

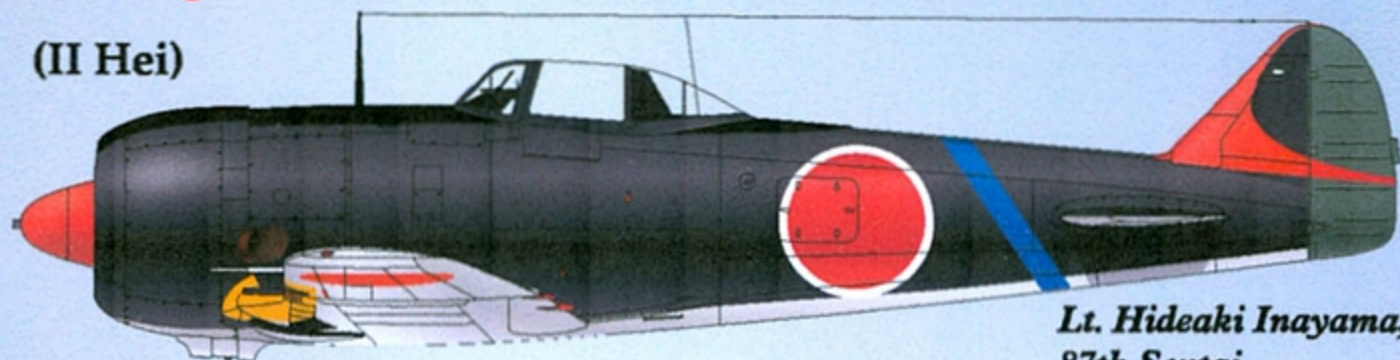
Lifelike Decals

48-036

Nakajima Ki-44 Part 1

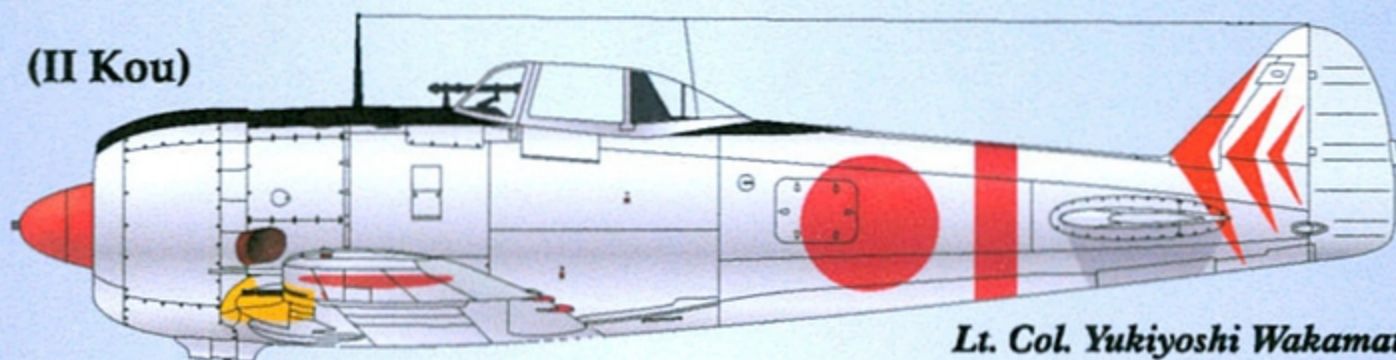
Limited Edition!

(II Hei)



