

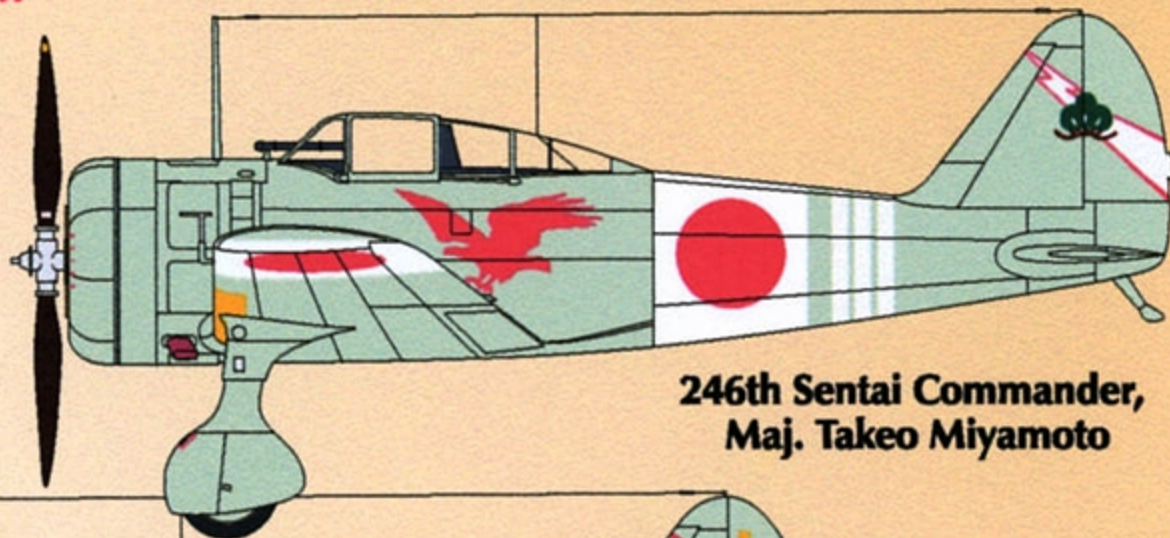
**Lifelike Decals**

*Limited Edition!*

48-056

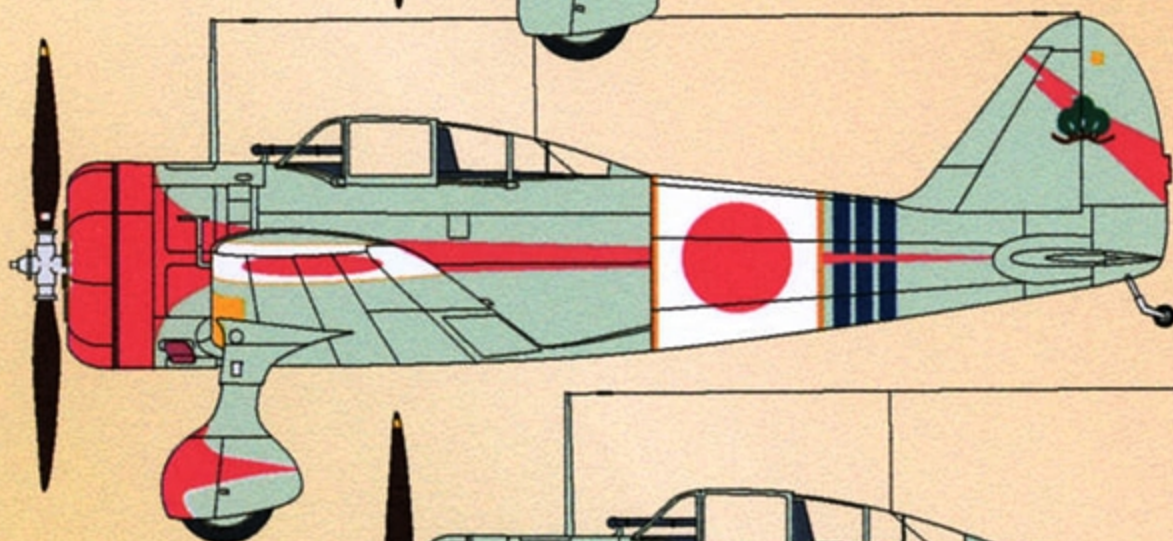
# Type 97 Fighters Part 4

**A/C #1**



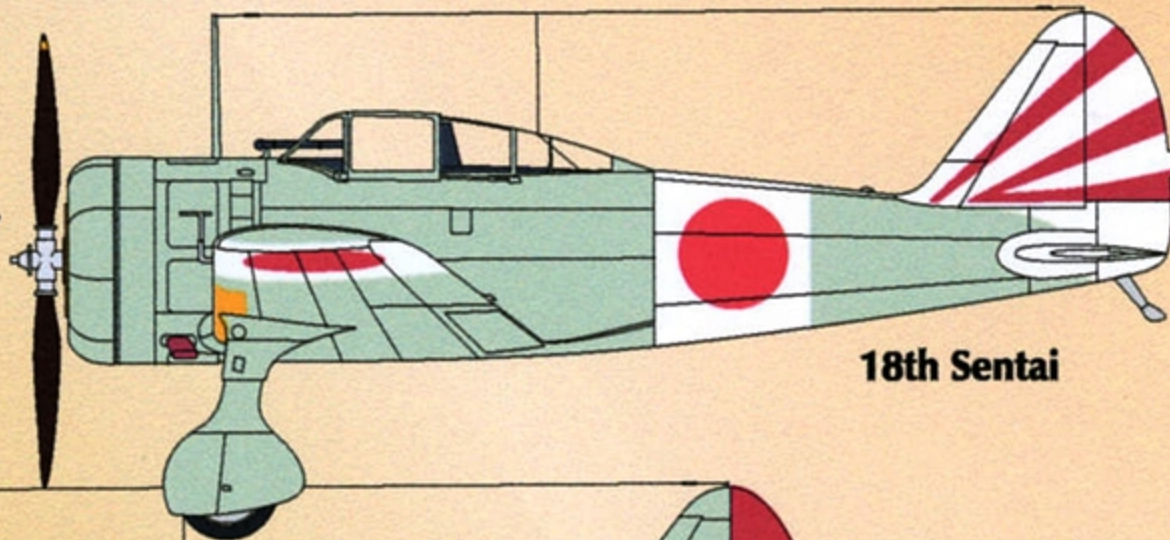
**246th Sentai Commander,  
Maj. Takeo Miyamoto**

**A/C #2**



**Cpl. S. Kajinami,  
246th Sentai**

**A/C #7**



**18th Sentai**

**A/C #9**



**1st Sentai,  
2nd Chutai**

