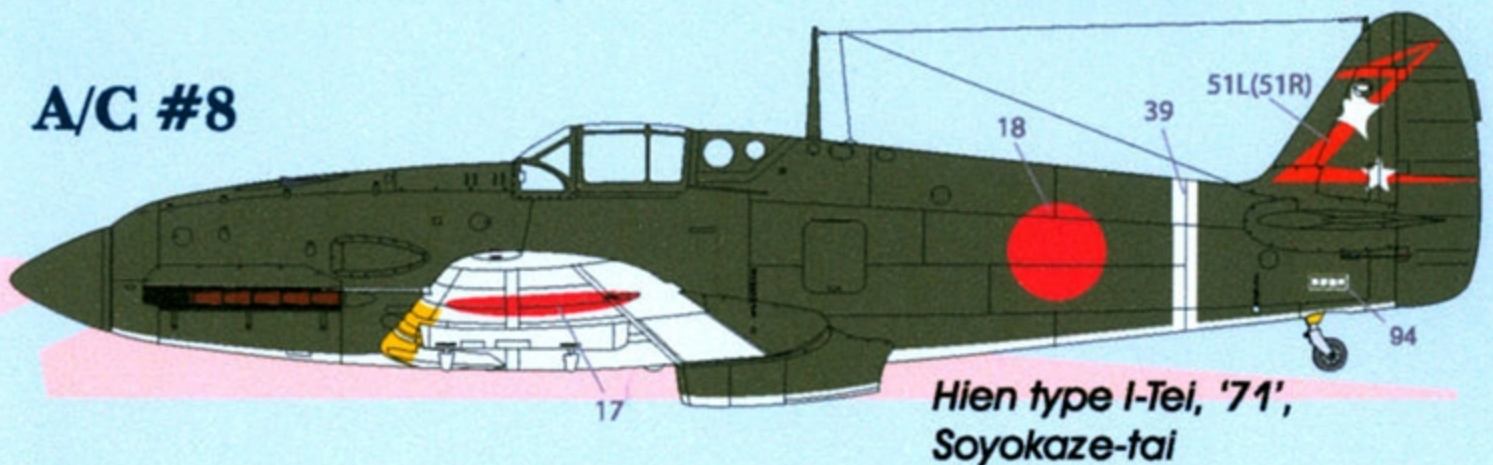
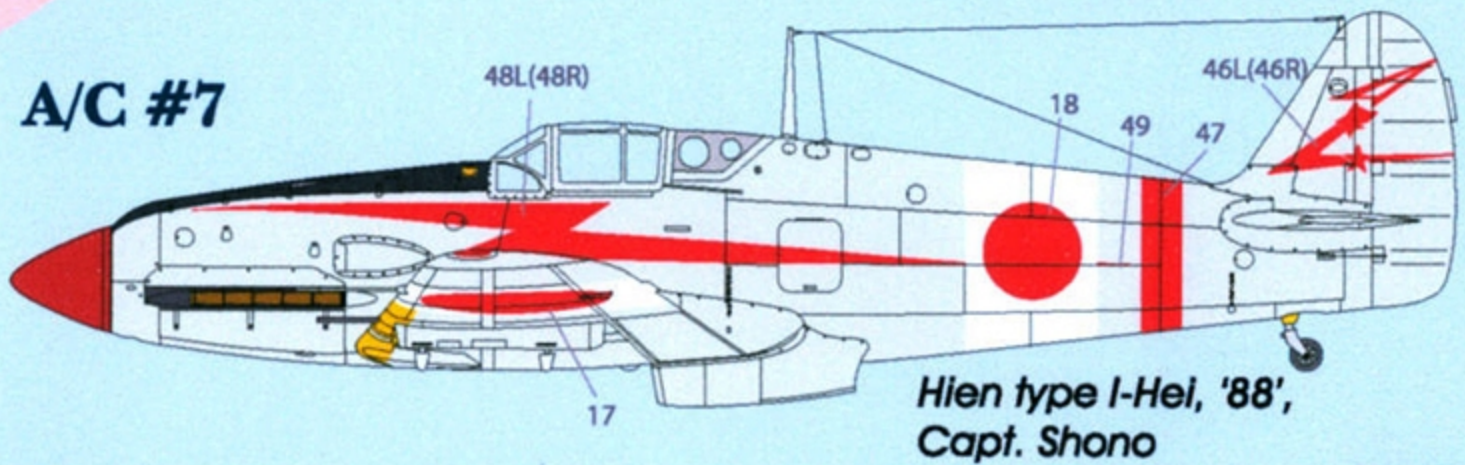
