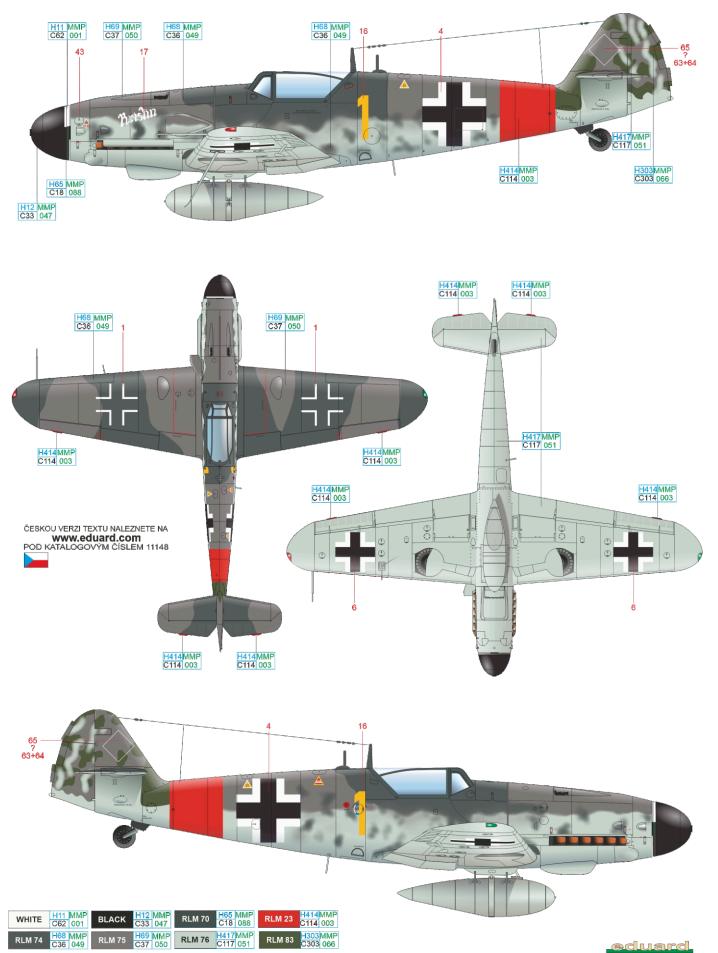


C Bf 109G-14/AS, Fw. Eberhard Gzik, 2./JG 300, Borkheide, Germany, October 1944

Messerschmitt factory in Augsburg, or a Series 413 or 460, produced by the Erla factory in Leipzig. During the fall of the 1944, the I./JG 300 led by Hptm. Gerhard Stamp conducted fighter cover for the Fw 190A-8/R2 Sturmbock heavy fighters. The unit suffered serious losses during tough combats with USAAF fighters in September and October. On October 2, I./JG 300 lost 19 aircraft destroyed and 13 damaged by Mustangs of the 355th FG which strafed the Borkheide airfield. Fw. Eberhard Gzik was posted to 9./EJG 2 in November 1944 and flew the Me 262 in Kommando Stamp. He achieved three aerial victories during the war.

