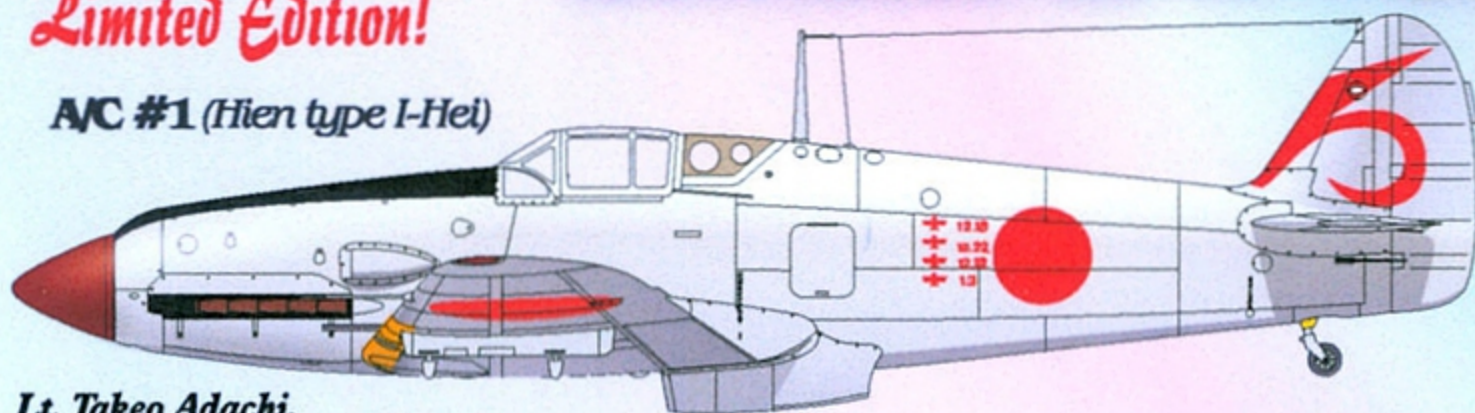


Kawasaki Ki-61 Part 1

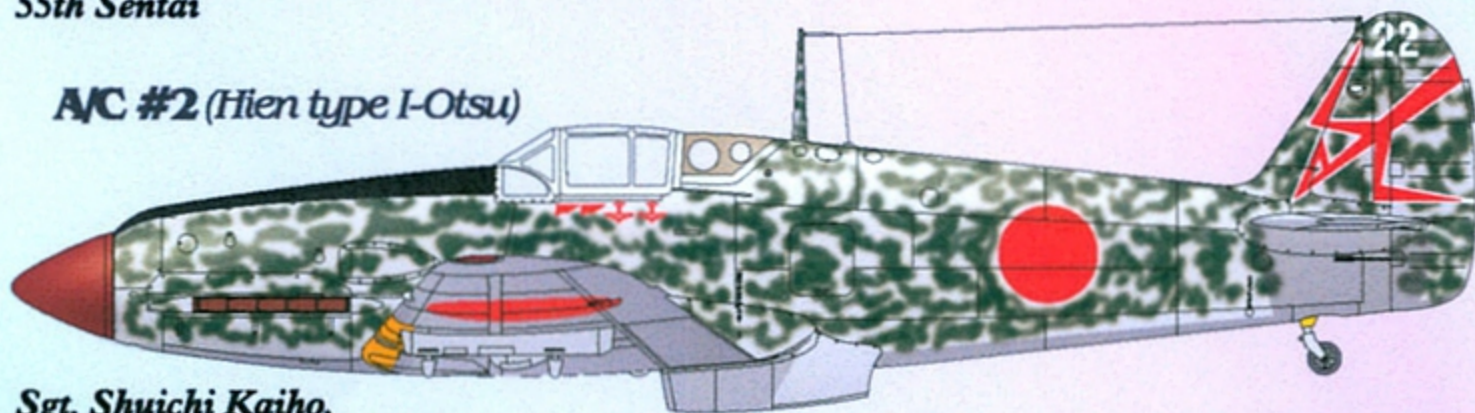
Limited Edition!

