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A References show these A/C to have different camouflage patterns. Since all of the pictures we have are side views, the upper surface patterns are speculative and should be considered temporary until more information is available. The modeller may use our suggestions or those in the kit instructions. The colors are also a point of argument, since every reference we have calls for a different F.S. Number. However, it is very unlikely that an exact match exists. EXTRA "colors" makes the correct color for these birds, and are highly recommended, if you cannot find them, we recommend F.S. 26440 for the Light Gray and F.S. 24233 for the Gray Green. Under certain light conditions Lt. Ghost Gray looks good as a replacement for F.S. 26440, but we believe this to be just a photographic perspective. Hardly any stenciling is visible, only the hoist markings on the fin and rudder. The radome color is approximately F.S.



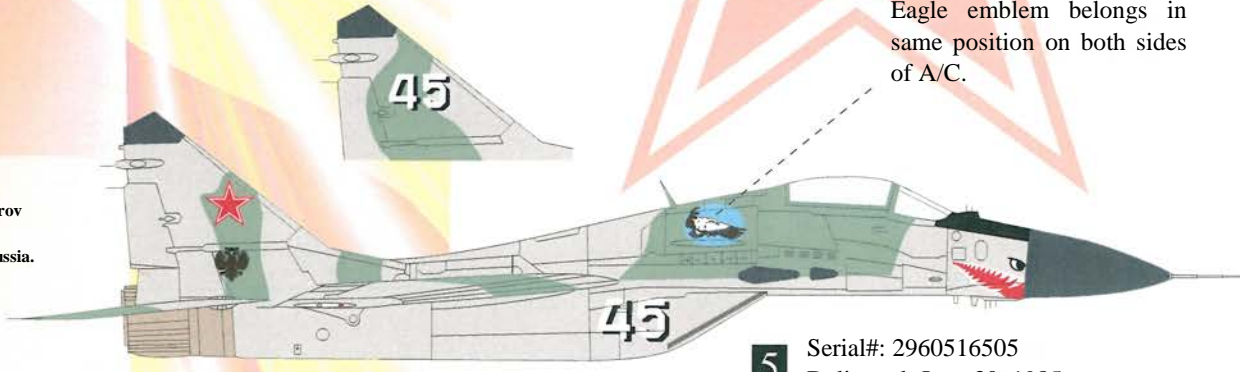
Our thanks go to M-K Hobby Magazine, Bob Lessels, Alexander Yegorov, and last but not least, George Mellinger, who provided us with the translation and information necessary to produce this decal sheet. George also provided the wonderful reading on Ivan's Eagles Hopefully, with their help, we will be able to produce more decals on these, and other, obscure Russian birds.

Our Thanks to them.

Enjoy!

- References:**
- Sqdn/Signal in Action
 - Photos and translation provided by Bob Lessels and Alexander Yegorov
 - All Text by George Mellinger
 - MK Hobby Magazine 2/2000, Russia.

