



Australian AVON SABRE

Conversion Kit SOUTH-EAST ASIAN SCHEMES

BRIEF HISTORY.

The North American F-86 Sabre was manufactured in Australia by the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation (CAC) but modified to suit Royal Australian AF requirements. The major such requirement was for the installation of the Mk.26 Avon engine to give the aircraft more power than its American-built counterpart. The Avon engine required a greater quantity of air which necessitated a deeper intake and therefore a lower nose profile. The only other significant change was the installation of an Aden cannon in each side of the nose replacing the normal six 50 cal guns.

The first flight of the Avon Sabre was on 3 August 1953 and a total of 113 were subsequently built. For 17 years the Sabre formed an integral part of the RAAF's frontline fighter squadrons. It underwent a number of modifications in the early years that increased its fuel capacity and firepower (including the capability to carry Sidewinder missiles on underwing pylons, 500lb bombs and additional underwing tanks). The definitive variant was the Mk.32 which commenced operations in 1960 - all earlier variants were upgraded to this standard.

The Sabre enjoyed a varied operational service with the RAAF including going into action against communist insurgents in Malaya and deployment to Ubon in Thailand during the earlier stages of the Vietnam conflict. The last RAAF operational Sabre sortie was flown on 31 July 1971 and was replaced by the Mirage III0 (which lasted an identical number of years before being replaced by the F-18 Hornet). Two other countries have operated the Avon Sabre - Indonesia and Malaysia. Between 1969 and 1971 a total of 16 were presented to Malaysia (one of which was eventually returned to Australia and currently flies with the RAAF Museum Flight) and 16 were gifted to Indonesia in 1973.

CONSTRUCTION

This conversion kit has been specifically designed to fit the two best 1/72 F-86 kits on the market - Fujimi's F-86F 'Mig-Killer' (Kit F-19) and Hobbycraft's Canadair Sabre Mk.5 (Kit HC1386) - both kits are nearly identical in detail and parts breakdown. With only the minimum of adjustment, the Tasman fuselage will fit snugly onto either the Fujimi or Hobbycraft wings. The surface detailing on our fuselage parts has been carefully matched to the detailing on the wings. The Tasman fuselage walls are slightly thicker than the Fujimi/Hobbycraft ones so the internal parts from these kits will need a little trimming to fit properly and you will need to add attachment supports.

As the Tasman nose intake is a little deeper it is necessary to split open the front of the intake duct by around a millimetre to match the Tasman nose. The resulting gaps are easily hidden with the use of filler. There are a number of differences in the surface detailing between the standard Sabre and the Avon version (the position of the fuselage breakpoint, panel lines, intakes grills, etc) and all of these have been included on our conversion parts. The Fujimi/Hobbycraft canopies will fit precisely but for those who want the clarity and scale thinness of a vacformed canopy, a Falcon ClearVax canopy has been included.

COLOUR SCHEME AND MARKINGS

INDONESIAN AF 'F-8614' (ex-A94-980)

This was the Unit Commander's personal aircraft in 14 Sqn. The colour scheme is overall painted aluminium with only the area just to the rear of the jet pipe surround left in polished natural aluminium (the immediate surround to the very rear of the fuselage is burnt metal as are the cannon port panels on the nose). The leading edges of the wings, tailplanes and fin are gloss black. The tip of the fin is light grey and should be painted before the fin decal is put in place. Ensure the rest of the fin is painted aluminium before putting the fin decal on so that it will show through clear areas in the decal. Put the red/white finflash decal on over the main fin decal - ensure that there is an even border of silver paint showing around the finflash. The anti-glare panel is semi-matt black - note the black extends to cover the entire windscreen framing but not on the canopy. Note that the position of the red/black lightning bolt on the nose is slightly out of position in our drawing - it should be slightly further forward with the bottom of the vertical stroke of the '4' touching the top right corner of the cannon panel. The bottom of the bolt comes down to the level of the wingroot (but not extending onto the wing). Take special care when removing the lightning bolt decal - glide the tip of the decal off the edge of the backing paper and put the tip in place on the model. When this is in the right position (use Micro Sol as a wetting solution) hold it there while slowly pulling the decal paper out from under the rest of the bolt and then do the final positioning. If you take the whole decal off the backing paper before placing it in position you risk having it curl back under itself and ruining it. Treat the fin decal in a similar fashion. The wing national markings are of equal size and in the same position on the wing - upper and lower. Use the wingwalk decals from the base kit's decal sheet. To remove the decal from the backing paper dip them in water for a couple of seconds and put aside for two minutes after which they should easily slide off. With all our decal sheets we strongly recommend that they be given a thin coating of Micro Scale's 'Micro Superfilm'. This is a brilliant product that adds an incredibly strong coating to decals without adding any perceptible thickness. It eliminates the likelihood of handling damage and is invisible.

MALAYSIAN AF 11 SQN 'FM1353'

We have given two options for the same aircraft - an all-aluminium painted scheme and its later camouflaged one. As with the Indonesian scheme, both Malaysian ones have black leading edges to the fin, tailplanes, wings (gloss) and anti-glare panel (semi-matt) - the black also extends to cover the windscreen framing. NOTE: for clarity we have shown the rear fuselage serial number on the camouflaged scheme as black - on the actual aircraft it is white so use the white serial provided. Only the aluminium schemes had black serials. NOTE: the tri-colour finflash always has the light blue nearest the fin leading edge (yellow always to the rear). The camouflaged scheme was the personal aircraft of Wing Commander Mohd Yunis Tasi and his name appears in yellow (decal supplied) under the anti-glare panel on the right side. Also note that the Olive Drab camouflage extends into the intake by 2.5mm (eighth of an inch) and that the light grey fin tip extends at an angle down the rudder (it is level on the aluminium scheme). The top camouflage colour has been described as 'olive drab' but colour photos indicate that it is much more of an olive green than the more familiar brown-tinted WWII USAAF olive drab. The underside colour is a duck-egg blue, similar to WWII RAF, and is the colour of the undercarriage wells too.

RAAF Mk.32 77 SQN BUTTERWORTH, MALAYA 1963 & 1968 'A94-965'.