A/C #1 (Hien type I-Hei)



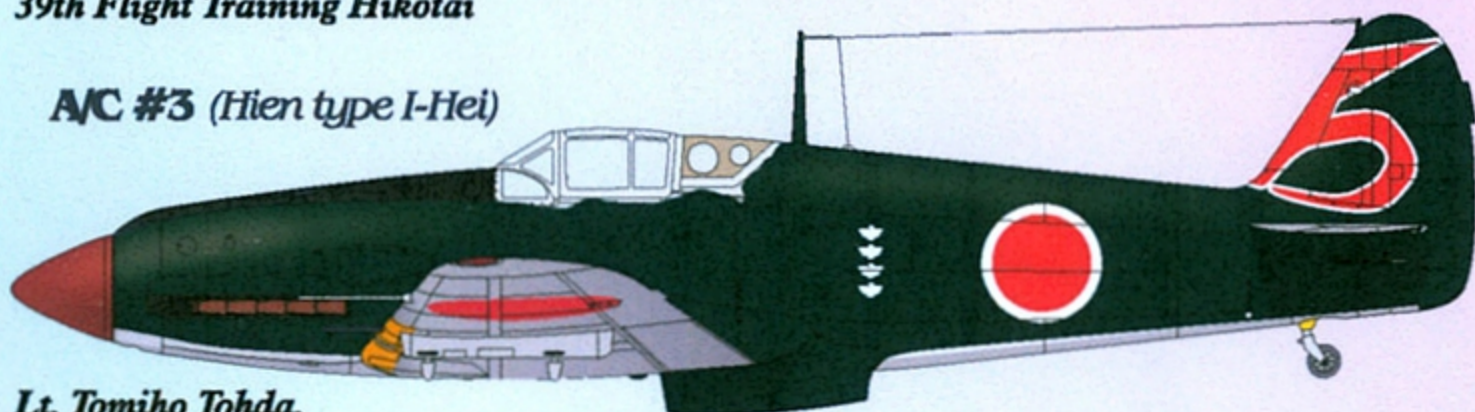
*Lt. Takeo Adachi,
55th Sentai*

A/C #2 (Hien type I-Otsu)



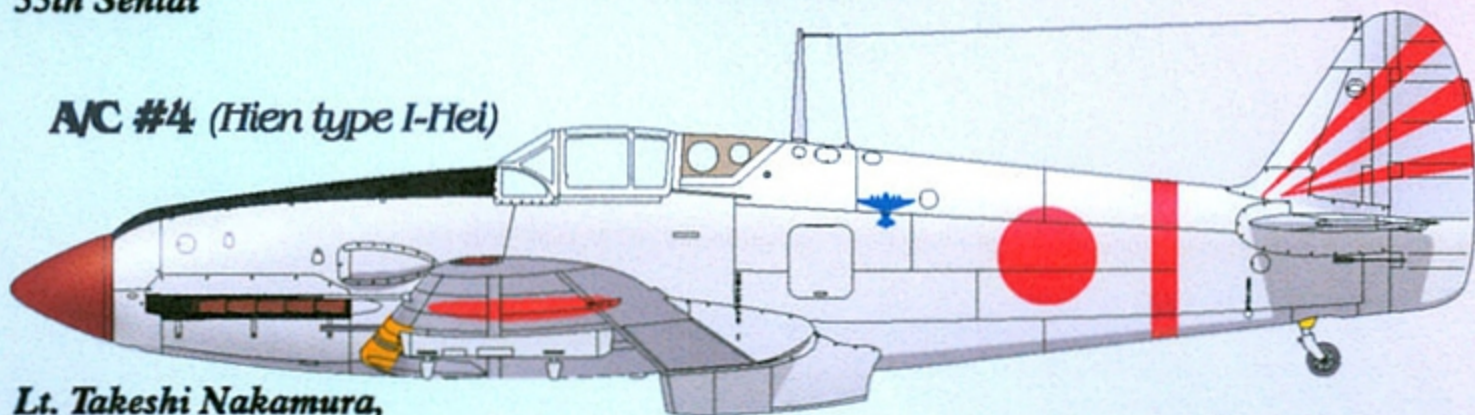
*Sgt. Shuichi Kaiho,
39th Flight Training Hikotai*

A/C #3 (Hien type I-Hei)



*Lt. Tomiho Tohda,
55th Sentai*

A/C #4 (Hien type I-Hei)



*Lt. Takeshi Nakamura,
18th Sentai*

Recommended kits: Hasegawa Ki-61 Hien

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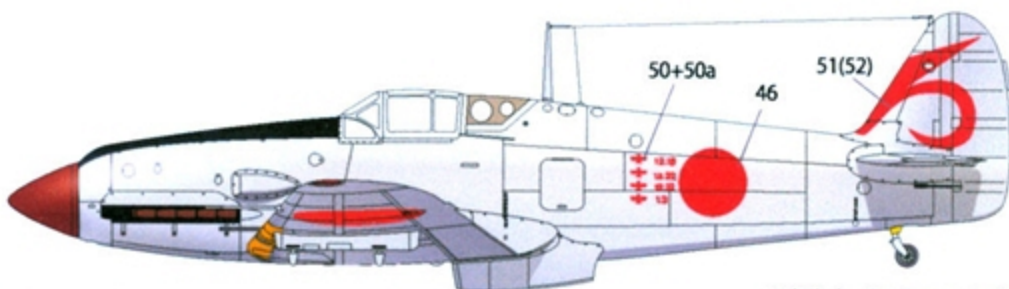
A/C #1

Hien, probably type I Hei, flown by 2nd Lt. Takeo Adachi of 55th Sentai, Komaki AB, January 3, 1945.