- Recommended Kits:**
- 1/72 Scale Italeri Mig-29 Family

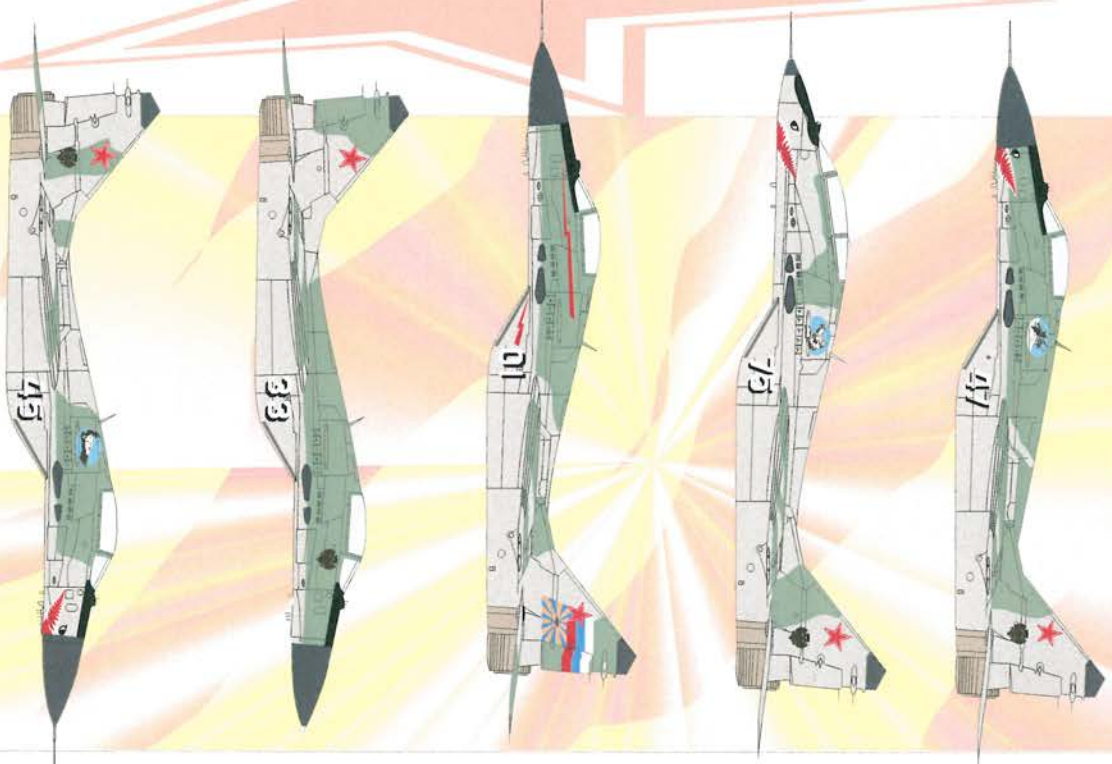


Eagle emblem belongs in same position on both sides of A/C.

5 Serial#: 2960516505
Delivered: June 30, 1985.



Suggested Kits: 1/72 Scale Italeri Mig-29 Family



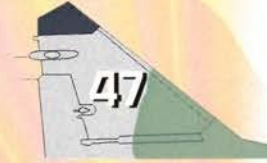
Mig-29's



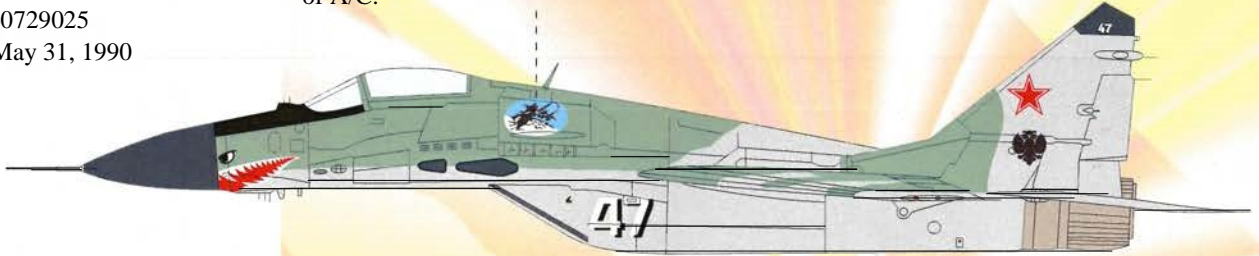
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Mig- 29's

Eagle emblem belongs in same position on opposite side of A/C.



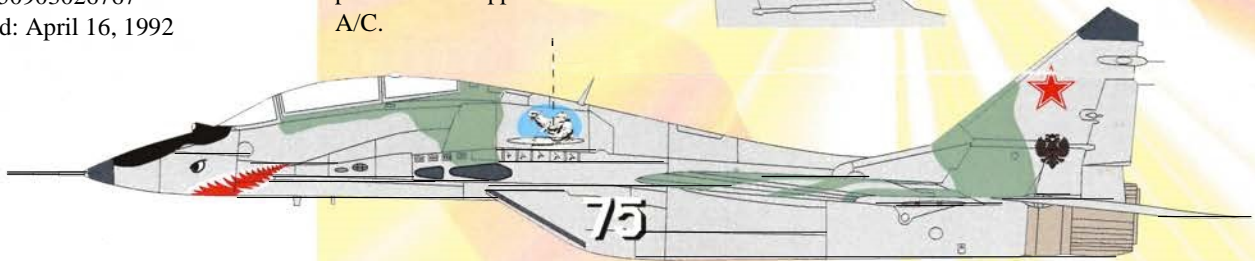
- 1** Serial#: 2960729025
 Delivered: May 31, 1990



