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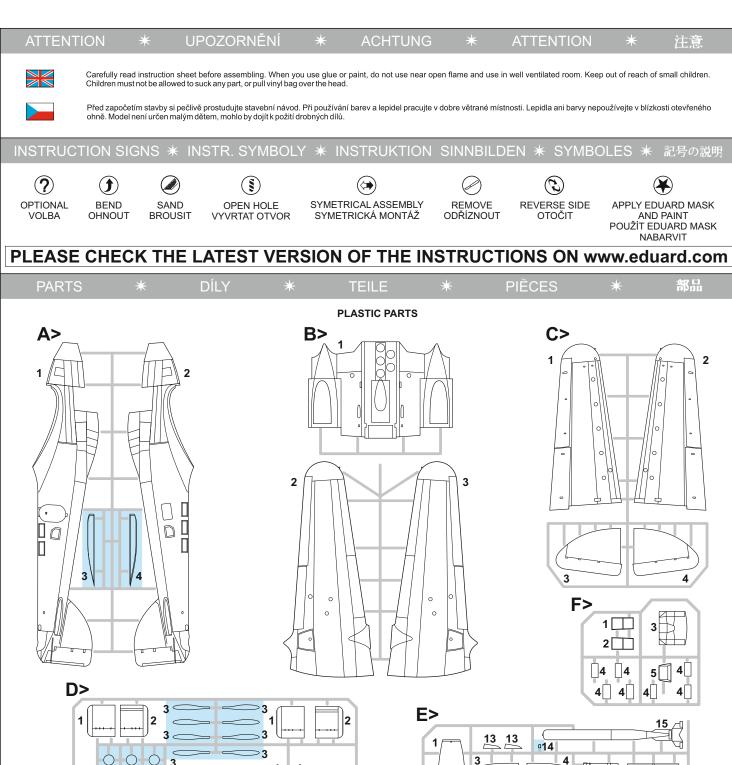
The SM.79 Sparviero was an Italian medium bomber developed by Savoia-Marchetti company. The aircraft was easily recognizable thanks to its three -engine concept and fuselage's distinctive dorsal hump.

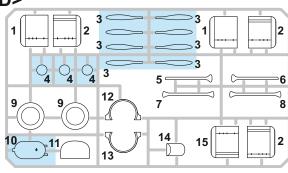
The Sparviero (Sparrowhawk in English) was liked by its crews and the airmen nicknamed it "il gobbo maledetto" (Damned Hunchback). The original development of SM.79 dates back to early 1930s. From the very start, it was designed as a fast passenger or cargo cantilever low-wing monoplane of combined wood and metal construction. The successful design was proving itself from the very beginning and the SM.79 became the fastest aircraft of its contemporaries within similar category. It made its maiden flight on September 28, 1934, with Adriano Bacula factory pilot behind the controls. And it did not take too long and the new aircraft established 26 aviation world records in the period from 1937 to 1939! The performance of the new type attracted attention of the Regia Aeronautica (Italian Air Force) representatives who looked at it as a prospective fast bomber. In fact, it was the fastest of the medium bombers of its time and the Fascist government readily used the SM.79s as a propaganda tool on many occasions like air meetings or fly-overs during national celebrations. The design was both rugged and responsive enough to allow it to be looped. Quite impressive for such a heavy aircraft.

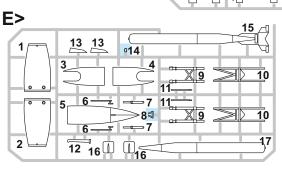
The SM.79 first saw combat during the Spanish Civil War, where these aircraft usually operated without any fighter escort. This tactics was possible thanks to the speed of the three-engined beast. Thanks to the encouraging performance during the Spanish War, several countries were interested in buying these modern aircraft with Yugoslavia and Romania procuring the type.

At the start of the Second World War, almost 600 Sparviero aircraft of SM.79-I and SM.79-II versions were in service in May 1940. Thereafter, they were deployed everywhere Italians fought.

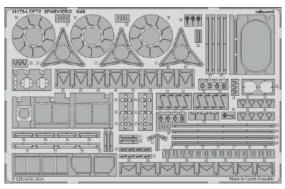
The SM.79 was initially used mainly as a medium bomber and transport aircraft. Following pioneering work by the Special Aerotorpedoes Unit, the type was also modified as a torpedo bomber. In this role, the SM.79 achieved notable success against Allied shipping in the Mediterranean theatre. Its wooden structure was light enough to allow it to stay afloat for half an hour in case of water landing. The SM.79 was the most numerous Italian bomber of the WWII, as some 1,300 units were built, and the type remained in Italian service until 1952.





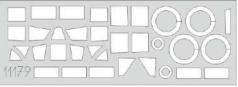


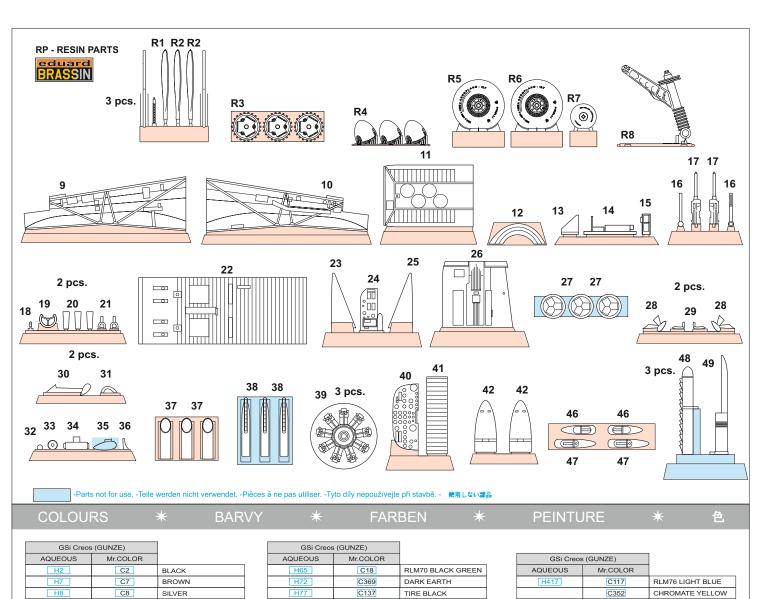
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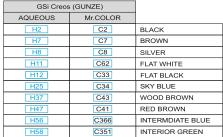






