

During the four years of World War I, aircraft development advanced at an amazing rate. All major nations participating in the conflict quickly realized the need to develop single seat fighters in order to have a weapon that would prevent enemy reconnaissance aircraft from performing their duties. In many cases, this development brought about fairly minor improvements, but every now and then new types implemented a leap forward that was truly ground breaking.

text by Jörn Leckscheid

One of these major leaps came in the shape of the Fokker E-type series, the first fighter aircraft fitted with a (working) synchronisation gear for the fixed forward firing machine gun.

The success of this plane made Fokker famous on both sides of the front, but his next couple of fighter aircraft (such as the later E.IV and even the D.I – D.IV) were only minor improvements of the initial design.

Concerning Fokker, the next major leap in fighter development came in the shape of the Fokker Dr.l Triplane, which introduced the cantilever wing, a design that dispensed of the bracing wires, into mass production. By the time the Fokker Triplane first reached the front in late August 1917, the main

equipment of the German Jagdstaffeln consisted of the Albatros D-types (mostly D.IIIs and D.Vs), the early version of which (the D.I) had been introduced into combat a year earlier.

The later versions of the Albatros were simply evolutions of the same basic designs, and by the summer of 1917 their performance was no longer competitive with the new British and French fighters (such as the Spad XIII, Sopwith Camel and SE 5a) opposing it.

Development

A major improvement on the current equipment was urgently required, so the Inspectorate of the Germany Flying Forces (Idflieg) decided to invite all German aircraft manufacturers to enter their

latest single-seater designs in a Fighter Competition that was to be held at Berlin-Adlershof in late January 1918.

Anthony Fokker sensed that this was a golden opportunity for his company to acquire a major production contract, and entered no less than six new prototypes to the competition. Amazingly, the huge Albatros company, in spite of being fully aware of the inferiority of their product, decided to only showcase variants of their D.Va upgraded with the latest engines (Mercedes D.IIIaü and BMW IIIa)at Adlershof.

Unsurprisingly, the Fokker prototypes found unanimous approval amongst the many front-line ace pilots that evaluated the aircraft at the competition,

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and in the category of inline-engined aircraft the Fokker V.11 and V.18 prototypes found favour. These were both cantilever-winged biplanes with a nose-mounted radiator that marked a radical departure from the Albatros-fighter layout. Several modifications were made to both the V.11 and V.18 in order to improve directional stability and some other minor issues, but the production Fokker D.VII was derived directly from these two prototypes.

In February 1918, Fokker received an initial order for 300 D.VIIs, followed by four more contracts amounting to 1.000 aircraft of this type. Since his production capacity was not sufficient to fulfil the needs of the frontline units, Albatros and their subsidiary O.A.W. received no further contracts for their D.Va fighters and were ordered to produce the new Fokker fighter instead under license.

Into combat

The first batch of Fokker-built D.VIIs was shipped to the front in April 1918, and Jasta 10 was very likely the first unit to convert to the type at the end of the month. Other Jastas followed as quickly as deliveries allowed, and Jasta 11 and Jasta 6 in JG I also converted to the D.VII in mid May 1918. These two Jastas handed over their previous Fokker Triplanes to neighbouring units still equipped with obsolete Albatros and Pfalz fighters.

The new cantilever-winged biplane fighter found instant approval with all fighter pilots who were lucky enough to fly it.

Pilots praised the surprisingly high speed, which, in spite of being fitted with the "old" Mercedes engine, enabled it to keep up with all of its opponents, its ease of handling and the fact that it retained its performance at higher altitudes.

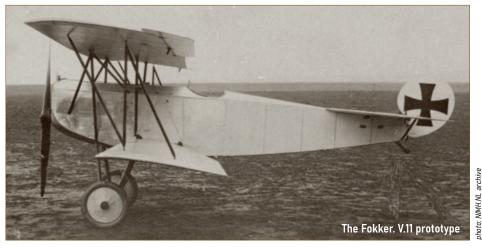
The airframe could absorb a surprisingly high amount of punishment, JG I ace Richard Wenzl reported that Lt. Fritz Friedrichs landed his D.VII safely after the main spar of one of his lower wings was totally destroyed by Flak fire. This would have been unthinkable with the Albatros D.Va.

In late June 1918, the first batch of BMW IIIa powered machines reached the front. Those that were built by Fokker were marked D.VII F, and the engine brought about an actual increase in output to about 230 hp and it retained its performance up to about 6000 metres altitude. The rate of climb was significantly increased, and a new tactic was evolved where D.VII F equipped flights would approach the enemy from a somewhat lower altitude, then out-climb them and attack from above.

The fact that the Fokker D.VII was highly regarded by its opponents can also be seen from many reports. As an example, according to an interview with an American WW I fighter pilot, by September 1918 an order was given to the French Spad XIII pilots to avoid combat with the Fokker D.VII. The Fokker was said to be superior to the Spad in all factors with the exception of diving speed.

Taking into account that the Spad XIII was then the standard fighter in both the French and American fighter units this meant that the D.VII had brought about a complete reversal of the situation from a year before.

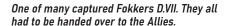
Those pilots that were unlucky enough to make do with their out-dated Albatros, Pfalz and Roland fighters longingly eyed the D.VIIs operated by other Jastas. Some of the less-successful units, or those



stationed in the more "quiet" sections of the front, had to wait for the Fokker until August or even September 1918.

Rudolf Stark, the commander of Royal Bavarian Jasta 35 summed up the exceptional qualities of the Fokker D.VII in a single sentence: "The Fokker was a thoroughbred that followed the slightest hand movement and almost anticipated the intention of the pilot."

As the number of available Fokker D.VIIs grew, so did the victory count of the pilots and Jastas operating the type. Some pilots rapidly increased their score on the D.VII, such as Ernst Udet for example.





Willi Gabriel in cocpit of his Fokker D.VII 286/18 prior to painting the orange fuselage stripe.



Rudolf Berthold in front of his first Fokker D.VII in state of unfinished paint job.



ıhoto via Jörn Leckscheid

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He was credited with 20 out his total of 62 victories during the first 22 days of August 1918 while flying a Fokker D.VIIF.

Jagdstaffel 40 was credited with 10 victories between September 1917 and mid-June 1918. Then the first D.VIIs arrived in late June, and during the remaining four and a half months of the war another 43 victories were credited to the Jasta. Available records do not confirm that all of these were scored on the D.VII, but it appears very likely that this was the case.

Several authors have described the Fokker D.VII as the best fighter aircraft of WW I, and this may or may not be the case. But, without a doubt, it was the most colourful fighter of them all, since it took the unit and personal colours of almost all German Army and Navy Jagdstaffeln into the air.

Fokker factory details

During their production at Schwerin, the Fokker D.VII underwent a number of modifications that slightly changed its outward appearance.

With the exception of the initial prototypes, the wings of the D.VII were covered with the polygon-covered fabric that is generally wrongly termed "lozenge fabric".

This fabric came in four- and five-coloured variants, and both were used at various times during production. A typical Fokker production detail was that the wing ribs received strips of printed fabric for strengthening purposes. However, close to the end of the war, this practice was also taken up by 0.A.W. and Albatros.

Initially, Fokker-built D.VIIs had their fuselage fabric covered in plain linen that was painted with green streaks, very much resembling the Fokker Dr.I camouflage scheme. Photographs document that from 379/18 onwards the fuselages were also covered with the polygon dyed fabric.

On a few very early production Fokker D.VIIs the old Iron Cross national markings were still applied. Very quickly, these gave way to the initially quite fat, straight-sided Balkenkreuz markings. As various upgraded instructions concerning the application of the national markings were issued, the Balkenkreuz continuously slimmed down, as if to mirror the ever-worsening nutrition standards of a large part of the German civilian population during the last year of the war.

The engine cowlings also underwent a number of changes. Initially, an exhaust exiting through the side of the engine panels was fitted. From the second production batch onwards, a "saxophone" style exhaust mounted higher was used, and initially this was covered under a metal panel, too.

During the late spring and summer of 1918 slots began to be cut into the metal nose side panels to improve ventilation of the engine compartment. These appeared at the factory even before a series of in-flight fires occurred in mid-July 1918, killing several pilots. It was found that a built-up of heat in the fuselage around the ammunition storage combined with high summer temperatures had caused the spontaneous self-ignition of phosphorous bullets, which then set the fuel tanks on fire. Jasta 4 pilot Julius Bender was able to successfully bail out of his plane after such an incident, and his report greatly helped to identify the problem. This issue was quickly fixed by adding more cooling to the airframe, and banning the phosphorous ammunition for some time, and the problem did not surface again.

Many of the D.VIIs not only survived the war, but served well into the thirties in many air forces around the world and also were flown in several movies of the time, adding to its imperishable glory.



The late production Fokker D.VII from Schwerin factory of Heinz Küstner from Jasta 18. It can be seen the colour of the tail stripes is about the same colour as front fuselage, and lighter than black cross.