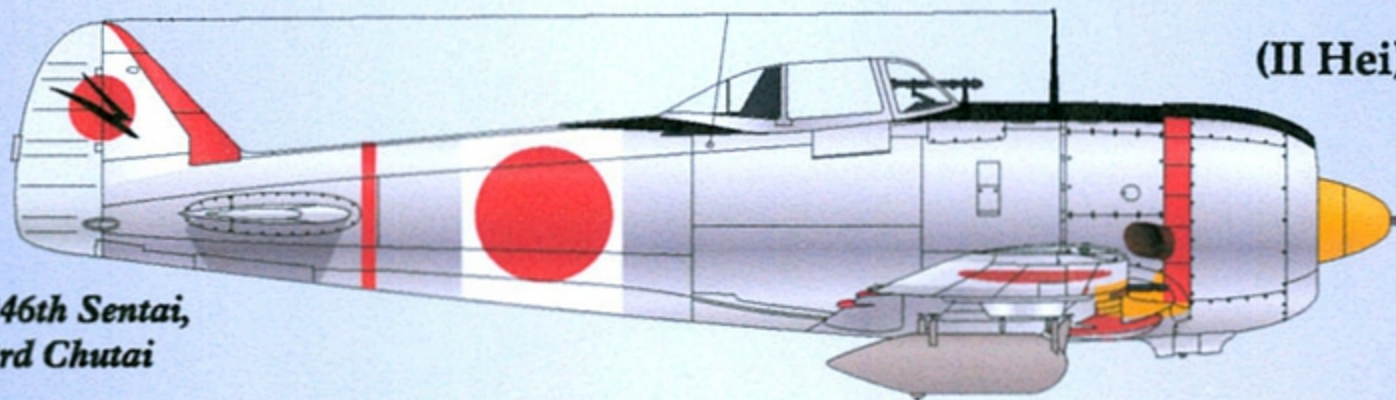
*Lt. Hideaki Inayama,
87th Sentai*

(II Kou)



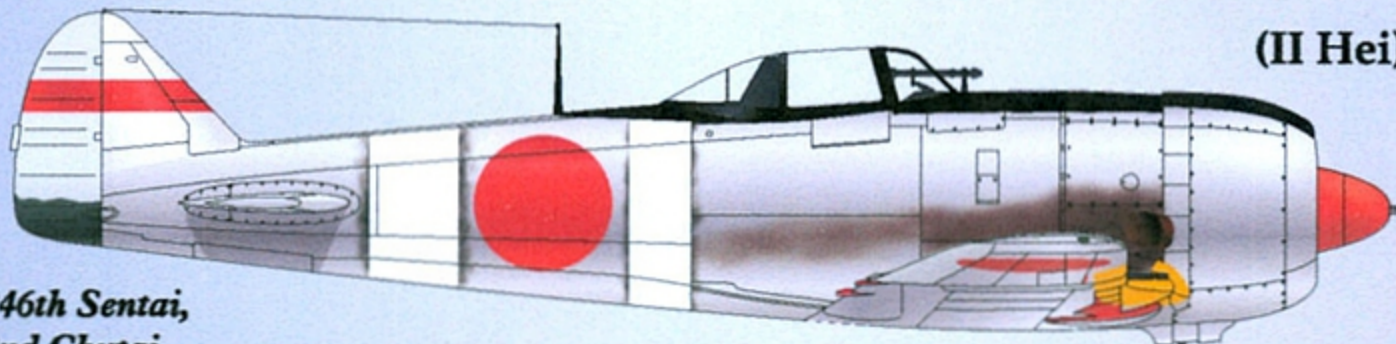
*Lt. Col. Yuki Yoshi Wakamatsu,
85th Sentai*

(II Hei)



*246th Sentai,
3rd Chutai*

(II Hei)



*246th Sentai,
2nd Chutai*

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Recommended kit: Hasegawa Ki-44

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48-036 Nakajima Ki-44 Part 1

A/C #1

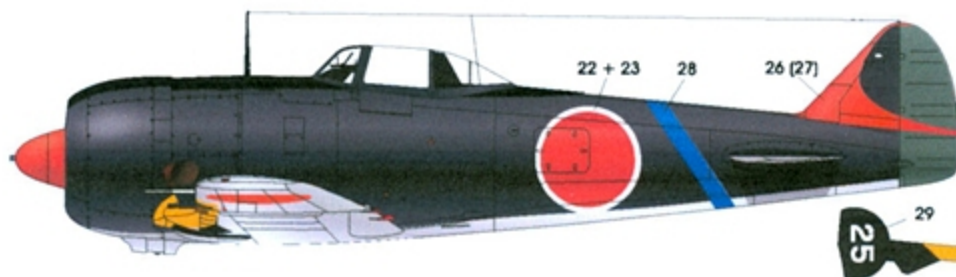
Shoki type II Hei, flown by 1st Lt. Hideaki Inayama of 87th Sentai 2nd Chutai, Palembang/Sumatra, January 1945.