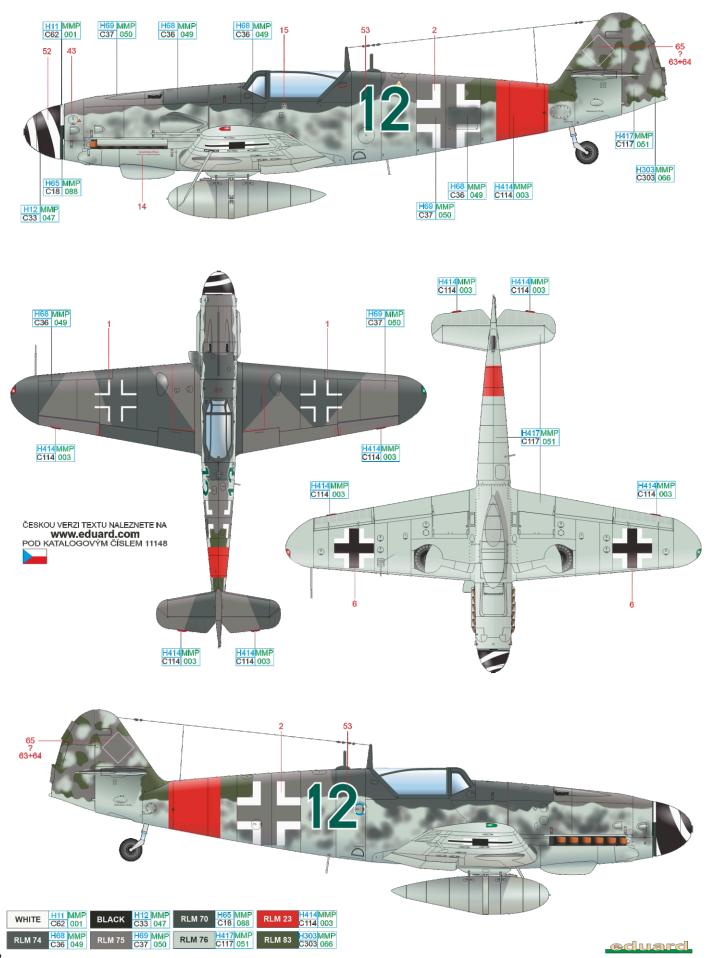


This Yellow 1 was damaged when the landing gear dug into the soft ground and the propeller hit the runway surface of the Mark Zwuschen airfield. The aircraft had the undercarriage legs painted red. Klaus Grothues was the last ace of III./JG 300 with 17 confirmed kills. He was killed in action during an attack against the formation of the American bombers during USAAF raid on Berlin on January 14, 1945. Grothues was shot down near Rathenow, west of Berlin when at controls of the Bf109G-14 Yellow 2.

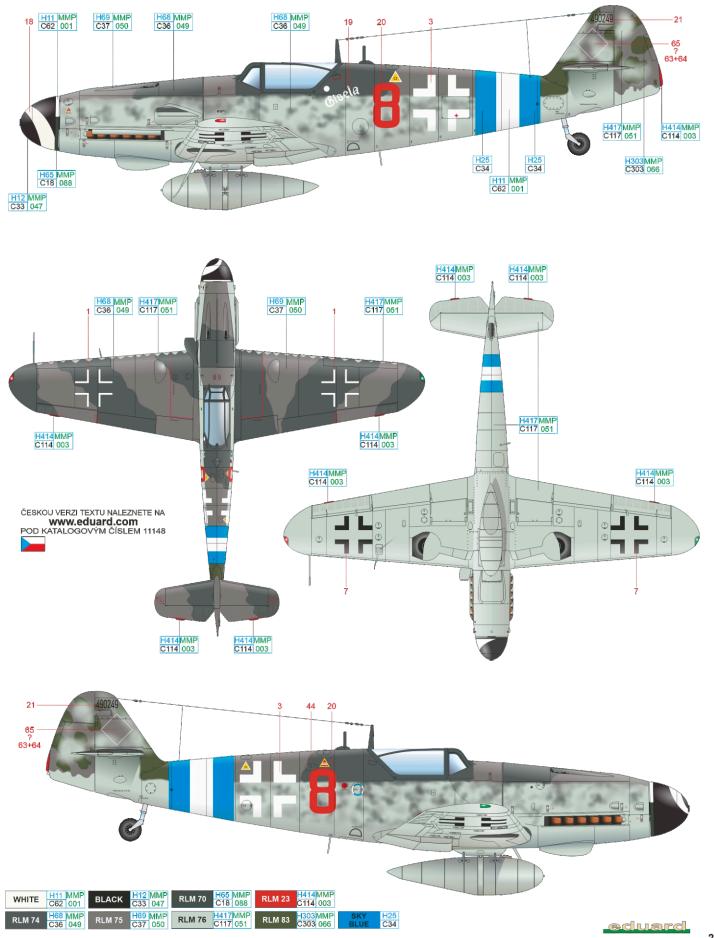


E Bf 109G-14/AS, Ofhr. Bruno Klostermann, 11./JG 300, Jüterbog-Waldlager, Germany, December 1944

Ofhr. Bruno Klostermann was a cousin of the French fighter ace Pierre Clostermann. Unlike his more famous relative, he did not live to see the end of the war, as he was killed in action during the USAAF's big raid on Berlin on January 14, 1945. That date was a black day for the Wilde Sau units, with JG 300 and JG 301 losing nearly 90 aircraft and 68 pilots in thirty minutes. Jagdgeschwader 300 alone lost 50 % of all its aircraft.