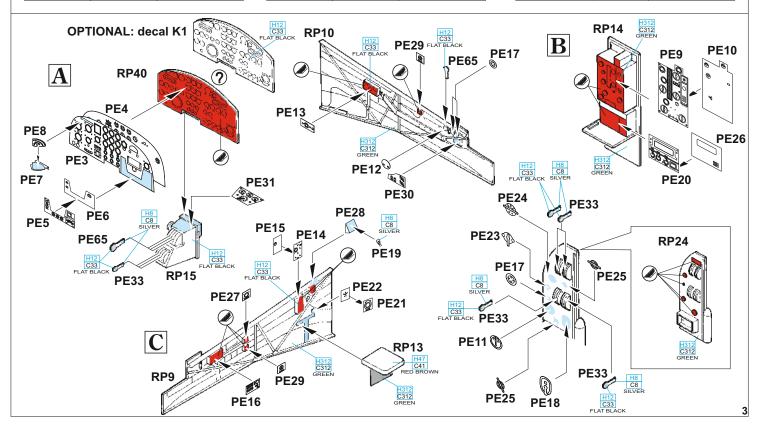


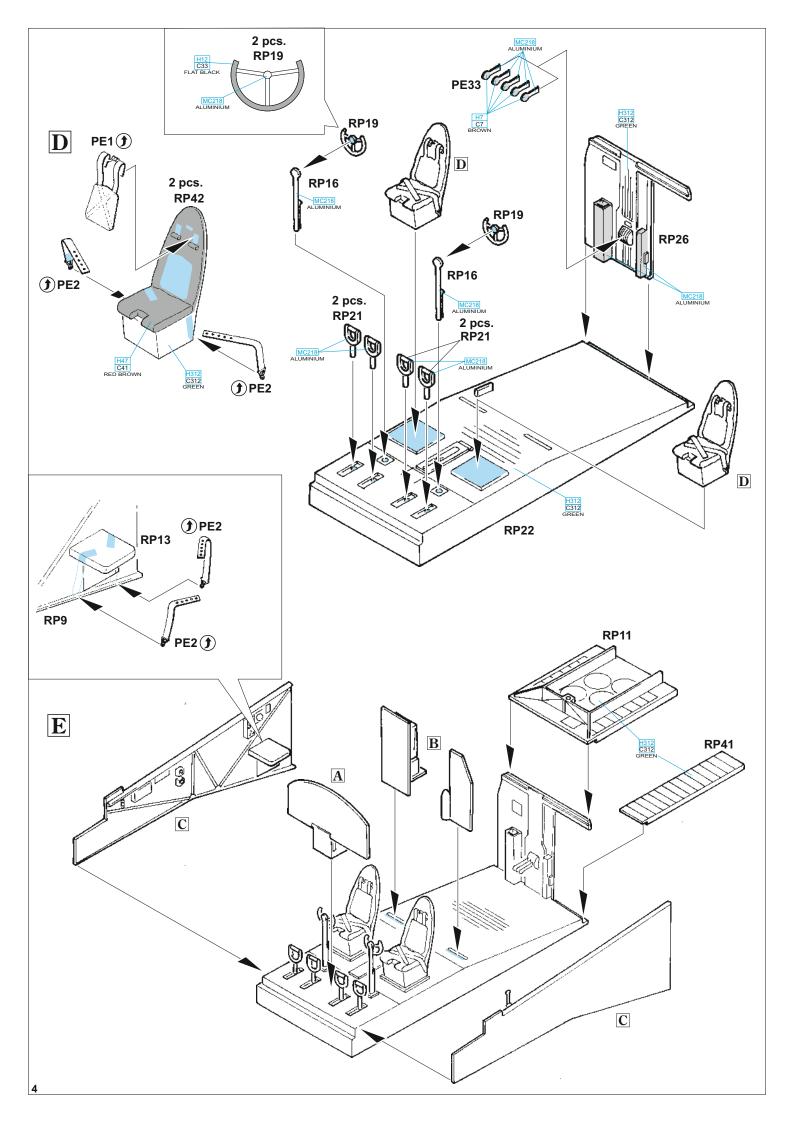


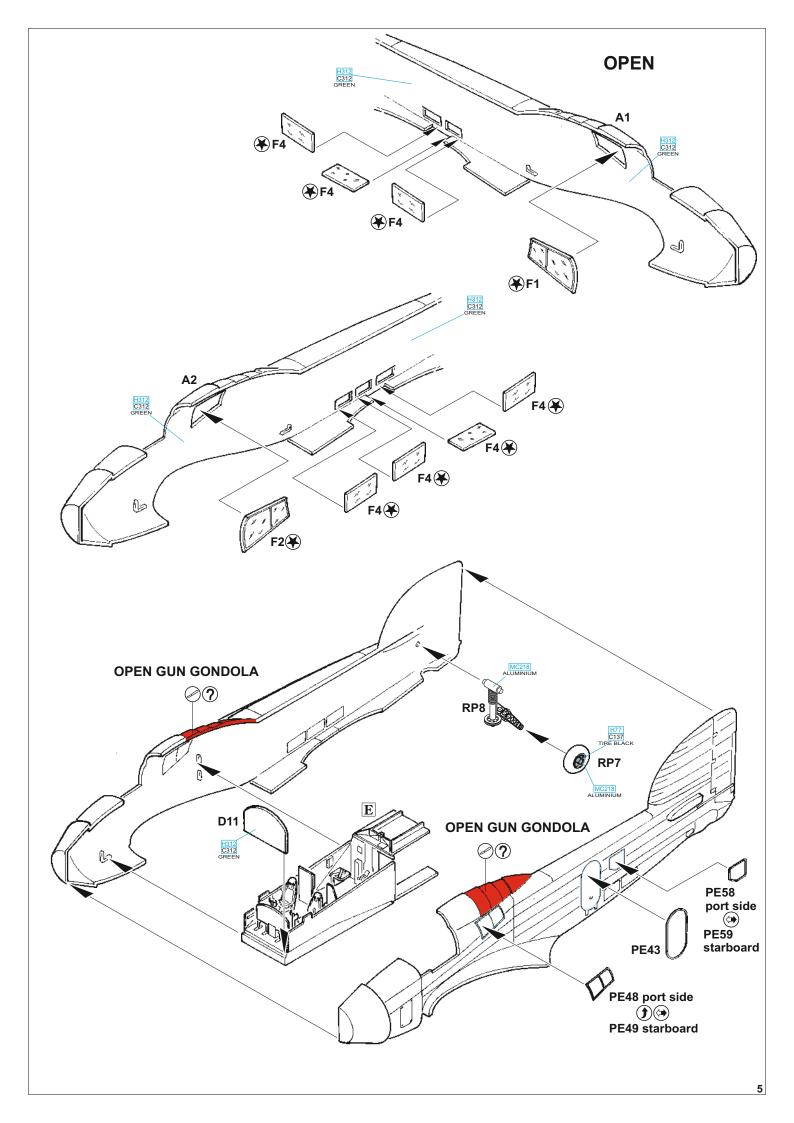


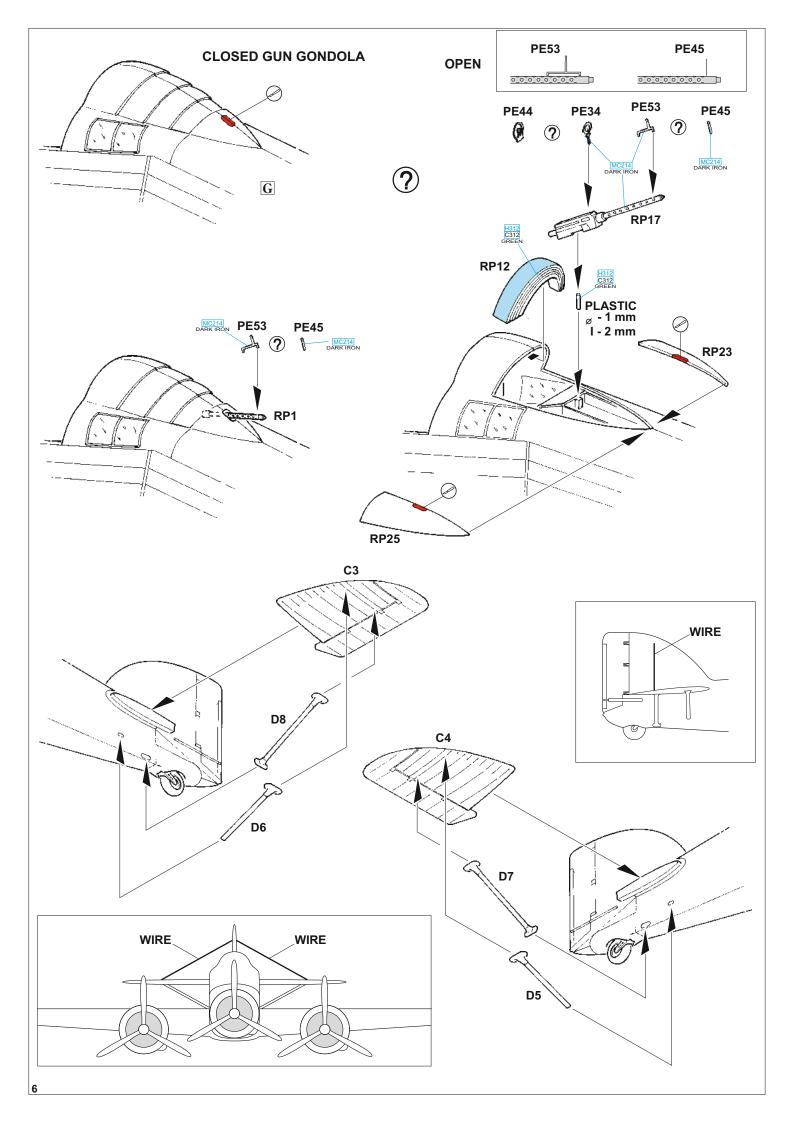
GSi Creos (GUNZE)		
AQUEOUS	Mr.COLOR	
H65	C18	RLM70 BLACK GREEN
H72	C369	DARK EARTH
H77	C137	TIRE BLACK
H79	C39	SANDY YELLOW
H302	C302	GREEN
H312	C312	GREEN
H317	C317	GRAY
H324	C324	LIGHT GRAY