Harald Auffarth in front of his early built D.VII 387/18. It is believed and visible on the photo, that upper side of top wing was overpainted with one colour. Possibly green or yellow.

| Military number batches assigned to Fokker-built D.VIIs | | | | | |
|--|---|----------|--|--|--|
| 227/18 | - | 526/18 | | | |
| 4250/18 | - | 4449/18 | | | |
| 5050/18 | - | 5149/18 | | | |
| 7604/18 | - | 7805/18 | | | |
| 10347/18 | - | 10399/18 | | | |



oto via Jörn Leckscheid

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 započetím stavby si pečlivě prostudujte stavební návod. Při používání barev a lepidel pracujte v dobre 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. SYMBOLY * INSTRUKTION SINNBILDEN * SYMBOLES 記号の説明







SAND OPEN HOLE **BROUSIT** VYVRTAT OTVOR



SYMETRICAL ASSEMBLY SYMETRICKÁ MONTÁŽ

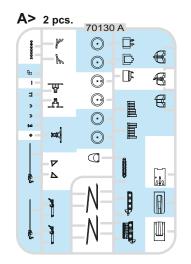


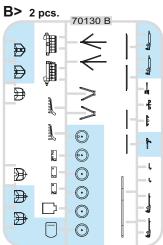
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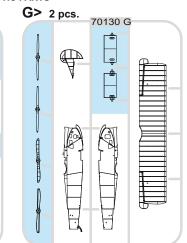


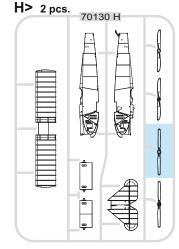
APPLY EDUARD MASK AND PAINT POUŽÍT EDUARD MASK NABARVIT





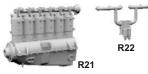




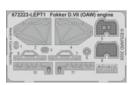


672 223 Fokker D.VII (OAW) engine / Mercedes D.III **RP - RESIN PARTS**

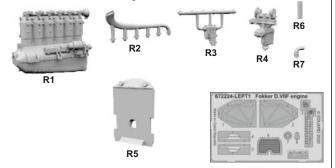








672 224 Fokker D.VIIF engine / BMW IIIa

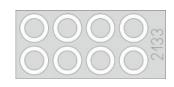


PE - PHOTO ETCHED **DETAIL PARTS** 2 pcs.

R5





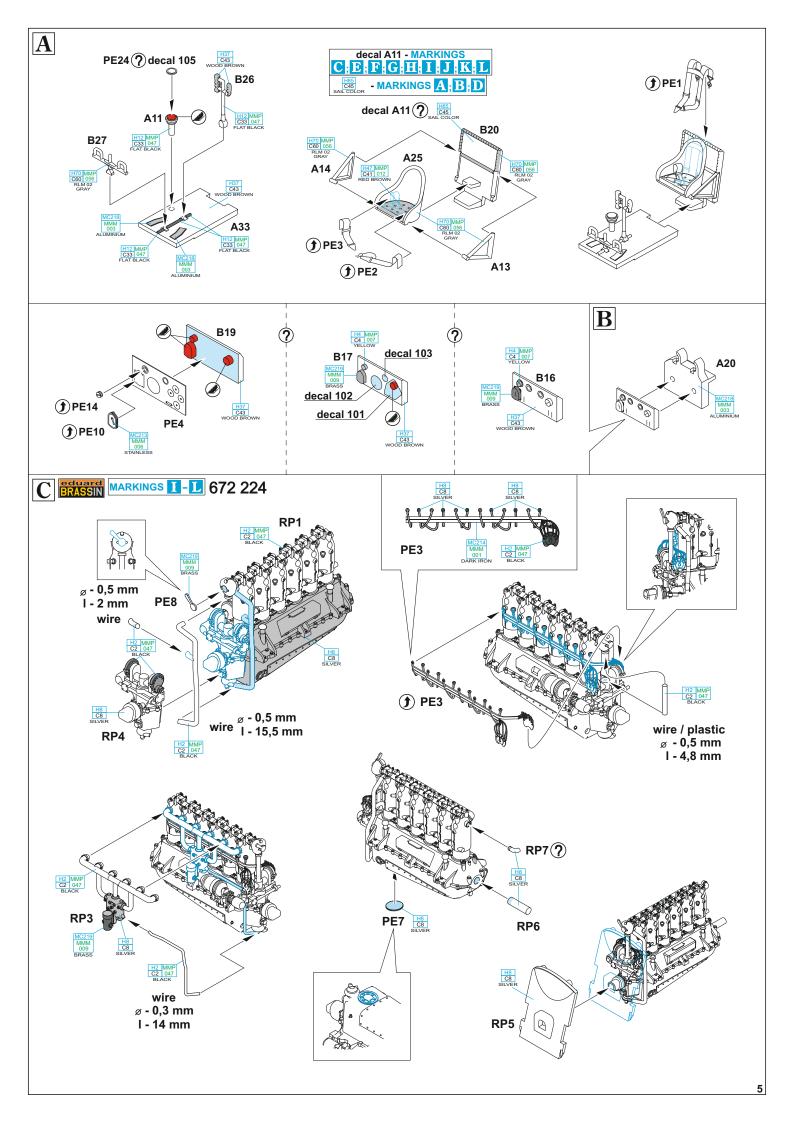


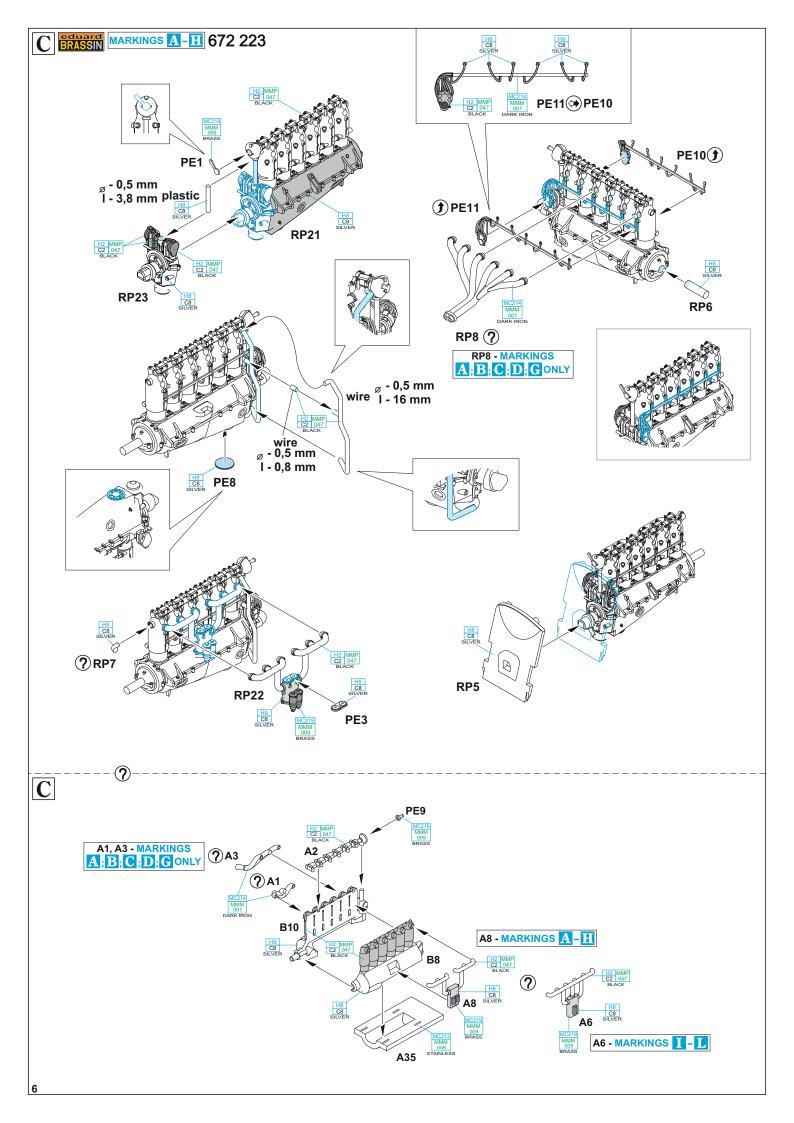
-Parts not for use. -Teile werden nicht verwendet. -Pièces à ne pas utiliser. -Tyto díly nepoužívejte při stavbě. - 使用とない部局