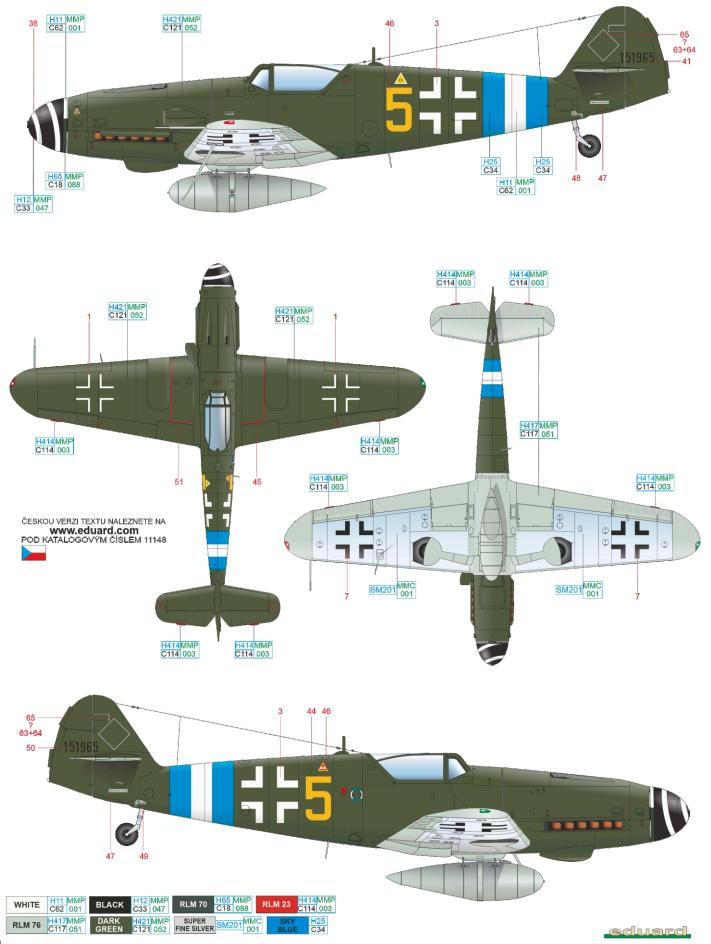


This aircraft with the Gisela inscription was flown by Uffz. Hanz Dahmen in December 1944 from the airfield in Borkheide, southwest of Potsdam. The designation was later changed to red 12. In December 1944 the marking of the JG 300 aircraft was changed to blue-white-blue fuselage band. In the second half of January 1945 was JG 300 deployed on the eastern front to fight on the Oder River, conducting ground attacks and strafing advancing Soviet troops. By this time, Hans Dahmen had already seen heavy fights in the fall of 1944, in which he shot down a B-17 on September 13, as well as the bloodbath of JG 300 pilots during the USAAF raid on Berlin on January 14, 1945.



