













Me 163B-1 Komet

Little more than a manned rocket, the **Me** 163 Komet from Messerschmitt had astonishing climb rate and speed. However, its short range limited it serving as a point interceptor and it was unsafe to fly. Sent up in small numbers, **Me** 163s shot down a handful of Allied bombers. Overall, the **Komet** was ineffective, though it gave Allied airmen a scare.

Variants

Me 163B-1 (Early) Early-production model with a lighter gun battery *Reduce Firepower to 2*





Me 210A-1

Messerschmitt's successor to the Bf 110 heavy fighter was a notorious failure. The Me 210 was difficult to fly and hundreds entered service before the bugs were ironed out. Things got so bad that production was cancelled and manufacture of the Bf 110 resumed. Eventually, the Me 210's flaws were fixed and new engines installed, the resulting aircraft being redesignated the Me 410 Hornisse.

Variants

This card depicts all variants, including the Me 210A-2, Me 210C and the Hungarian-made Me 210Ca-1





Hs 129B-2

Henschel built the **Hs 129** to a specification for a heavily armoured attack aircraft. The bomber's power was in its guns, and it was armoured to withstand small arms fire.

Only available in small numbers, the **Hs 129** proved an adequate tank killer, but was vulnerable to fighters.

Variants

Hs 129B-1 Early version, available May 42 *Remove AT Gun ability*

Hs 129B-3 Version armed with 75mm gun, in service Jun 44 in small numbers Increase AT Gun ability to AT Gun 7





He 177A-5 Greif

Germany's only heavy bomber of the war was the troubled Heinkel He 177 Greif ('Griffin'). Conflicting requirements and a ill-conceived engine installation resulted in a delayed entry into service, as well as ongoing bugs. The Luftwaffe never assembled fleets of heavy bombers on the scale of the Allies, though as a night bomber the He 177 proved a thorn in their sides on both the Eastern and Western fronts.

Variants

This card depicts all service variants, including the early-production He 177A-1 and A-3, available Jul 42





Yak-9U

The definitive Yak-9 variant, the Yak-9U was the product of a major program of improvement by the Yakovlev bureau, addressing aerodynamics, engine and weight. Additional firepower was added to make a formidable fighter. The Yak-9U soon proved itself in combat against the Fw 190. In the final months of war it entered service in sufficient numbers to help complete the destruction of the Luftwaffe.

Variants

This card also depicts the post-war Yak-9P, in service 1946





Yak-3

The Yakovlev fighter series diverged along parallel lines. The better-handling trainer version became the Yak-7 and eventually the Yak-9. The original Yak-1 went a separate route, evolving into the superior Yak-3, which entered service later than its stablemates. This incorporated all the lessons from its sisters, and was a lighter aircraft with improved aerodynamics. At low altitudes it stood toe-to-toe with the Germans, who soon issued a warning to their pilots to avoid it.

Variants

This card also depicts the post-war **Yak-3P**, in service late 45





La-7

The Lavochkin bureau continued to refine the La-5 airframe, replacing wooden parts with metal to lighten the aircraft and installing a more powerful engine. The resulting La-7 fighter was faster by a modest amount, and more manoeuvrable than the La-5FN. Many Soviet pilots considered the aircraft to be the equal of its enemies, particularly at low altitude, and the La-7 even scored victories against the new German Me 262 jets.

Variants

La-7 (Late) Up-gunned variant, in service Jan 45 *Increase Firepower to 3*





Tu-2

Tupolev designed his replacement for the SB bomber in an NKVD prison. When the Tu-2 arrived at the front it proved to be fast, with great range and a good bomb load—arguably one of the best medium bombers of the war. Pilots and commanders praised the aircraft, but their reports arrived late, with the result that the Tu-2 was cancelled in 1942 in favour of fighter production. Fortunately, the reports came to light and Stalin reinstated production. The Tu-2 would constitute less than 10% of the Soviet medium bomber force, but performed a vital long-range role in the last years of the war.