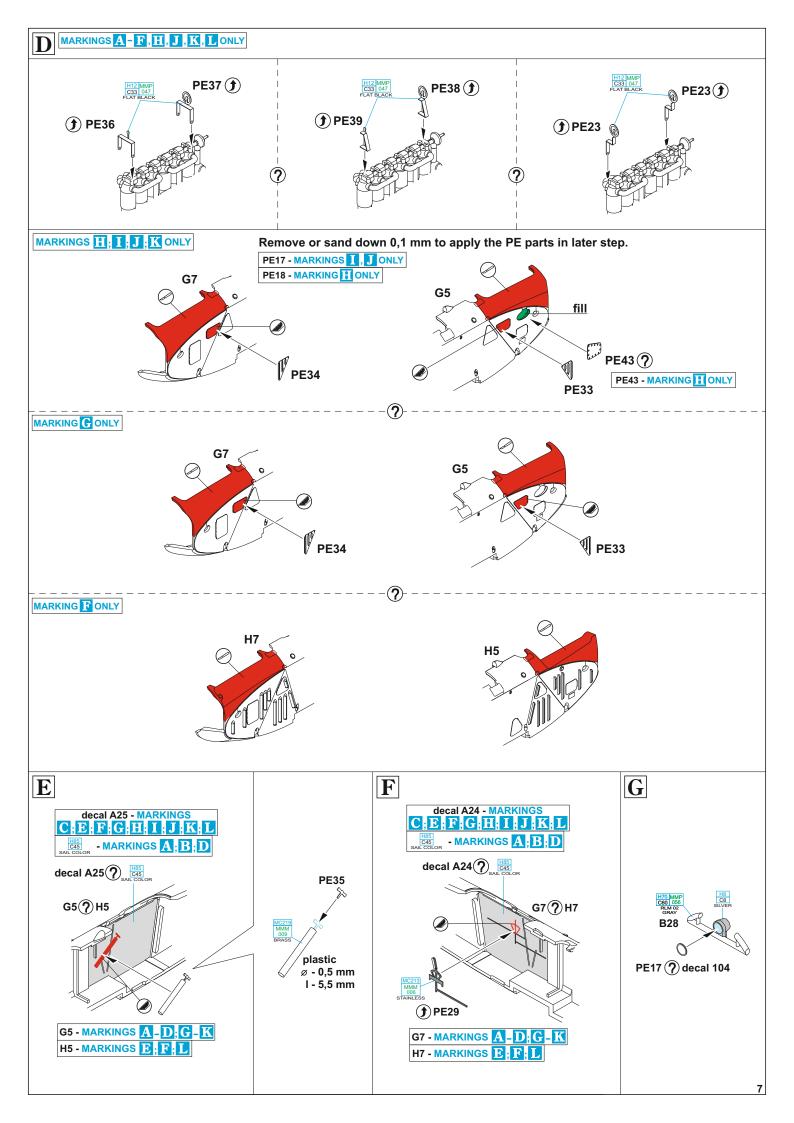
COLOURS BARV **FARBEN PEINTURE** 色

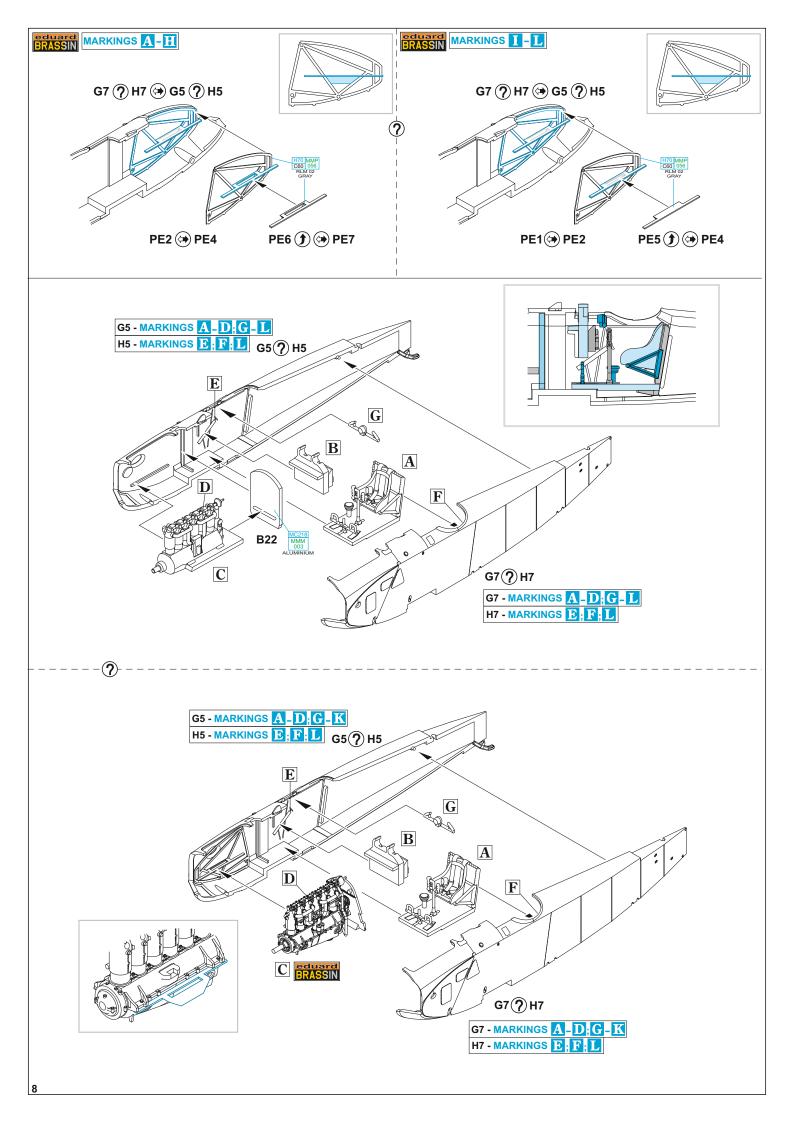
| GSi Creos | (GUNZE) | MISSION MODELS | |
|-----------|----------|----------------|-------------|
| AQUEOUS | Mr.COLOR | PAINTS | |
| H2 | C2 | MMP-047 | BLACK |
| H3 | C3 | MMP-003 | RED |
| H4 | C4 | MMP-007 | YELLOW |
| H8 | C8 | | SILVER |
| H11 | C62 | MMP-001 | FLAT WHITE |
| H12 | C33 | MMP-047 | FLAT BLACK |
| H15 | C65 | MMP-048 | BRIGHT BLUE |
| H37 | C43 | | WOOD BROWN |
| H39 | C67 | | PURPLE |
| H47 | C41 | MMP-012 | RED BROWN |
| H70 | C60 | MMP-056 | GRAY |
| | | | |

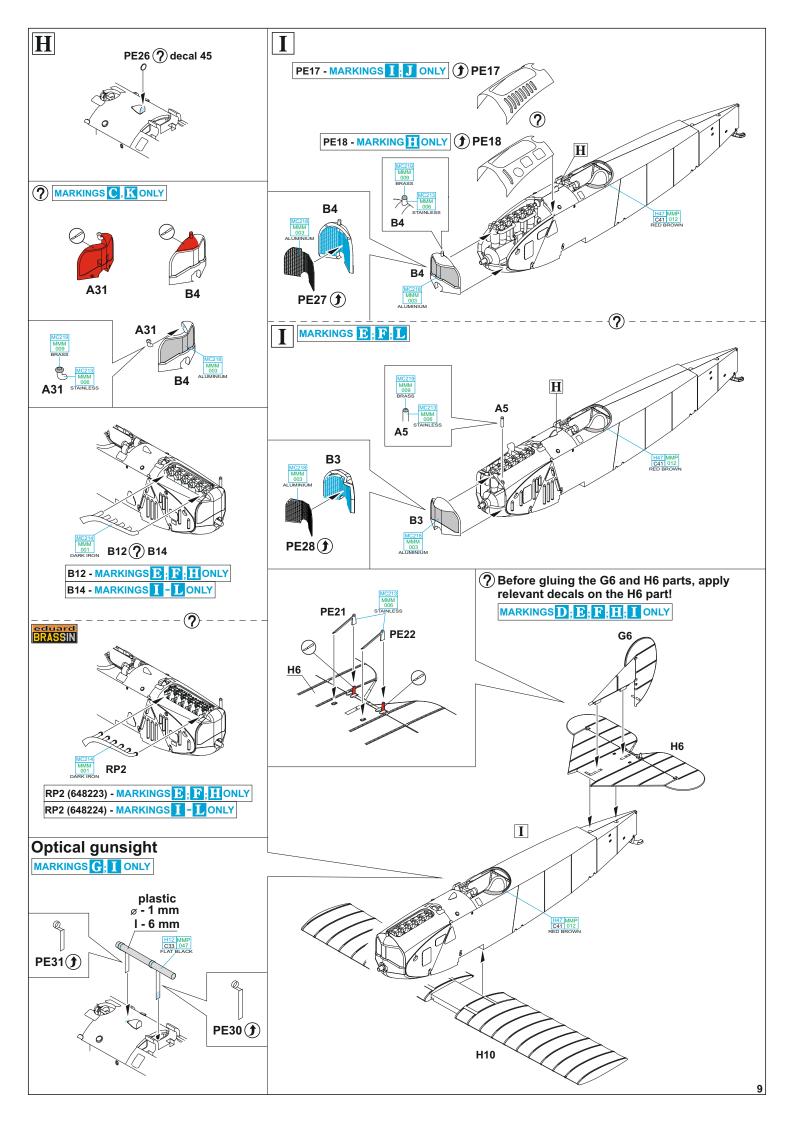
| GSi Creos | (GUNZE) | MISSION MODELS | |
|-----------|----------|----------------|-------------|
| AQUEOUS | Mr.COLOR | PAINTS | |
| H85 | C45 | | SAIL COLOR |
| H315 | C315 | MMP-069 | GRAY |
| H413 | C113 | MMP-090 | YELLOW |
| H414 | C114 | MMP-003 | RED |
| H418 | C118 | MMP-055 | LIGHT BLUE |
| H422 | C122 | MMP-053 | LIGHT GREEN |
| Mr.META | L COLOR | METALLICS | |
| MC | 213 | MMM-006 | STEEL |
| MC | 214 | MMM-001 | DARK IRON |
| MC | 218 | MMM-003 | ALUMINIUM |
| MC | 219 | MMM-009 | BRASS |