Once again we are supplying markings for the same aircraft covering two periods of its operational life. The earlier (1963) scheme had just the green/white checkerboard on the fin/rudder plus a plain green nose (note that the cannon panel very slightly protrudes into the vertical green rear edge). The shape of the light grey fin tip is the same as the aluminium Malaysian AF scheme while the 1968 Knight fin decal covers part of the downward grey panel. Neither scheme features black fin/wing/tailplane leading edges. The windscreen framing is slightly different - the vertical canopy frame line on the earlier scheme is painted black but no part of the horizontal canopy frame. On the later scheme the black extends onto the front edge of the horizontal frame. The wingtips were left bare on the 1963 scheme but painted green with a very thin white and black trim on the 1968 one. The 1968 scheme also had a thin white and green trim added to the rear of the green nose (protruding further onto the cannon panel) and a white '65' added to the solid green just above the top line of the cannon panel (decal supplied). This aircraft also carried squadron markings on both sides of each underwing fuel tank (decals supplied). Note the different positions of the finflashes caused by the enlarging of the fin markings. **NOTE:** RAAF Sabres carried RAF D-type roundels on the wings and smaller Kangaroo roundels on the fuselage. As with RAF aircraft, RAAF finflashes have the red to the front. It was standard squadron practise for the nose colour (when applied) to extend into the intake to the same depth as it appeared on the outside (about 2.5mm in 1/72).

RAAF Mk.32 79 SQN UBON, THAILAND 1968 'A94-988'.

79 Sqn was formed from 77 Sqn and therefore kept the green & white as its squadron colours - hence the green & white cobra. As with the two 77 Sqn schemes, this one did not have black leading edges as well as not having wingtips or tailplane tips painted. The windscreen framing is painted the same as the 1968 77 Sqn scheme. Nose markings are solid green with very thin white and green edging and a white '88' in the same position as '65'.

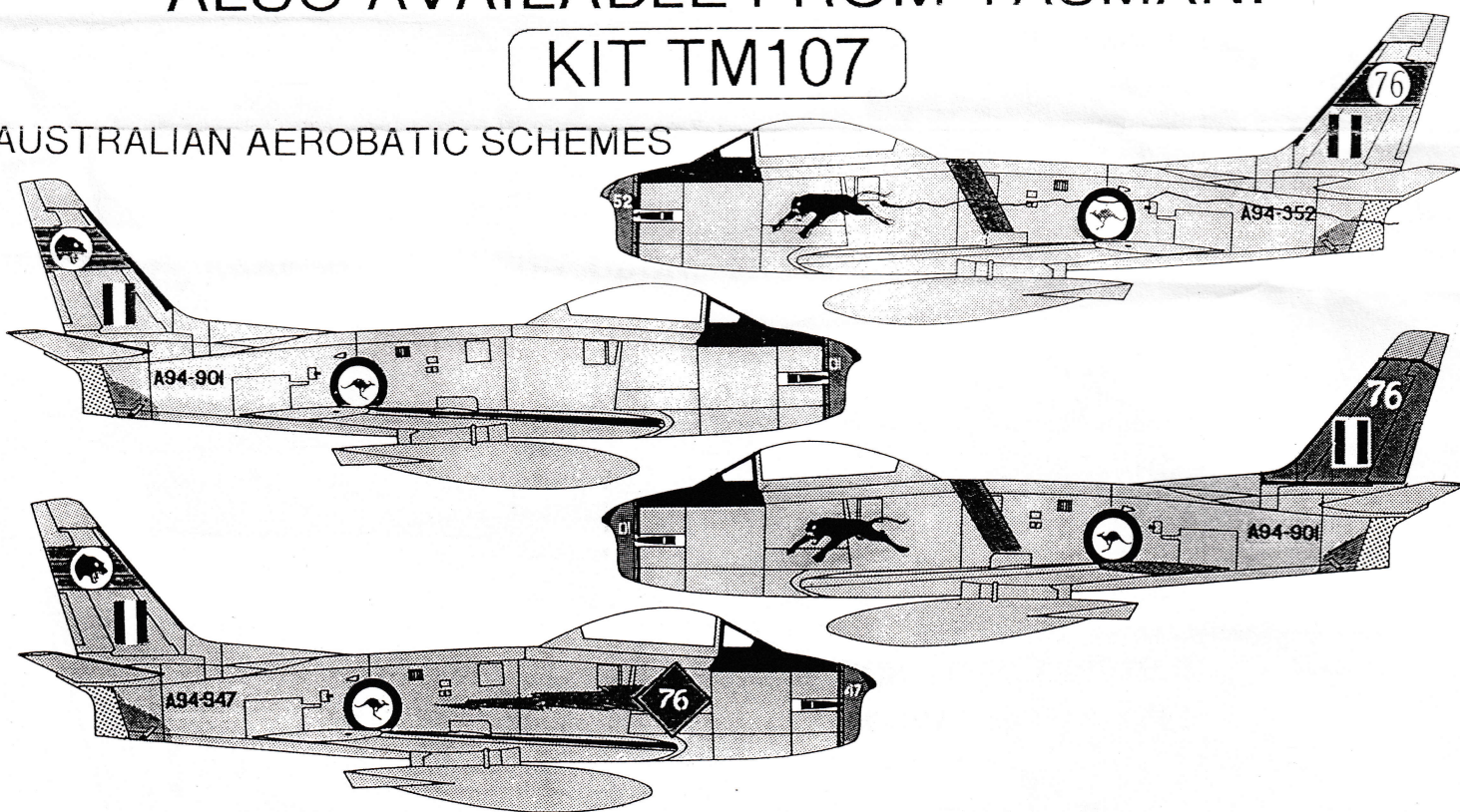
REFERENCE SOURCES.

The two most valuable RAAF Sabre references are Stewart Wilson's "Meteor, Sabre and Mirage in Australian Service" by Aerospace Publications (plenty of photos and historical info but not as modeller-friendly as perhaps it could have been with photo captions) and IPMS-Australia's 1974 combined issue 1 & 2 of "Modelcraft" magazine. This has a 15-page article of very modeller-friendly material covering most of the major variations of Avon Sabre schemes - a definite 'must-have' for all Avon-Sabre fans (IPMS-Australia, PO Box 1187K, G. P.O., Melbourne, Vic 3001, Australia) if you can lay your hands on a copy. Modelcraft's 1974 Nr 4 issue features a 4-page article on the Indonesian Sabre which is excellent with both drawings and photos. Although it has limited Sabre coverage, "Aircraft of the RAAF 1921-78" by Kookaburra Publications was a major reference source for our decal options and is arguably the best publication on the history of the RAAF for modellers. Two of the Aircam series are also highly useful - Nr 20 Vol 2 Commonwealth Sabres and S12 Vol 2 Aerobatic Teams 1950-71. A new publisher in Australia has recently brought out a publication devoted to the RAAF Sabre - Red Roo Publications by Gary Byk. Unfortunately we have not seen a copy yet but have heard glowing reports from Australian modellers.