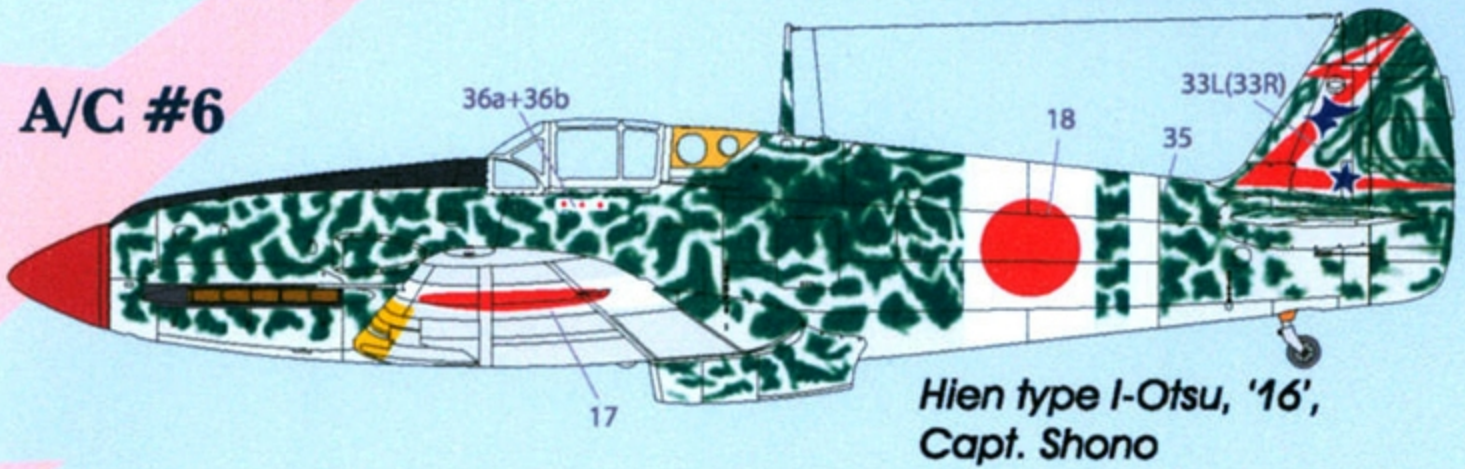
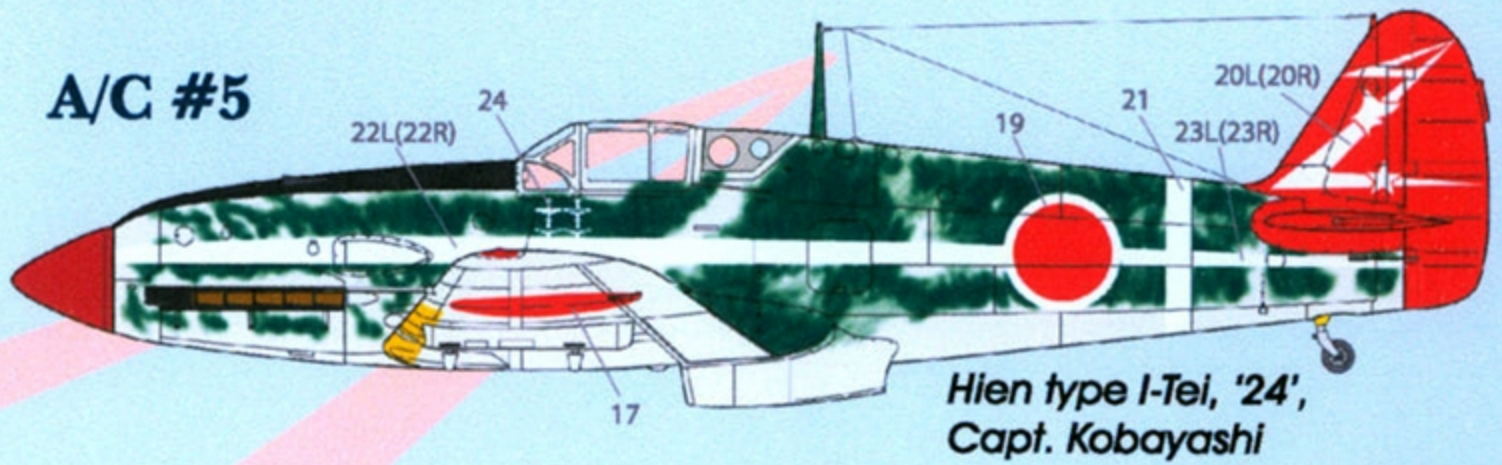