There is only one well-known photo of this A/C in ref. 1 - 5 and 16 in which 2nd Lt. Adachi is adding his fourth kill mark to his NMF Hien with Sgt. Kanzaki on January 3rd. He already scored his first kill on December 18th and two more kills on December 22nd, 1944.

In spite of the clear details around the kill marks (red eagles), all the references above do not show which sub-type this A/C is. Though a Tei type Hien of 55th Sentai was captured and photographed in color in Okinawa in June 1945, this A/C is more probably a type Hei as it is a "stay-behind cadre" machine like 2nd Lt. Tohda's A/C (A/C #3) and should not be the latest model.

As for the Sentai emblem on tail, two slash on arc mark is well-known, but this emblem was



introduced after the main force of 55th Sentai was exhausted in the Philippine campaign, and returned to homeland in March 1945. Up to that time the "old" type emblem should have been used, whose examples are shown on the above Hien in Okinawa, Hayabusa trainer that 2nd Lt. Tohda force landed on September 10th 1944 (photo in ref. 5 and 6), and the special attack unit Hien in ref. 7. This Sentai emblem seems to be hand painted in red (with white outline on dark green camouflaged A/C), and the third example (marks 59/60) differs from the first two examples (marks

51/52) in the longer bottom swoosh. Which type of old Sentai emblem Adachi's A/C carried is not known. If the extended swoosh type mark (59/60) is chosen, white outline should be cut-off while the decal is half dry. He became a fighter pilot while studying at Keio University, and was a hero of young pilots with 4 kills over B-29. But while intercepting a B-29 formation over Nagoya on January 19th a bullet pierced his right shoulder. He managed to drive stricken Hien to near Komaki AB, but lost consciousness and crashed to the ground.

A/C #2

Hien type I Otsu, flown by Sgt. Shuichi Kaihou of 39th Fighter Training Hikotai, Yokoshiba AB, March 1945.

This marking is based on the detailed interview and color illustration of Mr. Rikyu Watanabe with former 39th Fighter Training Hikotai members (Mr. Shuichi Kaihou, Mr. Akira Tsuyuguchi, Mr. Yoshiaki Okada, Mr. Noriyoshi Harano, Mr. Iwao Tabata and Mr. Kimiyuki Moriwaki among others) in ref. 8, but very regrettably there is no photo of this or other A/C of this unit. The Sentai emblem (motif of number 39, but was quite similar to swallow, and the unit was usually called Swallow Squadron) is shown in several books (ref. 9 - 11 and 16), but probably ref. 8 is the original document. It is painted in red with white outline, and dark green paint was applied irregularly over NMF. Hinomaru did not carry white outline. Reference 8 says this A/C is type Otsu, but all the subsequent references say it is type Hei. We followed the assertion of Mr. Watanabe.

The unique point of this A/C is (1) fuselage guns were



removed (gun troughs were left intact), (2) tail wheel retracting apparatus was also removed to lessen its weight, and (3) cartridge holder was installed below the wings. Sgt. Kaiho always used A/C #22 on several of his A/C.

Though this unit was a fighter training unit, it was engaged in home defense duties, and some skilled pilots scored victories. Red wing motif shows kill over single engine A/C, and outline of B-29 indicates damages on B-29. These are not for personal score, but for the Shotal he was flying with. Same 4 kill marks were also applied on the

Hien type Otsu of W.O. Iwao Tabata (A/C #21).