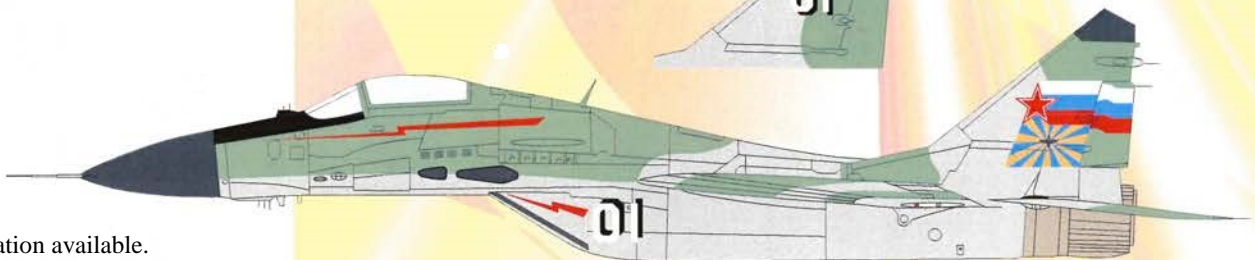
Eagle emblem belongs in same position on opposite side of A/C.



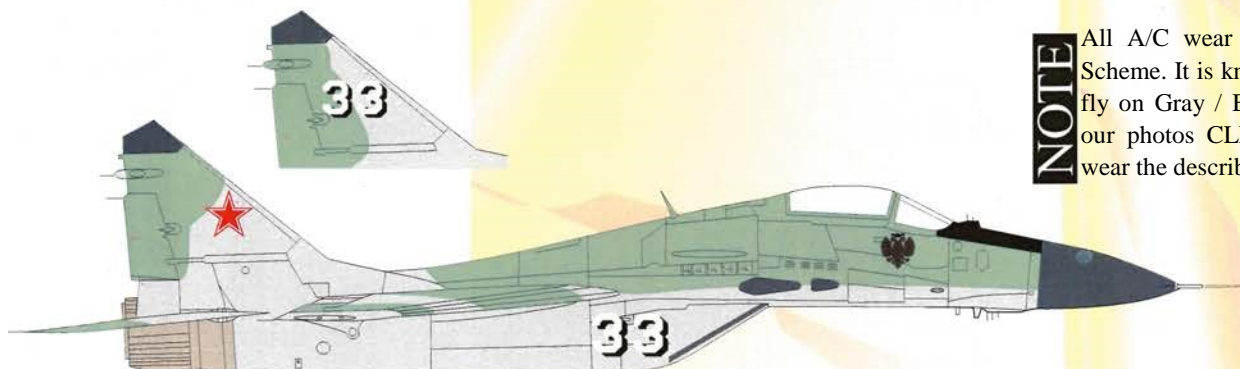
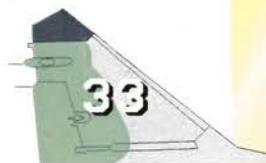
- 2** Serial#: 50903026767
 Delivered: April 16, 1992



- 3** No information available.



- 4** No information available.



NOTE All A/C wear the Grey/ Grey-Green Scheme. It is known that Mig-29's also fly on Gray / Blue-Gray schemes, but our photos CLEARLY show them to wear the described colors.

During the Cold War Period the Soviet WS strongly prohibited the use of individual and unit markings, both for security purposes, and to discourage individualism and strengthen uniformity and collectivism. However, as with other air forces, this prohibition weakened under conditions of protracted conflict, and combat units began introducing mission markings, unit insignias, and even personal markings. As units rotated home and were replaced, more regiments were exposed to, and adopted the new fashion. One of these units was the 120 LAP which deployed to Afghanistan on August 20, 1988, basing at Bagram and Shindand.

The 120 LAP is one of the youngest, but most illustrious fighter regiments of the Soviet WS. This unit was formed only at the beginning of 1969 in Belorussia for deployment to Domna Airbase in the Transbaikal Military District, specifically to strengthen the forces arrayed against China at the time of the Ussuri River border conflict. Initially equipped with the MiG-21, the 120 LAP was one of the first units to receive the MiG-23ML and MiG-23MLD. During the years 1982-1984 the regiment was the top regiment in the entire WS for training and operational records. While in Afghanistan, the regiment continued its record of superior performance, including the scoring of an air-to-air victory on September 26, 1988, shooting down an Iranian Bell helicopter.