WING LEADER

Art by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood



















Ki-49-IIa Donryu Allied Codename: Helen

The Nakajima Ki-49 Donryu ('Storm Dragon') or 'Army Type 100 Heavy Bomber' was not heavy by Western standards, but a replacement for the Army's Ki-21, with improved armour and weapons. Intended to operate without escorts, it struggled against powerful Allied fighters.

Variants

This card also depicts the late-production **Ki-49-IIb**

Ki-49-I Early variant, in service autumn 41 Reduce Protection to 4-5





Mosquito FB Mk.VI

De Havilland's **Mosquito** was a fine light bomber, fitted with external bomb carriers and a gun battery in place of a bomb aimer's position. The **FB Mk.VI** was the most numerous **Mosquito** of the war and became famous for its use in daring low-level raids.

Remove ATGR ability before Oct 44

Variants

Mosquito FB Mk.XVIII 'Tsetse' Antisubmarine variant with 57mm tank gun, available Oct 43

Reduce Firepower to 1; add AT Gun 5 ability





Barracuda Mk.II

The ungainly-looking Fairey Barracuda was a replacement for the Royal Navy's obsolete Swordfish and Albacore torpedo bombers. The Barracuda proved more versatile and could double as a dive bomber, participating in the attacks that sunk the battleship *Tirpitz*. After performing well in European waters it fought in the Pacific, though a lack of power resulted in its gradual replacement by the American-built TBF Avenger.

Variants

This card also depicts the early **Barracuda Mk.I** and anti-submarine **Mk.III**





Firefly F Mk.I

The Fairey Firefly carrier fighter looked superficially similar to the company's stopgap Fulmar, but was a brand-new design. Built to a specification for a larger and more powerful two-seat fighter, it lacked performance, but proved to be versatile as a naval fighter, scout, and fighter-bomber. A success on its own terms, versions of the Firefly would serve into the Korean War and beyond.

Variants

Firefly FR Mk.I Advanced radar-equipped model, in service mid-45 Add Gyro ability





Ki-100-la

The supply of inline engines for the Ki-61-II Hien ceased due to bombing, leaving hundreds of airframes without powerplants. In response Kawasaki installed a radial engine that cost the aircraft speed but made it far lighter. The new Ki-100, or 'Army Type 5 Fighter' was not given a codename by the Allies. However, it proved a reliable, easy-to-handle and agile mount, and a dangerous foe in the final months of the war.

Variants

Ki-100-lb Improved version Add Rear View ability





Ki-48-IIa Allied Codename: Lily

The Kawasaki **Ki-48** (or 'Army Type 99 Twin-engined Light Bomber') proved to be a useful, if poorly protected, light bomber on its debut in the China War. Late-war variants added armour to cope with attacks from Allied aircraft, and served into 1945.

Variants

This card also depicts the late-production **Ki-48-IIc**

Ki-48-la, -lb Early-war variants, in service late 40

Reduce Bombs to 7 and Protection to 4

Ki-48-IIb Late-production variant Add Speed Brakes ability





Ki-45-KAla Toryu Allied Codename: Nick

Observing that European air forces were developing two-seat 'destroyer' fighters, the Japanese Army ordered one of its own, which became Kawasaki's Ki-45 Toryu ('Dragon Slayer'). Like the German Bf 110, the aircraft would struggle against single-seat fighters, but came into its own as a bomber interceptor and attack aircraft.

Variants

Ki-45-KAlb Up-gunned variant Reduce Firepower to 0; add **Heavy Gun 3** ability





Ki-44-IIa Shōki Allied Codename: Tojo

Nakajima designed the **Ki-44 Shōki** (named after a guardian spirit) as a fast bomber interceptor, to complement the Army's **Ki-43** dogfighter. It served in the defence of the Home Islands, China' and Sumatra before its partial replacement late in the war by the superior **Ki-84 Hayate**.

