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Messerschmitt Bf 109

The Yugoslav Story

Operational Record 1939 – 1953

Volume II



Radio technicians, engine mechanics and armourers of 15.(kroat.)JG 52 maintaining 'Black 7' at the height of the battle for Novorossiysk in early September 1942.

(Hrvatski državni arhiv)

Hptm. Helebrant in 'Black 8' shot down a Soviet fighter he wrongly identified as a LaGG 3 at 9.00. Actually, two Yak 1s of 25 IAP and one of 62 IAP, which took-off from Myskhako at 8.30, separated from a pair of Il 2s they were supposed to guard and went after the twin-tailed recce machines. Failing to spot the escorts, the Yak pilots attacked and, as they tried to regroup, one of them had disappeared. A report received shortly thereafter from the anti-aircraft defense ground station near Dolgay revealed that a Yak followed a Fw 189 when four Bf 109s came up behind it and sent it crashing to earth; leit. Aleksey Titov of 25 IAP did not survive.

Next victory for 15.(kroat.)JG 52 was recorded during a Kette escort for a Fw 189 on **5 September**: Lt. Galić in 'Black 3' claimed a MiG 1 at 11.30 near Fedotovka; Soviet fighter units suffered no losses.

Keeping in mind that just nine fighter pilots remained on the roster of JGr. Dzal, an impressive 26 sorties were flown on **6 September**. After an uneventful Rotte patrol in early morning, a Schwarm dispatched on Bf 110 escort to Novorossiysk fought an inconclusive battle with four bombers and numerous fighters. Another Rotte went up at 8.10, its task was a sweep between Tuapse and Novorossiysk. South of Shaumyan, it found some Il 2s of 502 ShAP and at 8.45, east of Krivenkovskaya, Obfw. Martinašević in 'Black 7' shot down and killed st.ser. Gennadiy Baranov. In the meantime, Hptm. Helebrant in 'Black 8' and Oblt. Starc in 'Black 10' scrambled from Elizavetinskaya in hot pursuit of an intruding aircraft at 8.40:

When the alarm was signaled, we took off and soon noticed an enemy aircraft at a high altitude. It was hard to follow

and we lost him in clouds. As we flew behind him, we came to the Black Sea coast near Betta. We did a few circuits as we expected the enemy plane to land at a nearby airfield. Suddenly, we noticed a small tanker, sailing towards the port of Tuapse. This is something for us!

'We'll make an attack on the ship' I said to Oberleutnant Starc. We approached the vessel slowly to identify it. It had no markings, which convinced us that it was hostile. We opened cannon fire from a distance of 200 m. After the first burst, fires erupted, assuring us that the ship was loaded with gasoline. The following explosion cut the ship into two burning halves, which then sank. The fuel burned on the surface long thereafter, and we returned to our base.²²

Following two quiet Fw 189 escorts, a third led to an engagement with six DB-3s of VVS ChF and five fighters between Novorossiysk and Tuapse at around 16.40. In the ensuing battle, Oblt. Bencetić separated from the Schwarm and reported one of the bombers down, but as he had no witnesses the claim was rejected and, indeed, no Soviet bombers were lost. The last Schwarm up that day, between 16.40 and 17.50, encountered numerous I-16s and four I-153s but the fight ended up in a draw.

Formations of Soviet aircraft were engaged three times on **7 September**, but only Obfw. Martinašević in 'Black 7' filed a claim after a melee with eight Ratas of 36 IAP, during a Kette patrol between Novorossiysk and Gelendzhik which started at 15.50. Soviet pilots reported a skirmish with a pair of Bf 109s at 16.28, one of which was claimed damaged for no losses.

During the second mission on the **8th** - a patrol in Novorossiysk area, Hptm. Helebrant in 'Black 8' and Obfw.



An unknown radio technician is adjusting the FuG 7 radio set of Bf 109G-2 'Black 11' W.Nr.13632. Operating in a frequency range between 2.5 and 7.5 MHz, in normal weather conditions its range was about 50 km.

(Nenad Goll)

Martinašević in 'Black 7' came upon '11 I-153s and R-5s'. The Legionnaires jointly claimed one biplane identified as an R-5 at 7.10, seeing it go down in flames between Svetlyy and Divnomorskoye, while Martinašević reported another, which remained unconfirmed. Upon return to Elizavetinskaya, Helebrant won the coin toss and got the R-5 victory for himself. They had actually engaged eight I-153s of 267 IAP, returning from a strafing in the area of Borisovka. Soviet pilots reported a prolonged fight with enemy fighters, six Bf 110s according to one source and Bf 109Fs according to another, during which two Chaikas collided just southeast of Gelendzhik: st.ser. Abel Shagiyani bailed out and reached the ground unharmed but st.leit. Georgiy Sayenko perished.

Obfw. Martinašević, in 'Black 4', reported another victory on his next sortie, a patrol over Novorossiysk between 10.15 and 11.09, but yet again, neither Oberstlt. Džal nor Hptm. Helebrant saw one of the three DB-3fs of 36 minno-torpednyi aviatsioni polk (MTAP - Mine-Torpedo Aviation Regiment) VVS ChF which he attacked go down, before eight 36 IAP Ratas drove him away. The bomber was badly damaged and crashed trying to force-land at Lazarevskoye airfield, taking the life of navigator st.leit. Georgiy Sokolov. Its pilot, ml.leit. Vassiliy Andreev, and radio-operator ser. Ivan Sidorenko - who reported hits on a Bf 109 during the engagement - survived, although badly injured.

A pair sent on a patrol over Novorossiysk at 15.00 from Yelisavetinskaya bounced six Chaikas of 267 IAP en route to strafe Gayduk station. Rottenführer Lt. Galić in 'Black 3' reported one shot down at 15.40 near Grushovaya Balka and Lt.

Lasta in 'Black 11' claimed another five minutes later over the sea, some seven km south of Bolshoy Utrish. One plane was hit, st.leit. Sergey Mayev was badly wounded, nonetheless he managed to land back at Gelendzhik aerodrome.

As the ground battles raged at the Black Sea coast on **9 September**, there was no rest for the few pilots of 15.(kroat.)JG 52. No less than 18 sorties were flown before Oblt. Starc led Lt. Galić, in 'Black 5', and Lt. Lasta, in 'Black 11', on another patrol over Novorossiysk at 15.50. The first enemy planes they saw - three I-153s of 267 IAP - quickly dropped their bombs and ran away. Few minutes later, over Kabardinka at 16.15, they attacked six I-16s of 36 IAP and two I-16s of 62 IAP, flying at 2.000 m altitude as top cover for a pair of 62 IAP I-15s returning from a ground strike in the area of Borisovka. Early on in the melee, the leader got detached from his wingmen and, overwhelmed by a superior force of nimble enemy fighters, he failed to notice that his fire had shot down and killed leit. Anatoliy Frolovskiy of 36 IAP at 16.20. About that time, three Yak 1s and a LaGG 3 of 62 IAP joined the fray and Oblt. Albin Starc found himself in deep trouble:

I was shot down by a Yak 1. We went head-on, one after another, and fired. I saw that we were going to collide and I broke off to the side. He hit me in the engine and it began to smoke. That model of 'Messer' had the option to switch the oil cooler off and the engine would continue to work for some time with system closed, with what it had left inside. I turned and went back and the Russians were still attacking. I was a sitting duck, when they fired I would just crouch in my seat and wait for the attack to end.



Bf 109G-6 'Red 9' W.Nr.19638 is raised from the ground and dismantled after a crash-landing at Karankut airfield on 26 November 1943.
(Desimir Furtinović)

Fedor Rusakov bailed out over his own lines near Baksy. The later unit fought with four Gustavs, ml.leit. Ivan Sayanniy (who had been shot down by the Legionnaires back in **May**) claimed one of them over Chushka, but lost ml.leit. Pavel Kulagin, who bailed out some five to six km east of Kerch and was later declared dead. In II./JG 52, Oblt. Wilhelm Batz, CO of 5. Staffel, claimed two Yak 1s, Hptm. Barkhorn a single Yak 9 and Fw. Sachsenberg one P-39, between 9.15 and 9.48, without suffering any losses.

Uffz. Albin Šval's Bf 109G-6 W.Nr.15770 was badly damaged in a crash-landing near the village of Muniy (today Stepne), some 40 km short of Karankut, after running out of fuel on a ferry flight from Nikolayev on **25 November**. On the next day, Bf 109G-6 'Red 9' W.Nr.19638 crash-landed at Karankut airfield due to a technical malfunction; its pilot escaped injuries. On the **27th**, Uffz. Dragutin Gazapi failed to return from a sweep over Sivash. He was shot down by Airacobras of 16 GIAP and fell to his death with G-6 W.Nr.19475 near Mahazynka. The time of his demise is unknown, st.leit. Nikolay



Crash site of Bf 109G-6 W.Nr.19475, in which Uffz. Dragutin Gazapi lost his life near Mahazynka on 27 November 1943.
(Desimir Furtinović)

Starchikov and kap. Arkadiy Fyodorov each claimed a Bf 109 near Tarhan (today Vishnovka) during a mission from 8.25 till 9.03, leit. Veniamin Tsvetkov reported another down near Voinka between 10.10 and 10.50, and st.leit. Starchikov filed a second claim near Myasnikovo from 11.45 until 12.25.

There was renewed fighting with 16 GIAP Airacobras on **28 November**, when a Schwarm escorted a dozen or so Romanian Ju 87s over Sivash. Uffz. Šval claimed one of six P-39s at 9.18 southeast of Russkiy island. None of the fighters led by maj. Aleksandr Pokryshkin were lost, they claimed four Stukas (one of which was actually shot down and another damaged), while st.leit. Ivan Olefirenko reported a 'Me 109' down northwest of Kirk Ishuny (today Volodino). In fact, G-4 W.Nr.19208 of Uffz. Vladimir Nahod was hit and he crash-landed upon return to Karankut. In the afternoon, two Messerschmitts came upon a lone Boston Mk.III of 30 ORAP VVS ChF west of Genichesk, Uffz. Šval shooting it down at 13.30. The return fire struck his plane and forced him to belly-land back at the base. The Soviet plane crash-landed near Syvashivka



Dramatic shot of Bf 109G-4 W.Nr.19208, with Uffz. Nahod at controls, crash-landing at Karankut airfield on 28 November 1943.
(Desimir Furtinović)

Following the dogfight with 16 GIAP Airacobras, with crash-landed Bf 109G-4 W.Nr.19208 and curious ground crews behind them, Uffz. Vladimir Nahod (on the right) reports to Oblt. Mato Dukovac. Standing next to the Staffelkapitän is Fw. Desimir Furtinović.
(Desimir Furtinović)



and burst into flame, but not before the four-man crew of ml.leit. Valentin Arefyev walked away unharmed, returning to their unit four days later and claiming one of the attackers damaged.

The last aerial victory in **November** went to Oblt. Dukovac on the **29th**: a P-39 shot down at 10.00 over Sivash lagoons, south of Strohanyvka. It is thought that he engaged 104 GIAP, as four of its Airacobras reported an engagement with a trio of He 111s over Sivash, when a pair of Bf 109s intervened and hit the plane of st.leit. Aleksandr Vilyamson, wounding him slightly into the right leg; he made a smooth landing back home. The next day, 15.(kroat.)/JG 52 reported a strength of two Bf 109G-4s and eight G-6s, five of them operational, and eight out of nine pilots combat-ready. In all, during the month a total of nine Gustavs were lost or damaged in action and four others in flying accidents.