While in Afghanistan, the first squadron adopted as its marking a rather simple drawing of an eagle shooting a bow and arrow. The second squadron was fortunate to have Captain Valerii P. Maksimenko, an aircraft maintenance officer and a talented artist who designed an insignia for the squadron based on the Grif, which happened to be the popular name for MiG-23 s in Afghanistan, much as the Su-25 was called the Grach. This spread-winged Grif went on the right air intake. By the left air intake went one of several caricatures - one for each of two flights and a third 'Teacher' for the squadron's three MiG-23UBs. In January the shark mouth insignia was added, though only for six of the combat aircraft.

When the 120 LAP returned home on March 25, 1989, they brought their colorfully marked MiGs with them. Even though their aircraft were sent for a major overhaul, including repainting and in some instances the assignment of new aircraft numbers, the shark's teeth and individual aircraft markings were restored as a mark of pride. Their first public showing came at the local air show on Air Forces Day, August 20, 1991.

At the beginning of 1993 the 120 LAP replaced its MiG-23s with MiG-29s from regiments disbanded in the wake of withdrawal from eastern Europe and the newly independent republics. They received a mixture of the original MiG-29 (factory type 9-12) Fulcrum-A, and the hump-backed (factory type 9-13) Fulcrum-C, as well as the usual complement of MiG-29UB Fulcrum-B trainers. Since all were used aircraft, they were sent first to factory overhaul, where in addition to maintenance,

they were repainted in a scheme of 'Neutral Gray' and 'Dark Gray Blue', except for the two-seaters, which

were overhauled at a different factory and came back in "Neutral Gray" and "Gray-Green". On the Fulcrum-As, the camouflage pattern was not uniform, and varied considerably from aircraft to aircraft, but the Fulcrum-Cs all followed much more closely a regular template with the darker colors on forward and upper portion of the fuselage, and the outer panels of the wing and tail surfaces. There were also some differences in the style of anti-glare panels, the Fulcrum-C having a more extensive area of Black. There were further variations due to the indifferent standards of workmanship prevailing at the time. On aircraft Number 33, the factory workers just slapped on Gray-Green paint over the upper surfaces by brush!

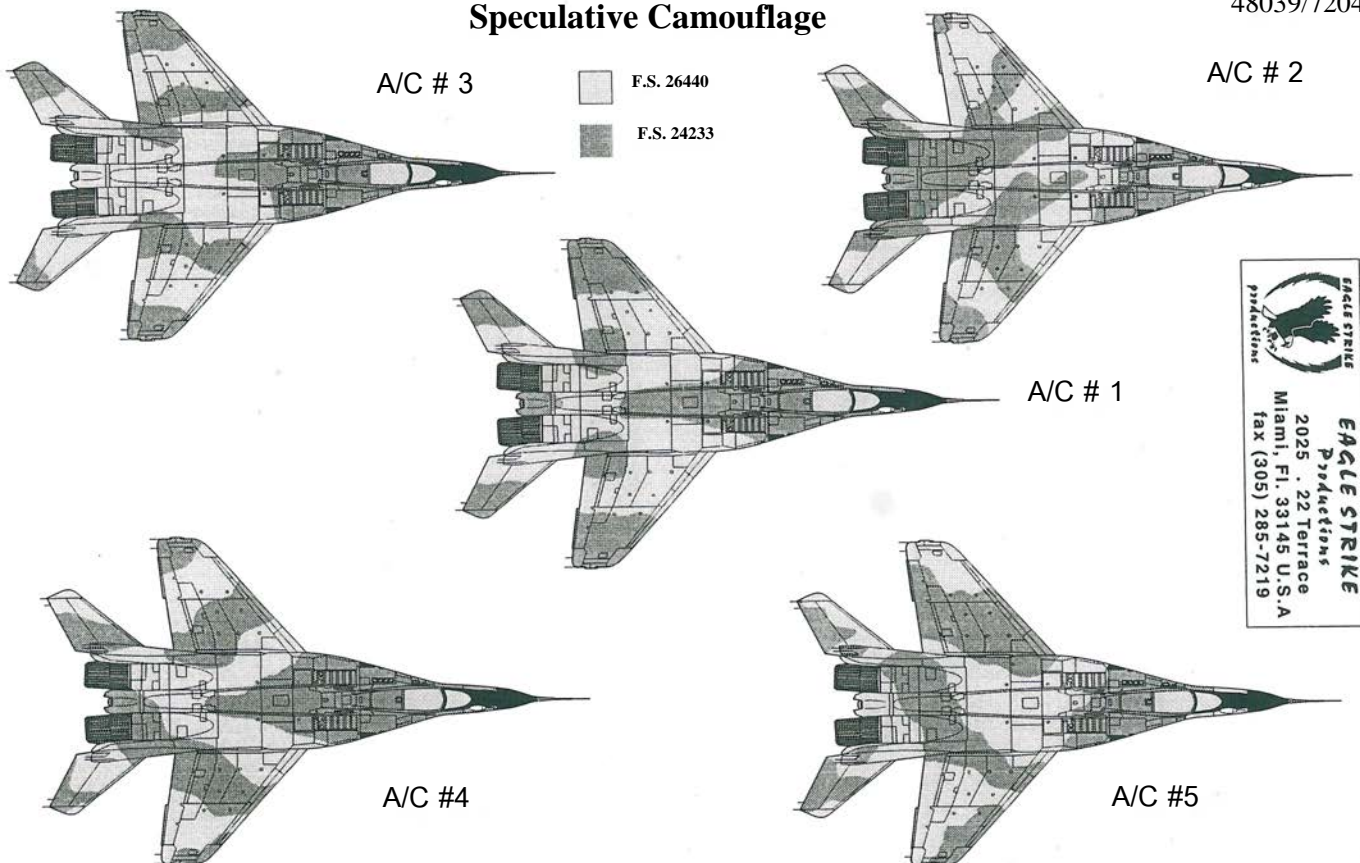
As for the presentation of the aircraft number, this saw an innovation. The regiment retained its traditional White numbers, but they were also given a new, and stylish offset Black outline. For greater visibility on the ground and in the air, the numbers were placed on the tail surfaces as well as the intakes, high and on the inside surfaces.