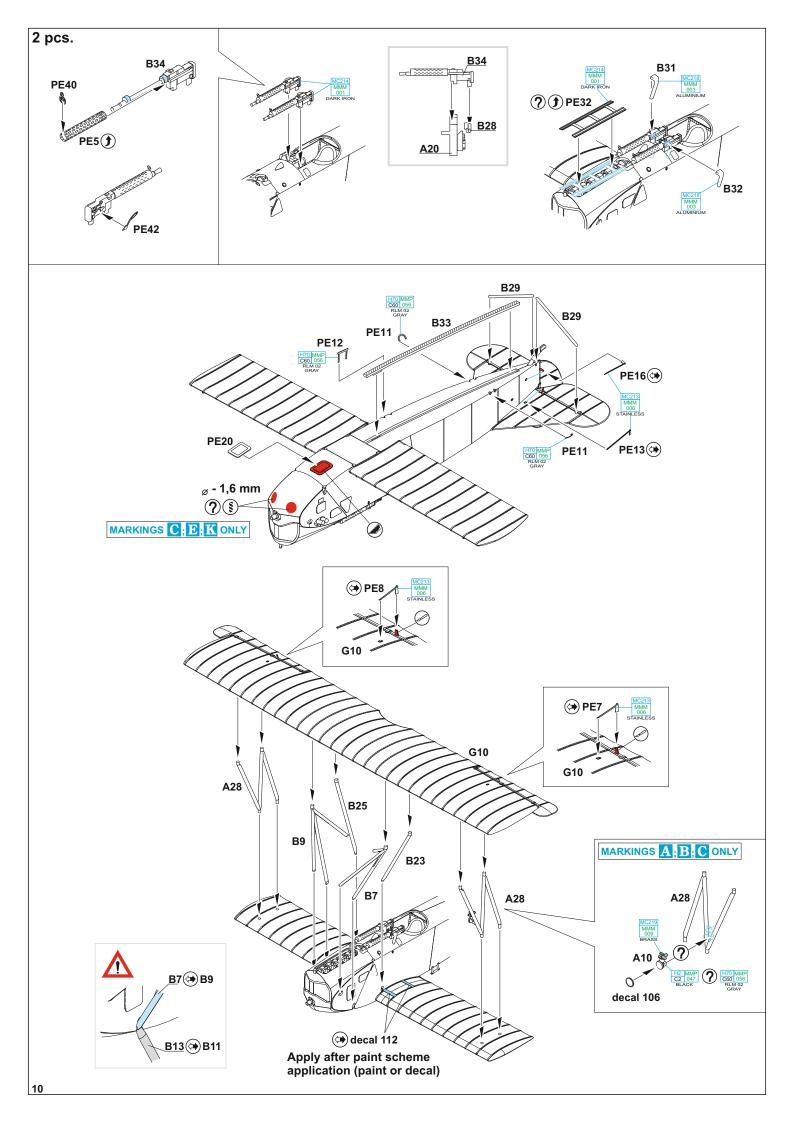


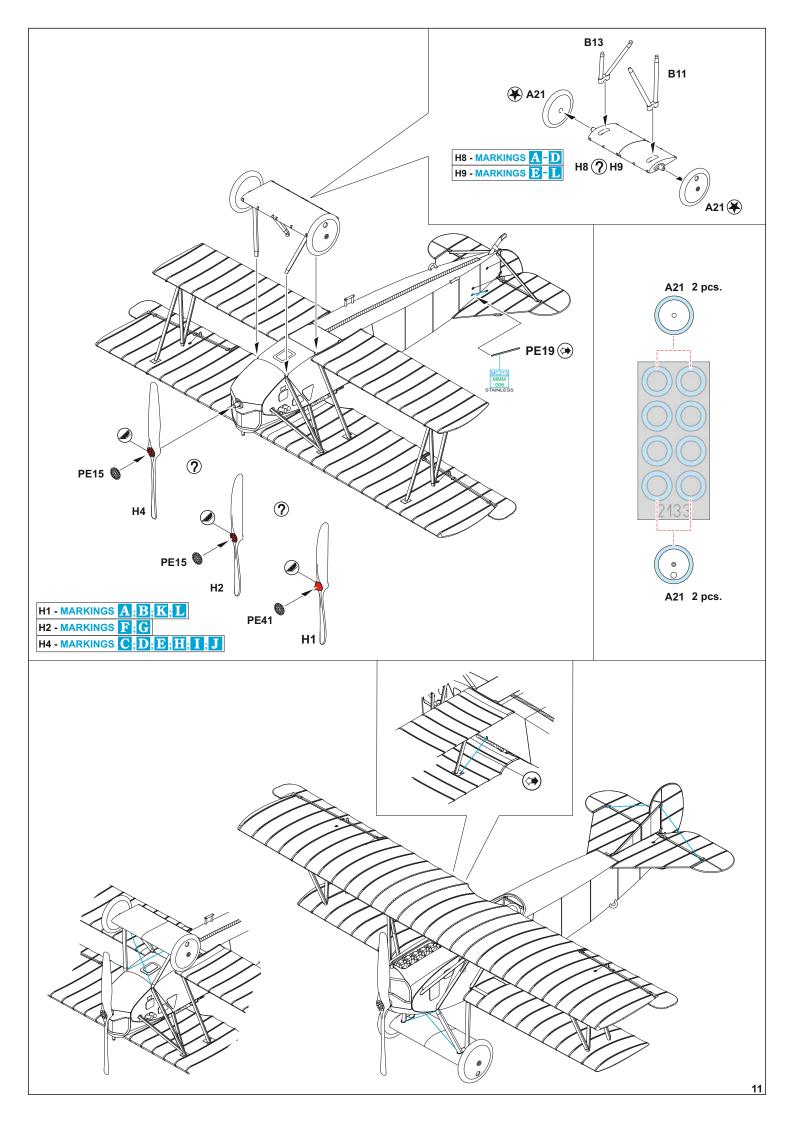






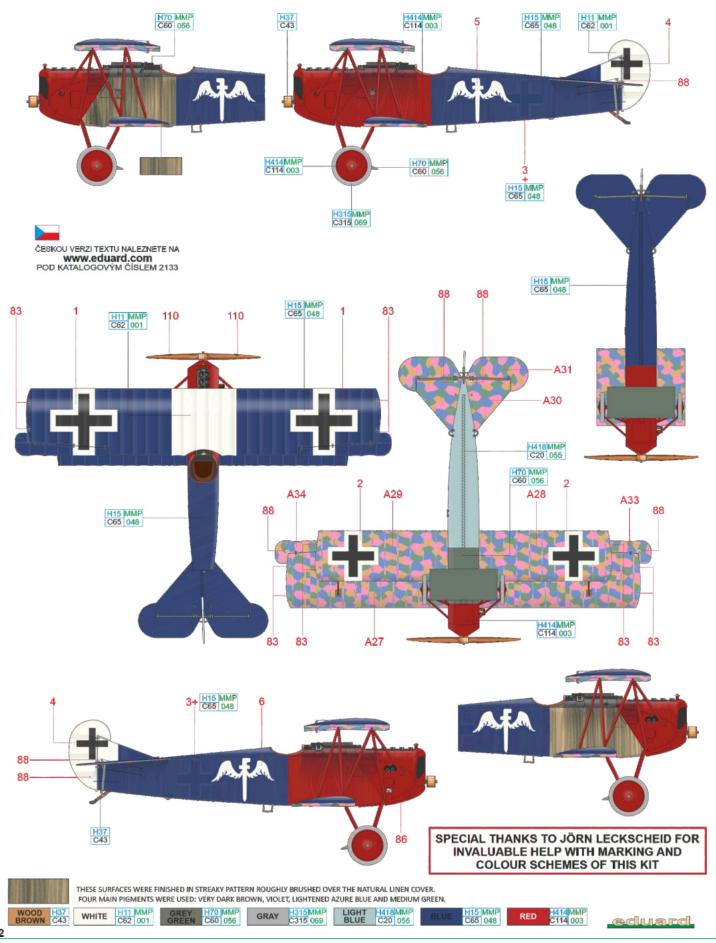






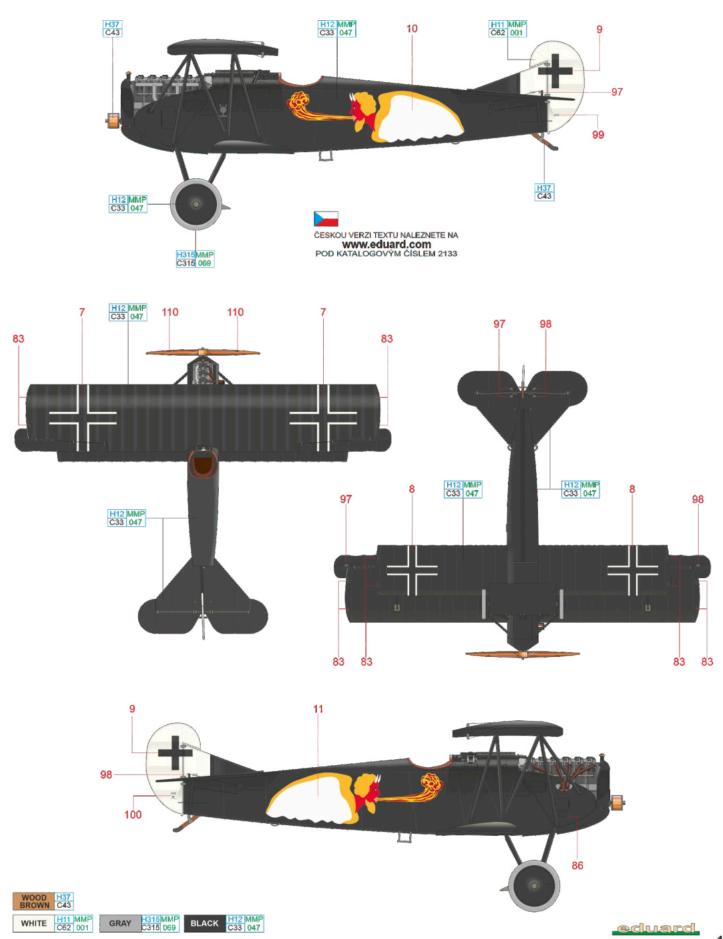
A Fokker D.VII Early, mil. No unknown, Hptm. Rudolf Berthold, CO of JG II, Le Mesnil-Nesle, France, June 1918

The first D.VII of combative and patriotic 44 victories ace Rudolf Berthold was of early production batch and is well known thanks to the photo, showing it in the colours of Jasta 15 (Berthold was leading it before promoted to the JG II command), i.e. red nose and middle blue fuselage and upper surfaces of the wings. The abovementioned photo depicts the aircraft in unfinished state of paint job when part of the fuselage was still left in original factory streaked painting. It was overpainted later as the reports state. You can choose which one scheme you prefer. The bottom of the fuselage was either left in original factory light blue colour, or also overpainted by middle blue. Regarding the bottom side of the wings we tend to the "lozenge" four colour light variant, but some sources are stating light blue overpaint of it.



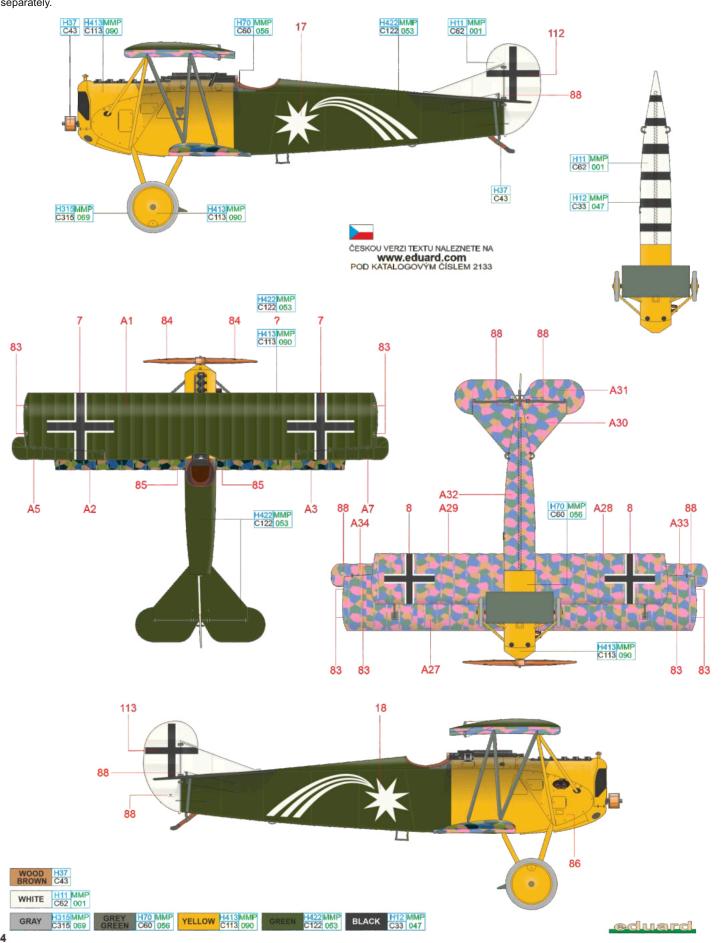
Fokker D.VII Early, 365/18, Lt. Josef Carl Peter Jacobs, CO of Jasta 7, St Marguerite, France, August 1918

Long serving commander of Jasta 7 (from August 2, 1917 till the end of the war), the 47 victory ace, was famous for his all black Fokkers Dr.I and D.VII marked with the distinct flame-breathing devils' head painted on both sides of the fuselage as his personal emblem. While the shape of the devil is