At least three missions were flown by the Legionnaires on **1 December**: a weather recce over the Perekop isthmus between 7.39 and 8.50, escort for He 111s from 12.45 till 13.25 over Russkiy island and escort for Ju 87s over Sivash beginning at 14.09 and ending at 15.10. During the latter mission, a pair of Airacobras flown by the very experienced kap. Grigoriy Rechkalov and leit. Georgiy Golubev of 16 GIAP were encountered and Fw. Martinko claimed one of them at 14.40 west-southwest of Vesnyanka village. Soviet pilots reported a fight with seven Ju 87s and six Bf 109s during a sortie between 14.15 and 15.10, one of the dive bombers being claimed by the element leader, before they withdrew unscratched. In the afternoon of the **2nd**, the Legionnaires returned to Bagerovo to participate in the final Axis push against the Eltigen bridge-head.



Uffz. Albin Šval, leaned on the cockpit frame of belly-landed Gustav at Karankut, explains the air battle with a 30 ORAP VVS ChF Boston Mk.III on 28 November 1943 to Uffz. Vladimir Nahod and Oblt. Mato Dukovac (third and fourth from the left).
(Danijel Frka)

post, 200-300 m east of the place where our machines have been parked in the southeastern part of Lučko, and prepared the flight plan for that day with satnik Bencetić and poručnik Simčić. We jumped into the trenches as quickly as possible.

When the bombing and strafing were over, we went to the location of our aircraft. Mainly from the bombing, but also from later explosions of our aircraft, three of our Bf 109s and one Morane 406 were destroyed that day, and three other Bf 109s, three Fiat G.50s and a Morane were more-less slightly damaged. In the strafing, and by stray bullets from the German flak, a Bf 108 and a Bf 110 were also lightly damaged. Germans also had two of their Fw 190s destroyed and many aircraft damaged, among them a pair of Fw 190s, a single Ju 88 and several Hs 126s on the opposite side of the aerodrome.

Just as we were looking at the damage inflicted to us, commander of the Lučko aerodrome, Maj. Hermann Holtmann and his escorts arrived in his personal Steyr and demanded from satnik Bencetić that he clear away the wreckage and damaged aircraft as soon as possible, out of fear that reconnaissance aircraft could establish the success of their attack. In the next couple of hours everything was cleared and taken to a remote and well-camouflaged position, leaving only the bare ground, blackened by the fire. And indeed, later in the afternoon, a reconnaissance plane appeared above us.⁵³

The clearing operation succeeded, as the initial claim by RAF pilots for just two Fw 190s and a Ju 88 destroyed, one Fw 190 probably destroyed and a single-engine enemy aircraft damaged was not altered. Gunners from the nearby flak train brought down Mustang Mk.IV KH809 of 213 Sqn, Lt Winston Thomson (SAAF) bailed out and became a POW.

Every Man for Himself

On a daily basis, members of the ZNDH were literally showered with leaflets and radio broadcasts, coming both from the Allies and JA, which called for defectors to switch sides, with or without aircraft, with precise instructions for escape. On the **25th**, after being dispatched on a sweep in the area Sisak - Karlovac, vod Korkut flying a Bf 109G-10 and his wingman str Ivan Mišulin in a G.50 defected to RAF-held airfields near Zadar - the former landing at Škabrnja and the later at Prkos. Their planes were quickly plundered by souvenir hunters and rendered useless. The combat flight of vod Korkut was the 51st of 2.ZLJ with Bf 109s.

In late **March**, both the Luftwaffe and ZNDH concentrated much of their effort to attempt to slow the advance of 4. armija (A - Army) JA in the region of Lika. In the afternoon of the **30th**, 2.ZLJ provided a Schwarm of Gustavs led by sat Vid Saić to escort four Do 17Zs of 3.ZJ sent to strike Partisans in the area of Gospić. At 17.45, near the village of Perušić, the Croat formation stumbled upon a section of three Spitfire Mk.IXs of 73 Sqn, which quickly got the upper hand. In the ensuing melee, F/O Norman Pearce (RCAF) in MJ349 shot down Do 17Z No.0401 and P/O John Gilchrist claimed a 'Fw 190' damaged. His opponent, vod Antun Pleše, returned to Lučko with riddled Bf 109G-14. Do 17Z No.0411 was slightly damaged before it escaped into clouds and subsequently belly-landed at Partisan-held Krbavsko Polje, in a pre-arranged defection plot by its pilot, str Dragutin Žauhar.

On **1 April**, there were 14 officers, 83 NCOs and 24 lower ranks on the roster of 2.ZLJ. Out of its 15 Bf 109s - 12 at Lučko and three at Borongaj - only eight were operational. One out of two Bf 110Gs, two of five G.50s and one of two M.S.406s at Lučko were also airworthy. At around that time, the unit received two Bf 109K-4s and the Bf 109G-12 which were repaired after being damaged when ferried from Wiener Neustadt. Little over a week later, the G-12 was wrecked in a crash-landing at Lučko after its engine stopped; two young pilots walked away from it unharmed.

The skies over Lika were a scene of another dogfight on the **2nd**, when two pairs of Messerschmitts went to strafe ground targets near the village of Medak. En route, the second pair encountered 73 Sqn Spitfire Mk.IXs on a fighter-bomber sweep. Upon completion of the mission, P/O Norman Pearce in MJ349 reported:

I took-off from Prkos as No.4 of Black Section of four aircraft and proceeded to Gospić at 7.000 ft. Black 3 and I carried bombs and bombed Gospić town. We then formed up with Nos.1 and 2 to north of Gospić at 6.000 ft and set course for Zagreb area. At approximately nine miles southeast of Karlovac my leader reported two aircraft approaching from 11 o'clock on a course approximately reciprocal to our own, flying at 4.000 ft. As we drew abreast I recognized them as Me 109s.

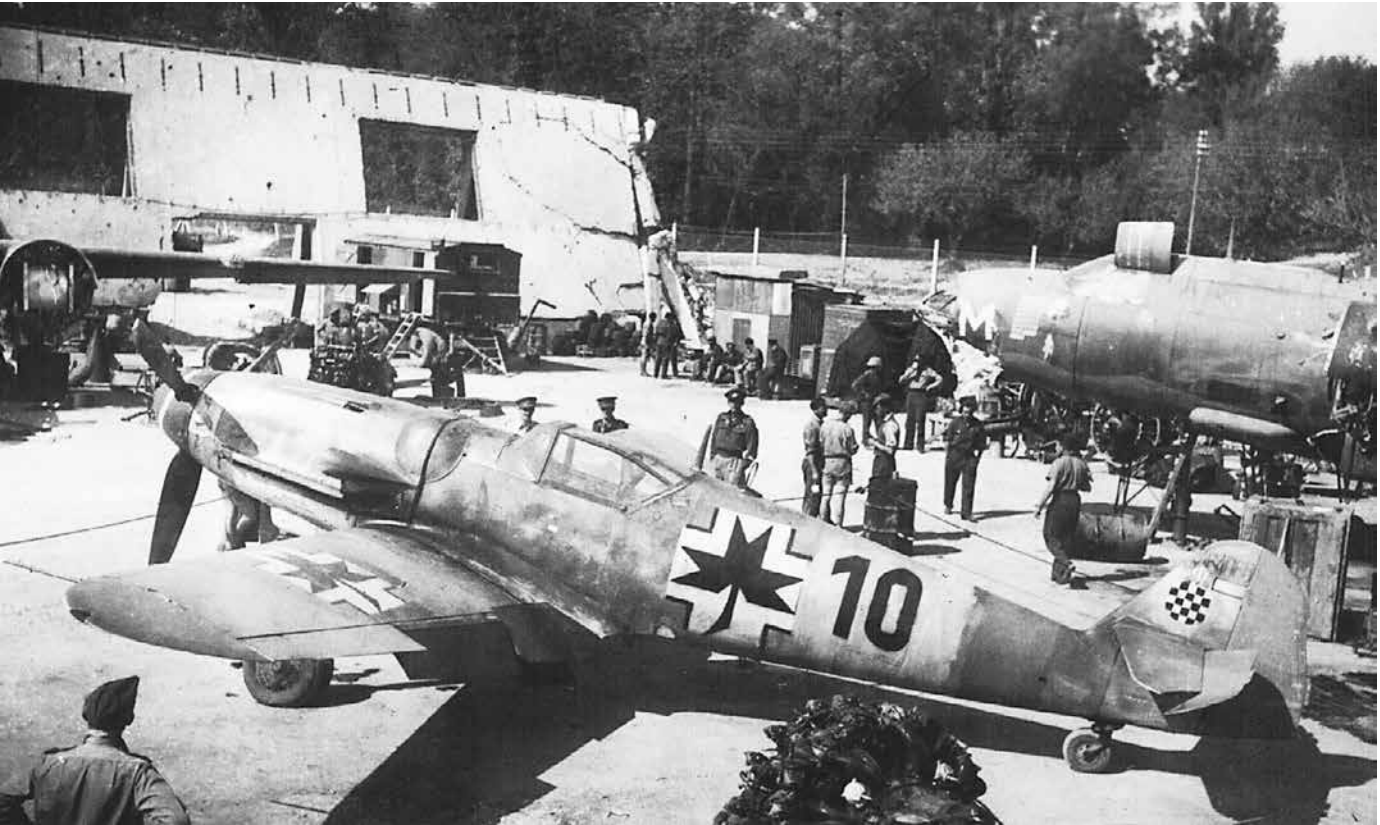
With the section, I dived to the attack, closing on three aircraft. I recognized a Spitfire being fired at from astern at a range of about 400 yds. This Spitfire immediately broke to port, still being fired at by the Me 109. I fired two short bursts to draw his attention from the Spitfire under attack. The enemy aircraft then appeared to attempt to turn to attack me, but I was well positioned and gave him a two-second burst from 75 yds, hitting the fuselage and cockpit. I believe the enemy pilot must have been hit as the enemy aircraft rolled on its back and crashed to the ground, bursting into flames.

I heard my No.3 call that he was pursuing an enemy aircraft but had cannon stoppages. The leader then called to the section to reform and the four aircraft returned to base.⁵⁴

Having scored several hits on the tail of the Spitfire flown by section leader P/O John Gilchrist, the pilot of the Bf 109 actually crash-landed in no-mans land near Primišlje at around 18.30, and managed to run away towards friendly lines. Circumstantial evidence suggests that it was por Šerif Mehanović, who reputedly once engaged four Spitfires and claimed one of them. The wreck was eventually captured by the Partisans of 4. korpus (K - Corps) NOVJ, which found a officer's flying jacket in the cockpit. The second Bf 109G, claimed probably destroyed by element leader Lt. Stan Harper (SAAF), made it back to Lučko where an unidentified str crash-landed. Lt Harper noted in his report that the *enemy aircraft was dark mottled camouflage with German markings and a large red and white indistinguishable patch behind the black cross on the fuselage⁵⁵*. The other Rotte, sat Ljudevit Bencetić and vod Mihajlo Jelak, completed the mission, making one firing pass at 4.A JA positions.

The last great ground battle in the Yugoslav theatre commenced on **12 April**, when 1.A JA breached the Syrmian Front and cleared the path for a rapid advance towards Zagreb.

At 14.50 on **16 April**, sat Bencetić led a Schwarm on a visual reconnaissance over Senj. Over the target, they made three wide circuits, but when the lead pair took a course for



Bf 109G-14 'Black 10' W.Nr.464068 at the apron of Iles airfield, receiving curious looks from USAAF and SAAF airmen. Seen behind is a Martin B-26 Marauder undergoing maintenance.

(Stefaan Bouwer)



With its engine cowlings removed, SAAF aircrews examine 'Black 10'. The meaning of the number 27 on the right upper cowling could not be established.