Recommended kit: Hasegawa Type 97 Fighter  
Lifelike Decals wants to hear from you and your input.

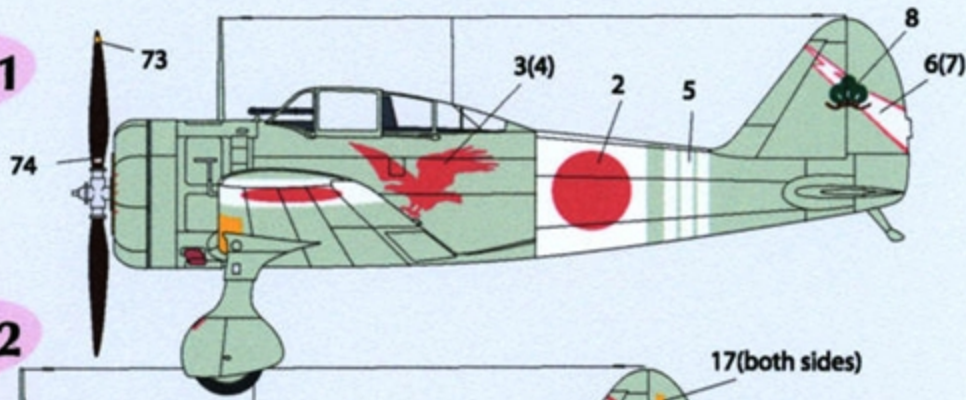
e-mail: [lifelike\\_d@kcn.jp](mailto:lifelike_d@kcn.jp)

<http://lifelikedecals.sakura.ne.jp>

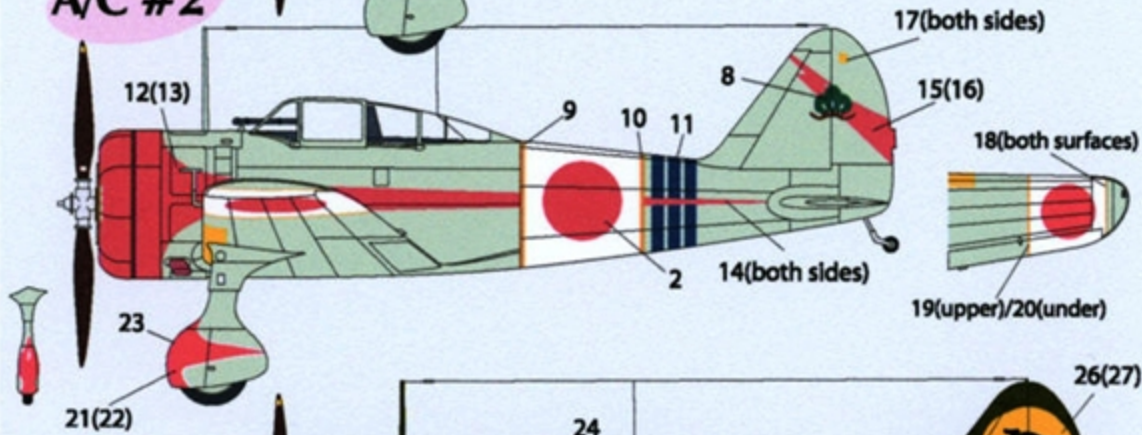
*(A total of 9 a/c are featured herein!)*