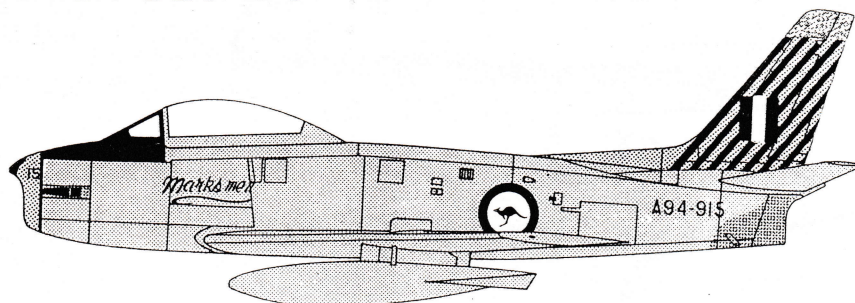
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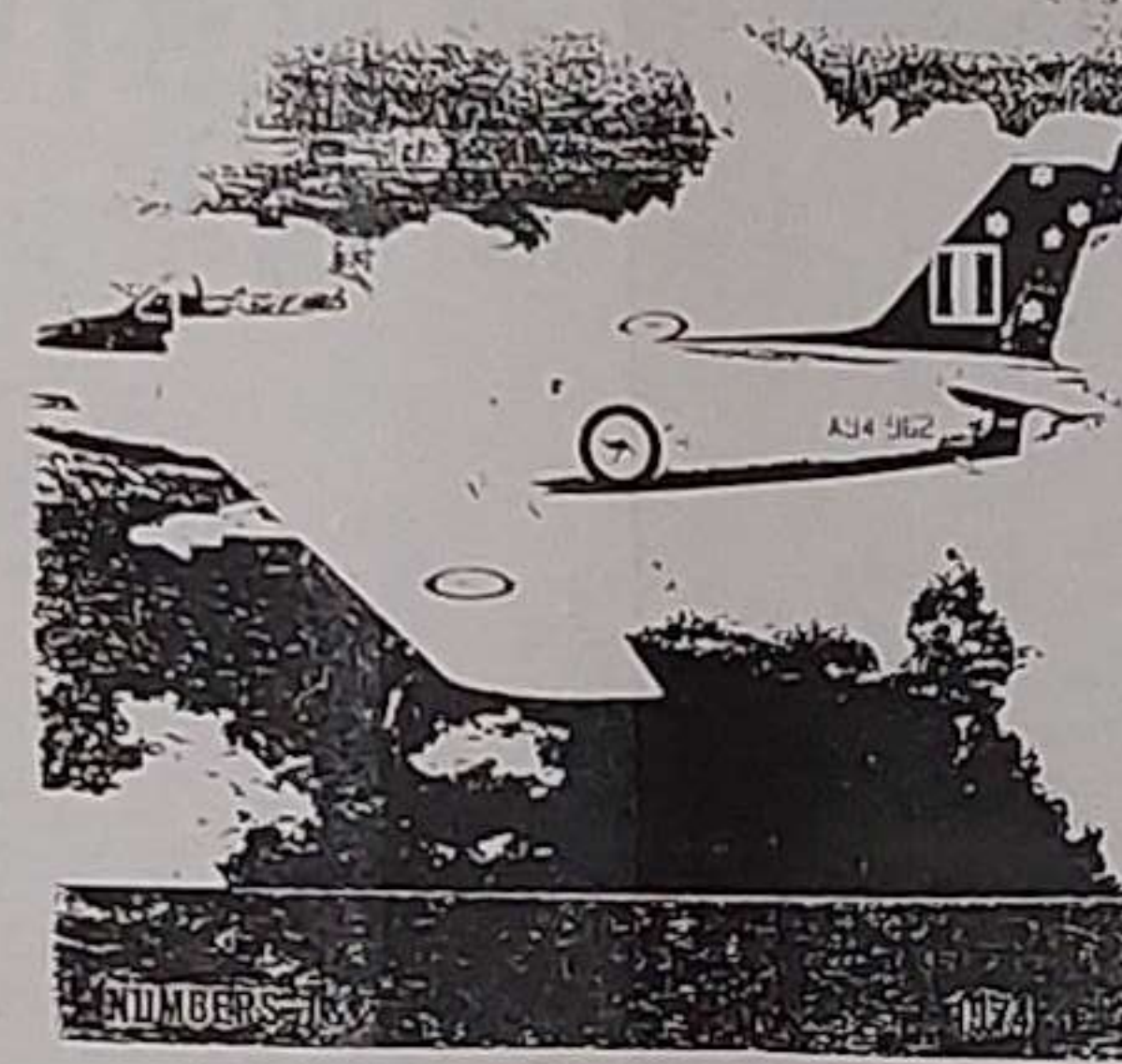