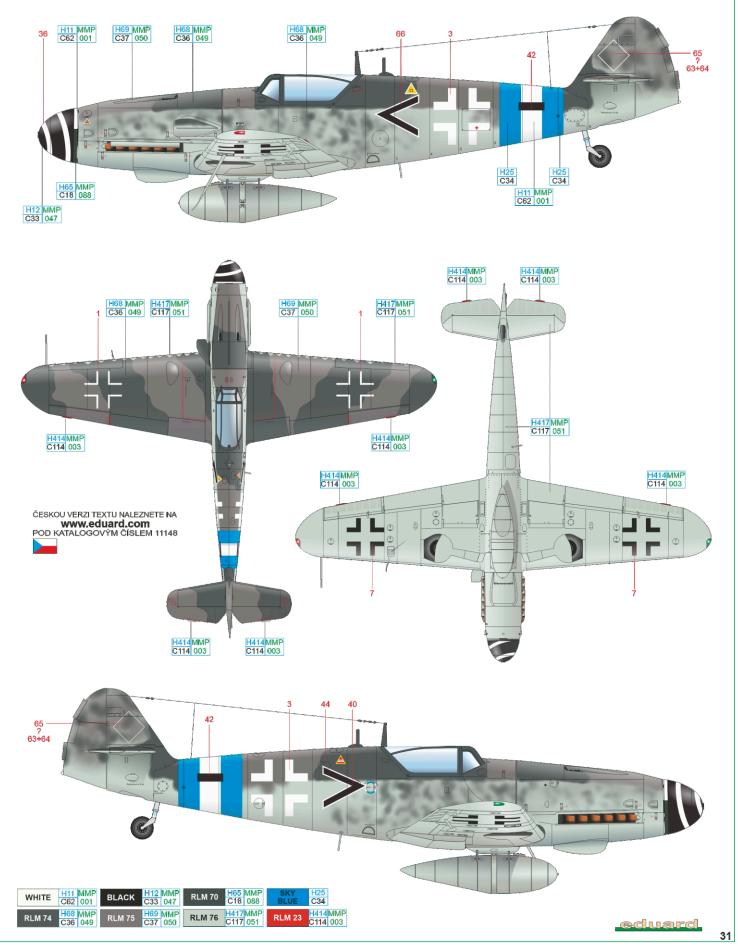
🕒 Bf 109G-10 Erla, WNr. 151965, 3./JG 300, Prague-Gbel, Protectorate Böhmen und Mähren, May 1945

WNr. 151965 is an example of a Bf 109G-10 produced by the Erla factory, series 151. These machines were characterized by a wing with large bulges over the undercarriage well and camouflage in a dark green overpaint on the upper and side surfaces, including the lower fuselage except of the center wing. This color would be green version of the RLM 81, or even older RLM 70 or 71 or another green paint. The bottom of the wing including the center section were left in bare metal, but the bottom surfaces of the ailerons and flaps were painted in light blue RLM 76. The lower surfaces of the wingtips and the horizontal tail were also painted in the same color. The underwing crosses were painted in form of black angles.



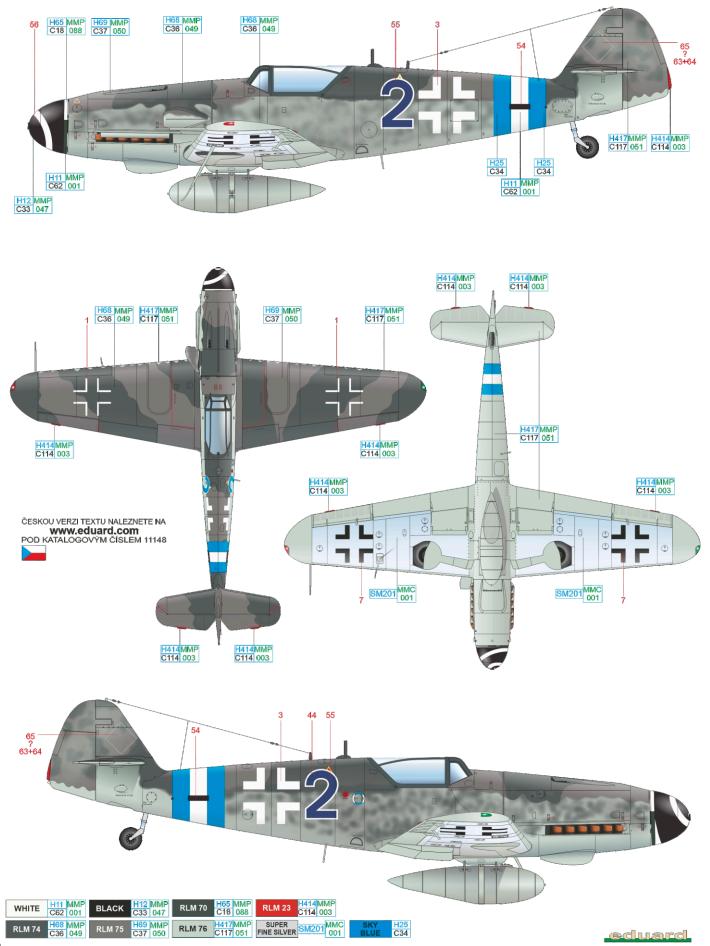
Bf 109G-10 Erla, Jagdgruppe 300, Ainring, Germany, early May 1945