In 1993 Captain Maksimenko was assigned to the regiment's third squadron (he would return to the second squadron when the regiment was reorganized on a two-squadron basis). On two of the less- aged Fulcrum-Cs, Numbers 47 and 51, he began by painting the "Afghan Eagle" on the right side of the fuselage. About the same time a number of the pilots of the regiment has begun to decorate their flight helmets with a painting of an eagle head, so this art fitted well. On the left flank of the aircraft he painted another sketch, this one inspired by a cartoon from a calendar distributed by the MiG bureau. This drawing showed a cartoon MiG-29, wearing a Russian military fur *ushanka*, chasing a frightened F-15. Initially some doubts were raised about this emblem, since at the time there were questions that the former opponent might soon become an ally, but the decision was made to keep it anyway. Also controversial was the issue of the national insignia, since at that time there was consideration "at the top" to doing away with the red star, a decision ultimately rejected. At the same time, there was concern about reviving the old double-headed eagle symbol of the Tsarist period. Ultimately, the decision was made that the two-headed eagle represented Russia's dual nature as a power of both Europe and Asia. Maksimenko placed the two-headed eagle on the tail fins along with the red star. He concluded his decoration with the regiment's now-traditional shark mouth.

Initially only the two MiG-29s were decorated with the shark mouth and drawings. Such decorations were strictly forbidden by WS regulation, but that regulation increasingly was vigorously ignored. However, the declining state of the air force meant that too often there was no fuel for flying, sporadic food, and no pay, so the luxury of dolling up the aircraft had a very low priority. However, in 1994 this military art came to the attention of the commander of the Military District, who gave Captain Maksimenko an award for his work as a maintenance officer and artist, and also made available the resources for more painting. As a result, by 1999 the remaining operational aircraft of the squadron were also decorated with the shark mouth, including the trainers, only the reserve airframes being left alone. While most of these aircraft received only the shark mouth, it does appear that at least one more aircraft, Number 45, a type 9-12, also received the eagle and "Pursuit" drawings. Additionally, the squadron's three trainers, Numbers 74, 75, and 77, also received their own caricature, "Instructor", very similar to the "Teacher" design originally painted on

Speculative Camouflage

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the MiG-23UBs on the left side of the fuselage, and the eagle on the right hand side. There was one exception, Number 33, previously noted for its extensive but sloppy camouflage painting, did not receive the shark mouth, and had the double-headed eagle located in a non-standard position under the cockpit instead of on the tail.