well documented on the Dr.I, there is only one rather poor photo of Jacobs' D.VII, so the shape of the devil depicted here and in the decals is reconstruction based on visible details on the D.VII, but taking into consideration the shape used on Dr.I, where no other clue exists. Jacobs' D.VII was photographed with upper engine cowling removed, which was a common quick-fix to the overheating problems following the self-ignition of phosphorous ammunition in several D.VIIs in mid-July.



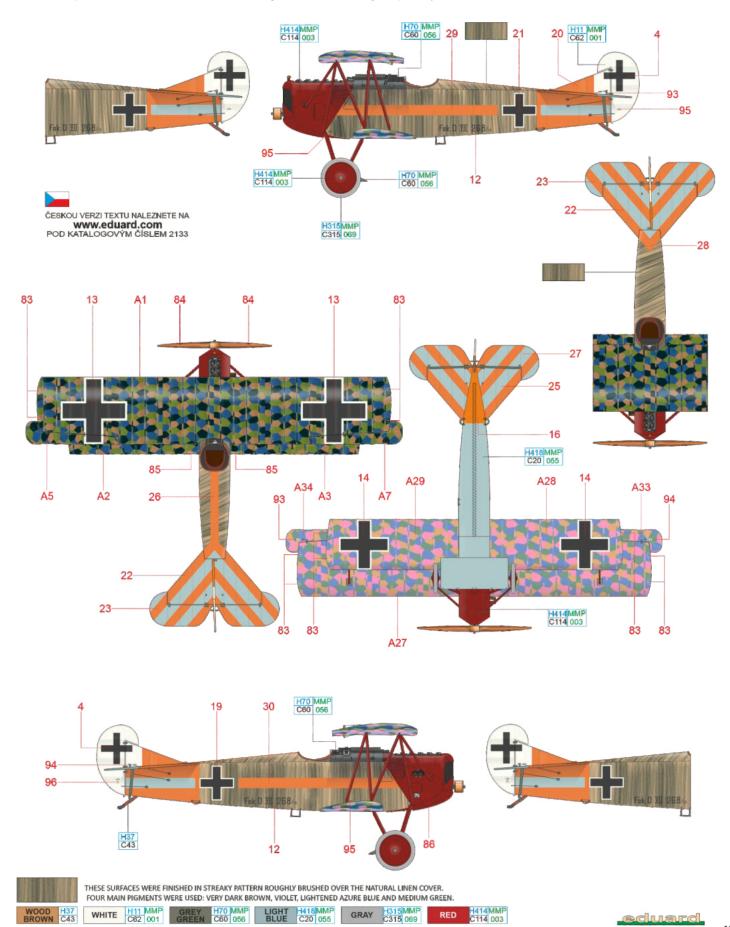
Fokker D.VII Early, 387/18, Oblt. Harald Auffarth, CO of Jasta 29, Aertrycke, Belgium, October 1918

Flying this D.VII, Harald Auffarth managed to shoot down several aircraft but also experienced one forced landing with it after catching some defensive fire from the observer of a DH-9 from 206th USAS Squadron on October 5, 1918. The D.VII survived and Auffarth scored also the last of his 29 victories with it. According to the photo and Jasta 29 reports the D.VII of Harald Auffarth sported the usual colours of Jasta 29, i.e. yellow nose with green fuselage and personal marking of white comet insignia on both sides. The upper side of top wing was painted either green or yellow as a common practice of personal mounts of the Jasta leaders. There is some uncertainty regarding the type of "lozenge" fabric used. Although the four-colour variant should be the right one according to the most respected sources, some possibility of five-colour variant is still open. An alternative set of five-colour "lozenge" decals can be bought separately.