**8 subject aircraft are featured herein!**



Recommended kits: Hasegawa Hien each types  
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# Notes on the Colors and Markings of 244th Sentai A/C.

**(1) Hinomaru Red:** Despite frequent claim that the Hinomaru was much darker on dark green camouflage paint, examination of various color photos and movies of Japanese A/C (taken mostly by the Allied

forces at/near the end of the war) shows that this red is still bright. This color is close to FS2190.

**(2) Upper surface Camouflage and interior colors;** Early production Hien is finished in NMF, and dark green color is applied on the upper surface in the supply depot or in the unit. Both of the dark green color chips in Model Art Extra #263 and #428 has slight brown tint, but are still different in brightness. LLD likes to take the color chip of #263, as this is based on the metal chip from fallen Hien that Mr. Ichiro Hasegawa possessed. This color is very dark color, and close to FS4050. All interiors are painted in "grey green" color, which, in spite of its name, is indeed light blue close to FS5550, but this color gradually becomes brownish to look like khaki tan or sand brown. Fabric parts are painted in silver dope (not grey green), and spinner/propeller were painted in red brown (close to FS0109). From August or September 1944 IJAAF ordered upper surfaces of all A/C from the production line (in case of Hien, type I Tei from #4646

or from #4844, type II and Ki-100 fighter) should be painted in "yellow green #7", which, when fresh, is close to dark Olive Drab (FS4088) as applied on type 100 Fighter of RAF Museum, but gradually becomes oxidized to brownish tint to become khaki or brown. In contrast to the acetyl or benzyl cellulose color used on metal or fabric in early Hiens, this "yellow Green #7" is nitrocellulose color, and easier to catch fire. To show this change of the paint, "yellow green #7" painted Hien or Ki-100 showed "迷彩塗料" (camouflage paint) below stabilizer, as shown in the photo of a derelict Hien on LLD website (originally in Revi (Czech magazine) #27 (1999)), but its "yellow green #7" color is too much green as with other photos in this magazine). From this period all interior area, spinner and propeller were also painted in "yellow green #7".

**(3) Other colors:** \* Anti-glare panel of Hien is always matt black.  
\* Friend identification band on leading edge was originally red, but on August 21, 1942 it was changed to yellow by official order.  
\* Drop tank is often said to be yellow or yellow green, but according to Mr. Sakurai (244th Sentai Association organizer) most of the 244th

Sentai crews assert that it was grey, and such example still exists today.

\* Caution letter "フムナ" (no step) and trim line of flaps are not often seen on dark green camouflaged Hien. Its color was changed to red with introduction of yellow green #7.

**(4) Fuselage band color:** Although each Chutai/Shotai had their own designated colors, Mr. Sakurai's research reveals that they were not at all strictly adhered to in the days of Commander Kobayashi, probably due to the frequent A/C re-assignment between Chutai to cover combat losses and too much work for the ground crews who should

keep as many fighters flyable as possible to pay attention to such marking regulations. More probably the fuselage band color is used for the identification of each A/C along with the A/C number on the landing gear cover. Modelers should apply fuselage band that passes through the air intake before fixing the intake.