Variants

This card also depicts the late-production Ki-44-IIc

Ki-44-IIb Bomber-killer variant with short-range 40mm cannon

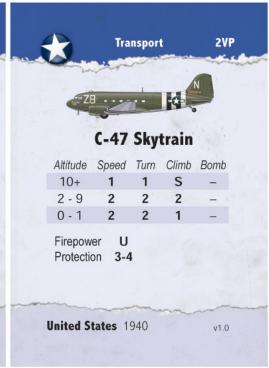
Add **Heavy Gun 4** ability, which cannot be used for standoff attacks



Art by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood



















Wing Leader: Eagles

B 18A

The design for SAAB's twin-engined bomber and reconnaissance aircraft went through so many changes that the **B 18** was delayed from entering service until 1944. A lack of modern engines resulted in a well-made but underpowered light bomber, a problem that was not rectified until after the war, with the installation of German motors in the follow-on **B 18B**.





C-47 Skytrain

The C-47 Skytrain, the militarised version of the Douglas DC-3 airliner, had a remarkable career. It was ubiquitous in every theatre as a troop and cargo transport, and proved vital to the Allied war effort.

Variants

This card also depicts the C-53 Skytrooper troop transport; the licence-built Soviet Li-2; and the licence-built Imperial Japanese Navy L2D (Allied codename: Tabby), or 'Navy Type 0 Transport'

The C-47 was named R4D in US Navy service and Dakota in British and Commonwealth service



B-25C Mitchell

North American's **B-25** was a major asset in the Mediterranean and Pacific, excelling at low-level attacks. Gunship variants mounted extra machineguns and even a tank gun!

Variants

This card depicts the **B-25C** and **D**, named **Mitchell Mk.II** in British service, as well as the early **B-25B**, in service Aug 41, named **Mitchell Mk.I** in British service

B-25 Gunship Many **B-25C** and **D** added guns to improve strafing, available Feb 43 *Increase Firepower to 2/0*

B-25G Gunship version armed with 75mm gun, available Jul 43 Add **Heavy Gun 7** ability



P-51A Mustang

North American built the **P-51A** to a British specification, boasting they could make a better fighter than the **P-40** using the same Allison engine. The resulting **Mustang** was big but aerodynamically clean, its size permitting the fuel tankage for very long range. An immediate success in British service, its main failing was the powerplant, which limited its performance at altitude.

Variants

This card also depicts the British Mustang Mk.I and Mk.II

Mustang Mk.IA Cannon-armed variant Increase Firepower to 3



B 17A

The SAAB **B 17** was the Swedish air force's first homegrown modern aircraft design. It was a tidy light bomber with novel air brakes that doubled as undercarriage covers, and was equipped with Erik Wilkensson's automatic dive-bombing sight. A shortage of engines meant that each variant had a different powerplant. The aircraft would soldier on into the post-war era.

Variants

This card also depicts the re-engined B 17C B 17B Variant with crutch for dive bombing Remove Speed Brakes ability; add Dive Brakes ability





J 22

The advent of war left Sweden with few fighters, all of which were obsolescent and foreign-made. An effort was launched to develop a domestic fighter and the company FFVS was set up to design and manage the project. Its product, the **J 22**, was kept simple and was built around a reverse-engineered American powerplant. The fighter was a solid, nimble aircraft, though one that, on entering service, was already two or three years behind the cutting edge.

Variants

This card depicts all of the armament variants





FM-2 Wildcat

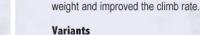
As Grumman switched its production lines from the F4F carrier fighter to the F6F Hellcat, General Motors was contracted to continue building Wildcats. GM's FM-2 was a lightweight development of the aircraft with a more powerful engine and was perfect for operating from the Navy's small escort carriers supporting anti-submarine and amphibious operations.

Variants

Wildcat Mk.VI British variant, in service Jul

Remove ATGR ability

For the FM-1 Wildcat see the F4F-4 card



P-47M High-speed 'sprint' interceptor, in service Jan 45

P-47N Thunderbolt

The final version of the Republic P-47

Thunderbolt was designed for very-long-

range missions in the Pacific, escorting

B-29s to the Japanese mainland from

Saipan. To aid endurance it was given a

'wet' wing with additional fuel tanks. A more

powerful engine helped with the extra

Remove Bomb rating and ATGR ability; add Edge > ability



Art by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood