

Warbirds over Wanaka '98

The Theme for 1998 was "RUSSIAN"- RED STARS RISING

Photos - Polikarpov I-16 (Rata's)

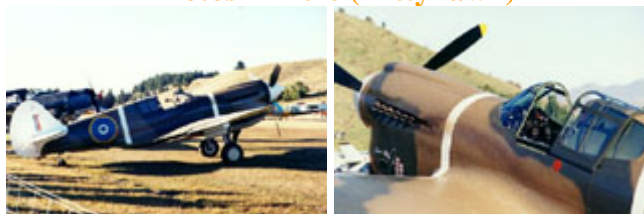


(440x293 @ 72 dpi jpg approx. 55k)

The restoration of the Russian Polikarpovs was a major undertaking, especially being done in Russia where time appears to have no meaning. But the appearance of 5 of these aircraft in formation was a once in a lifetime event for those in attendance. The unfortunate forced landing (The undercarriage would not lower down properly) of the only I-153 biplane so far to arrive in New Zealand just a week before the show meant that it was only in the static display area. One of each of the 6x I-16's and 3x I-153's will be kept by the Alpine Fighter Collection, the rest will be sold to offset the large investment in their restoration.

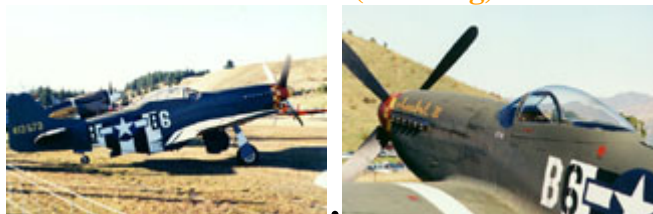
Some Other New Appearance's.

Photos - P40-e (Kittyhawk)



The appearance of the recently restored Curtiss P40-e NZ-3009 (one of the few genuine ex RNZAF aircraft) of Mark and Ray Hannah was a welcome sight resplendent in the Pacific Theater markings of the well known RNZAF P40-e "Wairarapa Wildcat". This would have complemented the AFC's P40-n very nicely had not the recent engine failure caused a wheels up forced landing in which it was seriously damaged (the Pilot was just bruised). We can perhaps look forward to a pairing in Warbirds over Wanaka 2000 maybe?

Photos - P51 (Mustang)



The appearance of the repainted AFC P51 "Miss Torque", in the markings of the only New Zealander "Jack Cleland" to fly with the USAF in WW2 (363rd Sqn), was a great hit with all those present. The Olive drab finish complemented the Silver finish of the "RNZAF -Territorial Sqn" marked P51 of the NZ Warbird

Association. The finish was only done in temporary paint but with the approval of Jack's Wife and children (Who were all Present) it may be a long term finish for this aircraft.

Air Show Review.

The 1998 show was up to the usual standard and the superb aerobatics, display flying and crowd entertainment was well worth the effort of attending. The ever improving ground displays by the Military Vehicles and Vintage Tractor clubs makes this a varied and interesting show for all people. The numerous Trade tents and dealers of Aircraft related products made for a very busy time to see all that was on the ground before the main Airshow started.

The appearance of a range of newly painted aircraft like the A-37 "Dragonfly" in Vietnam colours and the Catalina in Blue/Grey & White with Russian Stars, kept all interested. The aerobatics put on were of World Class standard and caused many sore necks I suspect. The usual special effects were present and the skills of the Model Helicopter display team from Australia defied all laws of flight during the Lunch break.

A VIDEO of the 1998 Warbirds over Wanaka is available from:

TV3 Ventures, Ph: (64) 9 366-5963 Fax: (64) 9 366-5991

Private bag 92624, Symonds St, Auckland, New Zealand.

Cost NZ\$39.95 + NZ\$3 p&p within NZ and NZ\$10 p&p Overseas

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