**(5) Sentai emblem:** The Sentai's new and most famous emblem was introduced, when the unit transitioned from Ki-27 to Hien around the summer of 1943. Basically it was all red, but some variations did exist

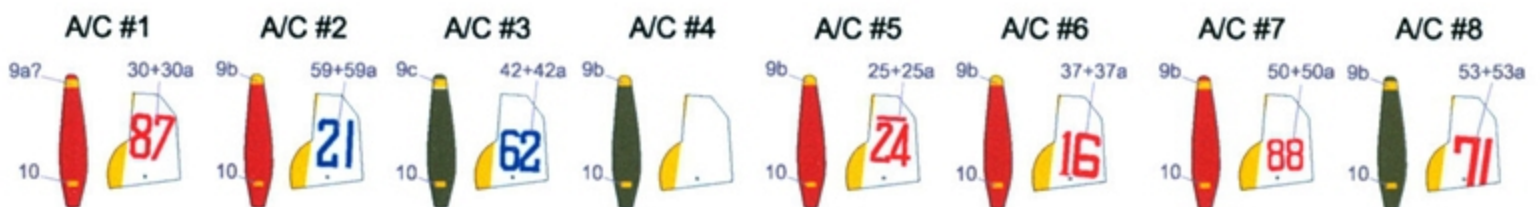
with the "4 and star" in blue, yellow or white. There was no rule to apply the emblem in Chutai colors, nor any special marking for the Commander, which is often alluded.

**(6) Red color on tail:** Originally the red color on tail was the symbol of "Shinten" (aerial suicide attack) Squadron, but Commander Kobayashi painted the tail of his HQ Shotai Hien in red to symbolize

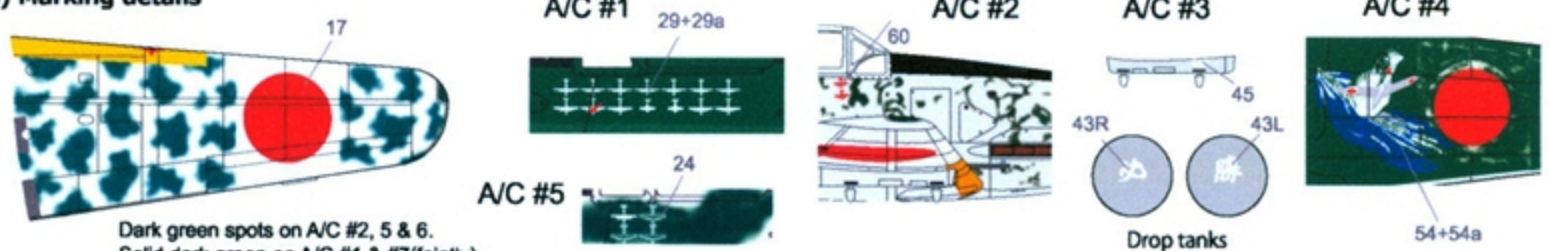
their determination and to boost the moral of his small Shotai (4 A/C) during the days of Empire Capital defense duty.

**(7) Propellers and main u/c covers:** Propellers and landing gear cover (Question mark of propeller indicates its caution band is not

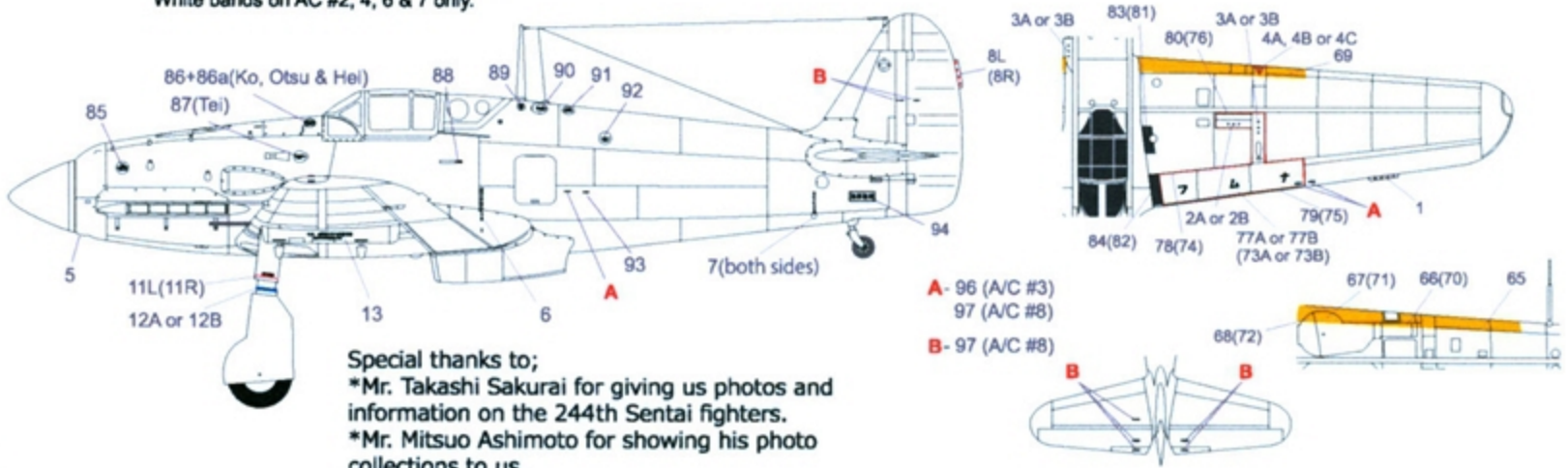
confirmed. No A/C number on gear cover indicates its number is not confirmed.)



## (8) Marking details



Dark green spots on A/C #2, 5 & 6.  
Solid dark green on A/C #1 & #7 (faintly).  
Solid yellow green #7 on A/C #3, 4 & 8.  
White bands on AC #2, 4, 6 & 7 only.



Special thanks to;  
\*Mr. Takashi Sakurai for giving us photos and information on the 244th Sentai fighters.  
\*Mr. Mitsuo Ashimoto for showing his photo collections to us.

## Captions for the items of 48-005R

**(A/C #1) Ki-61 Hien type I-Tei, #87, flown by the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai Commander Teruhiko Kobayashi (?), Akeno AB, early May of 1945.**

The photo of this A/C is said to be found in the personal album of Mr. Mamoru Tatsuta (a former Ki-100 pilot of the 111<sup>th</sup> Sentai) and later published in ref. 1. Its illustrations are shown in Maru (Japanese magazine) of around 1985, and ref. 2~4. It clearly shows a total of 14 kill marks below the canopy, thereby implying an association with Commander Kobayashi. On the back of this photo is the caption "April 1945 at Akeno". Since Commander Kobayashi achieved his 14<sup>th</sup> victory (1 damaged) on April 30<sup>th</sup>, the marking representing it should have been done in the first days of May at the earliest. Additionally, there is no record that he went to Akeno AB in May 1945! If he indeed did go to Akeno then, he would have been flying the newly assigned Ki-100. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> kill marks (F6F) were applied in the incorrect position, which means that the kill marks were applied at one time. Also, this A/C carried a white band on the antenna (a mark of some discernment), but did not have bomb racks under the wings which indicates it was not used for Special Attack or its escort. Thus the existence of a Hien so marked is confirmed, but its assigned pilot's identity is not yet established. We think this #87 was not the usual, or reserve, mount of Commander Kobayashi, but rather it was just painted in his marking for some other purpose (ceremonial? publicity?) in May.

The slightly lighter fuselage band was claimed to be blue, but more probably it was a white band over-painted with dark green. We believe the white paint area below the kill marks is a part of the original white band. If you decide on the light green band option, you should first apply the white decal, overcoat it with clear, and then apply dark green color. The tail marking is our best guess.

**(A/C #2) Hien type I Hei #21 flown by 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Yasuhiko Hiranuma of the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai, Chofu AB, February 1945 to the end of the war.**

Relatively many photos are known today for the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai aircraft, but most of them are those of HQ Shotai, Shinten Seiku-tai and Soyokaze-tai which were located near the Sentai HQ. Photos of Toppu-tai and Mikazuki-tai are quite rare. This is the only A/C to be established as belonging to Toppu-tai.