(Stefaan Bouwer)

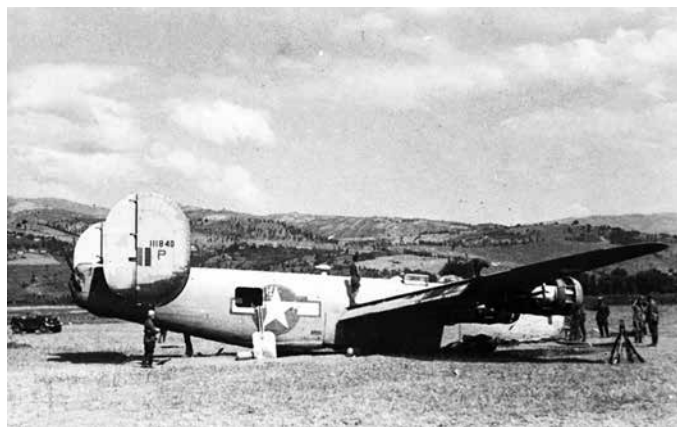


Having scored his first aerial victory - and the first for VnNVV in the Second World War - ppor Petar Bochev of 682-ro Y posing next to his Bf 109G-2 'Green 6' W.Nr.14789 which carries many scars from the battle, at Vrazhdebna, 1 August 1943.

(Family of Petar Bochev via Teodor Konstantinov)

smoke, from the stricken engines on the left wing. The damaged plane began to lag behind and lose altitude. Having made another pass and also expending his ammo, Bonev took his position next to me, visibly pleased with the result of his fire. I saw his happy smiling face through the cockpit glass, and his hand pointing to the defeated aircraft, as if telling me: 'Look, look!' The return of that badly damaged B-24 Liberator to the base was questionable. And indeed, two days after the battle, we learned that two planes have crash-landed - one in the area of Skoplje and another somewhere in Macedonia. Their crews were captured and said that they were attacked by some 'lunatics'. They stated that these were German fighters. Really, these were German fighters, which they knew well, but this time with Bulgarians inside, protecting their homeland.

A long time had passed since we took-off from Vrazhdebna. The pursued and distracted bomber group was now far gone from Sofia and was holding the southwestern course. We were probably



B-24D-CO 41-11840 'The Witch' lying on its belly near Suva Morava village on 1 August 1943, after being crippled by ppor Krastev.
(Yordan Andreev)

more than 100-150 km away from the aerodrome, where we had to return. We were able to orientate precisely only over Gyueshevo, near Kiustendil, and took a course for Sofia.⁶⁰

Both por Stoyanov and ppor Bonev were credited with a B-24 damaged and forced out of formation in the later stage of the battle⁶. They were attacking B-24D-45-CO 42-40322 'The Cornhusker', which was also subjected to fire from some of the biplanes. As its left engines trailed white smoke, it slowly fell behind the rest of the 415th BS, until being finished-off by the Gustavs of IV./JG 27 over the Ionian Sea (2/Lt Ned McCarty; ten killed). In return, 1/Lt Lewis Ellis and his crew in B-24D-CO 41-11815 'Daisie Mae' claimed one of the attackers damaged.

As this was happening, the second pair of Gustavs selected a pack of four Liberators from the 343th BS. After two passes from close range, ppor Petar Bochev shot down B-24D-53-CO 42-40364 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs', which caught fire and exploded in mid-air over Gojin Dol village in vicinity of Caribrod (today Dimitrovgrad) at 15.40 (Capt James Gunn; eight killed, one captured). His Bf 109G-2 'Green 6' W.Nr.14789 went through a hail of defensive fire and was hit in the wings, elevators and fuel tank (two surviving 343th BS crews claimed no less than two Bf 109s, a 'Fw 190', three unidentified fighters and three biplanes at this stage of the battle), nonetheless he returned to Vrazhdebna. His element

6 On 18 March 1944 VnNVV retroactively introduced a system of claim classification and registration of aerial victories: three points for destruction of a four-engine bomber in formation or for bringing down of a solitary and undamaged four-engine bomber; two points for damaging a four-engine bomber and forcing it out of formation (similar to German 'Herausschuss' - HSS), or for destroying or forcing out of formation of a twin-engine bomber; one point for final destruction of a damaged and straggling multi-engine bomber (similar to German 'endgültige Vernichtung' - e.V.), or for bringing down an enemy fighter; in case of joint claims, the points were split among the participating pilots; damaging an enemy fighter was noted but not rewarded with points.

leader, ppor Hristo Krastev, pressed on and near Vladičin Han saw his prey drop out of formation and lose altitude with smoking engines, before it disappeared in the clouds; he was credited with a HSS. Krastev continued on a southwesterly course for a few more minutes, before turning back near Skoplje. Soon he lost orientation and eventually force-landed near Ferdinand (today Montana). His victim was B-24D-CO 41-11840 'The Witch'. After three of his crewmembers bailed out, 1/Lt Julian Darlington crash-landed near Suva Morava village, just southwest of Vladičin Han, at around 15.50. Six men were captured, four were picked up by Partisans and evaded. Two of the later came down in Suvojnica village and were confined in the house of Janča Stanisavljević by village guards, which turned a blind eye and let them go before the Bulgarian troops arrived. As a consequence, several of the guardsmen were imprisoned and later executed.

Even if numerous deficiencies in the defense system were identified, VnNVV deservedly took part in one of the costliest USAAF missions of war: no less than 54 bombers failed to return, including eight interned in Turkey. While the Gustavs proved their worth, B-534s were barely able to catch up with the bombers and fire a few shots. Indeed, although the 98th BG gunners claimed at least four biplanes, 1/6 IO recorded no losses. New aircraft were urgently needed but only one second-hand Bf 109G-2 was received on 3 September. On the 23rd, 3/6 IO completed its move from Karlovo to Bozhurishte, its place being taken by 2/6 IO, equipped with 'new' Dewoitine D.520s, the first of which arrived a month earlier.

In early autumn, the Allies opened a new front in the struggle against the Axis. From their new bases in southern Italy, not only the Balkans but most of Central and Southeast Europe were now in reach of USAAF and RAF bombers. The strategic bombing campaign in daylight would be the responsibility of the 15th AF, but as it was still in the process of being organized, the 12th AF carried out the first missions. Occupied Skoplje was hit for the first time on 18 October, when 36 B-25s of the 321st BG, escorted by 12 P-38s of the 95th FS/82nd FG, targeted the marshalling yards, while 12 twin-tailed fighters each of 96th and 97th FS dropped bombs on a rail bridge and signal building six km southeast of the town between 12.20 and 12.45. Seeing a motorized column near the city, 82nd FG launched a second mission with 28 aircraft, back over Vardar valley four hours later. The raid caused significant damage to the infrastructure and left 30 civilians and three German soldiers dead. Two pairs of 3/6 IO launched from Bozhurishte failed to make contact with the enemy. Two planes landed at Skoplje after the attackers left but scrambled again at 15.30 when alerted that another raid might be imminent. Low on fuel, the Messerschmitt pilots set a course for home shortly before the arrival of the Lightnings and landed at 16.40.

Inadequate ground control and the significant distance from Bozhurishte (some 170 km) caused the poor reaction and on the following day two aged Emils of 672-ro Y were dispatched to Skoplje to act as forward defense. VnNVV fighters failed to encounter the enemy again on the 20th, when marshalling yards at Niš and nearby aerodrome found themselves under a carpet of bombs from 36 Mitchells of the 321st BG and 24 Lightnings of the 95th and 96th FS/82nd FG, while 16 others from the 97th FS acted as escort. The damage on the

ground was immense, nine aircraft, 19 locomotives and 191 railcars were destroyed or damaged, 66 buildings leveled, 245 persons killed (among them seven German soldiers) and 479 wounded. The duty pair scrambled from Skoplje at 12.30 and returned empty handed at 13.10. Another mission launched 10 minutes later ended with the same outcome. From Bozhurishte, 10 Bf 109s went up at 12.50 on receiving news that the enemy formation was flying in the direction of Sofia. As they waited for it over Kiustendil, they learned where the real target was and by the time they arrived over Niš, everything was over.

The 82nd FG returned to Skoplje on 21 October, a dozen P-38s each from the 95th and 97th FS being dispatched to dive-bomb the locomotive sheds. The duty pair, ppor Mikhail Grigorov and pof Yoto Kamenov, having already completed two flights in the morning, received the orders to scramble but got separated on take-off due to confusion caused by the landing of two friendly Italian-built aircraft. Alone, ppor Grigorov soon got entangled with the Lightnings and reported one shot down (although it remained unconfirmed) before making good his escape. He actually damaged the plane of Lt Doug Neilsen of the 95th FS, hitting its tail surfaces, while 2/Lt John Rogers of the 95th FS and 2/Lt Bert Lutz of the 97th FS each claimed a Bf 109 damaged, all at 10.05. Some sources mention that the aircraft of pof Kamenov was damaged in air combat that day, but reportedly it occurred on his next sortie when he mixed it up with some recce Lightnings en route to Sofia. So far no US records of any later engagement could be traced and it looks that if his Emil was indeed hit, it occurred over Skoplje in combat with 82nd FG.

On 14 November, 96 B-25s of the 321st and 340th BG, escorted by 48 P-38s of the 82nd FG, were launched on the first raid against the Bulgarian capital. Due to a late warning, Emils from Skoplje failed to intercept the bombers, while 13 Gustavs of 3/6 IO scrambled from Bozhurishte between 12.12 and 12.25, and the bomb run commenced at 12.30. One Gustav was shot down and its pilot killed, two others crash-landed, while three Mitchells were claimed damaged and forced out of formation; in fact none were lost. Over the target, P-38G-10-LO 42-13238 of the 95th FS, piloted by 2/Lt Roy Hurst, lost one of its engines and was escorted home by four other ships, one of them flown by 2/Lt William Woodrum:

My element and another led by Lt Walker began to weave over Hurst to protect his retreat home. After a brief encounter with a single attacking enemy aircraft, we were left alone to proceed on a course for home. We all began to climb above clouds which covered mountains solidly en route home. Hurst, on a single engine, became lost to view in his attempt to climb up through this coverage. On top, after several attempts to reach him over the radio (heretofore I had good radio contact with him) which were unsuccessful, I climbed higher and gave a mayday distress call and proceeded to base with flight as our gas was too low to remain over spot where Hurst was last seen.⁶¹

Having lost contact with the rest of the group southwest of Skoplje, the lone Lightning was caught by the duty pair which was back in the air, and ppor Grigorov reported hits in the right engine, fuselage and wings at around 13.35 before the flaming Lightning crashed near Debar. Four Dewoitines of 2/6 IO also scrambled, but kept patrolling over Karlovo and failed to encounter the Americans.



Cerklje aerodrome, late June 1951: pilots of 172.LAP posing to a visiting JA photo reporter, a day or two before the disastrous flight back to Zemunik.

(Milan Micevski)

to the long distance to Zadar, it was not possible to go around this area and the flight was possible only by breaking through the clouds, which was very risky. I proposed the cancellation of the departure until the clouds had cleared. The commander of the 172.LAP, kapetan Obradović, ignored this information and ordered the take-off.⁹⁶



Moments after take-off from Cerklje at 5.45 on 29 June 1951, the DB 605A W.Nr.200888 engine of 'White 31' suddenly stopped, forcing kap Teodor Bukovnik to crash-land.

(Teodor Bukovnik)



A pair of pilots from 1.E of 172.LAP in front of a Gustav: kap Petar Indić and zast Mirko Flajs. Note the opening for the KFM G 45 gun camera in the leading edge of the right wing.

(Milan Micevski)

The stubbornness of kap Petar Obradović shattered everything he had achieved with 172.LAP in the previous year and a half. All 14 pilots were supposed to take-off, form pairs and assemble into echelon formation. The commander and his assistant for navigation, kap Franc Pečarić went up first, followed by a four-plane flight of 1.E led by its CO, por Nikola

Mazinjanin. Although the mechanics at Cerklje established that his 'White 61' had a fractured cylinder shift on the left landing gear leg, kap Obradović and technical officer Batič still decided that he should ferry it with a lowered undercarriage! First troubles started at 5.45, during the take-off of the last flight led by 3.E commander kap Bukovnik: seconds after lift-off, just as he retracted the undercarriage at some 30 m above the ground, the engine of 'White 31' stopped. He hastily pushed the stick forward and pulled out the undercarriage lever, but realized that only the right leg was down and locked after touching down. His Gustav slid across the grass, overshot the runway, smashed through a fence and stopped on bumpy ground, completely wrecked. Bukovnik escaped with severe injuries, while por Kuprešanin took over the lead of the remaining three planes.