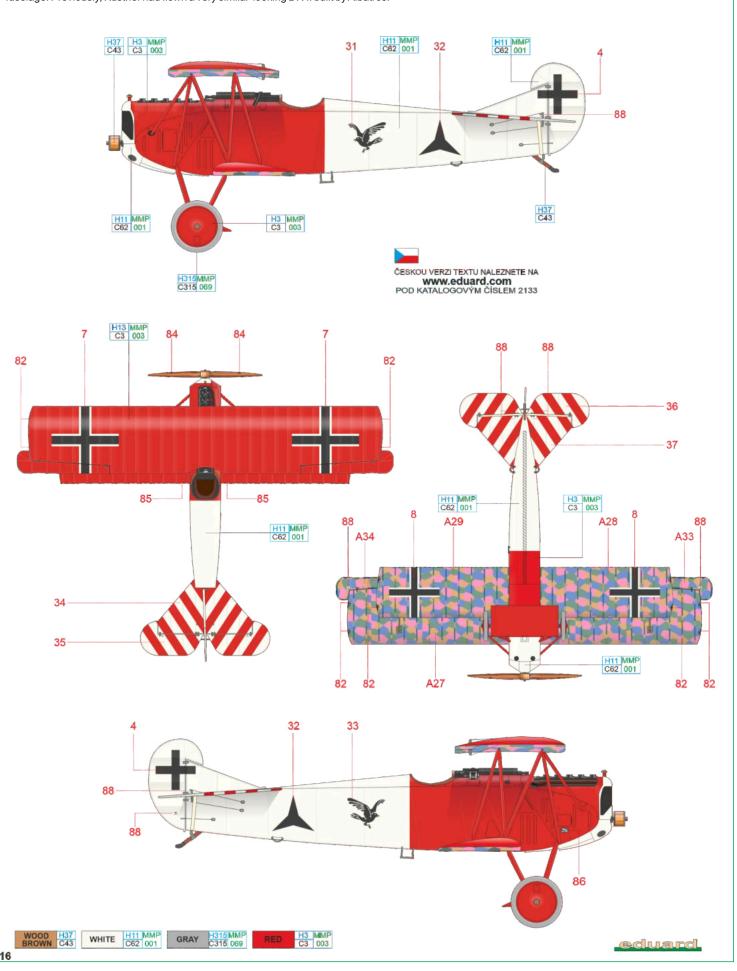
Fokker D.VII Early, 286/18, Vzfw. Willi Gabriel, Jasta 11, Cappy, France, May 1918

Willi Gabriel had just a brief career as a fighter pilot, after he spent most of war flying two seaters. He finally managed to persuade JG I commander Wilhelm Reinhardt to assign him to Jasta 11, where he started his fighter pilot career on May 17, 1918. Adding 10 victories to his only one he achieved during his observing pilot career he ran into troubles due to his lack of discipline and was finally "grounded" and posted out of the Jasta 11 in August 1918. His early D.VII sported very colourful scheme with orange rear end, fuselage stripes and light blue/orange chevrons on the horizontal stabilizer and elevator. The orange fuselage stripes were painted later. You can therefore choose in which state You prefer to finish this marking. There is some uncertainty regarding the type of "lozenge" fabric used. Although the four-colour variant should be the right one according to the most respected sources, some possibility of five-colour variant is still open. An alternative set of five-colour "lozenge" decals can be bought separately.



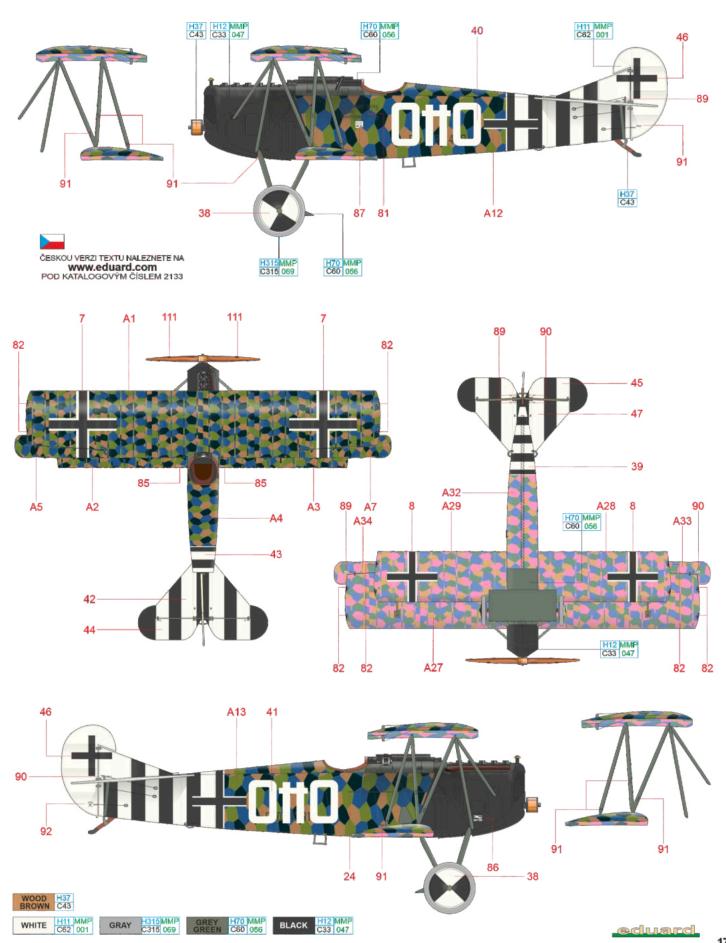
Fokker D.VII Late, mil. No unknown, Heinz Küstner, Jasta 18, Habsheim, Möntingen, Metz, France, October/November 1918

Typical Jasta 18 marking of red and white colours was applied also to the Heinz Küstner's mount, but according to some sources the paint job was not finished on the bottom of the wings which therefore stayed in four colour "lozenge" printed fabric. The black raven become Jasta's trademark after its leader August Raben (raven in German) made it famous on his plane. Küstner's late variant of D.VII sported also "Mercedes" three-pointed black star behind the Raven. The tail unit has been mostly depicted with black stripes, but, according to the newest findings they should be red as well as the wings and front fuselage. Previously, Küstner had flown a very similar-looking D.VII built by Albatros.



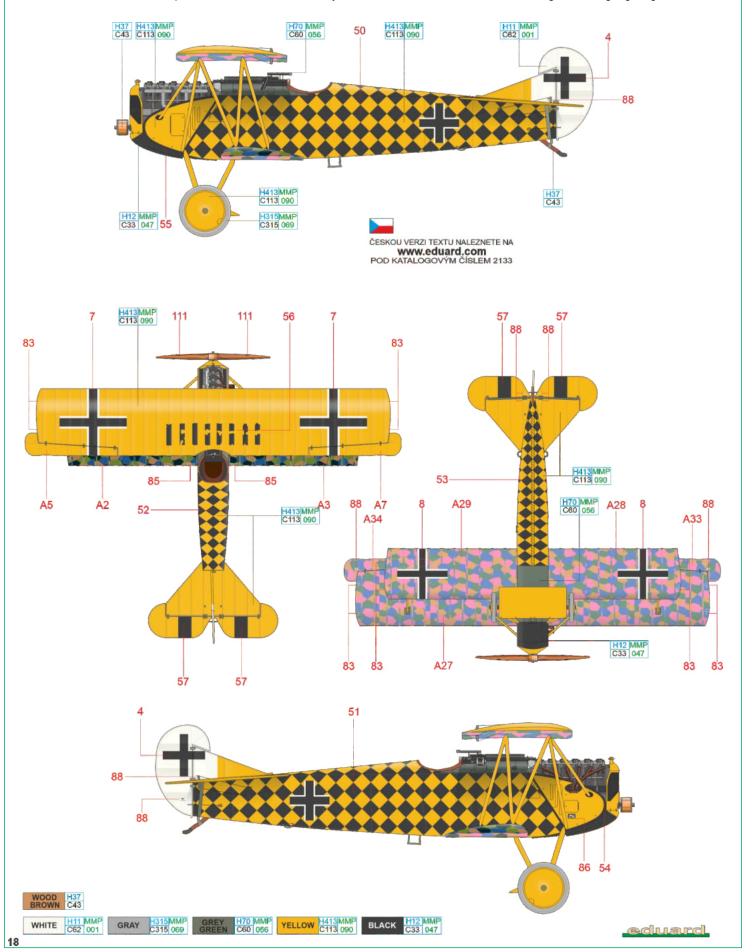
Fokker D.VII Late, 4301/18, Vzfw. Otto Heinrich Baurose, Jasta 71, Habsheim, France, November 1918

A little is known about Otto Heinrich Baurose, the fighter pilot with no official aerial victories. He served with Jasta 20 from April 16, 1917 till February 6, 1918, after that period he was moved to Jasta 71. He might be one of the victims of the famous Billy Bishop's raid on June 2, 1917, when Canadian pilot destroyed several aircraft during his solo dawn patrol; some in the air, some on the ground when taxiing. If so, Baurose survived... His aircraft was typical late production D.VII from Schwerin factory and is well known thanks to several photos, where the inscription Otto and B/W tail stripes are clearly visible. Also removed top engine cowling is evident, either due to the maintenance or as the means for better engine cooling during hot summer.



