

COLORS OF WAR

WE DELVE INTO THE CHALLENGE ARCHIVES TO SELECT ANOTHER BATCH OF INTERESTING AND UNUSUAL CAMOUFLAGE SCHEMES OF SECOND WORLD WAR AIRCRAFT
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The winter of 1944/45 was one of the coldest on record for Britain and Europe. This, of course, caused havoc with aerial operations and P-51D-10-NA USAAF 44-14783/CG*C *Iona* has its wing and canopy draped with canvas covers to repel moisture and ice. These covers were usually issued with each aircraft and can still be found today. This Mustang was flown by Capt. Andrew Fuller of the 3rd Scouting Force and the fighter is fitted with the English-built "paper" long-range underwing fuel tanks. The yellow and green checker markings on the nose indicate that this plane was attached to the 55th Fighter Group. Photographed at RAF Wormingford.



P-51D-10-NA USAAF 44-15056/PI*W *Jackie* of the 360th Fighter Squadron, 356th Fighter Group, pulls in close to his wingman to have his photo snapped. The Mustang was flown by Capt. Jack W. "Wild Bill" Crump. One of the Group's "characters," Crump would fly 77 combat missions in Thunderbolts and Mustangs. He owned a coyote named "Jeep" and he took the beast along for five missions — which could not have been much fun in the cramped cockpit. Note the coyote head painted beneath the windscreen. The coyote became a formal member of the 356th but on 28 October 1944, Jeep was run over and killed by a military vehicle at Playford Hall. He was buried with full military honors at Playford Hall, where a plaque marks his resting place. This Mustang was inherited by Lt. Robert P. Schmidt who renamed it *Tar Baby* after his home state of North Carolina.



On 16 October 1944, P-51B USAAF 42-106779 was declared "War Weary" (WW — painted on the vertical) to indicate it was no longer combat worthy. Carrying the code J2*Y, the Mustang was assigned to the 374th Fighter Squadron, 361st Fighter Group, and used as a base hack. The plane was photographed at RAF Old Buckenham.