Flying as a wingman to kap Petar Indić in the second pair of 1.E was zast Marko Flajs:

When the formation assembled and gained sufficient height, the commander took the prescribed course. Soon, after just 10 minutes of flight, the clouds appeared in front of us. Obradović did not hesitate for a second and led the formation into the clouds. I wasn't worried since, back when I was in 83.LAP, we practised instrument flying, first with a Zlin 381 and then on a Me 109. I could keep the course and altitude with the artificial horizon by holding the 'ball', and the Messerschmitt had an excellent gyro-compass. Before entering the clouds, the regiment CO ordered that the artificial horizon should be switched on but due to the poor radio link it seems that not everybody heard this. The formation fell apart in the clouds due to the loss of orientation.

At one instance I saw my pair leader Indić turning abruptly and I lost him from sight. After five minutes I exited the clouds, but Indić was nowhere to be seen. After landing in Zemunik, since many planes were missing, Obradović held his head in desperation and shouted: 'They all got killed!'

Later we learned that kapetan Pečarić also lost his life, while the others returned to Cerklje.⁹⁷

Both kap Pečarić and kap Indić perished: inspection of wrecks of their 'White 62' and 'White 21', which were found in wider area of Plitvice Lakes, suggested that they collided in the clouds. Upon reaching the weather front, por Kuprešanin turned back to Cerklje, followed by his wingmen, kap Momčilo Nikić and ppor Jordan Faganel. The final mishap that morning occurred to por Mazinjanin at 6.30, when the left landing leg of his 'White 61' collapsed on landing at Zemunik. In the aftermath of the debacle, kap Petar Obradović was discharged and sent to a court martial, which sentenced him conditionally to 18 months in prison. His position was taken by kap Tomaš Samardžić, who came from Spitfire-equipped 103. izviđački puk (Reconnaissance Regiment).

In weeks that followed, both Gustav-equipped regiments, and especially their reconnaissance sections, were heavily involved in preparations for the massive naval exercise to be held that summer. On one occasion, confident in the abilities of his men, in the early hours of darkness maj Milikić led 83.LAP on a mock attack against Zemunik aerodrome. Coming from the direction of the sea at the first light, it was a success as no one expected it on the sleepy aerodrome. Still, considering such kind of flying highly dangerous, 21.MVD banned it.



Mottled Bf 109G-6 'White 31' W.Nr.165106 lying wrecked at the perimeter of Cerklje aerodrome. Built at the plant in Regensburg in May 1944, this plane is from the batch exported to Bulgaria during the war.

(Milan Micevski)



WW II era bitter enemies sharing the apron at Zemunik aerodrome in the summer of 1952: ground crews receiving instructions from the chief technical officer of 172.LAP por Viktor Tomić next to UMe 109 'White 42' W.Nr.161471 and De Havilland Mosquitoes of 97.BAP in line behind it.

(Dragan Savić)

able and reliable Thunderbolt won the hearts of Yugoslav airmen in no time, ppor Albin Pibernik of 83.LAP being one of them:

*When I sat in the Thunderbolt after the Messerschmitt, it was as if sitting in an apartment. Everything was at hand, beautiful. And since there were no two-seaters, we first did two flights with a Harvard. My first solo flight with the Thunderbolt went so, that my instructor followed me in another plane. We took-off and after flying for some time, I began to wonder whether the engine was defective, as all the instruments pointed exactly where they should. So unusual!*¹⁰⁶

One of the few who exchanged the Gustavs in 83.LAP for Mosquitoes in 97.BAP was por Ciril Rupert:

*When we handed over the Messerschmitts, we were asked whether anyone wanted to go on Mosquitoes in Zadar. I did. Somehow, to me it was better to fly with two engines. Guess what, the Messerschmitt's swerve to the left awaited me again with the Mosquito! The plane had a pair of Rolls-Royce 1.600 HP engines. Both the propellers were turning in the same direction, which meant, there was a lot of running to the left on take-off. However, here I easily used a trick, which I couldn't on the Messerschmitt. When adding the throttle before the run, I always gave a little bit more power to the left engine, which reduced the turning to some extent.*¹⁰⁷

Still, the hard times on Gustavs had a good effect on future careers of those who learned to fly it, as summarized by zast Petar Novković of 172.LAP:

Regarding flying techniques, the Me 109 was the most difficult aircraft to handle, it had the strongest gyroscopic and

*reactive momentum. But, who learned to fly the Messerschmitt, he never again had any problems with take-off and landing, with any other machine.*¹⁰⁸

About a hundred JRV pilots flew the Messerschmitts between 1948 and 1952. In all, they amassed a total of 5.332 flying hours - 1.312 in 1952, but individually, their training and flying log depended from many factors, as can be assumed through some examples. One of the first JRV pilots to complete the transition to Gustavs, Dušan Martinović, logged 828 flights and 147.20 hours on the type between **August 1948** and **February 1950**. A graduate of the 2nd VVU class, Marko Flajs amassed 328 flights and 100.28 flying hours between **March 1949** and **October 1951**. His classmate Nikola Kuprešanin flew Gustavs until **March 1952** and logged 767 flights and 148.10 hours. In the 5th class of ŠAOA, Branko Kovačević accomplished 210 flights of 80.07 hours in twelve months, while Radomir Stamenković and Miloš Kondić logged just 36.02 and 29.31 flying hours respectively before their crashes in the summer of 1952.

Together with 31 Bf 109Gs (six of them two-seaters), 56 DB 605A-1 and 134 DB 605D-1 engines were also stored. When, many years later, the technicians and mechanics from the two Gustav-equipped regiments learned that large stocks of engines were at hand, they could hardly believe it! There was a constant shortage of engines in the later stages of the aircraft's service, as proven by the fact that por Viktor Tomić found a dumped DB 605ASM at a scrapyard in Rijeka, overhauled it and installed it in a 83.LAP aircraft and for a long time it used to be the best and most reliable engine in the regiment.



Zemunik, 16 May 1953: pilots of 172.LAP with the last operational Gustav, Bf 109G-6 No.9617 W.Nr.162482 of ŠAO 21.MVD, with a coat of weathered light gray colour on its upper surfaces and white escadrille number overpainted (from the left): por Jože Kunčič, kap Branko Vujičić, kap Teodor Bukovnik, kap Nikola Jovanović, unknown, por Anđelko Košuta (on the wing), kap Momčilo Nikić and por Milan Drnovšek. (Teodor Bukovnik)

The large quantity of DB 605Ds, initially meant for S-49Bs, remained in storage. Decisions about their use changed many times. Three engines were delivered to the navy, for trials on new domestic torpedo boats. At one moment, they were even considered to be fitted to Shturmoviks, which were still in good condition but with their AM-38F engines had reached the end of their service lives. In cooperation with the VOC and the Ikarus aircraft factory, in 1953, the DB 605D W.Nr.11101390 was mounted in Il 2 No.4039. VOC test pilot por Ljubomir Zekavica taxied the plane and made take-off runs but the plane never flew due to engine overheating. Soon thereafter, the need for Il 2 conversion diminished, as F-84G jets poured in from the west and entered JRV service through the Mutual Defense Aid Program.

Gustavs stored at Rajlovac were occasionally used as teaching tools at Vazduhoplovni tehnički školski centar (Aviation Technical School Centre), cadets studying its construction, systems and radio equipment. On the orders of the State Secretary for People's Defense issued on **18 March 1955** these aircraft were written-off, dismantled to pieces and sold as a scrap. All the DB 605A and D engines met the same end, being scrapped in late 1957. Before that happened, two aircraft were put aside and saved.

Survivors

Built by WNF in **January 1943**, Bf 109G-2 W.Nr.14792 was badly damaged early on in its career in VnNVV, where it

had a serial No.23/7057, so much that Messerschmitt A.G. provided W.Nr.14561 at its own expense as a replacement. Nonetheless, the plane was repaired at A.S.A.M. works, and it was probably there that it got a set of wings from G-4 sub-type. When taken over by JRV pilots In **December 1948** at Karlovo, the plane carrying 'White 15' on the fuselage and with DB 605A-1 W.Nr.36179 engine installed, had 40.55 hours logged since the last overhaul. The plane was initially left in EzV KVJA at Zemun, where it got new markings and serial No.9663. In late **March 1949**, it was ferried to Cerklje and allocated to ŠAO 44.VD. From the moment of being taken over from VV, until **1 September**, it amassed 10.16 flying hours. After the regular 10-hour overhaul and some minor repairs, por Andrija Arapović made two test flights of 12 minutes on **13 October**, and declared 'White 63' operational. Just two days later, por Stanko Verbić veered on take off, tearing off its left landing gear leg and damaging the propeller and left wing. Due to serious damage to the left longeron, 'White 63' was dispatched to VR 154 at Zagreb on **2 December** minus its engine - which was kept in 44.VD since being fully functional. The plane was still in the workshop on **4 October 1952**, when KJRV issued orders for it to be struck-off charge and handed over to the JA Museum. With the new engine, W.Nr.01102924, 'White 63' was sent to ZOA 170 at Zemun, which prepared it for static display. The plane was exhibited at Belgrade fortress, until being transferred to the Yugoslav Aviation Museum in **1961** and taken firstly to the old and then to the new Belgrade airport. In early seventies, it went through a detailed restoration and conserva-

Aircraft delivered from Bulgaria and assigned to 83.LAP received the roundels (blue ring having a width of 1/4 of the circle radius) with yellow-outlined red star on the fuselage and wing undersides, black serials beginning with 9611 and large white escadrille numbers with squared edges (applied with the same stencils used on Yaks), while they retained the VV camouflage. It was only in **September 1949** that they received a new paint coat: domestically produced GM 6529 dark gray (similar to Soviet AMT-12) on top and GM 6527 light blue (similar to Soviet AMT-7) on the bottom. The aircraft allocated to 172.LAP were repainted and received roundels 50 cm in diameter, with the blue ring 8 cm wide and red stars outlined in yellow. The roundel was supposed to be 80 cm away from the horizontal stabilizer on the fuselage, and 140 cm from the wing tip. The 45 cm high tri-colour with red star (which was supposed to have a yellow outline but in most cases came without it) on the rudder should have its top edge 50 cm below the rudder top. White escadrille numbers were standardized to size of 28 x 19 cm (4 cm wide) and serial numbers on the fin to 18 x 9 cm. In most cases, the marking were applied slightly curved in relation to the aircraft axis. A free interpretation of JRV painting guide which prescribed that aircraft top sides should be covered either with dark gray or light brown led to some motley schemes with the use of dark earth (approximately FS20117) in 83.LAP from **1950** on, a practice copied by 172.LAP in the first half of **1951** on some aircraft.

Beginning in **1951**, mainly in 172.LAP, some of the repaired Gustavs returned from workshops with light gray coat (approximately FS26270) on upper and sky blue (approximately FS 25352) on lower surfaces. During the summer, aircraft with sky blue colour (approximately FS 35414) on undersides also showed up. Kept in the open in warm climate of the Adriatic shores, with time the upper paint could fade into light gray, the contrast being easily spotted on some aircraft and on a few rudders mounted as replacements on freshly-painted aircraft.