# 48-056 Type 97 Fighters Part 4

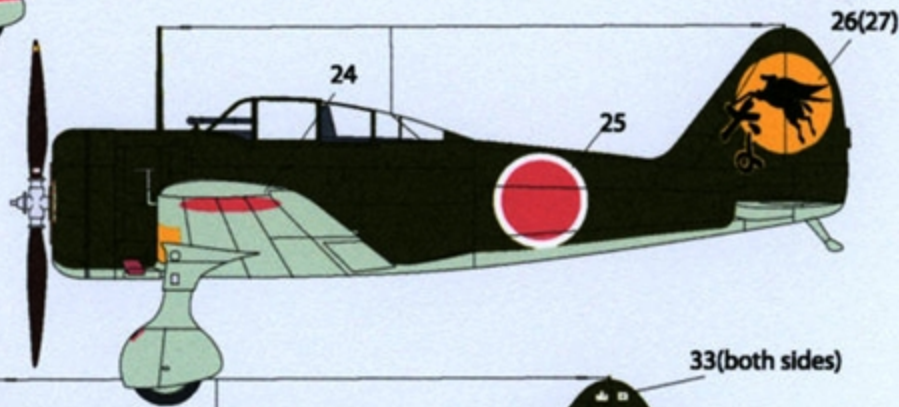
A/C #1



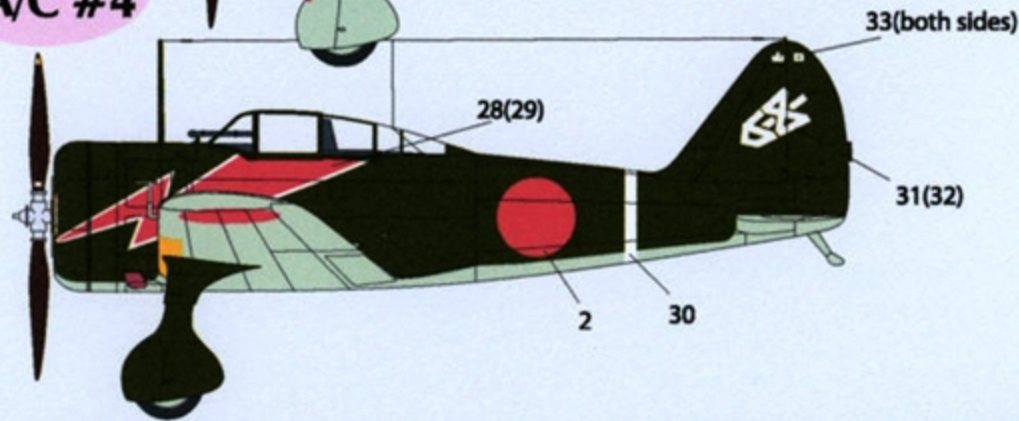
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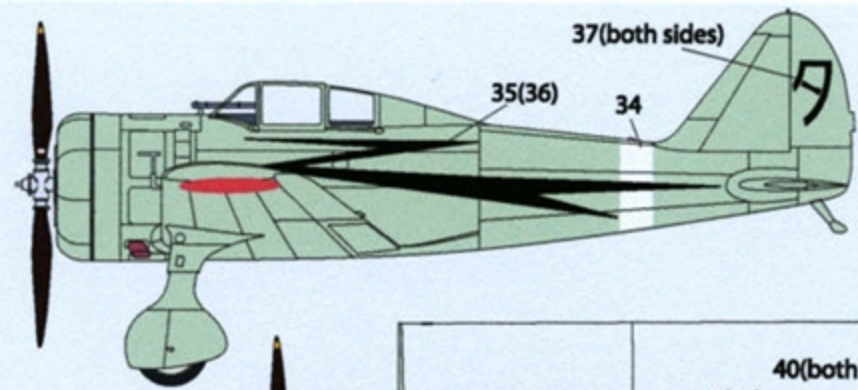
A/C #3