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COLOUR SCHEME AND MARKINGS

TM108

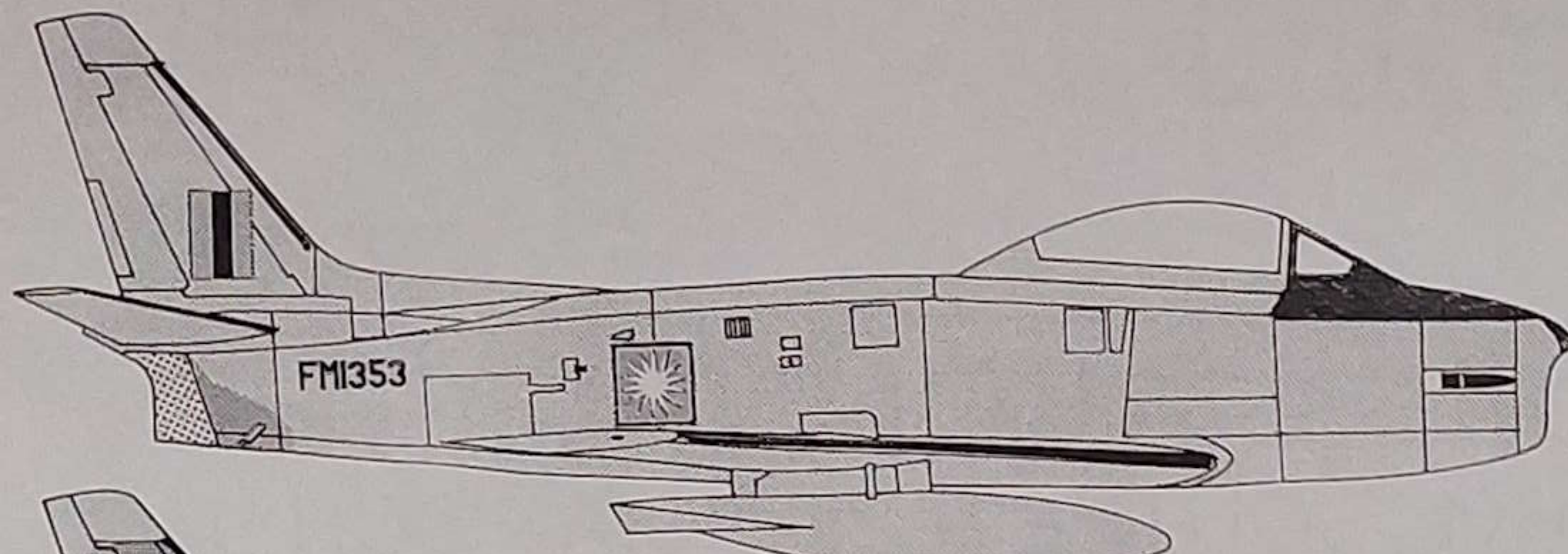


METEOR, SABRE
AND MIRAGE

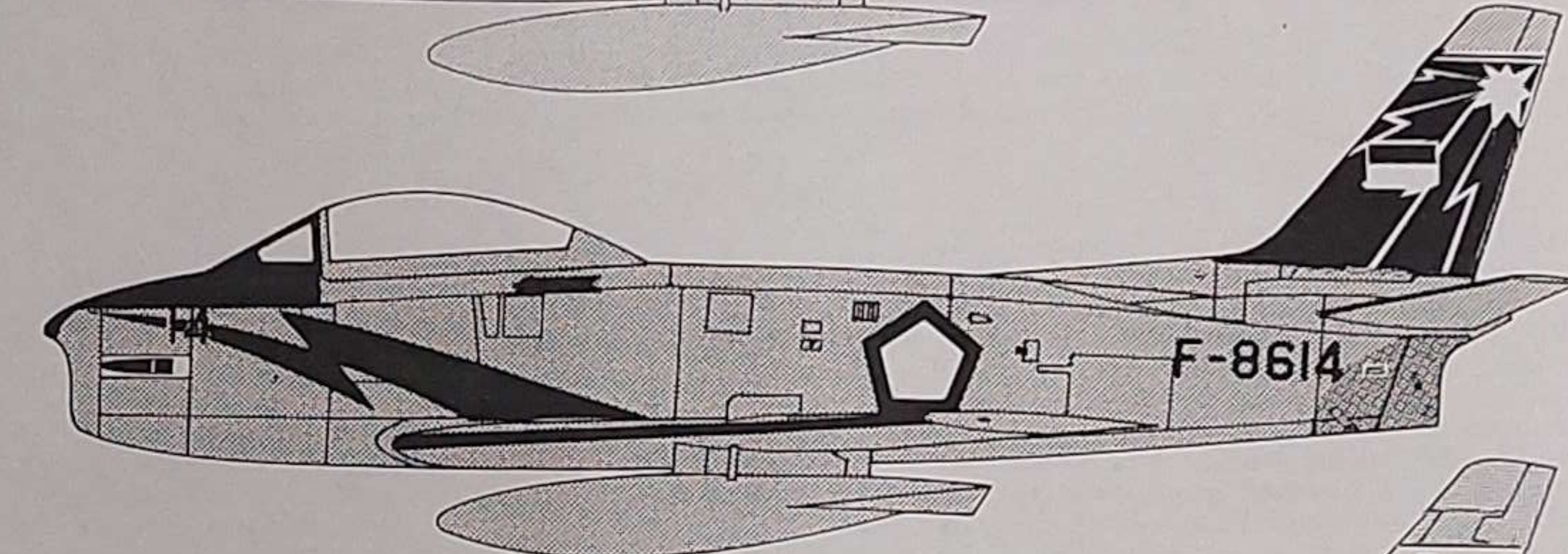
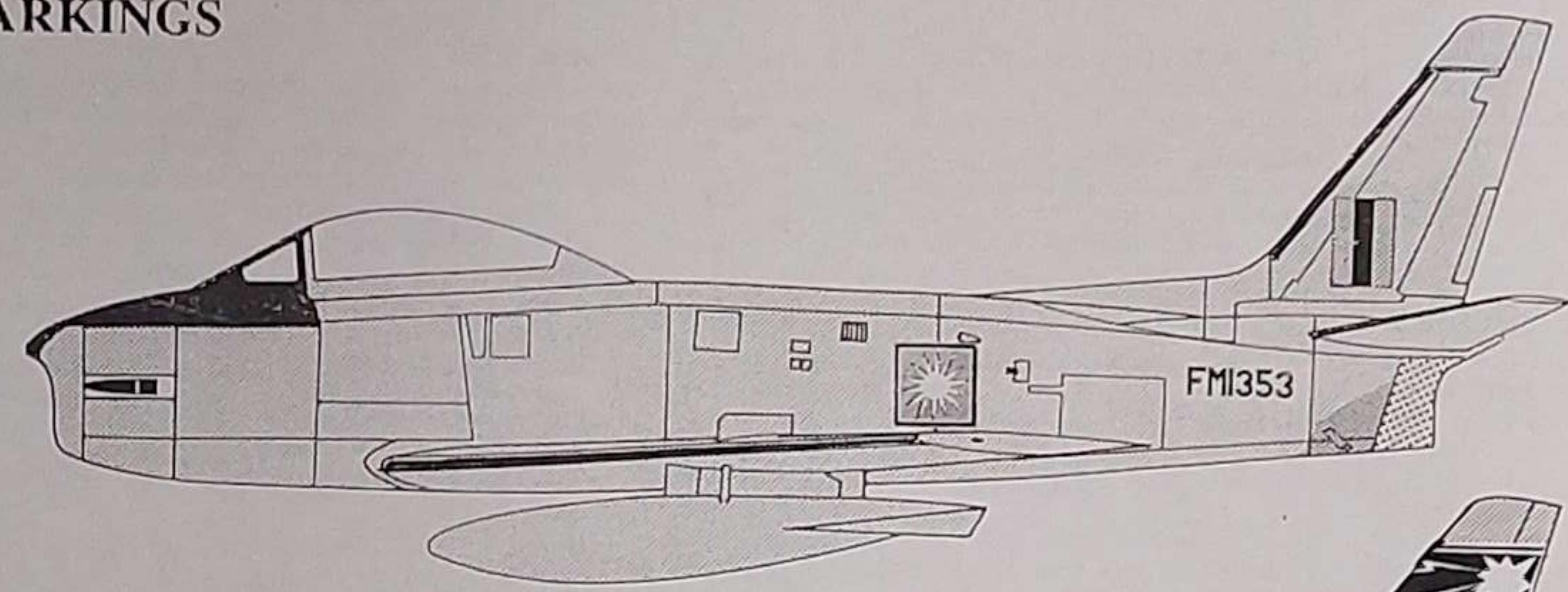
IN AUSTRALIAN SERVICE
by Stewart Wilson