As for unit markings, in the summer of **1950** each escadrille in 83.LAP had the spinners of its Gustavs painted in different colours, two of which are known: white and black. In preparation for the demonstration exercises in front of KJRV inspectors in late **October 1950**, numerous patriotic slogans were painted in white on upper wing surfaces of the regiment's aircraft. On an individual level, shortly thereafter, the 83.LAP commanding officer, kap Miloš Milikić, ordered his Bf 109G-2 'White 58' to be painted all black with a white lightning along both fuselage sides. His counterpart in 172.LAP, kap Petar Obradović, quickly followed in early **1951** and had a red lightning painted on his 'White 44' (it was overpainted when the plane received a new coat of paint later in its service). Occasionally, for some exercises, especially when conducted in company with bomber and ground assault regiments, aircraft parts - like wing tips and spinners in 83.LAP - received a temporary white coat.



Bf 109G-10 'White 11' W.Nr.150880, with clearly visible white wing tips, after the landing accident on 28 November 1951. White markings were used occasionally during exercises for quick identification in the air. According to some reminiscences, these also included white spinners and fuselage bands.

(Dušan Prašnikar)

Endnotes:

- 1 Interview with Albin Starc; Belgrade, Yugoslavia, 5 December 2002;
- 2 Mario Raguž: *Zapisi legionara*, page 14 (Sky & Sea, Croatia, 2017);
- 3 Interview with Vladimir Ferencina; Zagreb, Yugoslavia 1980 (courtesy of Šime Oštrić);
- 4 *Zhurnal boyevih deystvi 20 sad* (Журнал боевых действий 20 сад), 2.11.1941. (Архив ЦАМО, Фонд 20076, Опись 1, Дело 7);
- 5 Mario Raguž: *Zapisi legionara*, page 51 (Sky & Sea, Croatia, 2017);
- 6 Interview with Albin Starc; Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, 15 January 2005;
- 7 *Zhurnal boyevih deystvi 74 sad* (Журнал боевых действий 74 сад), 9.2.1942. (Архив ЦАМО, Фонд 20138, Опись 1, Дело 6);
- 8 Hans Mücke: *Zrakoplovni nadporučnik, pilot-lovac Cvitan Galić poginuo je nepobjeđen*, Hrvatska krila br.8/1944, page 160 (Independent State of Croatia, 1944);
- 9 *Gundobin Nikolay Ivanovich 1923g.r. № zapisi 11563594* (Гундобин Николай Иванович 1923г.р. № записи: 11563594 (Архив ЦАМО, Фонд 33, Опись 682524, Единица хранения 616);
- 10 *Dnevnik letenja 10. ojačanog lovačkog jata*, 25.3.1942. (Hrvatski državni arhiv, fond 489, Zapovjedništvo vojnog zrakoplovstva NDH, kutija 8);
- 11 Mario Raguž: *Zapisi legionara*, page 82 (Sky & Sea, Croatia, 2017);
- 12 *Itogovaya operativnaya svodka shtaba 56 A* (Итоговая оперативная сводка штаба 56 А), 28.4.42 (Архив ЦАМО, Фонд 228, Опись 701, Дело 994, Документ 12);
- 13 *Protokol oprosa plennogo ofitsera Germanskoj armii* (Протокол опроса пленного офицера Германской армии) 5.5.1942 (Архив ЦАМО, Фонд 215, Опись 1185, Дело 59);
- 14 Alexander Pokryškin: *Vojnové nebo*, pages 193-194 (Pravda, Czechoslovakia, 1980);
- 15 *Pobjede neustrašivih hrvatskih zrakoplovaca*, Hrvatski narod, 17.9.1941. (Independent State of Croatia, 1942);
- 16 Josip Helebrant: *Dnevnik, 24. lipanj 1942* (unpublished manuscript; Mariupol, Soviet Union, 1942; courtesy of Šime Oštrić);
- 17 Interview with Albin Starc; Belgrade, Yugoslavia, 5 December 2002;
- 18 Zlatko Kocbek: *Brojem slabiji, ali ipak bolji*, Hrvatska krila br.9/1945, pages 197-198 (Independent State of Croatia, 1945);
- 19 Ibidem;
- 20 *Smionost hrvatskih zrakoplovaca na istočnom bojištu*, Hrvatski narod, 16.8.1942. (Independent State of Croatia, 1942);
- 21 Zlatko Stipčić: *Samo za desetak metara...*, Hrvatska krila br.19/1942, page 480 (Independent State of Croatia, 1942);
- 22 *Hrvatski satnik Helebrand*, Hrvatski narod, 15.10.1942. (Independent State of Croatia, 1942);
- 23 Interview with Albin Starc; Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, 20 May 2003;
- 24 *Boyevye doneseniya, opservodki No.10, 10.9.1942, mor.av.grupa, Savitskiy* (Боевые донесения, оперсводки №: 10, 10.09.1942, мор. ав. группа, Савицкий) (Архив ЦАМО, Фонд 20219, Опись 1, Дело 9);
- 25 *Dzabadari Georgiy Revezovich 1916g.r. № zapisi 50776546* (Джабадари Георгий Ревезович 1916г.р. № записи: 50776546) (Архив ЦВМА, Фонд 3, Опись 1, Единица хранения 588);
- 26 Interview with Tomislav Kauzlarić; Subotica, Yugoslavia, 5 February 1989;
- 27 *Fond 236 Lvovskoy Krasnoznamennoy istrebitelnoy aviatsionnoy divizii* (Фонд 236-й Львовской Краснознаменной истребительной авиационной дивизии) /7.6.1942 г. - 1945 г./ (Архив ЦАМО, Фонд 20218, pages 182-183; courtesy of Aleksandr Gartman);
- 28 Cvitan Galić: *Pao za domovinu*, Hrvatska krila br.2/1943, page 33 (Independent State of Croatia, 1943);
- 29 *Hrvatski lovac obara 'Aircobru'*, Hrvatska krila br.13/1943, page 279 (Independent State of Croatia, 1943);
- 30 *Dnevnik letenja 10. ojačanog lovačkog jata*, 3.5.1942. (Hrvatski državni arhiv, fond 489, Zapovjedništvo vojnog zrakoplovstva NDH, kutija 8);
- 31 Written statement of Josip Helebrant, date unknown (courtesy of Šime Oštrić);
- 32 Interview with Albin Starc; Belgrade, Yugoslavia, 7 December 2002;
- 33 Boris Yeremin (Борис Ерёмин): *Vozdushnie boyci* (Воздушные бойцы), pages 194-195 (Voenizdat, Soviet Union, 1987);
- 34 Interview with Mato Dukovac; Miami, United States, April 1980 (courtesy of Henry Larry de Zeng);
- 35 *Zhurnal ucheta boyevih deystvi 57 giap* (Журнал учета боевых действий 57 гуап) (courtesy of Ivan Lavrinenko);
- 36 *Protokol oprosa horvatskogo letchika kapitana Cvikič N.M. dobrovolyno pereletevshego na nashu storonu 16 jona 1943 goda* (Протокол опроса хорватского летчика капитана Цвикич Н.М. добровольно перелетевшего на нашу сторону 16 июня 1943 года) (courtesy of Andrey Kuznetsov);
- 37 Interview with Desimir Furtinović; Zagreb, Yugoslavia, 30 August 1988;
- 38 'Poletio sam, našao ga, naciljao i - pobedio', Hrvatska krila br.1/1944, pages 5-6 (Independent State of Croatia, 1944); time (11.30) and location of the claim written in OKL records (Pl.Q.66633 - near Priazovski village, some 30-35 km east-northeast of Kerch) are thought to have been a result of a clerical error;
- 39 Interview with Desimir Furtinović; Zagreb, Yugoslavia, 30 August 1988;
- 40 Interview with Zdenko Avdić; Zagreb, Yugoslavia, 28 August 1988;
- 41 Interview with Vladimir Kreš (ex Nahod); Zagreb, Yugoslavia, 6 September 1988;
- 42 Interview with Ivan Baltić; Budrovec, Yugoslavia, 10 September 1988; Ivan Baltić stated that he was shot down on 21 December 1943 when flying in pair with Josip Kranjc, which is disputed by recently acquired Soviet and German archival sources;
- 43 Interview with Vladimir Kreš (ex Nahod); Zagreb, Yugoslavia, 6 September 1988;
- 44 Interview with Janko Čurilović; Karlovac, Croatia, 22 August 2008 (courtesy of Robert Čopec and Tomislav Aralica);
- 45 *Maršalu Titu - Terzić, 5.10.1944, Br.233-34* (Vojni arhiv, Arhiv Josipa Broza Tita, I-3-V/694);
- 46 Interview with Vladimir Bosner; Zagreb, Yugoslavia, 3 July 1987;
- 47 Interview with Tomislav Kauzlarić; Subotica, Yugoslavia, 19 May 1989;
- 48 Interview with Tihomir Simčić; Zagreb, Yugoslavia, 14 April 1988;
- 49 Interview with Tomislav Kauzlarić; Subotica, Yugoslavia, 19 May 1989;