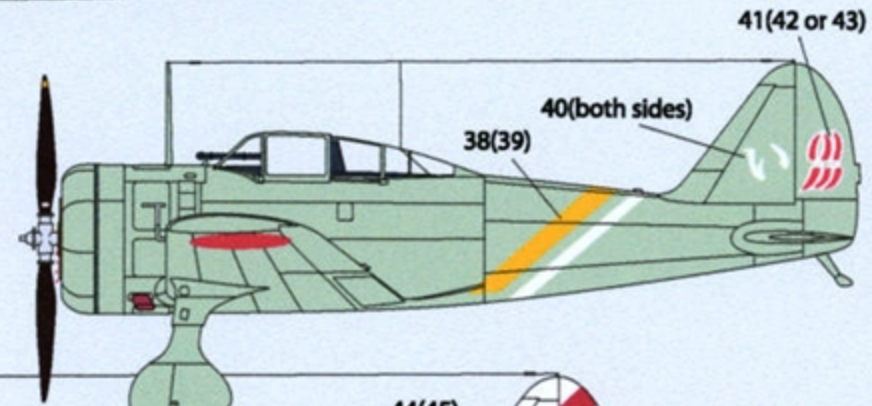
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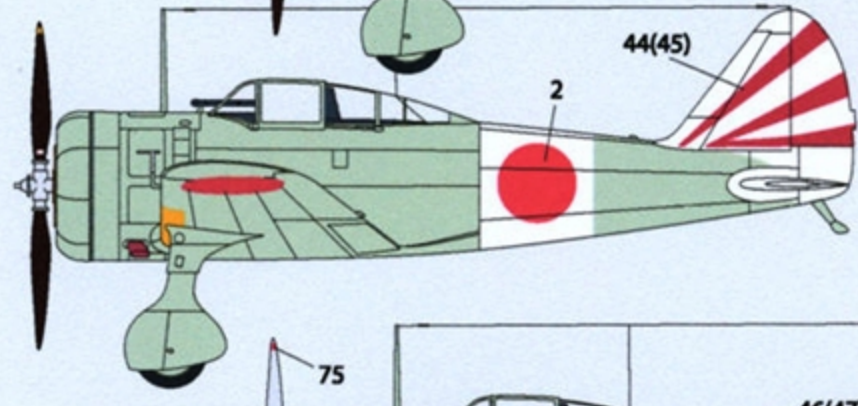
A/C #5