The marking of this A/C is illustrated many years ago in ref. 1 and 2, but up to now no photo of this A/C is published. The illustration shows black-grey (very thin to faintly see the metal underneath) on upper surface and NMF lower surface with red spinner and tail Sentai mark.

We had discussion with Mr. Millman (author of Osprey Aces book, ref. 3), and he informed us of the following;

*Mr. Abe wrote English article on 1st Lt. Inayama's account of the Palembang battle in 1960 Royal Air Force Flying Review magazine. His account described his A/C as painted "black" with blue marking of his "flight" (3rd flight he said, meaning Shota?).

*There is a detailed RAF ATAIU report of some 87th Sentai Ki-44 found at Thedaw strip (satellite of Meiktila



in Burma) with drawings of A/C fuselage. Some A/C had white fuselage band, but some had colored diagonal fuselage band (probably indicating leader A/C). As 1st Lt. Inayama belonged to 2nd Chutai (not Chutai leader) whose color is red, we are much puzzled with his account of "blue" marking. As the photo in ref. 4 clearly shows white fuselage band (to show operation outside homeland), we were skeptical of the non-existence of white band in illustration in ref. 1 and 2, and finally

agreed to Mr. Millman's interpretation of blue diagonal fuselage band.

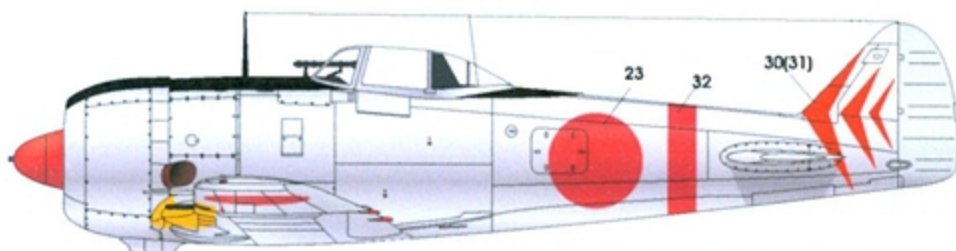
It is always claimed that this A/C carried #25 on its landing gear cover, but its color differs between ref. 1 and 2. We chose that shown in ref. 1. The Sentai emblem symbolizes the balloon of wind god.

We do not know much about the career of 1st Lt. Inayama except the fact that he made 4 sorties on January 24th 1945 battle above Palembang, lived through the war, and joined JASDF as Major.

A/C #2

Shoki type II Kou, flown by Lt. Col. Yukiyoishi Wakamatsu of 85th Sentai 2nd Chutai leader, Kwangtung AB/China, Summer 1943.

The photo and illustration of this A/C is shown in many books (like ref. 5, 6, 7 and 8), but all these illustrations are based on that shown in ref. 9. The photo in this article is probably the widest scope of the original photo, and clearly shows the position of middle and right (smallest) arrow which is not precisely reflected in these illustrations. Also the solid bar style of lower front mark in the illustrations is quite strange for 85th Sentai (see the marking of Commander Saito's A/C in LLD48-038). Dr. Izawa continued his search, but could not find any further information or photo of this A/C, so the tail marking should be reasonably guessed.



The photo in ref. 9 clearly shows (1) smallest arrow head does not touch on the edge of rudder and (2) top of middle arrow is slightly below the tail light panel. Taking into consideration of Commander Saito's A/C marking, we are confident that this tail mark is "triple arrow head" mark shown in this decal.

The red fuselage band is also seen on other A/C of this

Sentai, and its spinner is quite probably red, as he is called "red-nosed leader" among his Sentai members. This red spinner is also carried by his later A/C (Shoki and Hayate (LLD 48-031)).