1.11.43.	14:50	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	21	213	PIQu.34Ost/66733 (2 km S of Chelyadinove)	II-2 m.H.	8 GShAP VVS ChF: 1 II-2 lost
1.11.43.	14:55	Uffz. Zdenko Avdić	1	214	PIQu.34Ost/66733 (2 km S of Chelyadinove)	II-2 m.H.	
2.11.43.	5:20	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	22	215	PIQu.34Ost/66732 (7 km ENE of Chelyadinove)	II-2 m.H.	47 ShAP VVS ChF: 1 II-2 lost, 1 damaged, 1 slightly damaged
2.11.43.	~ 5.20	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	u/c	u/c	PIQu.34Ost/66732 (7 km ENE of Chelyadinove)	II-2 m.H.	
2.11.43.	~ 5.20	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	w.b.	w.b.	PIQu.34Ost/66732 (7 km ENE of Chelyadinove)	II-2 m.H.	
2.11.43.	10:15	Uffz. Dragutin Gazapi	4	216	PIQu.34Ost/66651 (6 km WSW of Ilyich)	II-2	5./NJG 200: ? 8 GShAP VVS ChF: 1 II-2s lost ? 622 ShAP: no losses
2.11.43.	11:45	Fw. Eduard Martinko	5	217	PIQu.34Ost/66673 (Tuzla island)	I-153	VVS: no losses
2.11.43.	14:45	Uffz. Zdenko Advić	2	218	PIQu.34Ost/66871 (7 km SE of Naberezhne)	LaGG 3	805 IAP: no losses ?
2.11.43.	14:47	Uffz. Zdenko Advić	3	219	PIQu.34Ost/66871 (7 km SE of Naberezhne)	LaGG 3	
2.11.43.	14:48	Uffz. Josip Kranjc	1	220	PIQu.34Ost/66871 (7 km SE of Naberezhne)	LaGG 3	
6.11.43.	7:20	Uffz. Dragutin Gazapi	5	221	PIQu.34Ost/66642 (3 km ENE of Baksy)	LaGG 3	II./JG 52: 7 Yak 1s 66 IAP: no losses
6.11.43.	7:23	Uffz. Ivan Baltić	1	222	PIQu.34Ost/66674 (9 km NW of Taman)	LaGG 3	25 IAP: 1 LaGG 3 damaged ?
12.11.43.	14:43	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	23	223	PIQu.34Ost/66562 (2 km W of Bondarenkove)	DB-3	VVS: no losses
13.11.43.	~ 7.00	Uffz. Josip Kranjc	u/c	u/c	E of Kerch	Yak 1	42 GIAP: no losses
13.11.43.	~ 7.00	Uffz. Josip Kranjc	u/c	u/c	E of Kerch	P-39	66 IAP: no losses
13.11.43.	~ 7.00	Uffz. Zdenko Advić	u/c	u/c	E of Kerch	Yak 1	
13.11.43.	~ 7.00	Uffz. Zdenko Advić	u/c	u/c	E of Kerch	P-39	
13.11.43.	9:03	Fw. Eduard Martinko	6	224	PIQu.34Ost/66613 (2 km NW of Yurkov Kut)	LaGG 3	42 GIAP: no losses
13.11.43.	9:04	Uffz. Dragutin Gazapi	6	225	PIQu.34Ost/66642 (3 km ENE of Baksy)	LaGG 3	66 IAP: 1 P-39 lost ?
13.11.43.	9:06	Fw. Eduard Martinko	7	226	PIQu.34Ost/66812 (6 km WNW of Taman)	LaGG 3	
13.11.43.	10:37	Uffz. Josip Kranjc	2	227	PIQu.34Ost/66672 (S Chushka)	LaGG 3	790 IAP: 1 LaGG 3 damaged ?
13.11.43.	10:40	Uffz. Zdenko Advić	4	228	PIQu.34Ost/66644 (Yenikale)	LaGG 3	
13.11.43.	10:42	Uffz. Josip Kranjc	3	229	PIQu.34Ost/66644 (Yenikale)	LaGG 3	
15.11.43.	14:55	Uffz. Zdenko Advić	5	230	PIQu.34Ost/37892 (10 km E of Karpova Balka)	P-39	8 VA: no losses
15.11.43.	14:57	Uffz. Josip Kranjc	4	231	PIQu.34Ost/37891 (5 km E of Karpova Balka)	P-39	
15.11.43.	~ 15.00	Uffz. Josip Kranjc	u/c	u/c	E of Karpova Balka	P-39	
20.11.43.	10:10	Uffz. Zdenko Advić	6	232	PIQu.34Ost/66671 (7 km SE of Kerch)	LaGG 3	II./JG 52: 2 Yak 1s
20.11.43.	10:12	Uffz. Zdenko Advić	7	233	PIQu.34Ost/66672 (S Chushka)	LaGG 3	249 IAP: 1 LaGG 3 lost
20.11.43.	10:15	Uffz. Josip Kranjc	5	234	PIQu.34Ost/66822 (6 km E of Taman)	LaGG 3	
21.11.43.	9:15	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	24	235	PIQu.34Ost/66812 (7 km WNW of Taman)	LaGG 3	II./JG 52: 2 Yak 1s, 1 Yak 9, 1 P-39
21.11.43.	9:17	Uffz. Zdenko Advić	8	236	PIQu.34Ost/66672 (S Chushka)	LaGG 3	42 GIAP: 1 Yak 1 lost 88 IAP: 1 LaGG 3 lost
21.11.43.	9:20	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	25	237	PIQu.34Ost/66641 (4 km E of Bondarenkove)	P-39	57 GIAP: 1 P-39 lost 66 IAP: 1 P-39 lost
28.11.43.	9:18	Uffz. Albin Šval	1	238	PIQu.34Ost/47772 (3 km SE of Russkiy island)	P-39	16 GIAP: no losses
28.11.43.	13:30	Uffz. Albin Šval	2	239	PIQu.34Ost/47594 (near Syvashivka)	A-20	30 ORAP VVS ChF: 1 Boston Mk.III lost
29.11.43.	10:00	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	26	240	PIQu.34Ost/37831 (3 km S of Strohanivka)	P-39	104 GIAP: 1 P-39 slightly damaged
1.12.43.	14:40	Fw. Eduard Martinko	8	241	PIQu.34Ost/47762 (5 km WSW of Vesnyanka)	P-39	16 GIAP: no losses
4.12.43.	9:20	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	27	242	PIQu.34Ost/66592 (4 km S of Kerch)	Yak 1	249 IAP: 1 LaGG 3 lost
4.12.43.	12:05	Fw. Eduard Martinko	9	243	PIQu.34Ost/66733 (Tobechikskoye lake)	LaGG 3	6./JG 52: 1 Yak 1 66 IAP: 1 P-39 damaged
5.12.43.	11:40	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	28	244	PIQu.34Ost/66813 (10 km E of Eltigen)	LaGG 3	979 IAP: no losses
5.12.43.	11:50	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	29	245	PIQu.34Ost/66814 (W tip of Taman peninsula)	II-2	43 ShAP: no losses
5.12.43.	11:52	Uffz. Ivan Baltić	2	246	PIQu.34Ost/66814 (W tip of Taman peninsula)	II-2	
6.12.43.	8:35	Fw. Eduard Martinko	10	247	PIQu.34Ost/66732 (E of Eltigen bridgehead)	P-39	57 GIAP: no losses
6.12.43.	8:40	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	30	248	PIQu.34Ost/66732 (E of Eltigen bridgehead)	LaGG 3	805 IAP: 2 LaGG 3s slightly damaged
6.12.43.	8:50	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	31	249	PIQu.34Ost/66732 (E of Eltigen bridgehead)	LaGG 3	
6.12.43.	11:40	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	32	250	PIQu.34Ost/66732 (E of Eltigen bridgehead)	P-39	66 IAP: 1 P-39 badly damaged
8.12.43.	10:15	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	33	251	PIQu.34Ost/47781 (10 km ESE of Russkiy island)	P-39	16 GIAP: no losses
12.1.44.	13:00	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	34	252	PIQu.34Ost/66614 (2 km ENE of Osoviny)	Yak 1	790 IAP: 1 LaGG 3 lost
21.1.44.	14:20	Uffz. Ivan Baltić	u/c	u/c	E of Tarhan	P-39	57 GIAP: no losses
24.1.44.	10:30	Uffz. Vladimir Nahod	1	253	PIQu.34Ost/66642 (E of Baksy)	P-39	790 IAP: 1 LaGG 3 lost
25.1.44.	15:30	Uffz. Josip Jelačić	1	254	PIQu.34Ost/47854 (10 km SW of Genichesk)	LaGG 3	812 IAP: 1 Yak 9 lost
28.1.44.	11:53	Uffz. Vladimir Nahod	2	255	PIQu.34Ost/37791 (near Prymorske)	LaGG 3	402 IAP: 2 Yak 1s damaged ?
28.1.44.	11:55	Uffz. Albin Šval	3	256	PIQu.34Ost/37793 (3 km SSW of Prymorske)	LaGG 3	
10.2.44.	12:50	Uffz. Albin Šval	4	257	PIQu.34Ost/47571 (W of Gromivka)	LaGG 3	8 VA: 2 Yak 1s lost ?
10.2.44.	12:52	Uffz. Vladimir Nahod	3	258	PIQu.34Ost/47583 (5 km SE of Serhiivka)	LaGG 3	

25.2.44.	8:30	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	35	259	PIQu.34Ost/47772 (SE of Russkiy island)	Yak 1	Stab II./JG 52: 2 Yak 7s
25.2.44.	8:32	Uffz. Vladimir Nahod	4	260	PIQu.34Ost/47772 (SE of Russkiy island)	Yak 1	402 IAP: 1 Yak 1 lost & see below 291 IAP: see below 812 IAP: 1 Yak 1 slightly damaged
25.2.44.	~ 11:25	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	u/c	u/c	near Druzhelyubivka	Yak 9	6./SG 2: 2 P-39s, 2 Yak 9s
25.2.44.	11:30	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	36	261	PIQu.34Ost/47742 (SE of Druzhelyubivka)	P-39	Stab II./JG 52: 1 Yak 7 9 GIAP: no losses
25.2.44.	11:30	Uffz. Albin Šval	5	262	PIQu.34Ost/47744 (E of Russkiy island)	Yak 1	291 IAP: 1 Yak 9 lost ? 402 IAP: 1 Yak 1 lost, 1 badly damaged ?
27.2.44.	11:00	Oblt. Mato Dukovac	37	263	PIQu.34Ost/47743 (W of Russkiy island)	LaGG 3	
2.3.44.	~ 9:45	Fw. Desimir Furtinović	w.b.	w.b.	near Karankut	Yak 7	6./SG 2: 1 Yak 9 291 IAP: 1 Yak 9 lost 812 IAP: 1 Yak 1 damaged ? 3 IAK: 1 Yak 1 damaged ?
11.3.44.	~ 11:00	Uffz. Vladimir Nahod	u/c	u/c	area of Sivash	P-39	812 IAP: no losses
25.5.44.	7.50	Fw. Josip Jelačić	2	268***	PIQu.24Ost/97296 (near Priozernoe, E-SE of Tiraspol)	Yak 9	3./JG 52: 1 Yak 9 6./SG 2: 2 Yak 9s 39 ORAP: 1 Yak 9 lost ? 162 IAP: La 5 lost ?
4.6.44.	16.14	Uffz. Vladimir Sandtner	1	269	PIQu.24Ost/78731 (near Avantu, W-NW of Iasi)	II-2	
5.-6.44.		Fw. Josip Jelačić	u/c	u/c	southernmost section of the Eastern Front	fighter	
5.-6.44.		Uffz. Vladimir Sandtner	u/c	u/c	southernmost section of the Eastern Front	Yak 9	

* Tomislav Kauzarić claimed his first aerial victory as a VVKJ pilot against a Bf 110 of I./ZG 26 on 6 April 1941 and the second against Ju 88 of III./KG 51 on 7 April 1941