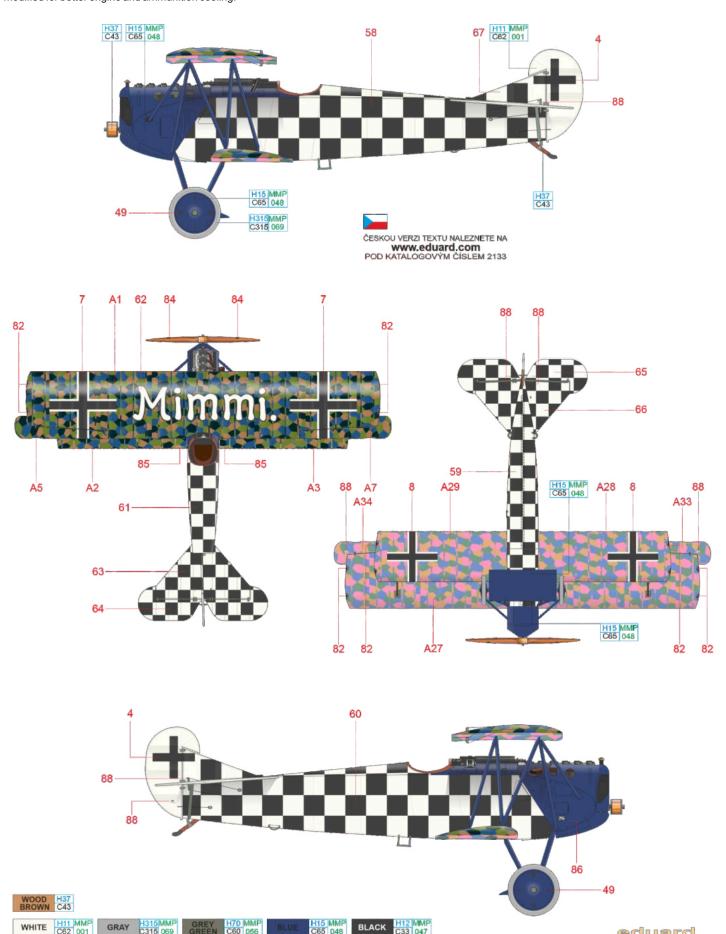
G Fokker D.VII Early, mil. No unknown, Oblt z. S. Gotthard Sachsenberg, CO of MFJ 1, Coolkerke, Belgium, September

The second highest scoring ace of all the German marine pilots in WWI, Gotthard Sachsenberg (second only to Theo Osterkamp), achieved 31 victories and was decorated with Pour le Mérite on August 5, 1918. From October 1918 Sachsenberg led the first naval air wing, the Marine Jagdgruppe 1. After the War he formed the Jagdgeschwader Sachsenberg, providing the aerial support to Freikorps units fighting on Baltic borders of Germany. His aircraft from the time of leading the MFJ1 unit sported diagonal black checkerboard painted over yellow fuselage. Eight partly worn black stripes on the upper side of top wing are considered to be kind of reinforcement tape, as the linen cover of upper wing centre section had a tendency to part company with the airframe during the fierce combat manoeuvres. The black stripes on the elevator were in contrary the identification marks of MFJ 1. Sachsenberg used an Oigee gunsight on his D.VII.



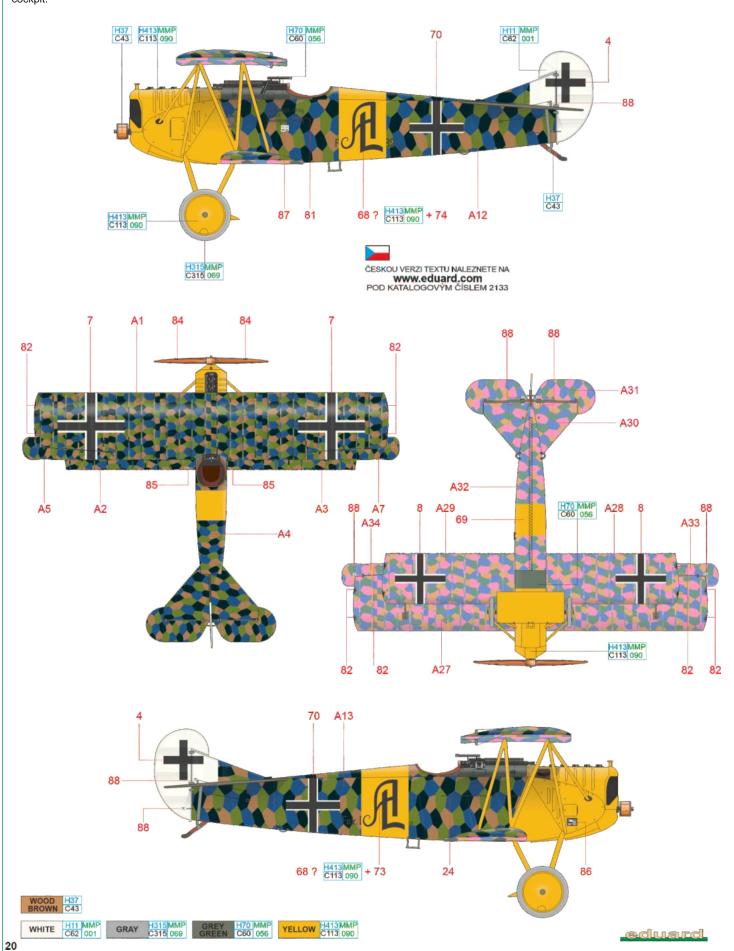
Fokker D.VII Mid, 505/18, 2592, OStv. Friedrich Wilhelm Hippert, Grenzschutz-Ost, East Prussia,

One of the most colourful D.VIIs used to be the mount of Wilhelm Hippert, the WWI ace with eight victories. Hippert was fighting with the Mimmi, the pet name of his belowed fiancée Wilhelmine Bückert, painted on the upper side of the top wing. Willi served with FA(A) 227 during 1917 and achieved one aerial victory shared with his observer. Transferred to Jasta 39 he scored for the first time as a fighter pilot on October 2, 1917. He moved again on March 5, 1918, joining Jasta 74. It was long believed, this checkerboard D.VII was operated by this unit, but latest findings revealed the D.VII in this particular appearance is a post war marking, when serving with Grenzschutz-Ost, helping the Freikorps to fight in the eastern regions of Germany. The top engine cowlings were field-modified for better engine and ammunition cooling.