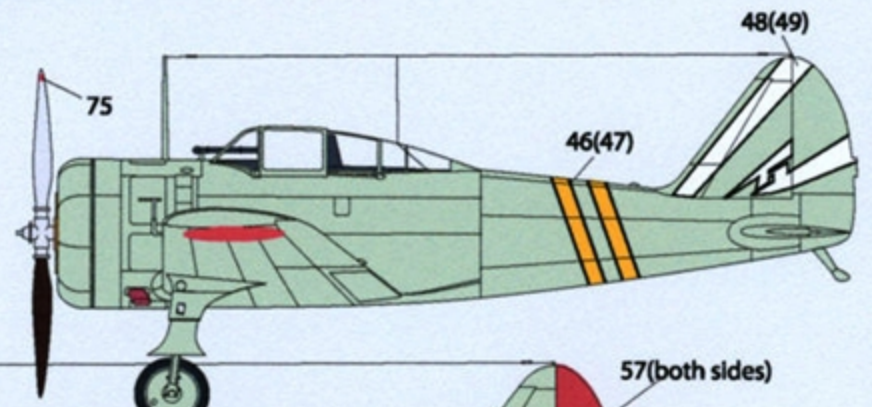
A/C #6



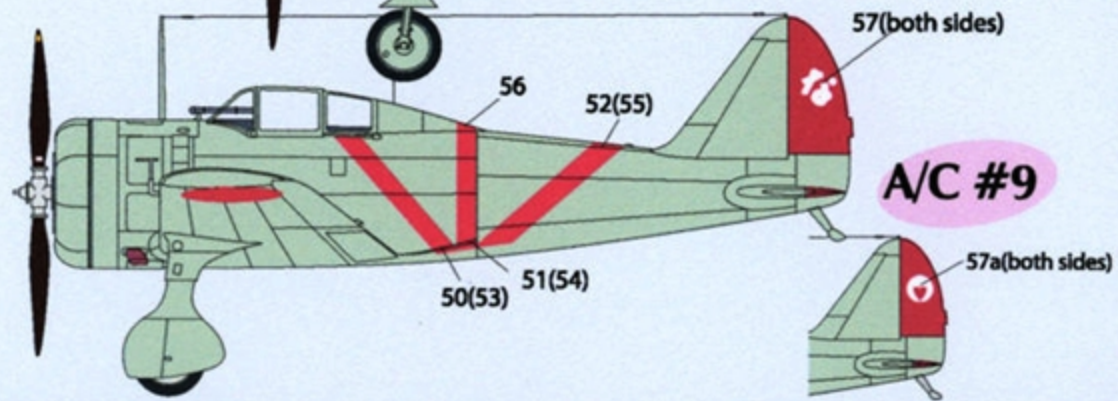
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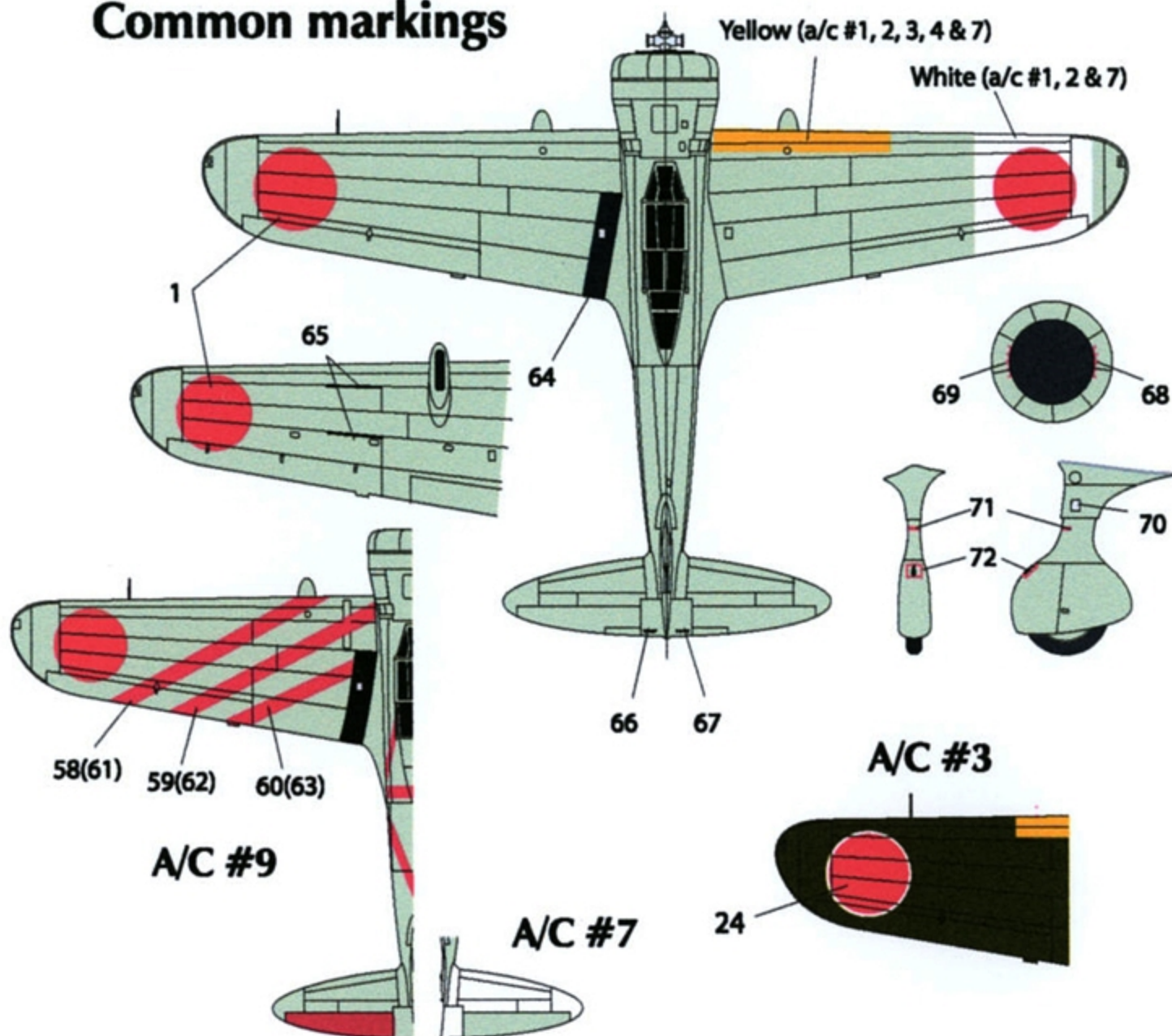
A/C #8



A/C #9



# Common markings



Special thanks to Mr. Aida for introduction of ref. 13, Mr. Ryusuke Ishiguro for identifying Shimizu AB, and Mr. Mark Smith for the check of English captions

## References

- (1) [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/59/Ki-49-I\\_letecka\\_skola\\_hamamacu\\_1chutal.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/59/Ki-49-I_letecka_skola_hamamacu_1chutal.jpg) (original photo shown in Koku Fan, August 1997 issue.)
- (2) Koku Fan, February 1976 issue (Bunrindo)
- (3) Revi magazine #34 (Revi Publishing, 2000)
- (4) Pictorial History of Air War over Japan—Japanese Army Air Force (Y. Watanabe, Hara Publications, 1980).
- (5) Scale Aviation (Japanese magazine), November 2013.
- (6) Imperial Japanese Army Air Service Illustrated (fighter edition) (Y. Nishikawa, Shin-Kigensha/Japan, 2015).
- (7) Model Art Extra No. 619, Technical Guide for Painting Imperial Japanese Army Aircraft Models (Model Art, 2002).
- (8) Famous Aircraft of The World #29—Army Type 97 Fighter (Bunrindo, July 1991).
- (9) Maru Mechanic No. 12 (Koujinsha, 1994).
- (10) Pacific War series #46, Type 4 Fighter Hayate (Gakken Books, 2004).
- (11) Photo Collection of Imperial Japanese Army Aircraft (Delta Publishing (Japan), September 1994).
- (12) Model Art Extra 263, Army type 3 fighter Hien (Model Art 1985).
- (13) Daitoua Sensou Gahou (Pacific War Illustrated) 9, #137 (Mainichi Newspaper, Nov. 8, 1944).
- (14) Model Art Extra #451, IJAAF Special Attack Units (K. Osuo, Model Art, 1995).
- (15) Japanese Army Air Force Fighter Units and Their Aces 1931~1945 (Hata, Izawa and Shores, Grub Street, 2002)/ Japanese Army Fighter Aces 1931~45 (Stackpole Books, 2012)
- (16) Koku Joho (or Airview, Japanese magazine), January 1965.
- (17) Koku Fan Illustrated #42, Imperial Japanese Army and Navy Aircraft colors and markings (Bunrin-do, 1988)
- (18) Osprey Aircraft of the Aces #103, Ki-27 "Nate" Aces (N. Millman, Osprey Publishing, 2013)
- (19) Model Art Extra #395, camouflage and marking of IJAAF type 1 fighter Hayabusa (Model Art, 1992).
- (20) Koku Joho (or Airview, Japanese magazine), June 1970.