** Zlatko Stipčić claimed his first aerial victory as a VVKJ pilot against a Ju 88 of 8./LG 1 on 6 April 1941

*** claims no.264-267 were scored by 2./Iagdgruppe Kroatien pilots flying Macchi C.202 and C.205 fighters over NDH

Appendix 2

Known Losses of Luftwaffe Bf 109s with HZL Pilots 1941 - 1944

Date	Unit	Location	Circumstances	Aircraft	Pilot
12.8.41.	JFS 4	near Flexdorf	mid air collision with W.Nr.390	Bf 109D-1 2605 100%	Stfw. Slavko Boškić OK
12.8.41.	JFS 4	near Flexdorf	mid air collision with W.Nr.2605	Bf 109B-1 390 100%	Oblt. Ivan Rubčić +
22.8.41.	JFS 4	SE of Beilngries	flipped-over during a forced landing in soft terrain	Bf 109D-1 2539 70%	Hptm. Trpimir Akšam-Vid W
28.9.41.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	near Milovice	lost orientation during a ferry flight, flipped-over during a forced landing	Bf 109E-7 100%	Oblt. Ivan Karner +
28.9.41.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	near Býškovice	lost orientation during a ferry flight, flipped-over during a forced landing	Bf 109E-7 100%	Maj. Mato Čulinović W
1.10.41.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Lemberg a/f	rammed by Bf 109E-7 whilst taxiing	Bf 109E-7 1431 45%	Obfw. Martin Korbelik OK
1.10.41.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Lemberg a/f	rammed Bf 109E-7 1431 whilst taxiing	Bf 109E-7 Cat.C	Oblt. Ljudevit Bencetić OK
19.10.41.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Šumy-Tokari	flipped-over	Bf 109E-7 Cat.A	Hptm. Zlatko Stipčić OK
10. - 11.41.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	?	crash-landed	Bf 109E-7 Cat.B	Oblt. Albin Starc OK
12.12.41.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Taganrog a/f	taxiing accident	Bf 109E-7 3324 50%	pilot OK
1.1.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	taxiing accident	Bf 109E-7 3498 40%	pilot OK
10.1.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	collided with German Bf 109F whilst taxiing	Bf 109E-7 75%	Oblt. Albin Starc OK
11.1.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	damaged propelerl whilst taxiing	Bf 109E-7 Cat.C	Uffz. Stjepan Radić OK
15.1.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mius Front	left wing damaged by flak	Bf 109E-7 6354 Cat.C	Hptm. Zlatko Stipčić OK
15.1.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	left wing damaged by flak, collided with Ju 52 on landing	Bf 109E-7 950 Cat.C	Hptm. Josip Helebrant OK
22.1.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	destroyed on ground by VVS I-16s	Bf 109E-7 100%	
12.2.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	near Mariupol	technical malfunction	Bf 109E-7 7672 80%	Lt. Slavko Boškić W
19.2.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Taganrog a/f	force-landed due to engine failure	Bf 109E-7 6354 Cat.C	Hptm. Josip Helebrant OK
11.3.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	collapse of the right landing leg	Bf 109E-7 6087 Cat.C	Obfw. Veca Miković OK
22.3.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	between Taganrog and Uspenka	hit into canopy, engine and propeller by VVS 56A Yak 1	Bf 109E-7 2680 Cat.C	Obfw. Veca Miković OK
25.3.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Solenyi	damaged fuselage, radio and propeller in air combat by VVS 56A fighters	Bf 109E-7 1438 Cat.C	Oberstlt. Franjo Džal OK
28.3.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Lemberg a/f	take-off accident	Bf 109E-7 3333 25%	pilot OK
28.3.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	damaged landing gear	Bf 109E-7 6124 15%	pilot OK
5.4.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	between Taganrog and Uspenka	struck by flak into the right wing	Bf 109E-7 1285 Cat.C	Stfw. Cvitan Galić OK
5.4.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Kolesnikovo	struck by flak into the left wing	Bf 109E-7 1285 Cat.C	Stfw. Cvitan Galić OK
21.4.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Taganrog a/f	damaged by 4 OIAE I-153s in air combat, crash-landed	Bf 109E-7 3792 30%	Obfw. Veca Miković W
23.4.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	engine malfunction, crash-landed	Bf 109E-7 4217 15%	pilot OK
23.4.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	tire burst, crash-landed	Bf 109E-7 3864 30%	Hptm. Vladimir Ferenčina W
24.4.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	destroyed on ground by VVS bombers	Bf 109E-7 6087 100%	
27.4.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	near Bolshekrepinskaya	defected, belly-landed	Bf 109E-7 Green 4 1411 100%	Hptm. Berislav Supek C
28.4.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Uspenka	engine malfunction, force-landed	Bf 109E-7 1285 20%	pilot OK
28.4.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Sea of Azov near Yeysk	damaged by flak	Bf 109E-7 Cat.C	pilot OK
29.4.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Taganrog a/f	damaged by flak, force-landed	Bf 109E-7 Green 23 1932 30%	Hptm. Zlatko Stipčić OK
30.4.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Stalino	take-off accident	Bf 109E-7 6393 15%	pilot OK
3.5.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Sarabuz a/f	damaged in air combat, crash-landed	Bf 109E-7 3664 65%	Hptm. Vladimir Ferenčina W
4.5.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	6 km S of Kugey	defected, belly-landed	Bf 109E-7 Green 9 1586 100%	Oblt. Nikola Vučina C
12.5.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Eupatoria a/f	crash-landed	Bf 109E-7 4217 70%	pilot OK
13.5.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Sarabus a/f	destroyed on ground by VVS bombers	Bf 109E-7 5058 100%	
17.5.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	tire burst, crash-landed	Bf 109E-7 1285 65%	Lt. Slavko Boškić OK
1.6.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	crashed into parked Bf 109E-7 1483 whilst landing	Bf 109E-7 3779 10%	pilot OK
1.6.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	struck by Bf 109E-7 3779 on the ground	Bf 109E-7 1483 60%	
1.6.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	tire burst	Bf 109E-7 2680 35%	pilot OK
9.6.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	crash-landed	Bf 109E-7 5057 40%	pilot OK
10.6.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	damaged landing gear	Bf 109E-7 3238 40%	pilot OK
13.6.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	taxiing accident	Bf 109E-7 1618 50%	pilot OK
9.7.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	near Rostov	shot down by flak	Bf 109G-2 Black 6 13421 100%	pilot OK
12.7.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Sea of Azov	damaged in air combat with 453 BAP DB-3fs and 62 IAP VVS ChF LaGG 3s	Bf 109G-2 Black 4 14154 15%	Hptm. Zlatko Stipčić OK
12.7.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Sea of Azov	damaged in air combat with 453 BAP DB-3fs and 62 IAP VVS ChF LaGG 3s	Bf 109G-2 Cat.C	Oblt. Ljudevit Bencetić OK
13.7.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Sea of Azov	damaged in air combat with VVS ChF I-16s	Bf 109E-7 Green 4 Cat.C	Hptm. Josip Helebrant OK
16.7.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Taganrog a/f	crash-landed due to faulty servicing	Bf 109E-7 1438 25%	pilot OK
20.7.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	near Rostov	shot down by VVS Pe 2	Bf 109G-2 Black 13 13411 100%	Obfw. Veca Miković +
23.7.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Mariupol-West a/f	crashed on take-off due to a tire burst	Bf 109G-2 Black 9 13489 75%	Oblt. Ljudevit Bencetić OK
28.7.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	between Shamshev and Novobataysk	shot down by VVS fighters	Bf 109G-2 Black 1 13436 100%	Oberstlt. Franjo Džal EV → R
11.8.42.	15.(kroat.)/JG 52	Rostov-Nord a/f	crashed on take-off	Bf 109G-2 14177 30%	pilot OK

9646	G-10	WNF 2.45	611032	MKHL JGr.101; captured at Raffelding 5.45.	011102722	SOC 18.3.55.
9647	G-10	WNF 2.45	611076	captured in Austria 5.45.	11700989	SOC 18.3.55.
9648	G-10	WNF 3.45	612771	captured in Austria 5.45.	00701524	SOC 18.3.55.
9649	G-10	WNF 3.45	612779	MKHL JGr.101; captured at Raffelding 5.45.	00700650	SOC 2.4.56. (at the time in parts, disassembled)
9650	G-10	WNF 3.45	613090	MKHL JGr.101; captured at Raffelding 5.45.	11900452	SOC 18.3.55.
9651	G-6	Györ 3.44	760221	export to Bulgaria 30.5.44.	26597	SOC 18.3.55.
9652	G-6	Györ 4.44	760254	export to Bulgaria 30.5.44.	26268	SOC 18.3.55.
9653	G-6	Györ 4.44	760261	export to Bulgaria 21.6.44.	01104984	SOC 18.3.55.
9654	G-14	Mtt 8.44	781311	captured in Austria 5.45.	100630	SOC 18.8.52. due to lack of spare parts
9655	G-14	Mtt 8.44	782264	JG 101 09.44; captured in Austria 5.45.	00204629	SOC 29.12.52. following accident on 3.1.52.
9656	G-14	Mtt 9.44	782764	captured in Austria 5.45.	11704543	SOC 18.3.55.
9657	G-14 /AS	Mtt 11.44	785043	captured in Austria 5.45.	11706956	SOC 13.11.52. following accident on 26.12.51.
9658	G-2	Erla 11.42	10755	Lfl 2 damaged by bombs at Bari 26.04.43; export to Bulgaria 26.1.44.	00702898	SOC 18.3.55.
9659	G-2	WNF 6.42	13499	export to Bulgaria 31.1.44.	01102225	SOC 8.6.50 following accident on 28.4.50.
9660	G-2	WNF 1.43	14732	export to Bulgaria 10.3.43.	79685	SOC 18.8.52. due to lack of spare parts
9661	G-2	WNF 1.43	14733	export to Bulgaria 10.3.43.	76513	SOC 18.3.1955.
9662	G-2	WNF 1.43	14791	export to Bulgaria 10.3.43.	00702457	SOC 13.9.51. following accident on 29.6.51.
9663	G-2	WNF 1.43	14792	export to Bulgaria 10.3.43.	36179	SOC 18.8.52. due to lack of spare parts
9941	UMe 109	Mtt 5.44	165104	captured at Zeltweg 05.45	00204268	SOC 10.3.52. following accident on 1.3.52.
9942	UMe 109	Mtt 1.44	161471	10./JG 27 damaged in Hungary 19.03.44; export to Bulgaria 8.-9.44.	79074	SOC 18.3.55.
9943	UMe 109	Mtt 1.44	161472	export to Bulgaria 31.1.44.	V13	SOC 16.8.50. following accident on 5.7.50.
9944	UMe 109	Mtt 7.44	166152	export to Bulgaria 15.8.44.	00713548	converted from G-6, SOC 18.3.55.
9945	UMe 109	Mtt 7.44	166168	export to Bulgaria 29.7.44.	36041	converted from G-6, SOC 18.3.55.
9946	UMe 109	WNF 2.44	411991	damaged in air combat, a/f Buzau 15.8.44; export to Bulgaria 8.-9.44.	36581	converted from G-6, SOC 18.8.52. due to lack of spare parts
9947	UMe 109	Mtt 7.44	166140	export to Bulgaria 29.7.44.	100392	converted from G-6 9635, SOC 2.4.56.
9948	UMe 109	Mtt 1.44	161694	export to Bulgaria 3.44.	48502	converted from G-6 9615, SOC 18.3.55.
9949	UMe 109	Mtt 5.44	165097	export to Bulgaria 6.44.		converted from G-6 9630, SOC 18.3.55.