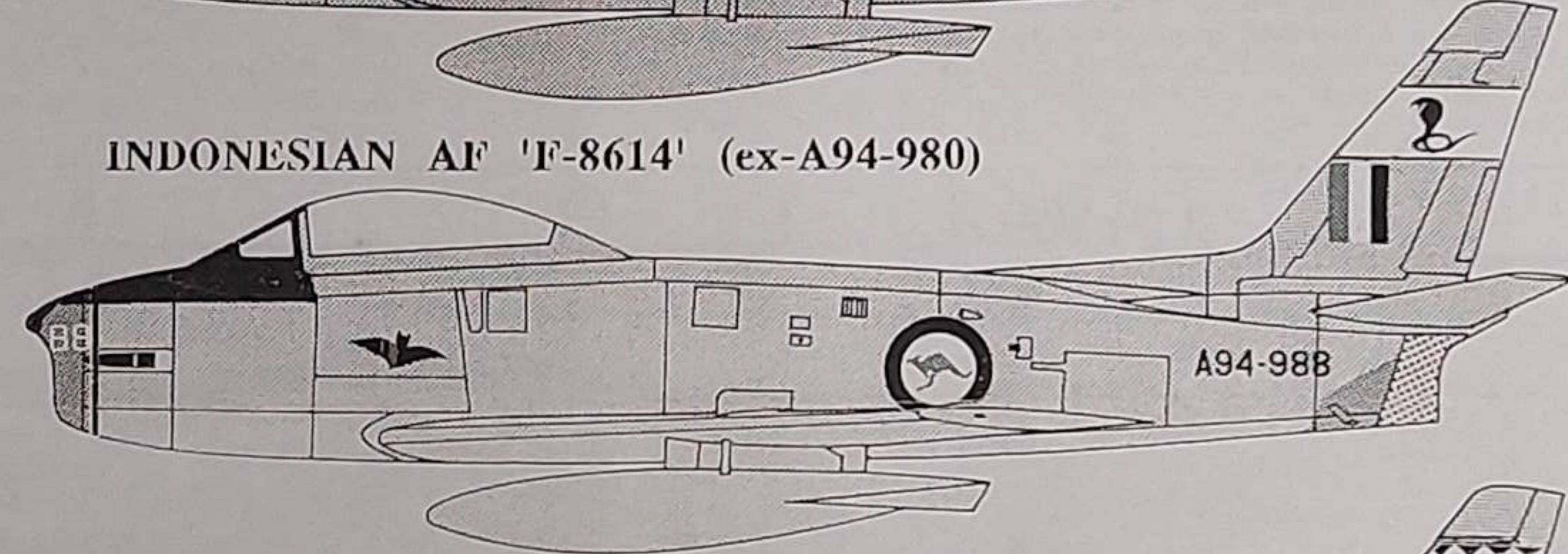
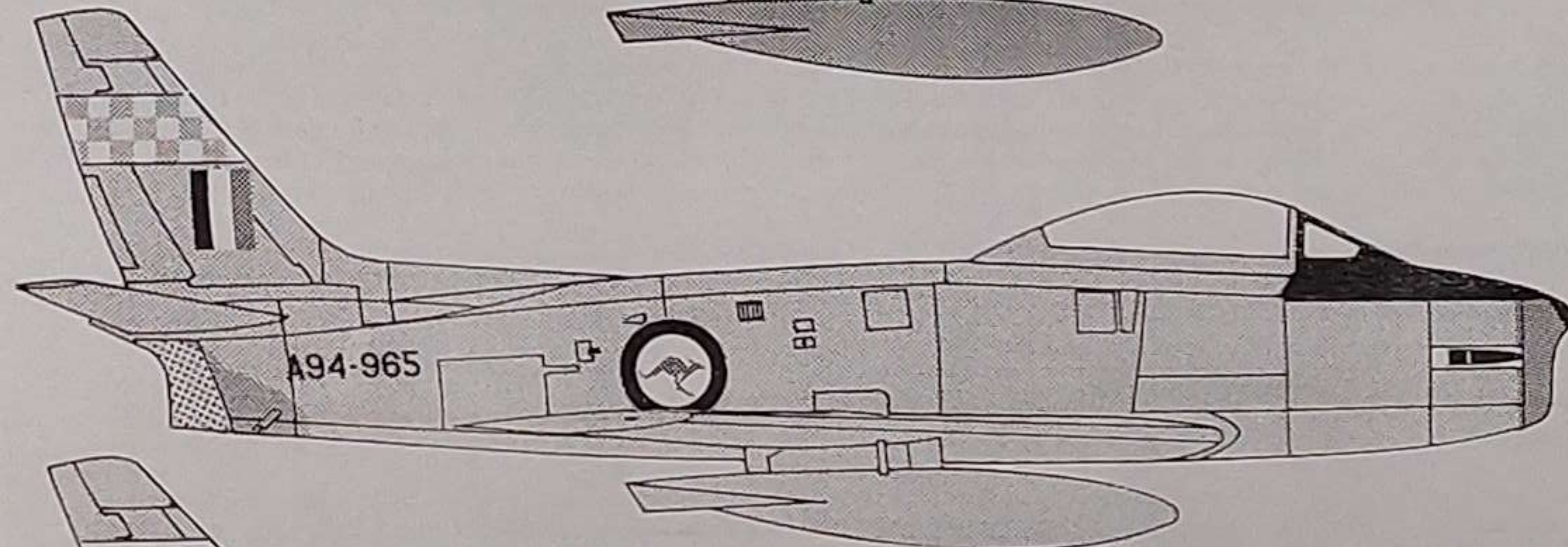
RECOUNTING THE EXCITING EXPLOITS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF
THE THREE JET FIGHTERS WHICH SERVED AUSTRALIA FROM THE
KOREAN WAR RIGHT THROUGH TO THE LATE NINETEEN FORTIES