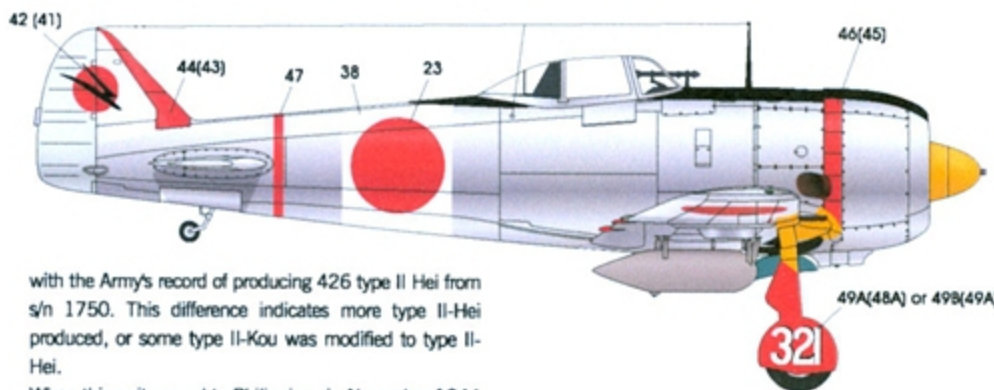
Lt. Col. Wakamatsu was a member of 85th Sentai from 1941, and scored more than 18 kills (all fighters, at least 9 P-51s), but was KIA on December 18, 1944 near Wuchang.

A/C #3

Shoki type II Hei, flown by 246th Sentai 3rd Chutai, Taisho AB/Osaka, 1944.

This is a very well-known A/C with its photo (with two underwing fuel tanks and bomb rack) and illustration shown in many books (like ref. 1, 2, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12), and inherits the spirit of gaudy marking applied on their Ki-27. From the tonal similarity with red Hinomaru and tail marking, cowling flaps, landing gear cover, fuselage band and forward edge of tail are judged red, and all Hinomarus are on white home defense bands. Spinner and wing leading edges are yellow, and antiglare panel in front and rear of canopy is black, while canopy and windshield are NMF.

The s/n of this A/C is 2321, but this does not coincide



with the Army's record of producing 426 type II Hei from s/n 1750. This difference indicates more type II-Hei produced, or some type II-Kou was modified to type II-Hei.

When this unit moved to Philippines in November 1944 all colorful markings were removed except Sentai emblem on tail. But they lost most of the pilots and A/C

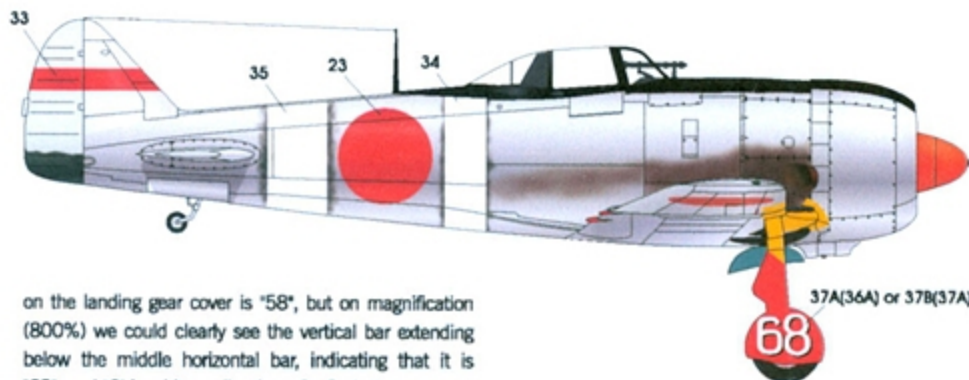
in one month in Philippines, and returned to Taisho AB/Osaka to switch to Hayate.

A/C #4

Shoki type II Hei, flown by 246th Sentai 2nd Chutai, Taisho AB/Osaka, Spring 1945.

The only photo of this A/C is shown in ref. 1, 2 and 10, and is illustrated in ref. 11 and 12. The photo shows this A/C when it force-landed at Ooi AB (Navy)/Shizuoka in the spring of 1945, and clearly shows damage repair on the lower part of its rudder. It also clearly shows the two white fuselage bands and red bar on the tail. This red band was introduced as new Sentai mark after returning from the Philippines. Its spinner is painted in Chutai color (in this case 2nd Chutai red color), and canopy/windshield in black. It should be noted that its antenna is moved aft of the canopy.

