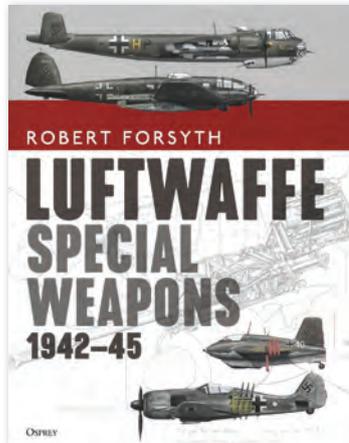


WACKY WEAPONS



Luftwaffe Special Weapons 1942-45
 By: Robert Forsyth
 ISBN: 978-1-4728-3982-4 Price: £35
 Pages: 272 Format: 198 x 250mm
 Web: www.ospreypublishing.com

“Necessity is the mother of invention”, as the saying goes, and this is particularly true during wartime, when operational needs drive massive changes. This

fascinating book is a compilation of projects undertaken by the German Luftwaffe between 1942 and 1945, regardless of how far they were developed – some stayed on paper, while others flew operationally. The book is split into seven chapters, covering the test units, air-to-air, air-to-ground and anti-shiping weapons plus radical suggestions, before finally using aircraft as weapons (Mistel fighter/bomber combinations). The three main target groups (air, ground and ship) share common solutions, with a mix of mortars, recoilless cannon, heavy cannon, bombs, guided missiles and rockets. The more extreme systems arguably provoke the greater interest, from cable bombs to chemical sprayers and even flamethrowers – all proving highly impractical, if not downright dangerous to the attacking aircraft. Period diagrams and photos give plenty of modelling information and add to the well-written text. **SF**

FRIEDRICH PLANS

Messerschmitt Bf 109F

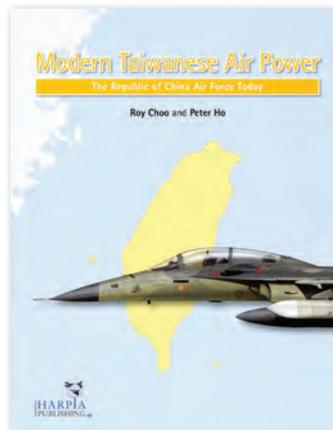
By: Mariusz Łukasik Pages: 24
 ISBN: 978-83-66148-41-3
 Price: €18.99 Format: A4
 Web: www.kagero.pl

Modellers with Messerschmitt Bf 109F kits will appreciate Kagero’s *TopDrawings* publication, which provides a selection of scale plans, colour profiles and detail diagrams for this sub-type. As usual, it begins with a one-page introduction to the aircraft, with text provided in English and Polish, before moving onto the technical diagrams. Initial spreads focus on prototypes and early airframes – notes on these state the 1/48 plans are based on given references, and a bibliography is provided alongside the drawings. Similarly, riveting has been simplified throughout to improve the clarity of the imagery. Production F-1, F-2 and F-4 models are covered in chronological order with fighter-bomber, reconnaissance, tropical



and specialised variants also featured, while elements such as the undercarriage, armaments, dust filters and instrument panels are shown in 1/24, with several displayed in full colour. Five aircraft form a profile section on the central spreads, with a further pair shown on the back cover, and completing the package is a pull-out poster depicting a II./JG 53 F-2 in combat with a Spitfire on May 3, 1941. **JF**

CURRENT STATUS STUDY



Modern Taiwanese Air Power
 By: Roy Choo and Peter Ho
 Pages: 94
 ISBN: 978-1-950394-03-6
 Price: £20.99 Format: 210 x 282mm
 Web: www.harpia-publishing.com

Known officially as the Republic of China, Taiwan has a fascinating military history, with war with the People’s Republic of China and continuing tensions between the

states. Its Republic of China Air Force (ROCAF) is the subject of Harpia’s new book, which having been published in summer 2021, is the most up-to-date study of the subject available. History and backdrop are covered in a concise but informative chapter, before attention turns to the ROCAF’s current mission and purpose, organisational structure and elements such as training and ground-based defence. Notably, this second chapter includes a full order of battle and maps of the appropriate region, while the third addresses possibilities and tactical analyses of conflict around Taiwan. However, the fourth section is of greatest interest to modellers, as indigenous histories and high-quality imagery covers the country’s crop of F-16, Mirage 2000, F-CK-1, C-130 and other aircraft in detail. A final chapter evaluates future projects and the ROCAF’s needs. **JF**

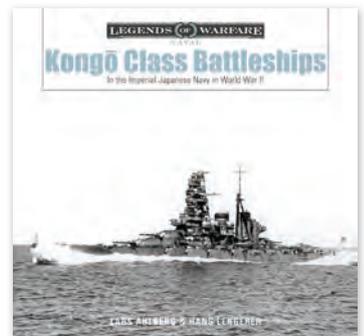
LONG-LIVED BATTLECRUISERS

Kongō-class Battleships

By: Lars Ahlberg and Hans Lengerer
 ISBN: 978-0-7643-6167-8
 Price: US\$24.99 Pages: 128
 Format: 235 x 235mm
 Web: www.schifferbooks.com

While many pre-World War One dreadnoughts were upgraded significantly in the inter-war period, few were changed as much as the four Japanese Kongō-class battlecruisers (*Kongō*, *Hiei*, *Kirishima* and *Haruna*), which were reconstructed extensively. Based on a British design, the development and operational service and fate of each ship is covered in depth. As recounted here, the Kongō-class vessels were among the most active major combatants, despite their age at the outbreak of World War Two. The authors have compiled a superb collection of period photos (a difficult task as many were destroyed at the end of

the war) and design blueprints to help illustrate the careers of these powerful ships. Arguably the most informative element for modellers will be the section devoted to the reconstruction and modification work undertaken, which included changing the tripod-style masks to the ‘pagoda-style’ structures that were also a feature of the later Yamato-class. It makes for an excellent reference on the type, and offers inspiration for those with kits of these ships. **SF**



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First look at Airfix's newly tooled 1/48 Vampire F.3

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