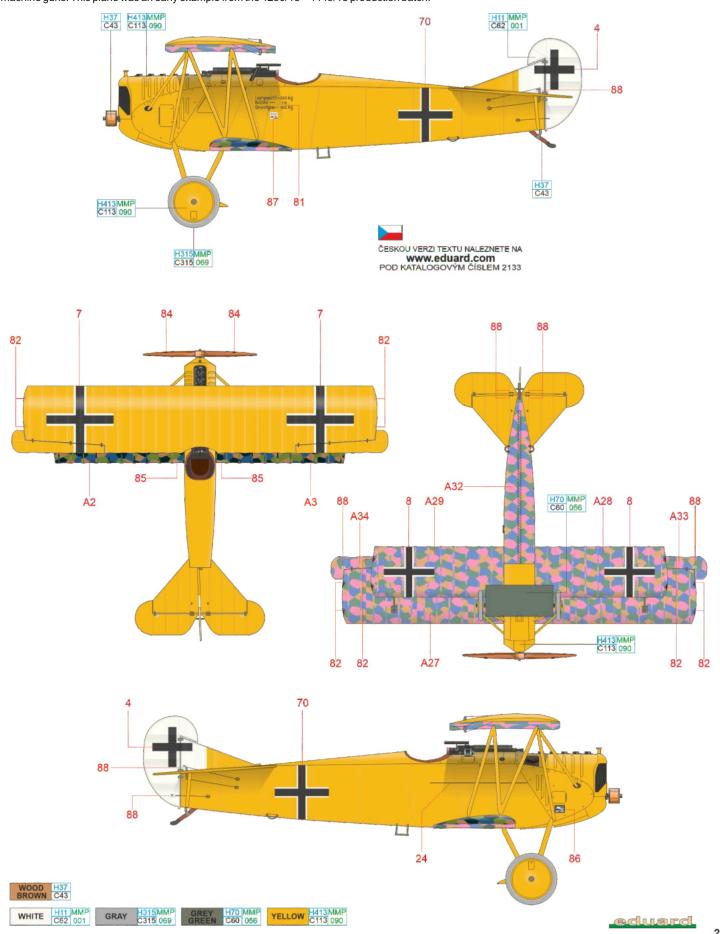
Fokker D.VIIF 4282/18, Ltn. d. R. Arthur Laumann, Jasta 10, Bernes, France, August 1918

As an artillery soldier Laumann was sent to pilot training only after many requests in August 1917. Eight months later he joined FA(A) 265, the unit led by his brother, for just brief service, as he was transferred to Jasta 66 in May. Laumann soon became ace there and even commander of the unit on July 21, 1918. He recorded last five of his 28 victories when leading Jasta 10, where he flew this D.VIIF from the mid production batch. Apart of the factory "lozenge" cover, the yellow nose and wide band around the fuselage with his personal AL inscription made his D.VII something special. The yellow colour of the band was considered only as probable but has been confirmed by his combat reports. Laumann was one of the pilots flying with optical gunsight mounted in front of the cockpit.



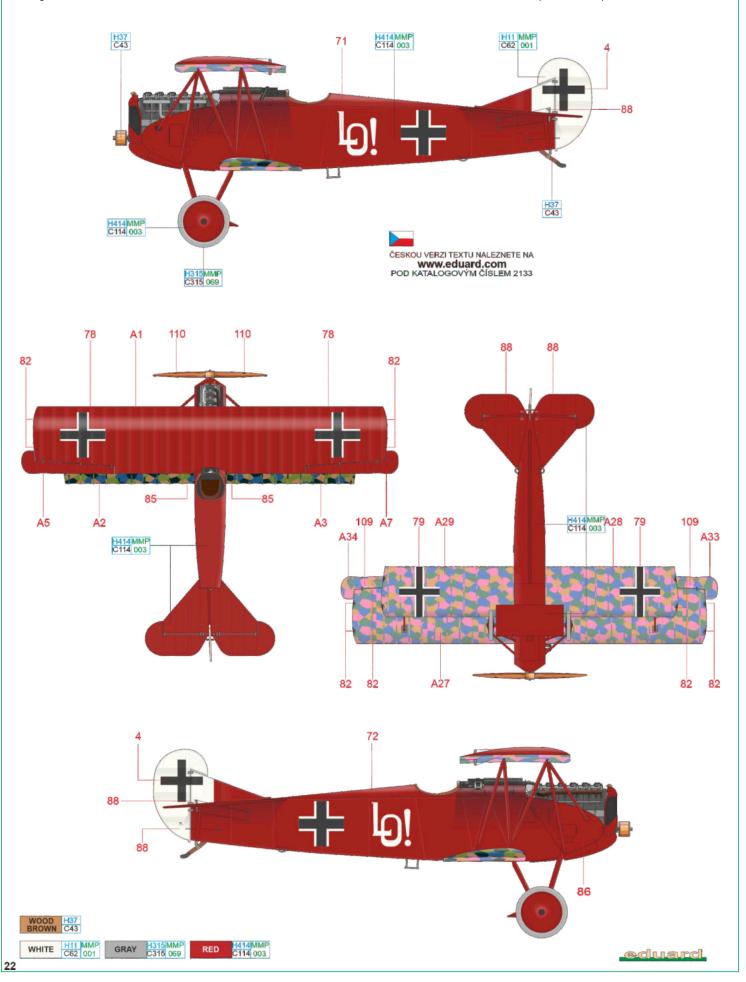
Fokker D.VIIF mil. No unknown, Oblt. Erich Loewenhardt, Jasta 10, Puisieux Ferme, France, August 1918

Erich Loewenhardt spent first two years of the war with infantry. He started flying in 1916 as an observer. After successful application for pilot training he joined FA(A) 265 in 1916 prior to undertaking fighter training early in 1917. He joined Jasta 10 thereafter in March 1917. He was appointed commander of the unit after scoring his first 15 victories on April 1, 1918 and received the Pour le Mérite on May 31. Two months later, on August 10, he shot down his 54th and last victim, but collided with another pilot from Jasta 11 during this combat. Although successfully bailing out, his parachute did not open and the Jasta 10 leader fell to his death. No photo of this yellow D.VII is known, but its appearance is well described by various eye-witness accounts, who described the plane as being "canary yellow". Contrary to most of the reconstructions we are convinced the upper side of top wing was yellow, as well as the cowling under the machine guns. This plane was an early example from the 4250/18 – 4449/18 production batch.



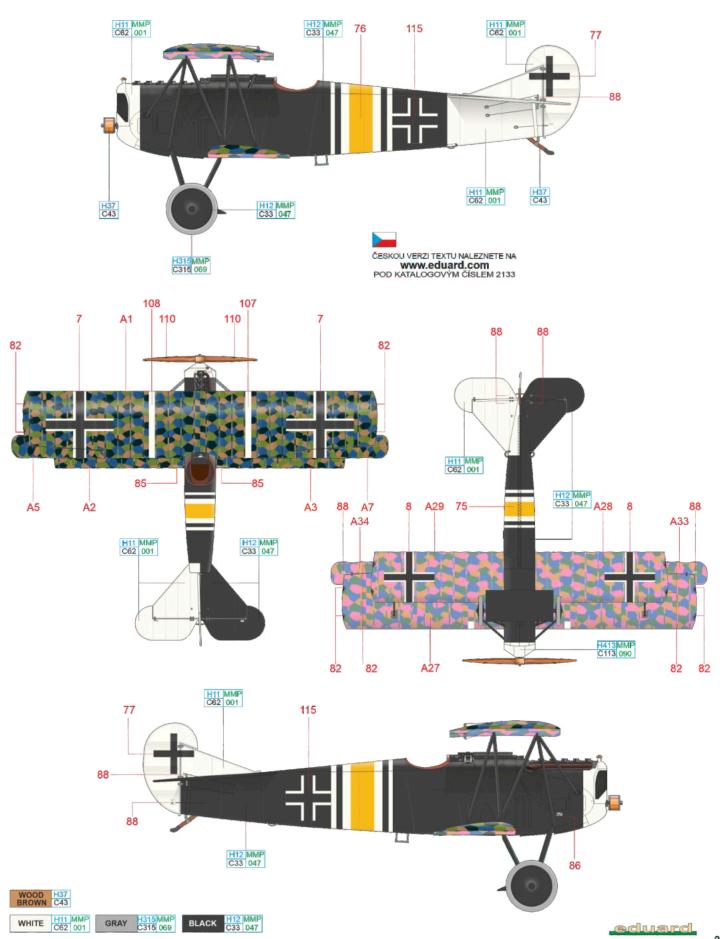
Fokker D.VIIF, 4253/18, Oblt. Ernst Udet, Jasta 4, Beugneux, France, July 1918

The all-red BMW powered mount of Ernst Udet reached Jasta 4 in late July 1918. Udet flew this plane with great success in August 1918, being credited with 20 victories in just 20 days. Due to unknown reasons the upper wing of his mount was changed for one coming from an O.A.W.-built D.VII. Udet, the highest scoring German ace surviving the war, flew this D.VIIF without the upper cowling to improve the cooling of the engine and ammunition. The Lo! painting on the fuselage was there to honour his fiancée Eleanor Zink, which he married in 1920. The famous "Du doch nicht!!" inscription was not present on this aircraft.



Fokker D.VIIF, mil. No unknown, Rtm. Karl Bolle, CO of Jasta 2, Lens Mons, France, October 1918

Karl Bolle started his aviation career as the pilot of KG4 and later of Kampstaffel 23, where he was flying with Lothar von Richthofen as his observer. He was moved to the Jasta 28 during the summer of 1917 and after becoming an ace with five victories, he was promoted to command the Jasta 2 on February 20, 1918. Bolle was leading this famous unit till the end of the war, his tally counting 36 aerial victories. On August 28, 1918, he received the Pour le Mérite. After the war he remained active pilot and was appointed Director of the German Transportation Flying School in 1920. This aircraft of Karl Bolle carried the wide yellow band with white and black outlines and was a typical mid-production Schwerin built D.VIIF with the BMW IIIa engine and also came from the 4250/18 – 4449/18 production batch.



Fokker D.VII (Fokker)

RIB TAPES