H335	C363	MEDIUM SEAGRAY
H337	C337	GRAYISH BLUE

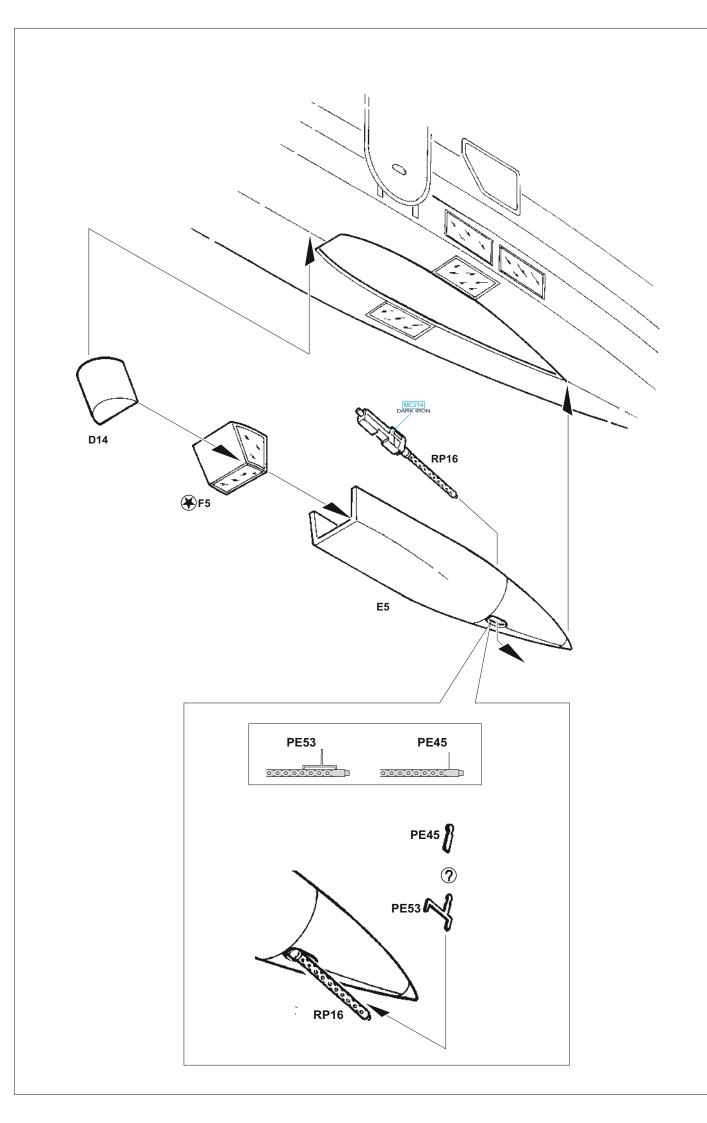
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GSi Creos (GUNZE)	
Mr.COLOR	1
C117	RLM76 LIGHT BLUE
C352	CHROMATE YELLOW
Mr.METAL COLOR	
MC215	
MC218	
MC219	
Mr.COLOR SUPER METALLIC	
SM201	
SM203	
	Mr.COLOR [C117] [C352] [C016] [216] [2218] [2219] [2219] [221] [221] [221]