The caption of the photo in ref. 10 says the number



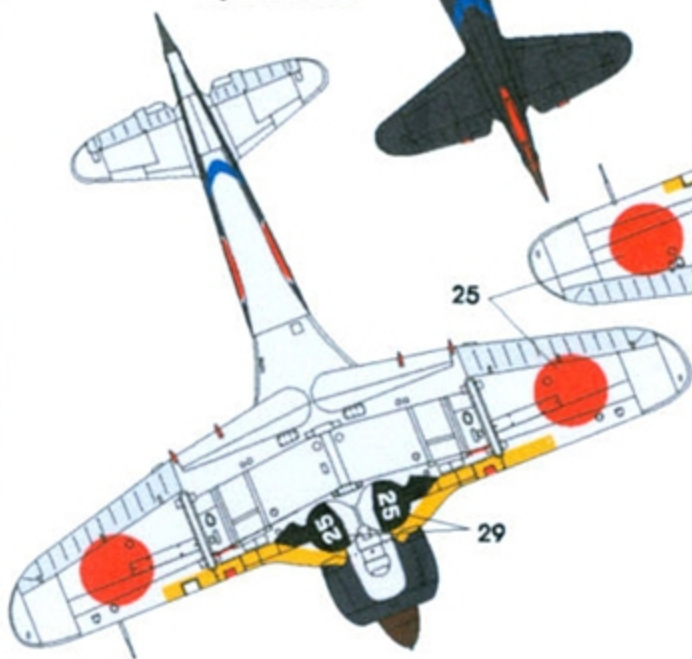
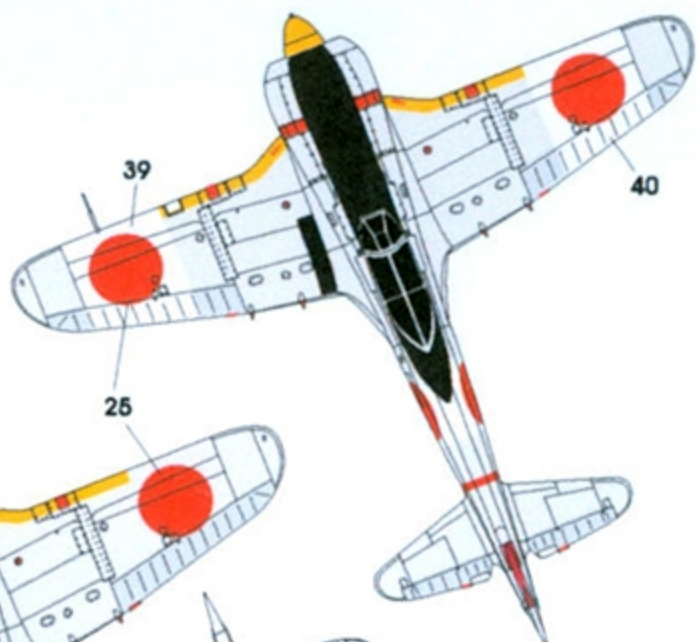
on the landing gear cover is "58", but on magnification (800%) we could clearly see the vertical bar extending below the middle horizontal bar, indicating that it is "68", and "6" is a bit smaller than "8". Both the numerals had black shadow, and the gear cover is much darker than the numerals. These finding indicate the landing gear cover is similarly marked as A/C #3.

The meaning of two fuselage white bands is not known, but if it signifies Chutai leader, this A/C might be flown by the then 2nd Chutai leader, Capt. Toshio Minami.