Though the First Squadron did not share the shark mouth and caricatures of the Second Squadron, it also enjoyed some decoration. Aircraft Numbers 01 and 03 both featured the addition of the new Russian tricolor, White, Blue, and Red to the red star insignia on the tail. Each of these aircraft also had a lightning bolt along the sides of the fuselage and the mouths of the airintakes, 01 in Red and 03 in Blue. Additionally, 01 featured the Blue and Yellow WS flag, painted on the left tail. Though this is a guess, the flag, and the number 01, may well designate this as the regiment commander's aircraft. Aircraft Number 50 arrived with a winged star insignia on the nose as a legacy of its former owners, probably the 968 IAP, withdrawn from Altenburg, Germany during 1992. MiG-29UB Number 73 had the WS flag painted on the left tail fin, but so large that it covered almost all the surface, and trainer Number 71 had an eagle drawing (though not of Maksimenko's creation) beneath the cockpit on the left.

By this time, Captain Maksimenko had been forced to abandon his air force career, in search of an opportunity to feed his family, and in 1998 the 120 IAP was renumbered to preserve the lineage of a neighboring Guards regiment which had disbanded. But the shark mouths remain. Not a one of these aircraft has been involved in an accident, and are viewed as lucky. Nor has a single MiG decorated with the bird motif, suffered from "birdstrike". Finally, in the spring of 2000, MiG-29s, Numbers 23, 47, 51 of the 2nd Squadron, and MiG-29UB Number 73 of the 1st squadron were passed on to the Borisoglebsk Training Center. Eventually, the shark mouth MiG-29s may become extinct.

However, though the 2nd Squadron, 120 IAP's shark mouths are the best known, they were not the first in the WS. In 1974 The Center For Flight Training at Turkmeniya Airbase, in the Turkestan Military District, established an "aggressor" training unit, inspired by the American experience, and staffed with pilots with First Class or Snaiپر Pilot ratings, who had experience in Vietnam or the Middle East. Initially the unit consisted of a squadron each of MiG-2 Is and MiG-23s. In 1987 the First Squadron reequipped with the MiG-29. At the same time the regiment introduced unit markings for their aircraft, both to ease the dilemma inherent in combat training against identical aircraft types, of distinguishing "us from them", and also to evoke the spirit of the Western opposition. Both squadrons introduced the shark mouth and a marking, nicknamed the "Cognac strip", the MiG-23 featuring the stripe on the vertical tail and the MiG-29 across the top of the fuselage. The MiG-29 also carried a "winged 1" on the tail, and a leopard marking under the cockpit on the right side. In the fall of 1991 the MiG-23s were replaced by the Su-27, but the entire unit disbanded a few months later.

There was also another, even less-known "aggressor" unit which operated MiG-29s

from Mari Airbase, in the Turkestan Military District during the late 1980s. This unit's team was not only a very large shark mouth, but also, a dramatic tail marking, featuring a bee sliding down a lightning flash, very blatantly "borrowed" from the A-1 Skyraiders of VA-176. At the top of the fin were the letters "AM" for "Avaibaza Mari", and on both sides of the fuselage spine there was an insignia showing an eagle spreading its wings over Lake Balkhash, with the legend beneath "Avaibaza Mari". Also notable is the unusual White color of the dielectric panels at the tip of the vertical fin, and the trim areas by the cockpit. The aircraft numbers were Red with a White outline.

Toothed MiG-29s of the 2nd Squadron 120 IAP

Side Number	Type	Serial Number	Additional Art	Production Date
23	9-13	2960729019		4/27/90
40	9-12	2960516785		9/10/85
41	9-12			
45	9-12	2960516505	Eagle & Pursuit	6/30/85
47	9-13	2960729025	Eagle & Pursuit	5/31/90
49	9-12	2960516515		6/10/85
51	9-13	2960729031	Eagle & Pursuit	5/31/90
52	9-12	2960507683		12/31/83
55	9-12	2960516773		9/24/85
74	9-51	50903026767	Eagle & Instructor	4/16/92
75	9-51	50903026769	Eagle & Instructor	10/16/92
77	9-51		Eagle & Instructor	

References: *MiG-29*, Polygon Aviation Series, E. Gordon, A. Fomin, and A. Mikheev.

Mir Aviatsii 2 '1994, "Iz istorii sovetskikh «Aggressorov»", Sergei Pazynich. *M Khobbi 1* '2000 - "Zubastye MiGi" (Toothed MiGs) by Viktor Markovskii. *M Khobbi 2* '2000 - "MiG-29, Gorbat i zubast" MiG-29 Humped and Toothed) by

Viktor

Markovskii.

Number 3 is a Mig-29A (Izdeliya 9-12), Russian Air Force, 21st OSAD/120th GvIAP, Domma Air Base, 01 White, serial number 2960515803. Paint scheme has Trumpeter TRU03223 or 01674 instructions.