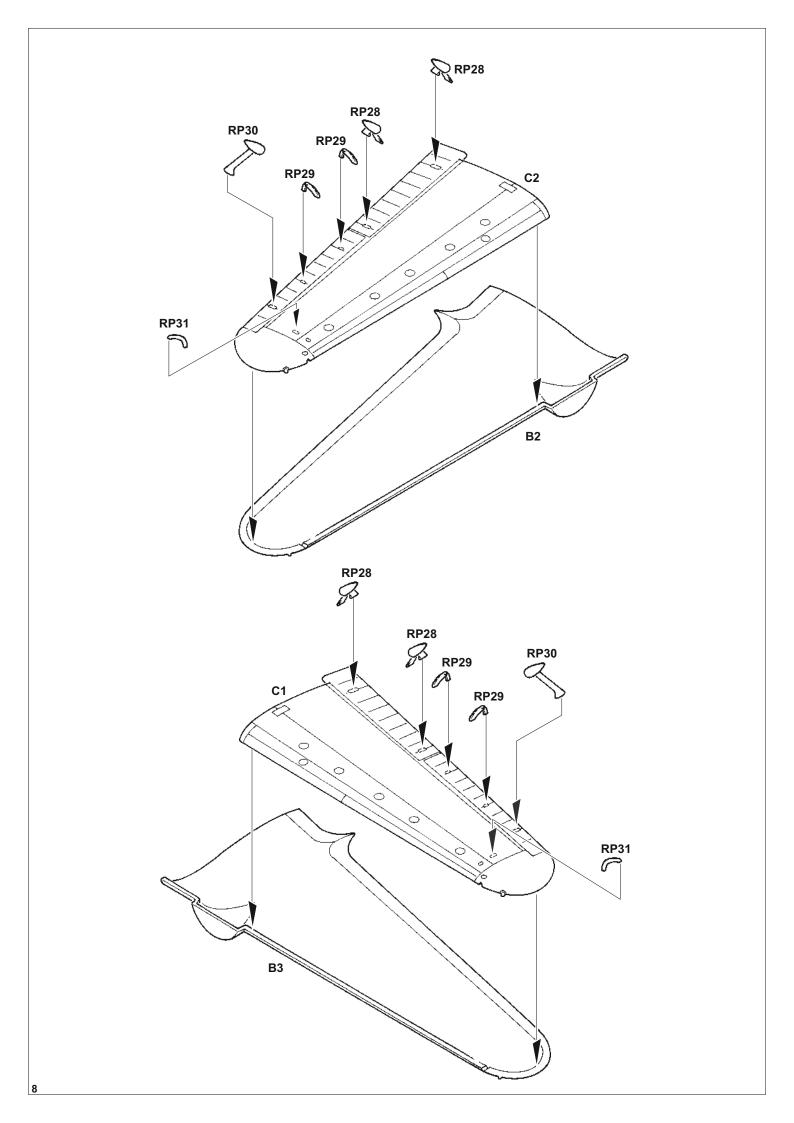


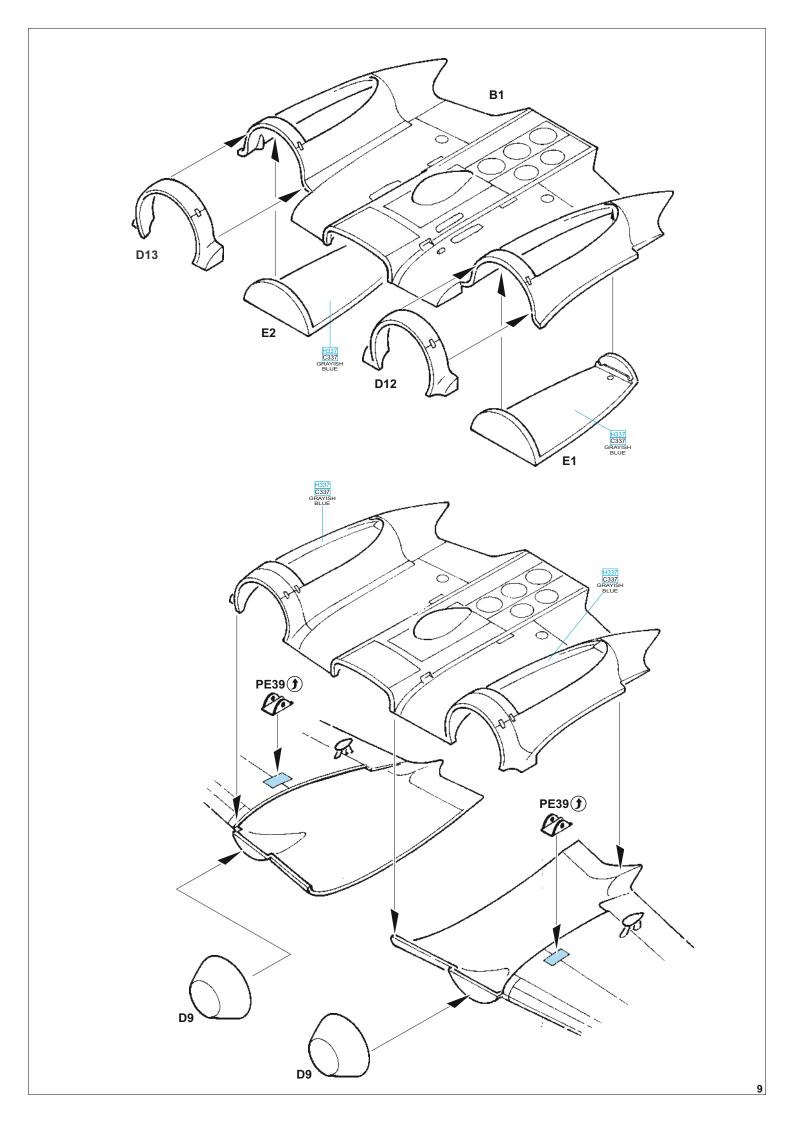


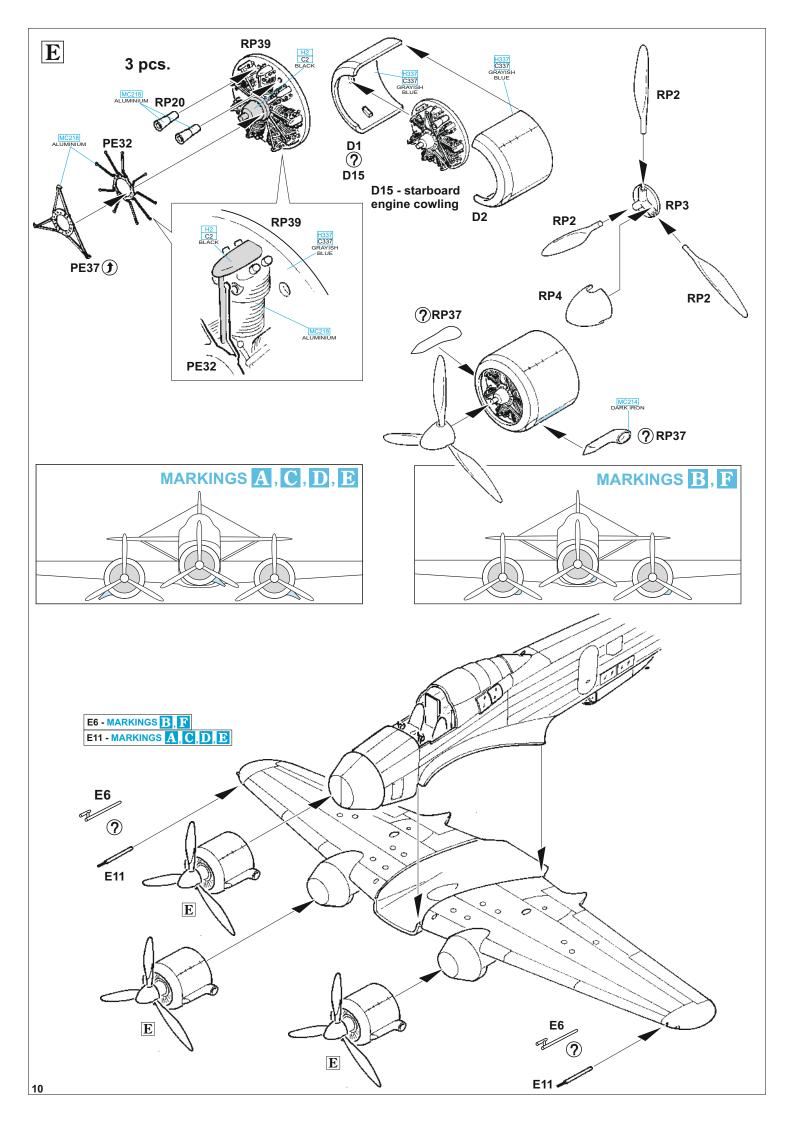


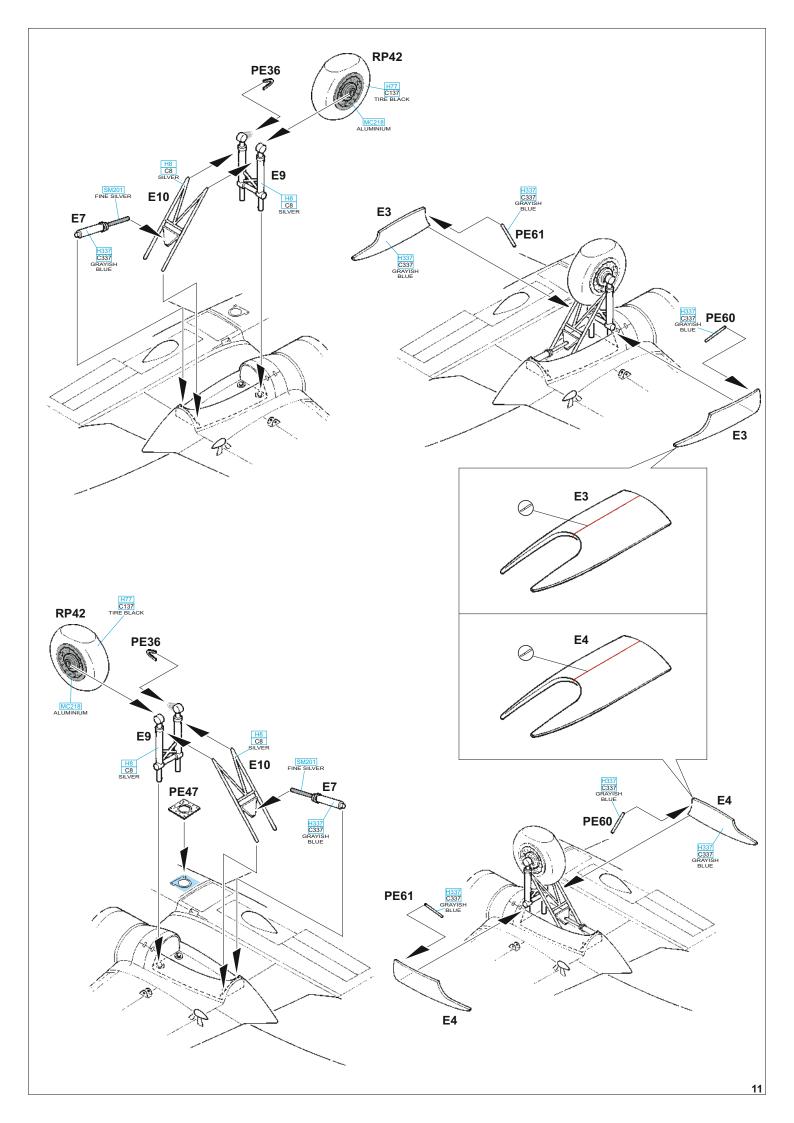


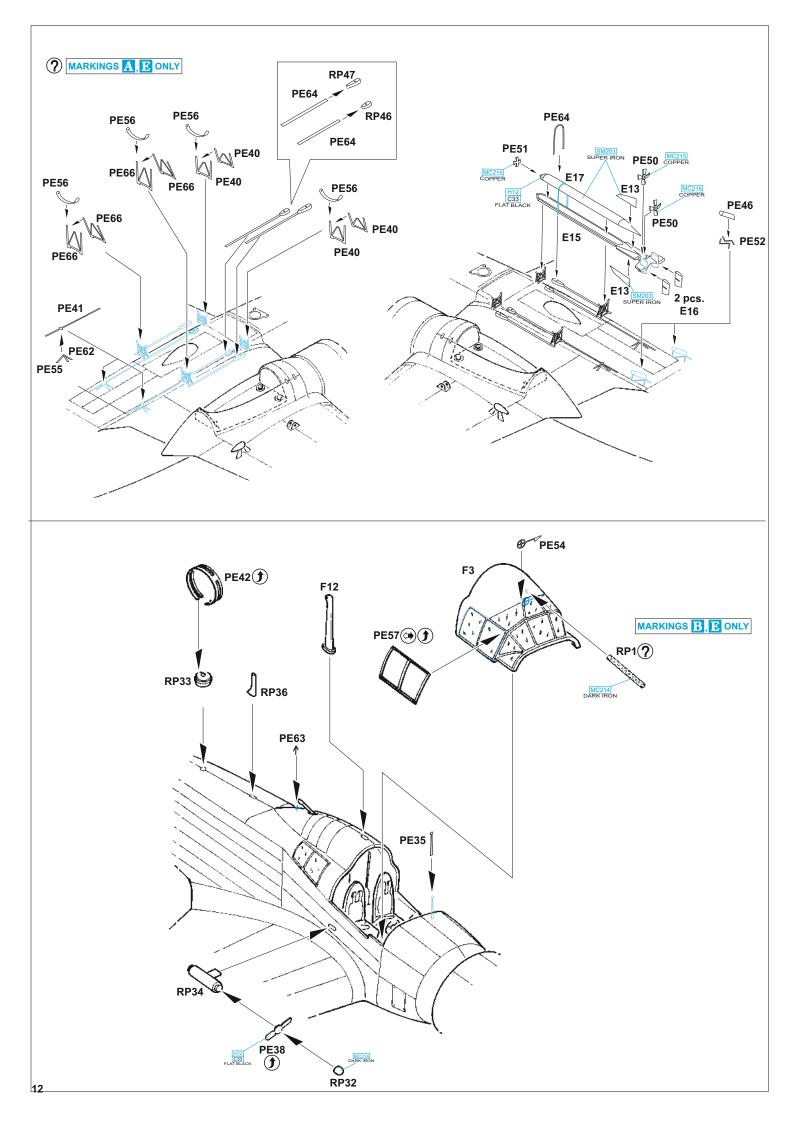




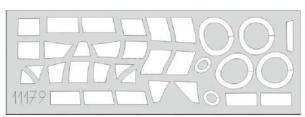


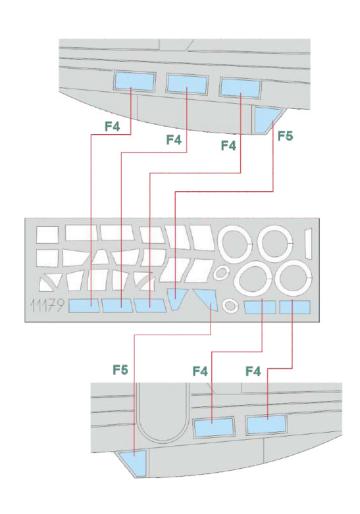