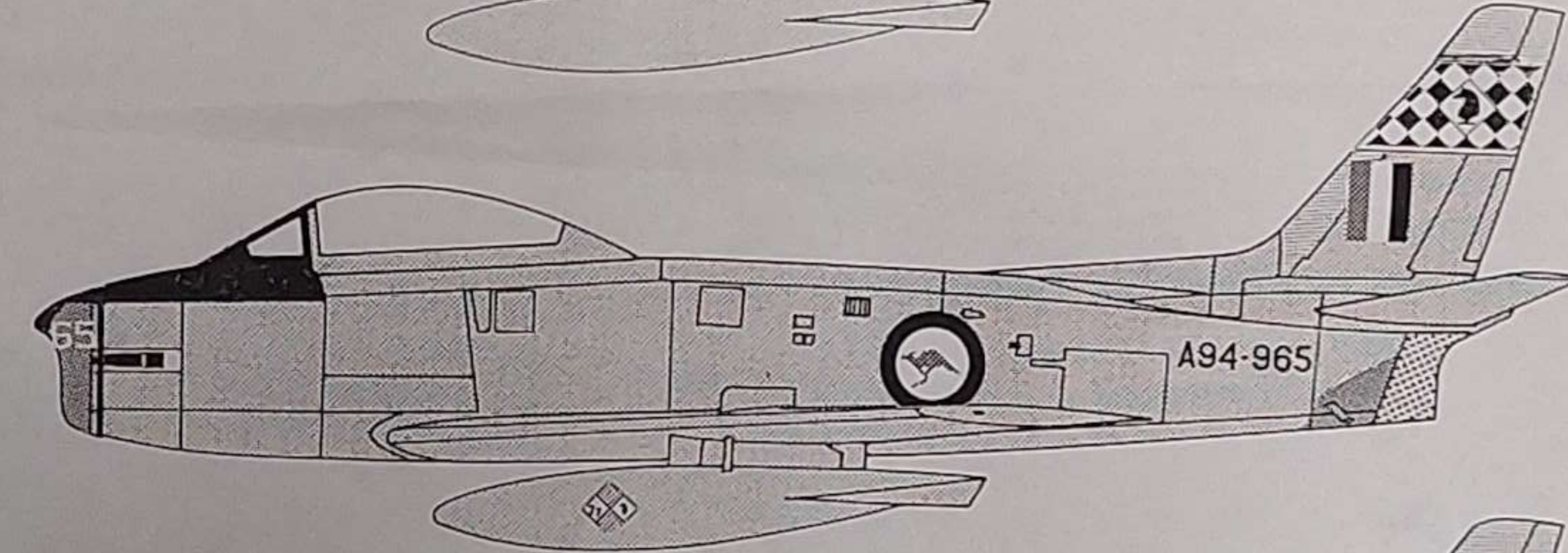
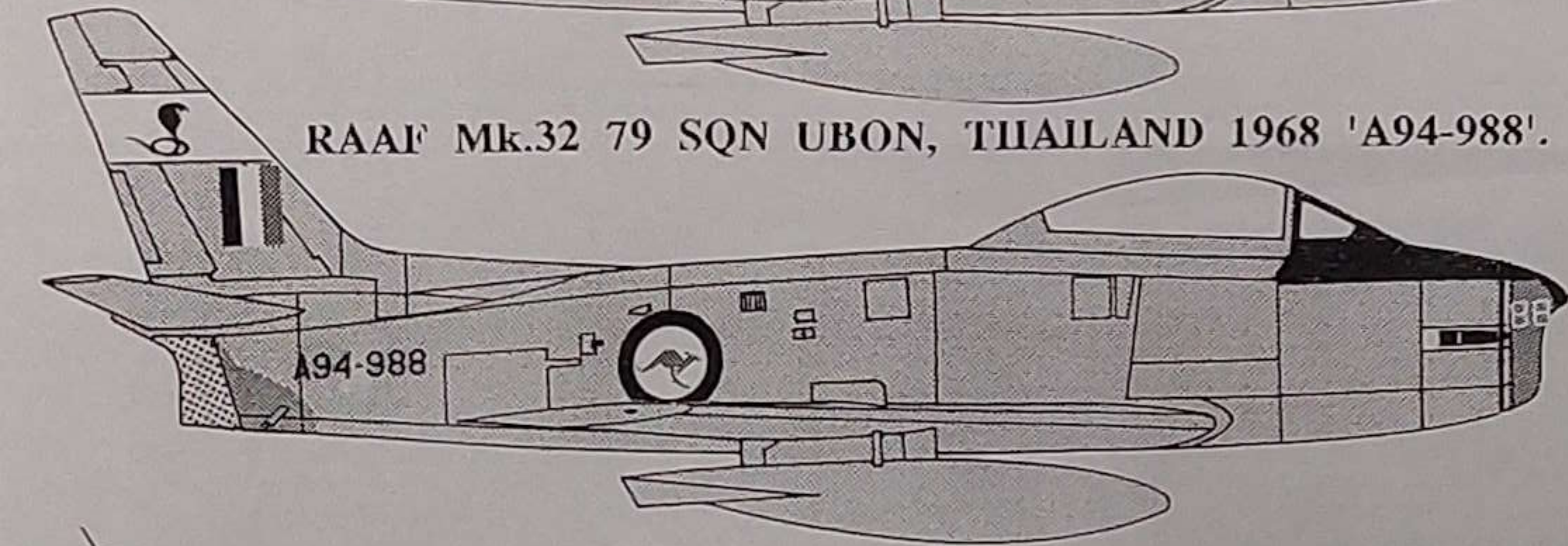
MALAYSIAN AF 11 SQN 'FM1353'