All subject a/c are painted in "No. 1 gray green" color specified in Koku-Kikaku (IJA AF Aircraft Specification) #39, unless otherwise stated. Samples of this color shown currently on the internet indicate light gray color with little green tint, but the color photos (especially that of flying Ki-49 Donryu (Helen) belonging to Hamamatsu Flying School) taken by Mr. Shunkichi Kikuchi (official photographer of IJA AF) (ref. 1) and the various color photos of derelict IJA AF a/c taken by US forces (like ref. 2 and 3) show it is gray with distinct green tint, and is quite similar to German RLM 02

It is usual practice that marks 59 and 60, the fine degree markings (used to calibrate synchronization when the guns are fired through the propeller's arc) were very neatly masked over on the cowling's leading edge before the red or green was applied, preserving the original grey green background. Photographic evidence shows this practice was followed for a/c #2.

**A/C #1: Ki-27 Otsu flown by 246th Sentai Commander, Major Takeo Miyamoto, Kakogawa AB/Hyogo Pref., December 1942.**

The only photo of this a/c is shown in ref. 4, with an illustration provided in ref. 5 and 6, and a model finished in this marking is shown in ref. 7. Regrettably this photo shows only the middle to upper left portion of the red eagle mark (even the eyes and beak are red) below the cockpit, and no information is available on the marking of its rear fuselage and tail. At this time no HQ Chutai was formed, so we followed the assumption of ref. 7 that this a/c carried 1st Chutai marking on its tail. The 1st Chutai marking is usually shown as a white lightning bolt, but a photo in ref. 8 clearly shows red outline on the white lightning bolt. If indeed this a/c carried the 1st Chutai marking, it typically would have carried a number at the top of the rudder as well, but no information is available.

On its rear fuselage may be one, two or three white bands. A three-band mark (#5) is provisionally provided in this decal. All Hinomaru marks are placed on white bands to show home defense duties. Please paint these white bands, as well as the yellow identification band on the leading edge of the wings.

**A/C #2: Ki-27 Otsu flown by Corporal Susumu Kajinami of 246th Sentai 2nd Chutai, Kakogawa AB/Hyogo Pref., January 1943.**

A photo of tail section of this a/c is shown in ref. 8, and its color illustration (with some inaccuracies) is shown in ref. 9. The red lightning bolt of Sentai marking on its tail indicates 2nd Chutai, and the 3 fuselage bands are said to be "Nasu-kon" (eggplant blue) over which the red flash runs through. Ref. 10 shows 3 blue color samples (6-1~3) of Koku-Kikaku (Aircraft Specification) 8609, and blue color sample 6-1 matches closely to "Nasu-Kon" with some red tint. This a/c carried a tail wheel (which is very similar to that of Hayabusa) with a target-towing wire, but we think the original condition was the normal skid. All Hinomaru marks are placed on white bands with narrow orange outline, which is said to be characteristic of 2nd Chutai. According to the photos in ref. 8 and 11 the flash design on the landing gear spats has sweeps higher on the front than usually illustrated. When applying marks 21 and 22 to the gear spats, by trimming any clear film at the front of the spats, and making some small cuts near the front edge with a new blade, the decal should conform to the tricky contour of the wheel spats. Please paint the white bands, as well as the yellow identification band on the leading edge of the wings. A similarly marked Ki-27, "と" (to), was the subject of Hasegawa kit JT108 before.

After finishing training as fighter pilot in 246th Sentai, Corporal Kajinami was then transferred to 68th Sentai in New Guinea (Wewak AB) in late September 1943. He fought with Ki-61 against strong US forces for about a year,

achieved 8 victories (official), and was promoted to Sgt. After the war he changed his family name to his wife's (Koyama), and became a flight instructor in Matsuyama Flying School/Ehime Pref., riding Fuji FA200 Aero Subaru. His interview article is shown in ref. 12. Nick Millman's "Aircraft of the Aces 114: Ki-61 and Ki-100 Aces" (Osprey Publishing, 2015), while focusing on his later IJAAF exploits, also features an interesting profile on Kajinami for English readers.