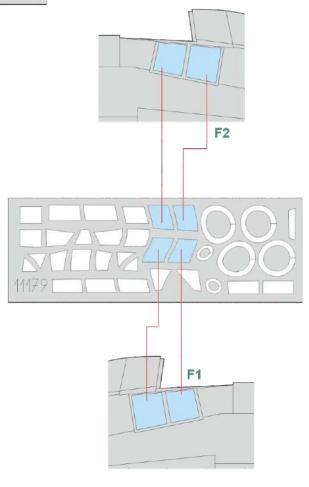


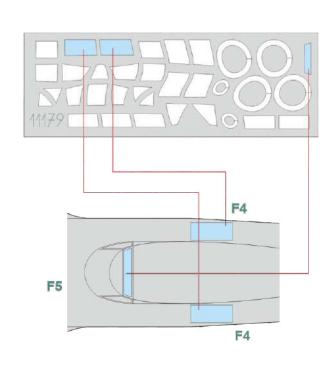






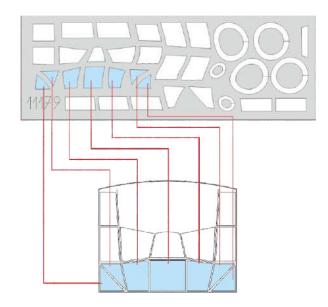




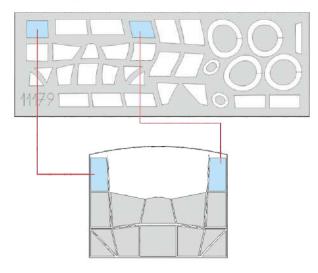


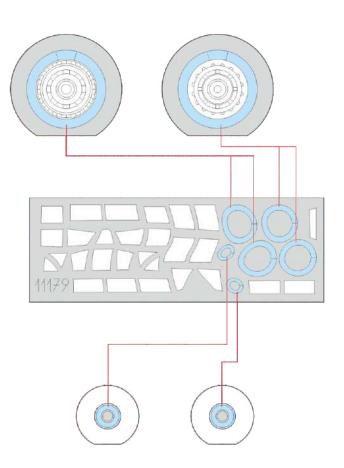


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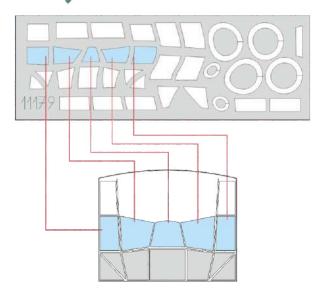


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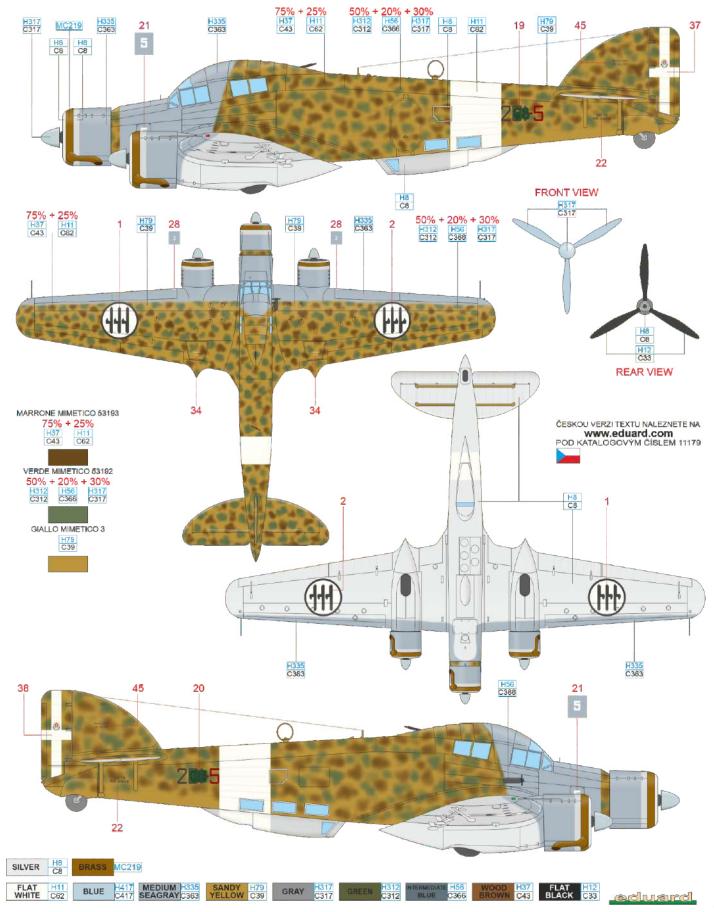
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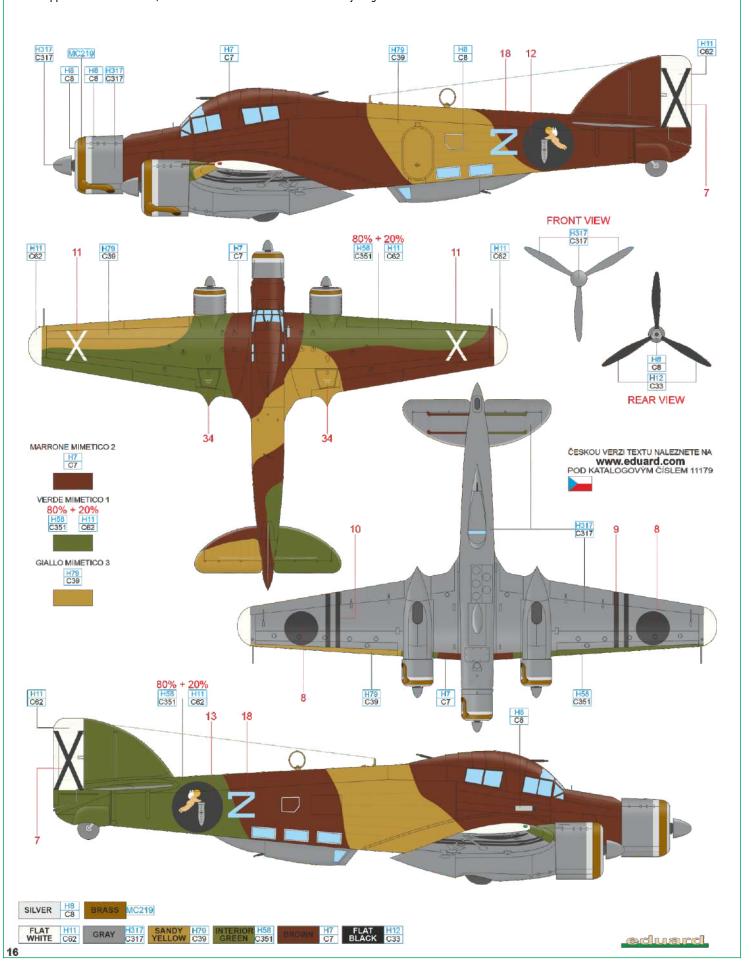
MM23838, Capt. Carlo E. Buscaglia, 281° Squadriglia, 132° Gruppo AS, Gadurra, Rhodes, summer 1941