During March 1945 the L/JG 300 was disbanded and between April 1 and April 12, some 15 of the remaining airworthy aircraft were handed over to the III. and IV./JG 300. Both units were shuttling around various airfields in southern Germany. As American forces advanced further southwards these aircraft were ordered to move to Ainring near Salzburg and then to Prague. Luftwaffekommando 6 ordered II. and III./JG 300 to be integrated into Jagdgruppe 300 Ainring on May 3, 1945. A short black horizontal stripe was then added to the blue-white-blue Reichsverteidigung stripes of the Jagdgruppe 300 aircraft. Ainring airfield was located on German side of German-Austrian border, also known as Reichenhall-Berchtesgaden airport. It was one of two Salzburg area military airfields during wartime.



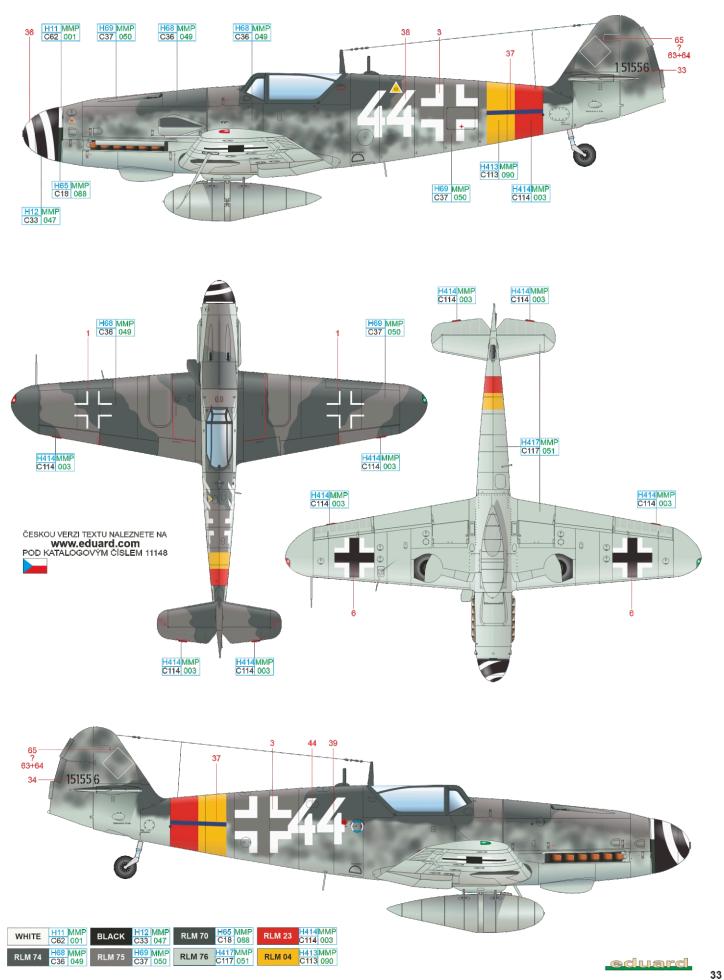
Bf 109G-10 Erla, Jagdgruppe 300, Prague-Gbel, Protectorate Böhmen und Mähren, May 8, 1945

This aircraft, originally belonging to 16./JG 300, is an Erla build 150 or 151 series machine with large bulges over the undercarriage wells. This machine was flown from Prague–Gbel airfield on May 8, 1945 by Fw. Josef Unminger, a pilot of Flugzeugüberführungsgeschwader 1. He had to make a belly-landing due to the lack of fuel near the city of Bochov near Karlsbad in Western Bohemia and the aircraft was destroyed by retreating German soldiers by several shots of Panzerfaust. Unminger was captured by the Russians but managed to escape from captivity and returned home to Bavaria after long way through Saxony and Thuringia.