Mr. Takashi Sakurai (organizer of 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai Association) sent us three photos of this A/C, but the right side photo (A) taken by US Forces at Chofu AB soon after the war is also shown in ref. 3, 4, 5, 13 and 14, and the left side photo (B) taken after the heavy snow of February 25<sup>th</sup> 1945 is also shown in ref. 7 and 15. Left side photo (C) taken while taxiing is not found in any references (only ref. 5). Three fuselage bands and #21 on landing gear cover are probably cobalt blue/red/cobalt blue and cobalt blue in comparison with Hinomaru red. Only the forward portion of Sentai emblem is seen above the stabilizer in photo (B), and it shows the emblem is rather slim. Blue "4 and star" is our best guess. Two kill marks are shown in photo (A), but none in photo (C). Why it is applied only on the right side is not known. As the style of kill marks is quite similar to those applied on the Commander's A/C, these kill marks are not the artificial one applied by Americans after the war, but should have been applied during the war.

2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Hiranuma was born in Saitama Prefecture in 1920, and became a fighter pilot after graduating Tokyo Agricultural University. He was assigned to Toppu-tai of the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai in August 1944, and scored two damaged B-29s. For some period he was a wingman of Flight Commander Capt. Goro Takeda. He lived through the war, and founded Saitama Toyopet Co. after the war. He passed away in July 2015 at the age of 94.

**(A/C #3) Ki-61 Hien Type I-Tei #5262, flown by 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Yujiro Itakura of the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai, Chofu AB, March 19, 1945.**

This was the A/C that 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Itakura of the HQ Shotai flew on March 19 1945, while escorting the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Shinbu-tai to attack U.S. ships off Hamamatsu. This mission ended in failure due to thick clouds. As indicated by its s/n, it is a late production type Tei, and was painted in yellow green #7, and "迷彩塗料" was put below stabilizers. In the original memorial photo (shown to us by Mr. Sakurai, ref. 6, 7) the white horizontal fuselage band is faintly visible since it was mostly overspayed with yellow green #7 paint. It would be better to cover decal 40/41 with clear coat, and then apply the yellow green #7 color over top for better realism when finishing your model. The vertical fuselage band is clearly visible. The number "62" on the landing gear cover is said to have been cobalt blue. The drop tank (gray colored according to crews) was adorned with the crewmembers' names, "必" and "勝" on the front (必勝 means "be sure of victory"), as with Commander Kobayashi's A/C #4424 (see 48-003, A/C#2). It also had further inscriptions - "武運長久" (good luck in war) and "祈勝て" (hope you win) - on its side in white. In this case all the crew member's names are clearly visible. The identification bands on the wing leading edges were yellow. This A/C lacks wing guns, and the opening was covered with red patches. Fuselage guns are equipped. Sentai emblem on the tail is out of frame, and cannot be confirmed.

**(A/C #4) Ki-61 Hien Type I-Tei, probably of the 159<sup>th</sup> or 160<sup>th</sup> Shinbu-tai (Special Attack Squadron), Ashiya AB, around October 1945.**

The photo in ref. 5 and 8 shows a Hien of one of the Special Attack Squadrons with an artistic painting on its fuselage of a Hien diving on a US battleship. The photo shows most of the fuselage and wing root, but very regrettably the tail section is out of frame. The location is obviously Ashiya AB (with the 55<sup>th</sup> Sentai Ki-100 in the background). The Special Attack Squadrons which stopped at Ashiya AB were the 55<sup>th</sup>, 56<sup>th</sup>, 159<sup>th</sup> and 160<sup>th</sup>. The 55<sup>th</sup> Shinbu-tai was organized with A/C from the Akeno Flying School, and the 56<sup>th</sup> Shinbu-tai with A/C from the Hitachi Flying School, while the 159<sup>th</sup> and 160<sup>th</sup> Shinbu-tai absorbed those of the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai. The remnants of a white band around the Hinomaru and a

white fuselage band can be seen. Furthermore Tokushima Newspaper of June 29, 1945 (shown in ref. 5) had an article on the markings of a Hien flown by Corporal Nishino (159<sup>th</sup> Shinbu-tai). It mentioned "an inscription of his name (西野伍長) is applied in big characters, and above it is painted a sinking U.S. carrier with its hull cut in two". Also shown in this reference is a memorial photo of 159<sup>th</sup> Shinbu-tai members taken at Ashiya AB. With this supporting evidence, we think this Hien was from either the 159<sup>th</sup> or the 160<sup>th</sup> Shinbu-tai which was left behind at Ashiya AB due to some mechanical trouble.