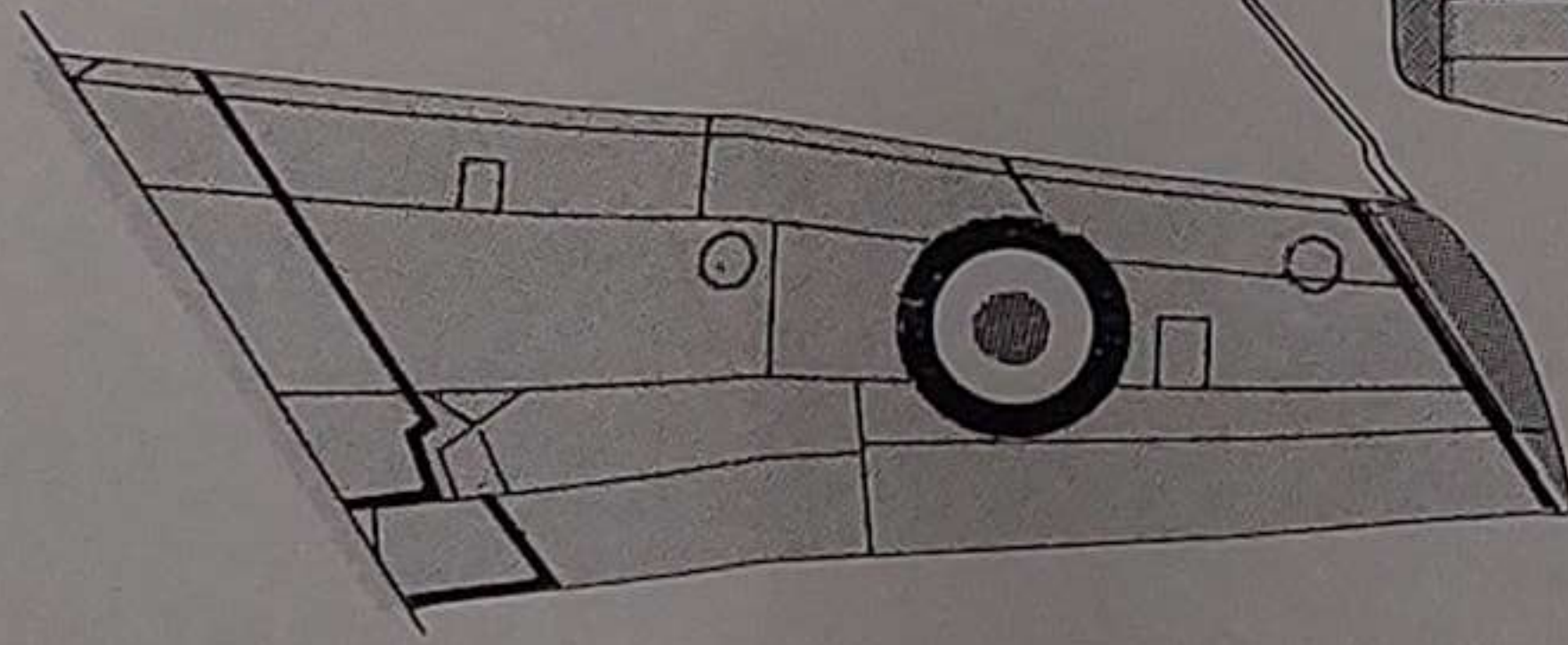
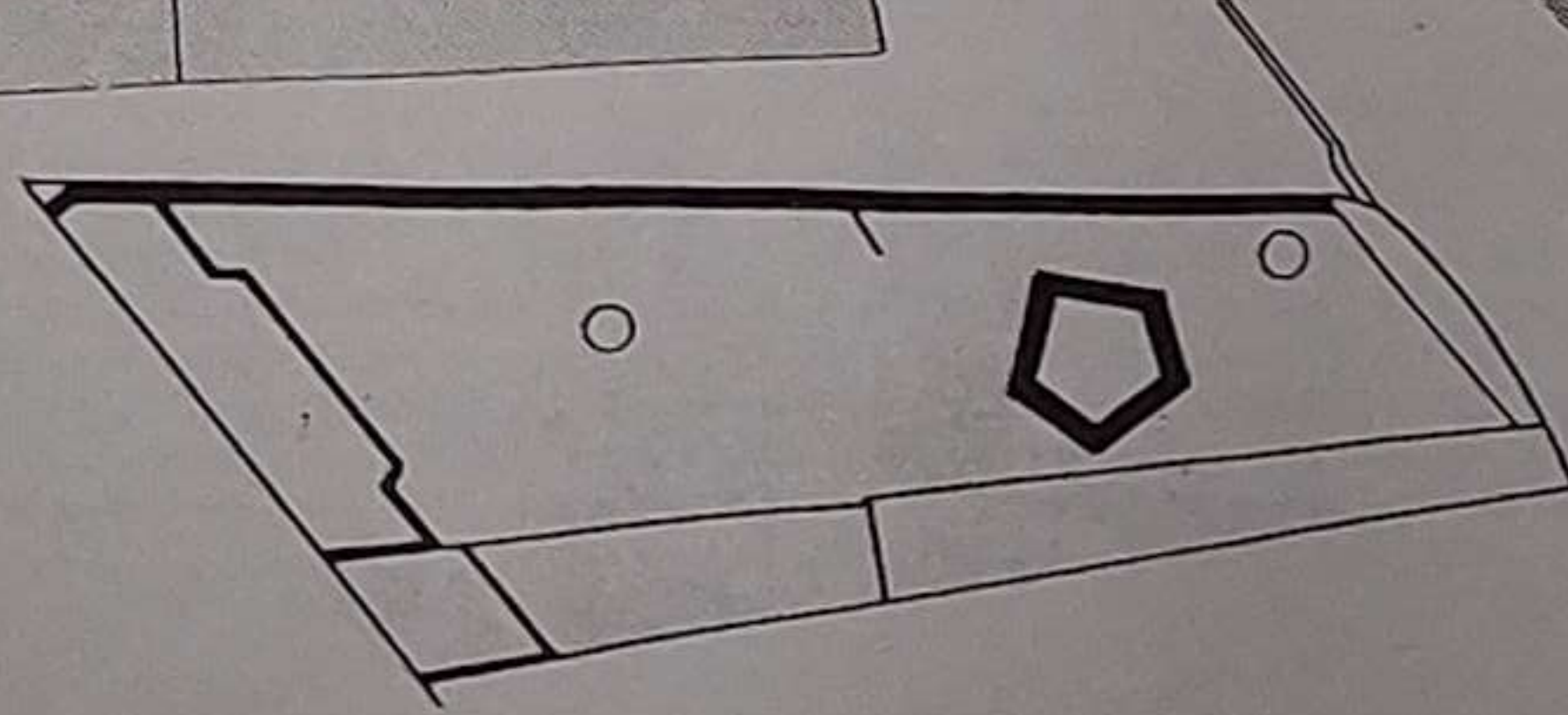
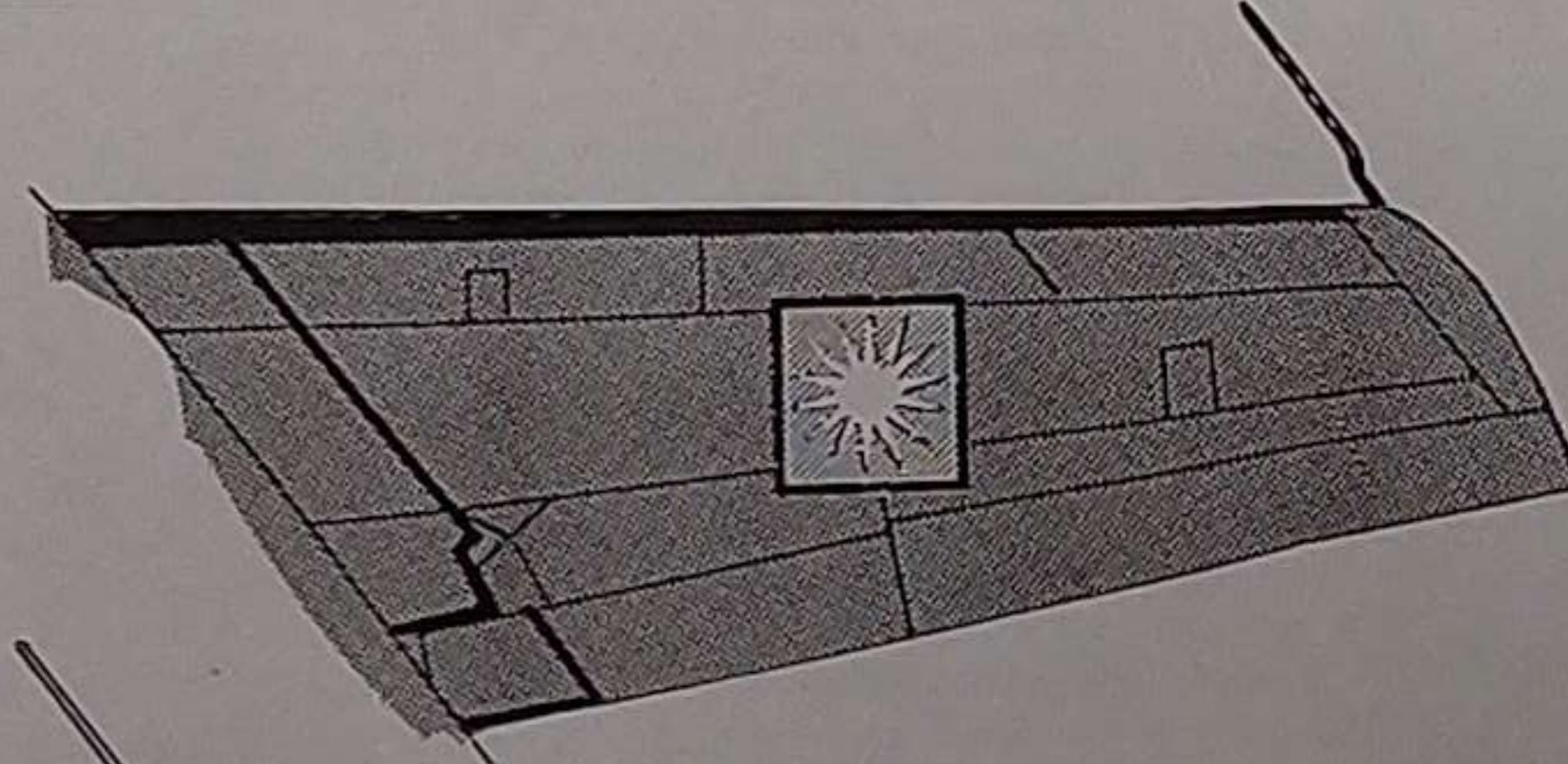
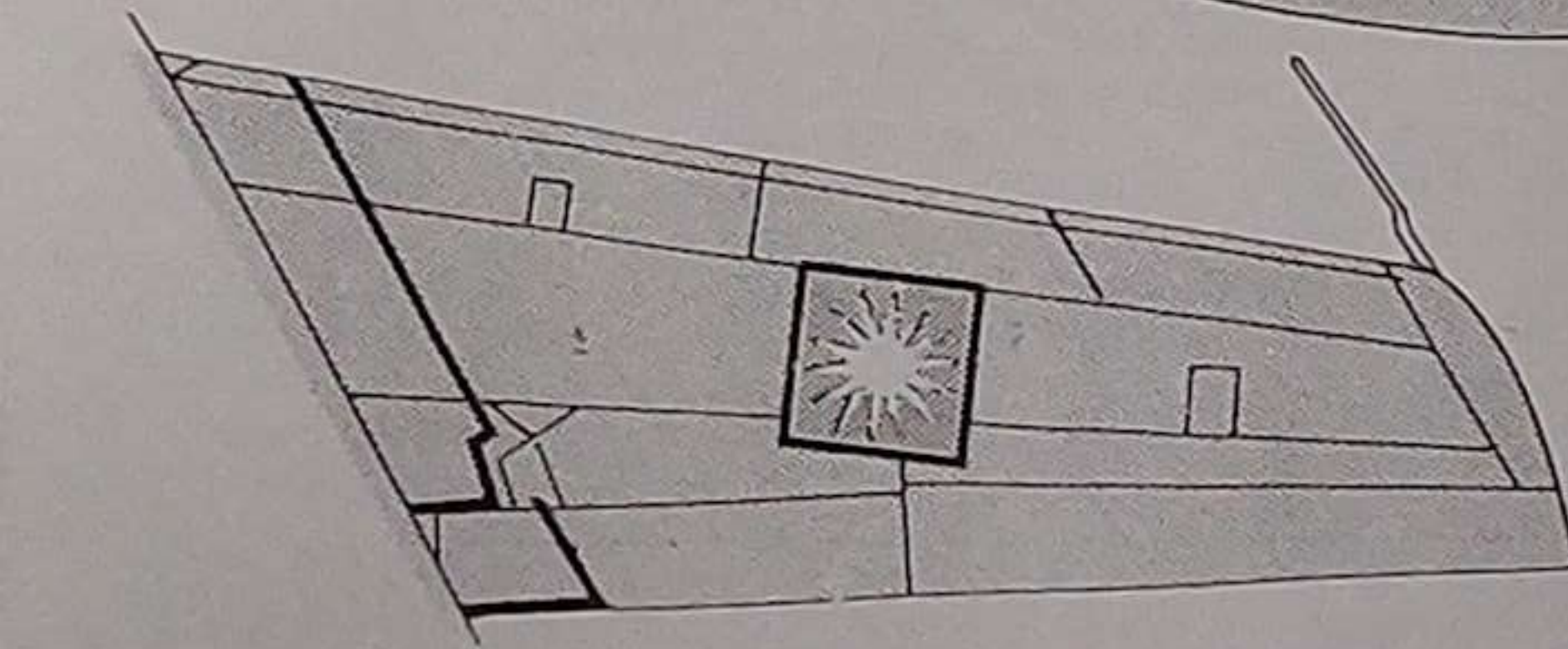
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RAAF Mk.32 77 SQN BUTTERWORTH, MALAYA
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Tasman unreservedly recommends that every aircraft modeller has David H. Klaus's 'IPMS Color Cross-Reference Guide' (PO Box 47110, Washington DC 20050-7110, USA) in his/her reference library — truly the definitive reference source on colours used worldwide.