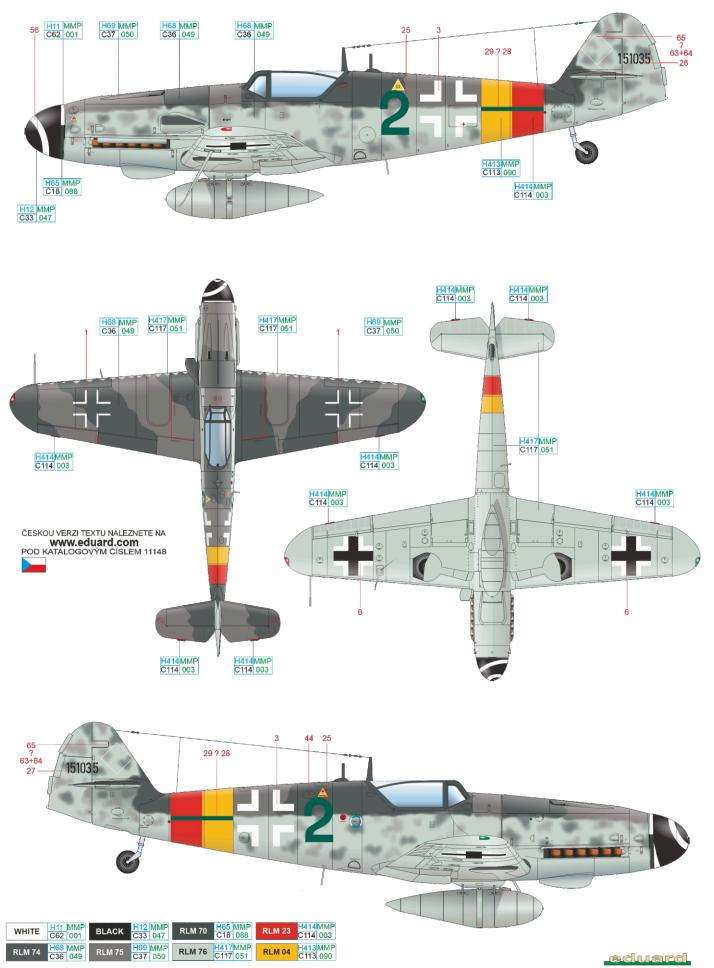


J Bf 109G-10 Erla, WNr. 151556, JG 301, Germany, May 1945

WNr. 151556 was an example of a Bf 109G-10 series 151 manufactured by the Erla factory. These machines were typical in having a wing with large bulge over the undercarriage well. It would be possible this aircraft was camouflaged in RLM 81 and RLM 82 colors on the upper surfaces and RLM 76-painted lower and side surfaces. Further details about this aircraft are not known.