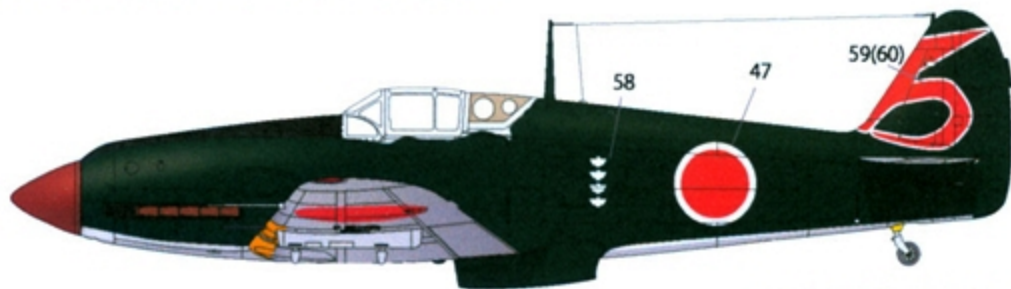
On July 20th, 1945 while practicing young pilots Sgt. Kaiho found a formation of P-51 attacking Tokorozawa AB. He instantly drove on the formation, and shot down the leader A/C with 12.7mm guns. After several days MP informed him that the downed US pilot is requesting to meet him. The pilot he met was Major E. J. Jones (unit unknown) from Okinawa, and a veteran with 6 to 7 kills. He was quite shocked to know that he was downed by a 20 years old boy-like pilot (ref. 8).

A/C #3

Hien type I Hei, flown by 2nd Lt. Tomiho Tohda of 55th Sentai, Komaki AB, February, 1945.

2nd Lt. Tohda was a member of "stay-behind" cadre of 55th Sentai, and two photos of his Hien (type I Hei) with 3 or 4 kill marks are shown in ref. 5, but close check of these photos show some difference in minor points, and they seem to be two different A/C. This decal reproduces his type I Hei Hien with 4 kill marks in February 1945.

Dense dark green paint was applied to the upper surface, but wind shield/canopy frame and some area around these as well as lower surface are left in NMF. Hinomaru has white outline. Kill marks are stylized bird mark, and the top one shows his damage to a B-29 on December 13th, 1944 over Nagoya, and the second one shows his only



confirmed kill of a B-29, 42-24773 (499BG/878BS), piloted by Lt. Leo E. Conway over Mikawa Bay on December 18th, 1944. He also damaged another B-29 on December 22nd, 1944. As with Adachi's A/C (A/C #1), the Sentai emblem is out of photo, and no conclusive evidence was found on which type of old 55th Sentai emblem it carried. By analogy to the special attack Hien (dark green camouflaged) in ref. 7,

longer swoosh type Sentai mark is provisionally shown here.

2nd Lt. Tohda was assigned to 55th Sentai in August 1944 from cadet school, and was trained with Hayabusa trainer. He made a beautiful wheel-unlocked forced landing on September 10th, 1944 at Komaki AB (ref. 5 and 6). He achieved a total of 4 victories, but the detail of his war-time career is not known.

A/C #4

Hien, probably type I Hei, flown by 2nd Lt. Takeshi Nakamura of 18th Sentai, Kashiwa AB, early 1945.

Only one photo of this A/C is shown in ref. 3, 12 and 13, and shows 2nd Lt. Nakamura's shared kill mark (blue) over a B-29 on NMF fuselage.

Sentai emblem consists of three slashes with lower two joining together (thus stylizing "一八" (18)), and its color is said to be white (with red trim on NMF) for 1st Chutai, red (with white trim on DG) for 2nd Chutai and yellow for 3rd Chutai (ref. 2, 4, 10, 14, 15), but the only two photos of this Sentai in Kashiwa AB (ref. 4, 5, 9, 10) published so far shows only red Sentai emblem and red fuselage band. As he was a "stay-behind" cadre of 18th Sentai, his Sentai emblem color is far