**A/C #3: Ki-27 Otsu (probably) of some training units in Manchuria, time and location unknown.**

The only known photo of this a/c is shown in ref. 13, which shows only major part of the tail emblem. Very regrettably, the head portion of the horse emblem and left end of "九" (na) is covered by its caption and another article, so the style shown here are our best guess. Its upper surface is painted in No. 21 green color.

Ref. 13 does not have any information on the identity of this flying school, but according to a Japanese website (now defunct) this a/c was assigned to 28th Fighter Training Unit which was located at Shimen AB in northern China in the summer of 1944. In the photo was another Nate of this unit at far distance. Though its marking is far from clear, its fuselage Hinomaru seems to have white outline, and no white band on rear fuselage.

The same website once showed a color illustration with red horse and "九" on yellow circle, but the color of the horse and "九" is definitely darker than "green" of fuselage, so probably they are black. The color of the circle may be white or yellow, but we think yellow is more appropriate, judging from the tonal difference between the circle and white shirt worn by a groundcrew walking behind. Probably yellow identification band is applied on the leading edge of the wings, which should be painted by the modeler.

**A/C #4: Ki-27 Otsu flown by 2nd Lt. Ichi Yamaguchi, leader of the 68th Shinbu-tai, Tenryu AB/Shizuoka Pref., March 30, 1945.**

Two photos of this a/c appear in ref. 14, showing the full marking of the left side. Probably the same marking is applied on the right side also. It is camouflaged in No. 21 green on upper surface and No. 1 grey green on lower surface, and the white outline of Hinomaru is painted over with green to reduce visibility. Though not clearly photographed, the landing gear spats were probably painted in green as well. The numerals 6 and 8 in the tail marking denote 68th Shinbu-tai, and above it was applied the pilot's name. Please paint the yellow identification bands on leading edges of the wings.

68th Shinbu-tai was formed on March 23, 1945 by Hitachi Fighter Training Air Division with 12 Ki-27s. On March 30th it moved from Maewatari AB to Kakogawa AB via Tenryu AB, and then moved to Chiran AB on April 5th via Ashiya AB. 2nd Lt. Yamaguchi perished in the special attack on April 9th against US Task Force off Okinawa.

**A/C #5: Ki-27 Kou flown by M. Sgt. Katsutaro Takahashi of 59th Sentai 1st Chutai (probably), Hankou AB/China, end of 1939.**

The full left side view of this a/c is shown by the photo in ref. 8 along with a color illustration. M. Sgt. Takahashi participated in the air battle of September 15th, 1939 with this a/c, and scored two victories. At that time 59th Sentai was composed of 1st and 2nd Chutai only, and which Chutai he belonged to, as well as the respective Chutai colors of each, differs from reference to reference. According to ref. 15, on that day the 2nd Chutai (including Lt. Kashiide) attacked an enemy formation from above, and scored 11 victories, but the 1st Chutai chased it deep into enemy territory, was attacked by superior number of enemy a/c from above, and suffered 5 a/c (including Chutai leader Yamamoto) lost. From this description it would be appropriate to judge that M. Sgt. Takahashi belonged to 2nd Chutai. The 2nd Chutai color is said to be black (ref. 16 and 17), or red (ref. 8) or even

dark blue (information from Mr. Nick Millman based on old Koku-Fan magazine, which is the basis of color illustration in ref. 18). (Color illustration in ref. 8 shows a green marking, but this is based on the assumption that he was a member of 1st Chutai.) A trial to determine the color of emblem (in b/w scale) using Photoshop software left no clear conclusion, so we followed the color guide of ref. 16 and 17 with a black emblem and "夕" (first Katakana character of his name). If modelers want to show Sentai emblem in different color, please use the template attached.

Please note the slight change of angle in the middle of the lower flash. Finally, the photos available to us indicate that 59th Sentai Nate did not typically wear yellow on wing leading edges.

Takahashi achieved two victories in the Nomonhan Incident, and added a further 7 victories in Malaya and Java to become the top ace of 59th Sentai. According to ref. 8 and 15, he met a sad fate for such a skilled pilot, killed on the ground by a strafing fighter attacking Timor Island.