Carlo Emanuele Buscaglia started his military career with the 50° Bomber Squadriglia and in the ranks of 252° Sq., he took part in a combat baptism, a raid on the port of Marseille, on June 21, 1940. His fame began to rise after training for torpedo attacks and his subsequent assignment to 278° Sq. operating from El Adem. Tenente Buscaglia hit the heavy cruiser Kent, the light cruiser Glasgow and several transport ships during his stay with the unit. On March 5, 1941, 281° Squadriglia was formed, and Capitano Buscaglia was appointed as commanding officer, subsequently becoming CO of the 132° Gruppo in early April 1942. On November 12, 1942, a Sparviero flown by Buscaglia was shot down by a Spitfire and Buscaglia was declared dead. However, he survived with severe injuries and burns and was transferred to a POW camp at Fort Meade, MD. After the surrender of Italy, Allies offered him command of the 28° Gruppo Bombardemento. Ironically, his former 132° Gruppo, now operating on the ANR side, was renamed 1° Gruppo Aerosiluranti Buscaglia. On August 23, 1944, Buscaglia crashed while taking off. His Baltimore exploded and Buscaglia succumbed to his injuries and burns the following day.



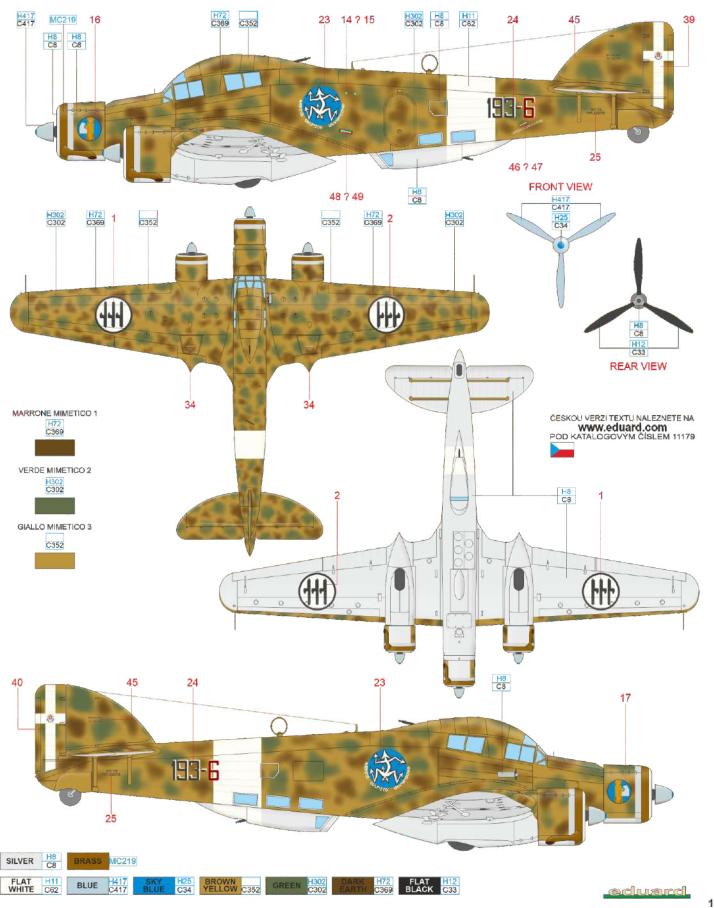
52° Squadriglia, 27° Gruppo BT, 8° Stormo BV, Son San Juan, Baleares, March 1938

The first Sparvieros destined to support the Nationalists during the Spanish Civil War landed at Son San Juan airport in February 1937 and belonged to 12° Stormo BV. The crews of this unit participated in actions against the Republicans until November 1937, when the 12° Stormo pilots were replaced by colleagues from the 27° Gruppo of the 8° Stormo BV, known as the Falchi delle Baleari (Balearic Falcons). The Sparvieros, supplied from Italy, were painted in pre-war camouflage scheme, consisting of large color fields using the Marrone Mimetico 2, Verde Mimetico 1 and Giallo Mimetico 3 shades on the upper and side surfaces, while the lower surfaces were covered by Grigio Mimetico.



MM 22278 or 22279, Ten. Col. Mario Giuliano, 193° Squadriglia, 87° Gruppo BT, 30° Stormo, Sciacca, Sicily, December 1940