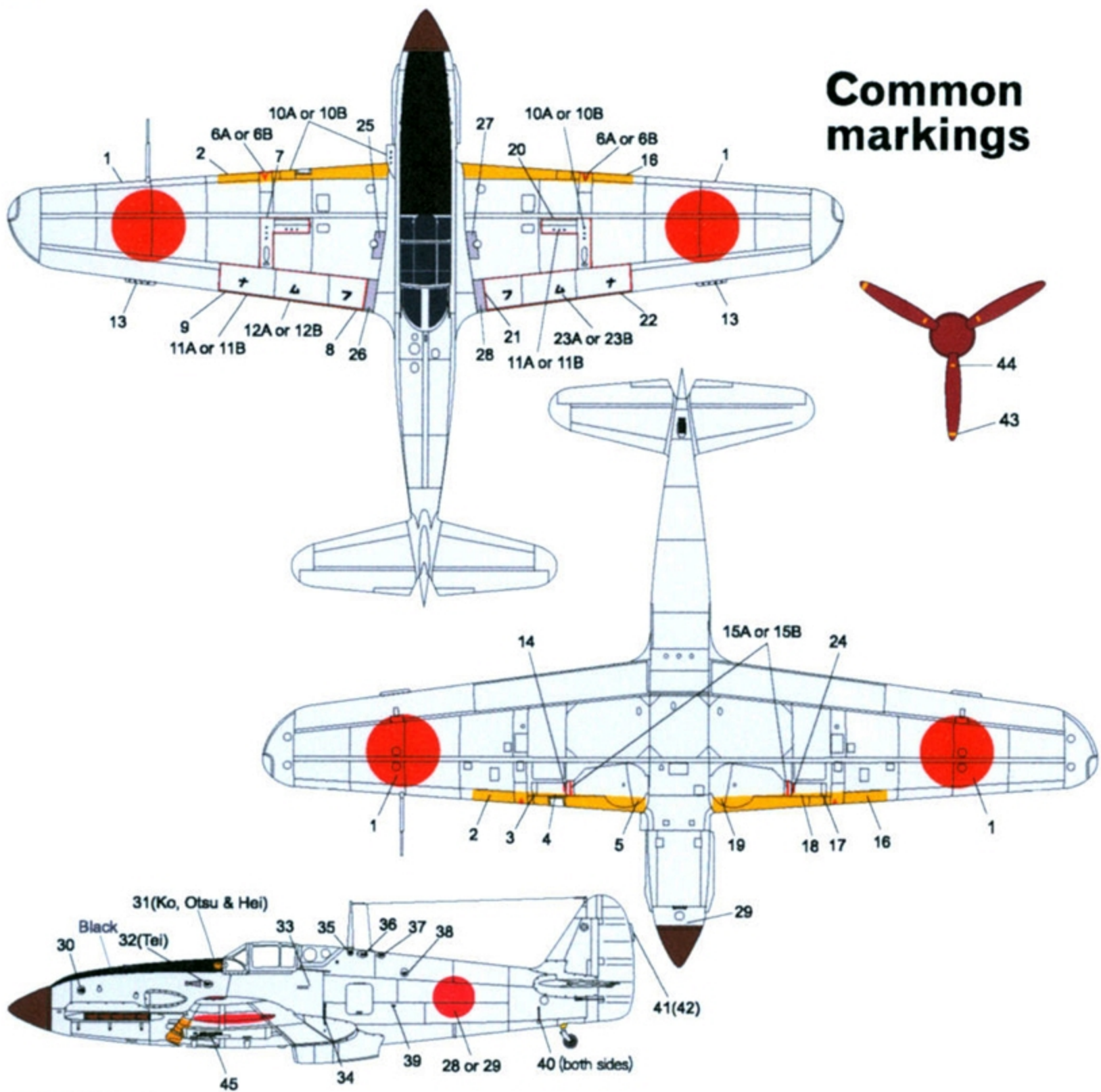


from conclusive. Photographed red Sentai mark and fuselage band is provisionally applied in this decal. All the illustration of Sentai emblem shows the upper slash extending to the front of stabilizer, probably due to the illustration in ref. 14, but the published photos show this slash just to the root of vertical fin. There may be A/C number on

landing gear cover, but it is not known.

2nd Lt. Nakamura's wartime career is not known except the fact that he achieved one shared kill (date and location unknown), and made a forced landing on a rice field near Narimasu on February 16, 1945 after combat with Hellcats.

Common markings



References

- (1) Famous Airplanes of the World #5, Army Type 3 Fighter Hien (Bunrindo Pub. 1984)
- (2) Japanese Army Fighter Force and Aces in World War II (Ikuhiko Hata, Yasuho Izawa, Kanto-sha, 1984)
- (3) World War II books 93, Army Fighter Ki 61 Hien (Yoji Watanabe, Sankei Pub. 1983)
- (4) Model Art #263 "Hien" (Shigeru Nohara, Model Art Co, 1985)
- (5) Pictorial History of Air War over Japan—Japanese Army Air Force (Yoji Watanabe, Hara Publications, 1980)
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- (7) History of Japan 3, Pacific War and GHQ (Shougakukan Publishing, 1984)
- (8) Koku Joho magazine, February 1969.
- (9) Famous Airplanes of the World #17, Army Type 3 Fighter Hien (Bunrindo Pub. 1989)
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- (11) Model Art Profile #733 Kawasaki Ki-61 Hien & Type 5 Fighter (Muneo Kashiwagi, Justin Taylor, Shigeru Nohara, Model Art Co. 1994)
- (12) Koku Fan magazine, October 2008.
- (13) Koku Fan magazine, March 2010.
- (14) Koku Fan magazine, August 1968.
- (15) Koku Fan Illustrated #42, Japanese Imperial Army & Navy Aircraft Color, Marking (Bunrindo Pub, 1988)
- (16) Osprey Aircraft of the Aces 114, Ki-61 and Ki-100 Aces (Nicholas Millman, Osprey Publishing, 2016)