Since it would be rather difficult and impractical to depict the heavily over-sprayed white bands with decals, we advise modelers to paint the white band around Hinomaru and white fuselage band first and then apply yellow green #7 color prior to decalling.

The tail section is not shown in the photo. It is very likely that the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai emblem was painted there, as these Shinbu-tais were regarded as detachments of the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai. If you choose to apply it, it should be a red one (mark 33, 58 or 51 with white 4 turned upside down). There is some marking (not like numerals) on the landing gear covers. Unfortunately we have no further information on this mark.

**(A/C #5) Ki-61 Hien type I-Tei, #4424, flown by Capt. Teruhiko Kobayashi, Commander of the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai, Chofu AB, late December 1944 to early January 1945.**

This famous A/C served Commander Kobayashi for a relatively long time and underwent 4 markings scheme changes before it perished as a Special Attack A/C on June 6<sup>th</sup> 1945. Its first known marking (without kill marks) is shown in a photo (ref. 7, 8) taken at Hamamatsu AB in the middle of December 1944. This package depicts the A/C in the late December 1944 to early January 1945 period, after returning to Chofu A/B with its 1<sup>st</sup> kill mark and three future kill marks as shown in one photo and another close-up photo (ref. 2, 4~7, 9~12). A/C number on the landing gear cover is red. Wing guns are removed, and the opening is covered with a red patch. Tail section is painted in red, and new Sentai emblem is applied in white.

**(A/C #6) Ki-61 Hien Type I-Otsu (or Hei), #16, flown by Capt. Fumisuke Shono of the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai, Chofu AB, January 3, 1945.**

Photos in ref. 7 and 10 are the famous shots of the Soyokaze-tai Hien with three kill marks. This A/C served as the backdrop for several memorial photos of Corporal Matsueda and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Maeda. In recent days its full markings and identity of the pilot were clarified through the laborious research of the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai Association. It is A/C #16 (ref. 5, 7) and, judging by the date of the kill marks (January 3, 1945), it was flown by Capt. Shono. On that day 8 pilots scored kills, but Soyokaze-tai members were only Capt. Shono and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Ogawa. Ogawa's A/C is already identified by a photo to be Hien type I-Tei, thus this A/C #16 is the mount of Capt. Shono. It is a short nosed Hien without the Mouser cannons in the wings, thus most probably a Hien type I-Otsu. The white band around the Hinomaru are very crudely painted. The Sentai emblem on the tail is red "2" and cobalt blue "4" and "star". Note the unique style of A/C number on the landing gear cover. Kill marks are not aligned perfectly straight.

**(A/C #7) Ki-61 Hien Type I-Hei #88, flown by Capt. Fumisuke Shono of the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai, Chofu AB, February 23-24, 1945.**

This A/C was flown by the Soyokaze-tai leader, Capt. Shono, when photographer Shunkichi Kikuchi took the photos (ref. 7, 9, 12). However, this is no guarantee that this was his personal A/C. Some researchers assign this A/C to other pilots (such as Capt. Takeda), but the research by 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai Association indicates that this is not right. Note that the Sentai emblem on the tail is positioned unusually head down, and the details differ on both sides (especially the inner tip of right Sentai emblem is not sharp-pointed but a line). It appears that the dark green was sprayed faintly on the upper surface of wings, partially covering the edge of the white band and the aileron.

**(A/C #8) Ki-61 Hien Type I-Tei #71 (probably 5271), pilot unknown, Soyokaze-tai of the 244<sup>th</sup> Sentai, Chofu AB, late February 1945.**

This is one of the Soyokaze-tai Hien with yellow green #7 (as indicated by "Camouflage Paint" below stabilizer) on the upper surfaces. Two clear photos (ref. 5, 7, 13) show both sides of this A/C. The Sentai emblem on the tail comprised a red "2" with a white "4" and "star", but surprisingly white 4 is upside down from the normal style. We have never seen such an example.