#### **A/C #6 Ki-27 Otsu of 13th Sentai 2nd Chutai, Kakogawa AB/Hyogo Pref., May 1940.**

For 13th Sentai Ki-27 with "カコ" and the river stream motif, "ホ" Go (1st Chutai) is very famous due to a well-known clear photograph. We chose "い" Go of 2nd Chutai, due to some abnormality in its marking. The only known photo of this a/c is shown in ref. 8 (p71), which shows yellow/white fuselage diagonal bands. The white band continues underneath the fuselage, but the yellow band stops at the bottom of the wing fillet. The Sentai marking is also irregular. Katakana "カコ" in the center is very small, and upper center river stream (all red with white outline) is reversed in direction. As the rightmost river stream motif is covered by the landing gear spats of another Ki-27 closer to camera, its angle is not known, but most probably it is the same as the middle one. We do not know why such an abnormality (mistake?) occurred. Nothing is known for the Sentai marking on the right side of this a/c, so we provided both options (mark 42 and 43). The available photos indicate 13th Sentai Nate did not wear yellow identification bands on the leading edge of the wings.

The 13th Sentai was inaugurated in July 1938 at Kakogawa AB with Ki-27 as main equipment. In September 1941 the Sentai moved to the new Taisho AB/Osaka, changing their Sentai emblem to Sakura blossom mark with "大" in its center, and engaged in defense duties. As the Ki-27 had become obsolete, the Sentai transitioned to Ki-45 Toryu in August 1943, changing its Sentai emblem yet again. Their fights using Ki-45 in New Guinea against strong US forces were quite disastrous, and the unit lost many pilots and aircraft.

#### **A/C #7 Ki-27 of 18th Sentai, Chofu AB/Tokyo, spring of 1944.**

The only photo of this uniquely marked Ki-27 is shown in ref. 19. The 18th Sentai was established in December 1943 with Ki-61 Hien as main equipment, but this Sentai also had a few Hayabusa and Ki-27 for training purposes. This photo shows the tail of Ki-27 (with Corporal Tsuneo Kurita leaning on the rudder) along with one NMF Hayabusa (another trainer) of this Sentai in the background. By comparing the tonal difference of NMF and white wing band on the adjacent Hayabusa, the entire empennage (including horizontal tail plane) of this Ki-27 is surely white, on which the red Sentai emblem is applied. This photo does not show clearly to what extent white paint was applied, but most probably it covered the vertical stabilizer, its rudder, and horizontal tail plane area only, with the probable exception of the upper and lower surface of the elevators, which remain normal grey green. As the number of Ki-27 in the unit was few (or perhaps only this one), no a/c number would have been applied. In analogy with 18th Sentai Hien, yellow identification band would have been applied. Please paint the white bands, as well as the yellow identification band on the leading edge of the wings.

**A/C #8 Ki-27 Otsu of 85th Sentai 1st Chutai, Manchuria/China, summer of 1942.**

Photos of 85th Sentai Ki-27 are rather limited, and the only photo of this a/c is shown in ref. 8. The Sentai marking on tail is the stylized form of “八五” (85). This a/c had a white emblem with (probably) black outline, but the fuselage diagonal band is darker, and seems to be yellow with black outline. Manchuria AB was known to be very dusty and muddy, and photos of this Sentai Ki-27 shows one a/c which wore full wheel spats; another a/c which only retained the upper part of the spats; and this a/c, which wore no spats at all when it was photographed. But in all probability only the upper part of the spats was the ordinary equipment to reinforce the landing gear. This allowed the necessary clearance for the wheels in muddy conditions while still offering limited streamlining in flight. We followed the illustration of ref. 8 without yellow identification band on the leading edge of the wings.

**A/C #9 Ki-27 Kou of 1st Sentai 2nd Chutai, Kagamihara AB/Gifu Pref., July 1938 to May 1939.**

A photo of this a/c is shown in ref. 8, and Katakana “な” (na) on the red rudder indicates this a/c belonged to 2nd Chutai. Three bands on fuselage and wings (the caption of the photo says two bands, but a closer look reveals a third band outside of the second) may indicate this a/c is the personal mount of the 2nd Chutai leader. The red Chutai color is also applied on elevators of this a/c, at least on the top surface, and probably the lower as well. The 1st Sentai was equipped with Ki-27 from July 1938, stationed at Kagamihara AB until moving to Harbin on May 31, 1939. During this period the Sentai Commander was Major Toshio Kato, and 2nd Chutai leader was Capt. Keisuke Yamada (ref. 15), so while not confirmed, it is highly probable that this “な” Go is the personal mount of Capt. Keisuke Yamada. (After Capt. Yamada was KIA on July 21st, 1939, Capt. Takejiro Koyanagi assumed leadership of 2nd Chutai, and he flew another Ki-27 “あ” Go without radiating fuselage bands.) Ref. 20 shows that Capt. Yamada applied his family emblem (Sagari-fuji) in white on the rudder (probably before “な” was applied) for a short period, but its details are not known. We provisionally provided mark 57a to replace 57. The photo shows a long rectangular object on the left upper wing, the reason for which is not known (perhaps a more streamlined fairing of gun camera mount to adjust guns?), and the second red diagonal band runs over it. As this object is not included in the Hasegawa kit, we disregarded it, and the length of the second band provided is sized to cover the standard upper wing area. No photos of 1st Sentai Nate show yellow identification band on the leading edge of the wings.