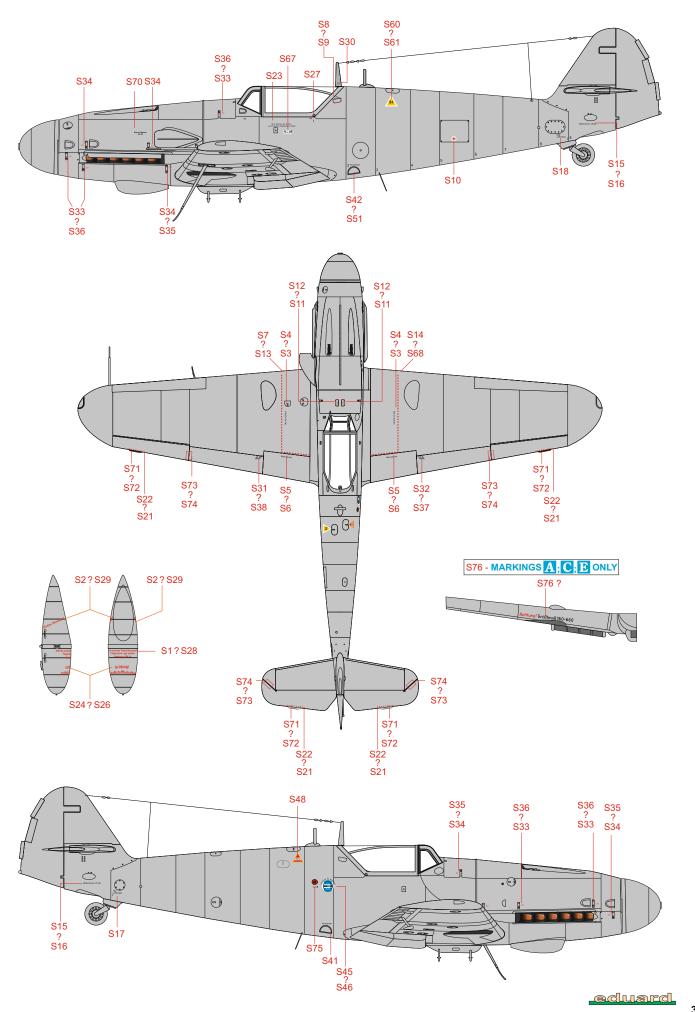


WNr. 151035 was an example of an early Bf 109G–10 series 151 produced by the Erla factory. These machines were characterized by a wing with large bulge over the undercarriage well. It is believed this aircraft served with the staff Staffel of the IV. Gruppe JG 301 at the Stendal–Borstel air base in Saxony–Anhalt. Further details about this aircraft are unknown.



Bf 109G-10 Erla

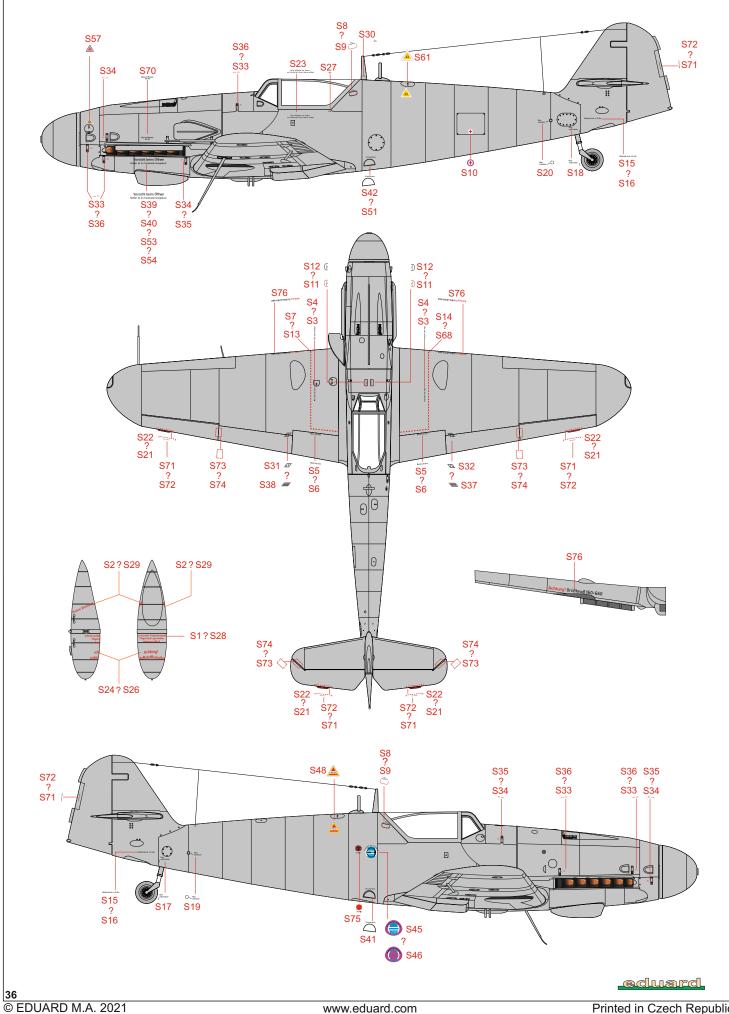
STENCILING POSITIONS



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Bf 109G-14/AS

STENCILING POSITIONS



Printed in Czech Republic