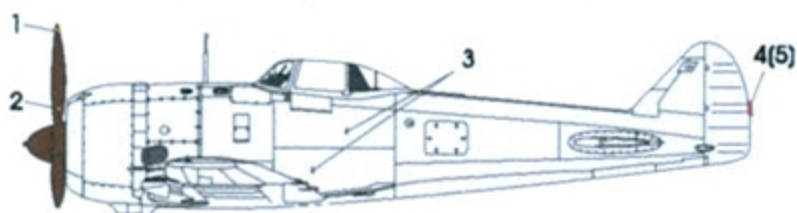
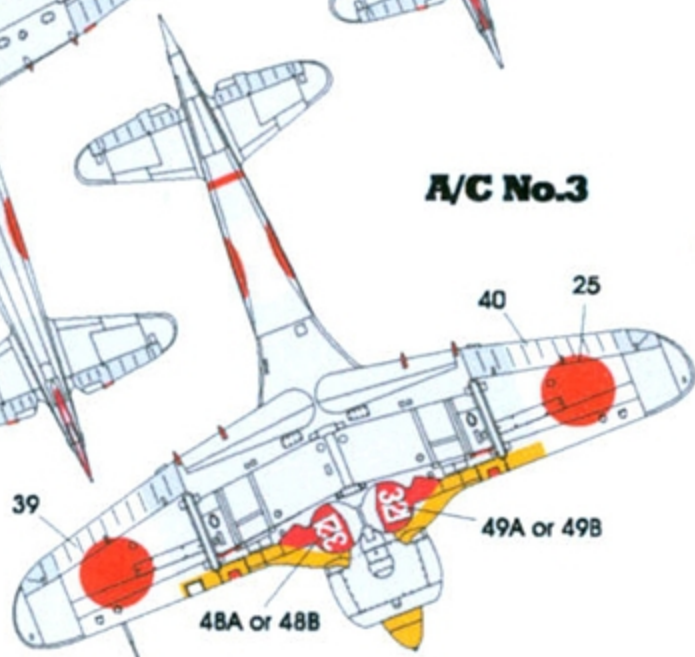
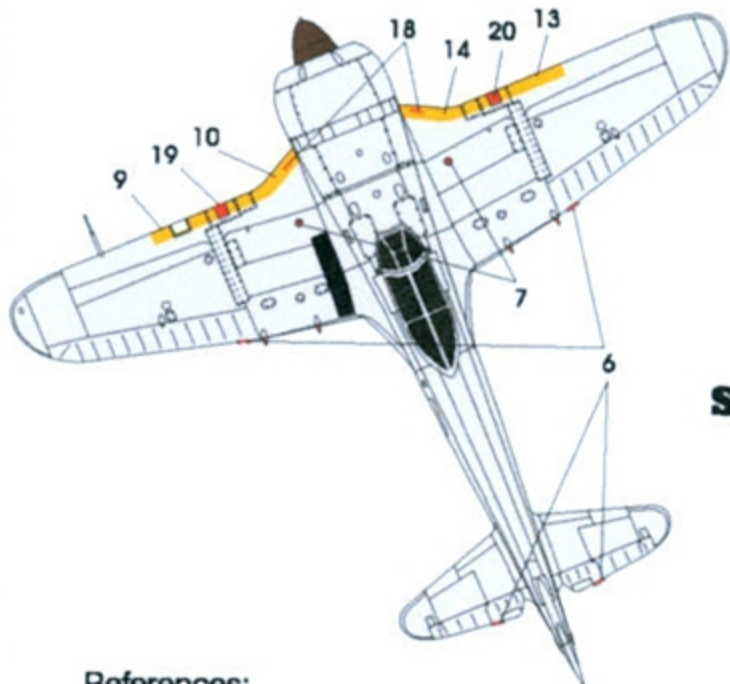


A/C No.1

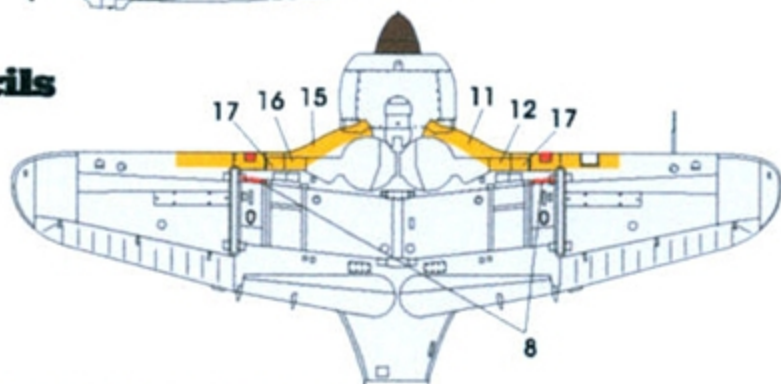
A/C No.4



A/C No.3



Stencils



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10. Famous Airplanes of the World No. 16, Type 2 Fighter Shoki (Bunrin-do, May 1989).
11. Nakajima Ki-44 Shoki (Martin Ferkl, Revi, 2009).
12. Aero Military Collection 6 - Japanese Army Fighter (Koel Publ., 2006).

Special thanks to Mr. Nicholas Millman for the information on Inayama's Shoki.