

FRIDAY NIGHT OLDIES



BY DOUG FISHER

MORE RARE KODACHROMES OF SURPLUS EX-MILITARY AIRCRAFT BEFORE THE ADVENT OF STARS AND BARS



Chuck Lyford putting on a spirited airshow in the *Bardahl Lightning* N74883 (USAAF 44-26961) as photographed by Jim Larsen. Over the years, we have featured this Lightning in several different configurations but the yellow Bardahl scheme was certainly the most stunning. With extremely limited time in the P-38, the daring Lyford worked out an aerobatic routine in the skies over Paine Field, Everett, Washington, before heading to the 1968 Abbotsford Airshow in Canada. *En route*, he perfected the routine and his P-38 performance was the hit of the show. As can be seen, the insides of the cowlings as well as the top of the nose were painted anti-glare green. The wing center section and outer wing panels were sprayed in a medium gray primer. Chuck put on a very few shows with the aircraft in these colors before owner Larry Blumer refinshed the aircraft in military-style colors and markings as *Scrap Iron IV*.

Another view of the beautiful *Bardahl Lightning* taken by Jim Larsen — showing the fighter over Puget Sound. It should be noted that several Internet "authorities" have stated the outer wing panels of the P-38 were painted green. As can be seen they weren't. Bardahl had sponsored Chuck's racing Mustang (see the *October* issue of *Air Classics*) and, in a fit of enthusiasm, Chuck reasoned that they would also want to sponsor the Lightning he was flying for owner Larry Blumer. However, after the death of their hydroplane driver, Ollie Bardahl became very upset and pulled all racing sponsorship. So, even though the plane was painted as the *Bardahl Special*, it never achieved official sponsorship.



Another Jim Larsen photograph of the *Bardahl Lightning* as it is prepared for the photo flight. The nose armament panel is, as can be seen, open. Since the guns and ammunition had been removed, lead weights were added to the nose compartment to maintain the center of gravity. If the sponsorship deal had gone through, the remainder of the Lightning would have been sprayed yellow.