Appendix 9

VJA & JRV Bf 109 Losses, Accidents and Emergency Situations 1945 - 1952

Date	Time	Location	Circumstances	Aircraft	Engine	Unit	Pilot										
1.45.		Kovin a/f	swerved on take-off and crashed	Bf 109G Cat.B		EzV	kap Janko Dobnikar OK	29.6.51.	6:30	Zemunik a/d	landed on one landing leg due to failure of the landing gear mechanism	Bf 109G-2 9661 Cat.C	203299	172.LAP		por Nikola Mazinjanin OK	
11.2.45.		Vučin a/f	destroyed by troops of 6.K to prevent its capture by the enemy	Bf 109G-8 100%		ME		25.7.51.	19:15	Zemunik a/d	swerved on landing due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9632 Cat.B	01102592	172.LAP		por Anđelko Košta OK	
2.45.		Zemun a/d	crashed on landing	Bf 109G Cat.B		EzV		26.7.51.	5:04	Zemunik a/d	swerved on take-off due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9628 Cat.B	78416	172.LAP		kap Nikola Jovanović OK	
9.5.45.		near Nijemci	belly-landed	Bf 109G-10 Black 3 Cat.B		ME	kap Mato Dukovac OK	26.7.51.	6:09	near Vir island	crashed into the sea due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9633 Cat.A	1100674	83.LAP		ppor Ivan Hren +	
9.5.45.		Jelas Polje a/f	crash-landed	Bf 109G-14 Black 5 Cat.A		ME	maj Josip Helebrant OK	11.8.51.	10:35	Zemunik a/d	swerved on landing due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9651 Cat.A	703099	172.LAP		kap Dinko Morović OK	
10.5.45.		Zemun a/d	landed on one leg due to failure of the landing gear mechanism	Bf 109G OK		EzV	vod Vinko Tatarević OK	24.8.51.	9:03	Zemunik a/d	collapse of the left landing leg during the landing run due to instructor's error	Ume 109 9942 Cat.C	708947	172.LAP		ppor Rade Rajić OK	
11.5.45.		Zemun a/d	swerved on take-off and crashed due to pilot error	Bf 109G White 14 Cat.B		EzV	ppor Vladimir Špoljar OK									kap Momčilo Nikić OK	
~25.5.45.		near Semizovac	belly-landed due to lack of fuel	Bf 109K-4 Cat.B		ME	ppor Stanislav Džodžović OK	28.8.51.	8:08	Zemunik a/d	collapse of the left landing leg during the landing run due to material fatigue	Ume 109 9946 Cat.C	708947	172.LAP		zast Georgije Elenkov OK	
~18.7.45.		Lučko a/d	crash-landed due to failure of the landing gear mechanism	Bf 109G Cat.B		ME	zast Dragutin Žauhar OK									por Tomislav Radić OK	
~19.7.45.		near Vrapče	crash-landed due to engine failure	Bf 109G Cat.B		ME	ppor Vladimir Špoljar OK	29.8.51.	6:35	Zemunik a/d	swerved on landing and crashed due to instructor's error and material fatigue	Ume 109 9941 Cat.C	00204268	172.LAP		ppor Rade Rajić OK	
46.			damaged in flying accident	Bf 109G Cat.B		VJA	zast Dragutin Žauhar OK									kap Stojan Mutić OK	
11.8.48.		Pleso a/d	collapse of the landing leg	UMe 109 9941 Cat.C	00204268	JRV		5.9.51.	11:51	Zemunik a/d	swerved on landing and crashed due to crew error	Ume 109 9615 (9948) Cat.C	48502	172.LAP		ppor Stevan Golić OK	
16.8.48.	18:42	Pleso a/d	collapse of the left landing leg due to poor landing	Bf 109G Cat.C		83.LAP	por Dobrivoj Petrovski OK	7.9.51.	11:20	near Pula	engine failure due to compressor fracture, crashed	Bf 109G-10 9640 Cat.A	11900371	83.LAP		ppor Ivan Kunović OK	
30.11.48.	16:00	Vrazdebna a/d	damaged on landing due to poor approach calculation	UMe 109 Cat.C		83.LAP	ppor Jordan Ferdinandov OK	8.9.51.	6:18	Zemunik a/d	swerved on landing due to pilot error	Bf 109G-2 9660 Cat.C	76513	172.LAP		ppor Bogdan Prodanović +	
24.12.48.	14:30	Niš a/d	belly-landed due to technical malfunction	UMe 109 White 4 Cat.C	V13	83.LAP	kap Andrija Arapović OK	20.9.51.	17:37	Pula a/d	belly-landed due to failure of the landing gear mechanism	Bf 109G-6 9619 Cat.C	200196	83.LAP		kap Nikola Jovanović OK	
8.2.49.	11:00	Cerklje a/d	damaged on landing due to instructor's error	UMe 109 White 5 Cat.C	00713548	83.LAP	por Dušan Martinović OK	25.9.51.	7:31	Zemunik a/d	engine failure due to fractured piston rod, belly-landed	Ume 109 9615 (9948) Cat.C	48502	172.LAP		ppor Jordán Faganel OK	
10.2.49.	8:40	Cerklje a/d	collapse of the left landing leg during the landing run due to instructor's inattention	UMe 109 White 4 Cat.B		83.LAP	kap Radovan Daković OK									zast Petar Novković OK	
29.3.49.	8:05	Cerklje a/d	collapse of the right landing leg during the take-off run due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9613 Cat.C	37075	83.LAP	por Ciril Rupert OK	28.9.51.	16:51	Zemunik a/d	burst of the left tyre on take-off, damaged after the burst of the right tyre on landing	Ume 109 9635 (9947) Cat.C	100392	172.LAP		kap Momčilo Nikić OK	
29.3.49.	11:25	Cerklje a/d	collapse of the left landing leg during the landing run due to crew error	UMe 109 9944 Cat.B	00713548	83.LAP	por Dobrivoj Petrovski OK	27.10.51.	10:20	Zemunik a/d	engine failure due to compressor fracture, crash-landed	Ume 109 9946 Cat.C	708947	172.LAP		zast Dordé Mileusnić OK	
30.3.49.	8:20	Cerklje a/d	collapse of the left landing leg during the landing run due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9612 Cat.B	78475	83.LAP	por Stojan Mutić OK	28.11.51.	9:27	Pula a/d	landed on right landing leg after the left wheel fell-off on take-off	Bf 109G-10 9611 Cat.C	11200062	83.LAP		por Tomislav Radić OK	
6.4.49.	11:35	Cerklje a/d	left wingtip damaged on landing run due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9625 Cat.C	01102592	83.LAP	ppor Anton Skale OK	1.12.51.	14:30	Zemunik a/d	crashed on landing due to material fatigue	Bf 109G-6 9617 Cat.C	205814	172.LAP		zast Dordé Mileusnić OK	
6.4.49.	12:04	Cerklje a/d	right wingtip damaged on landing run due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9623 Cat.C	77038	83.LAP	zast Ivan Krznarić OK	8.12.51.	9:30	Pula a/d	engine failure, crash-landed due to poor approach calculation	Bf 109G-6 9623 Cat.A	100327	83.LAP		ppor Albin Pišernik OK	
12.4.49.	9:07	Cerklje a/d	struck a telegraph pole on landing due to poor approach calculation	Bf 109G-6 9623 Cat.C	77038	83.LAP	zast Kiril Zlatkovski OK	26.12.51.	9:45	Istria	engine failure due to poor maintenance, pilot bailed out	Bf 109G-14/AS 9657 Cat.A	11700989	83.LAP		ppor Živko Erdogljia OK	
12.4.49.	11:34	Cerklje a/d	swerved on take-off and crashed due to crew error	UMe 109 9941 Cat.B	00204268	83.LAP	zast Stanko Sekulović OK	3.1.52.	9:45	Pula a/d	engine failure due to compressor fracture, crash-landed	Bf 109G-14 9655 Cat.A	77260	83.LAP		por Boris Pandar OK	
							zast Ivan Kunović OK	26.2.52.	9:10	Zemunik a/d	crashed whilst practising aerobatics due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9625 Cat.A	01101580	172.LAP		zast Petar Ćimović +	
							zast Živko Erdogljia OK	1.3.52.	10:20	Zemunik a/d	failure of the prop pitch mechanism, stalled and crashed	Ume 109 9941 Cat.A	205814	172.LAP		zast Dordé Mileusnić +	
14.4.49.	12:10	Cerklje a/d	damaged during the landing run due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9615 Cat.C	78416	83.LAP	por Anton Skale OK	20.3.52.	12:56	Zemunik a/d	engine trouble due to poor maintenance, belly-landed due to pilot error	Bf 109G-2 9658 Cat.C	77038	172.LAP		kap Dinko Morović +	
15.4.49.	9:25	Cerklje a/d	collapse of the right landing leg during the landing run due to crew error	UMe 109 9942 Cat.B	79074	83.LAP	por Franc Pečarić OK	15.4.52.	9:43	Zemunik a/d	swerved on landing and crashed due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9638 Cat.C	76140	172.LAP		zast Radomir Stamenković W	
							zast Dragoslav Pejić OK	15.4.52.	12:13	Zemunik a/d	swerved on landing due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9616 Cat.C	78475	172.LAP		por Tomislav Radić OK	
28.4.49.	12:43	Cerklje a/d	swerved on landing and crashed due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9616 Cat.B	37665	83.LAP	ppor Vaske Ivanovski OK	15.4.52.	12:13	Zemunik a/d	swerved on landing due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9616 Cat.C	78475	172.LAP		zast Arsenije Boljević OK	
4.6.49.	12:10	Cerklje a/d	engine failure on the ground due to poor handling on behalf of the pilot	Bf 109G-8 9639 OK	00204994	83.LAP	zast Milenko Kosanović OK	9.5.52.	8:40	Zemunik a/d	crash-landed due to pilot error	Bf 109G-2 9658 Cat.B	77038	172.LAP		kap Miloš Kondić OK	
8.6.49.	8:19	Cerklje a/d	crashed due to fracture of the piston rod and crankcase	Bf 109G-6 9626 Cat.A	78604	83.LAP	zast Stanko Đekić OK	9.5.52.	10:29	Zemunik a/d	belly-landed due to failure of the landing gear mechanism	Bf 109G-6 9619 Cat.C	00702898	172.LAP		ppor Vojislav Dakić OK	
12.7.49.	10:52	Cerklje a/d	crash-landed due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9613 Cat.B	37075	83.LAP	ppor Jovo Čuić +	24.6.52.	9:24	Zemunik a/d	collapse of the left landing leg during the landing due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9622 Cat.C	100495	172.LAP		ppor Radomir Veljković OK	
13.7.49.		Cerklje a/d	belly-landed due to engine failure	Bf 109G-6 9613 Cat.B	37075	83.LAP	por Franc Pečarić OK	8.7.52.	9:31	Zemunik a/d	engine failure due to fractured piston rod during take-off, crashed	Bf 109G-6 9619 Cat.A	702889	172.LAP		ppor Radomir Stamenković W	
25.7.49.	10:52	Cerklje a/d	engine failure due to fractured piston rod, smooth landing	Bf 109G-6 9615 Cat.C	78416	83.LAP	ppor Nikola Mazinjanin OK	14.7.52.	10:55	Zemunik a/d	collapse of the right landing leg during the landing run due to pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9617 Cat.C	11103775	172.LAP		kap Ik Tomaš Samardžić OK	
26.7.49.	15:22	Cerklje a/d	engine failure due to fractured piston rod, smooth landing	Bf 109G-6 9623 OK	78008	83.LAP	kap Nikola Milekić OK	19.7.52.	7:40	Zemunik a/d	collapse of the right landing leg during the landing run due to pilot error	Bf 109G-14 9642 Cat.C	206710	172.LAP		kap Franc Nabrogi OK	
13.8.49.		Cerklje a/d	collapse of the right landing leg during taxiing due to material fatigue	Bf 109G-6 9631 OK		83.LAP	ppor Milan Drnovšek OK	24.7.52.	8:43	Zemunik a/d	belly landed due to poor maintenance and pilot error	Bf 109G-6 9634 Cat.C	700168	172.LAP		por Branko Galić OK	
17.8.49.	6:57	Cerklje a/d	engine failure during take-off, flipped over during forced landing	Bf 109G-6 9620 Cat.C	00702844	83.LAP	por Milan Drnovšek OK	5.8.52.	9:45	Zemunik a/d	engine failure due to compressor fracture, crash-landed	Bf 109G-6 9634 Cat.A	700168	172.LAP		kap Miloš Kondić OK	
				UMe 109 9944 Cat.C	00713548	83.LAP	zast Ivan Krznarić OK	9.8.52.		Zemunik a/d	leaned on the ground with spinner and left wing tip during taxiing	Ume 109 9945 OK	78475	172.LAP		zast Georgije Elenkov OK	
							por Dobrivoj Petrovski OK									por Anđelko Košta OK	

**Bf 109E-7,
15.(kroat.)/JG 52,
Mariupol-West, January 1942**



Artwork by
Ognjan M. PETROVIĆ
№824/17

**Bf 109E-7/trop 'Green 1',
15.(kroat.)/JG 52, Oberstlt. Franjo Džal,
Mariupol-West, April 1942**



Artwork by
Ognjan M. PETROVIĆ
№825/17

**Bf 109E-7 'Green 10',
15.(kroat.)/JG 52, Hptm. Zlatko Stipčić,
Eupatoria, May 1942**



Artwork by
Ognjan M. PETROVIĆ
№828/17

**Bf 109E-7 'Green 21',
15.(kroat.)/JG 52, Hptm. Josip Helebrant,
Eupatoria, May 1942**



Artwork by
Ognjan M. PETROVIĆ
№826/17

**Bf 109E-7 'Green 14',
15.(kroat.)/JG 52, Obfw. Veca Miković,
Mariupol-West, June 1942**



Artwork by
Ognjan M. PETROVIĆ
№827/17

**Bf 109G-14 'White 55' / 9655 W.Nr.782264,
83.LAP, ppor Kiril Zlatkovski,
Pula, February 1951**



Artwork by
Ognjan M. PETROVIĆ
№873/18

**Bf 109G-14 'White 42' / 9642 W.Nr.511903,
83.LAP, Pula, May 1951**



Artwork by
Ognjan M. PETROVIĆ
№872/18

**Bf 109G-6 'White 22' / 9622 W.Nr.163275,
83.LAP, ppor Albin Pibernik, Pula, May 1951**



Artwork by
Ognjan M. PETROVIĆ
№865/18

**Bf 109G-6 'White 31' / 9631 W.Nr.165106,
172.LAP, kap Teodor Bukovnik,
Cerklje, June 1951**



Artwork by
Ognjan M. PETROVIĆ
№866/18

**UMe 109 'White 15' / 9948 W.Nr.161694,
172.LAP, zast Petar Novković / kap Momčilo Nikolić,
Zemunik, September 1951**



Artwork by
Ognjan M. PETROVIĆ
№875/18