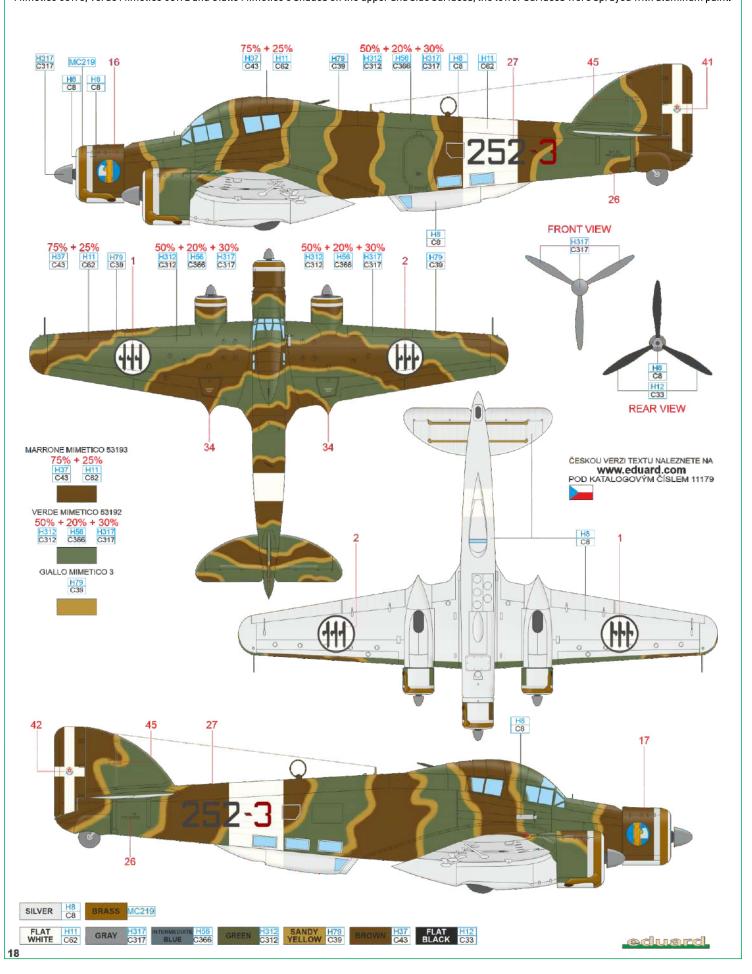
The 192° and 193° Squadriglia, forming the 87° Gruppo, received their first Sparvieros in 1938 and used them in Albania the following year. In early June, 193° moved to Sciacca airfield in Sicily, from where its crews flew their first wartime missions against airfields in Tunisia. From June 6, Sparvieros of 193° Squadriglia started raids on the island of Malta and on supplying convoys. The unit participated in the fighting against Malta until August 1941, when the rearmament of the unit to CANT Z.1007bis bombers began. The Sparviero, designated by the code 193-6, was camouflaged with Verde Mimetico 2, Marrone Mimetico 1 and Giallo Mimetico 2 on the upper and side surfaces, while the lower surfaces were sprayed with aluminum paint. The unit's emblem – Omino Elettrico – was painted on the fuselage sides, and the canvas punctures sustained during the Malta raids were covered with patches. It is not entirely clear whether these took the form of British or Italian cockades. The larger punctures were re-taped with pieces of canvas with the Italian tricolor and a label indicating when the damage occurred. Under the fuselage codes was the inscription CHI-MI-TOCCO'-CI-LASCIO'-LE-PENNE.



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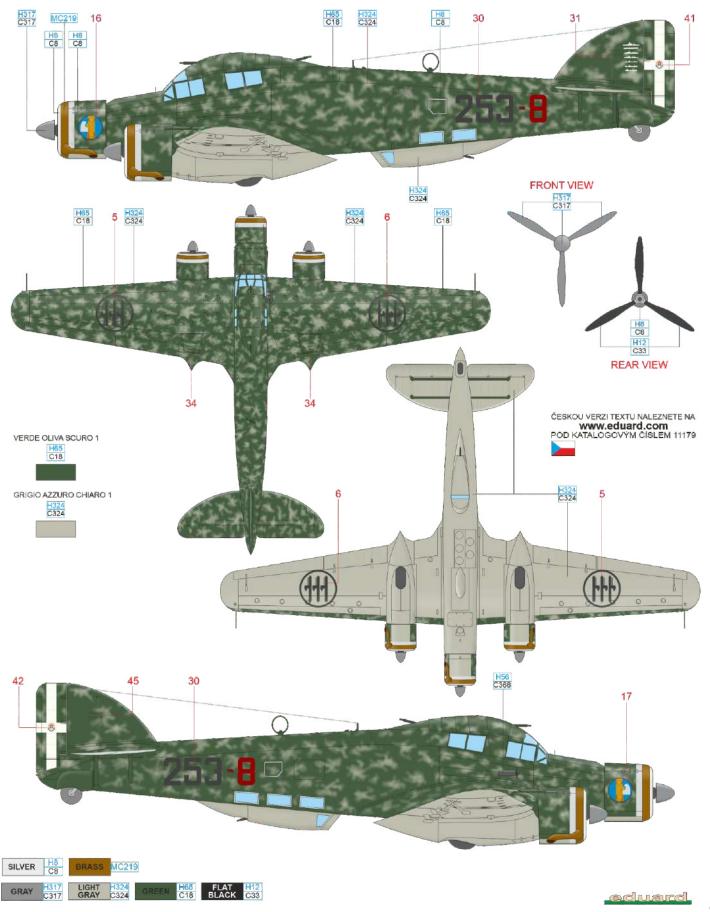
MM 22593, 252° Squadriglia, 104° Gruppo BT, 46° Stormo, Skadar, Albania, end of 1940

The 252° Squadriglia, which was formed together with 253° Squadriglia, 104° Gruppo BT, received the first Sparvieros on February 15, 1940. In June of the same year the crews took part in the first raids on targets in Corsica and Marseilles, followed by a move to an airfield in occupied Albania in November, from where the Sparvieros took off for bombing raids over Greece. The Sparvieros used by 252° Squadriglia were camouflaged in several camouflage schemes, consisting of both spots and irregular patches. The Sparviero with number 252–3 had the camouflage of irregular patches sprayed with Marrone Mimetico 53193, Verde Mimetico 53192 and Giallo Mimetico 3 shades on the upper and side surfaces, the lower surfaces were sprayed with aluminum paint.



253° Squadriglia, 104° Gruppo BT, 46° Stormo, Gadurra, Rhodes, August 1942

The crews of 104° Gruppo Sparvieros were retrained for anti-ship torpedo attacks in the spring of 1942, and the unit first moved to Decimomanu airfield on the island of Sardinia in May 1942 to conduct raids on ships of the Harpoon convoy. Later they moved to Rhodes in July, from where they undertook reconnaissance flights over the eastern Mediterranean and attacks against Allied shipping in the same area. The Sparvieros used by 252° Sq. and 253° Sq. against ships in the summer of 1942 were camouflaged with Verde Oliva Scuro 2 shade on the upper and side surfaces, the lower surfaces were painted in Grigio Azzuro Chiaro 1 shade. The olive color on upper surfaces was supplemented with irregular patches of GAC 1 paint before Rhodes deployment. The vertical fin of the aircraft number 253–8 was like the other aircraft of the unit adorned by silhouettes of the ships, which were hit during the operation against the Harpoon convoy by the entire 104° Gruppo BT.



256° Squadriglia, 109° Gruppo BT, 36° Stormo, Castelvetrano, Sicily, June 1940

The entire 109° Gruppo, consisting of 256° Squadriglia and 257° Squadriglia, was formed along with its sister 108° Gruppo in the spring of 1938 at Bologna Borgo Panigale airfield. These units were equipped with Savoia SM.79s and SM.81s and took part in the occupation of Albania with them. Subsequently, they were moved back to Sicily, from where they undertook raids on Malta and on convoys transporting much needed material destined for the struggling island and its inhabitants. The camouflage of this Sparviero consisted of a base color of Giallo Mimetico 3 on the upper and side surfaces, with irregular patches of Marrone Mimetico 53193 and Verde Mimetico 53192 shades. The lower surfaces were camouflaged with Grigio Mimetico. On both sides of the vertical fin, there was painted the emblem of 36° Stormo, the towers of Asinelli and Garisenda, monuments and landmarks of the city of Bologna, meant as a honor of the place of origin of this unit.

