

Profile provided by Warbird Alley, with permission of Buck Wyndham

PROFILIE: Yakovlev Yak-9

(Variants/Other Names: See *History* below)

HISTORY:

When the German Army swept into Russia in June, 1941, Luftwaffe chief Herman Goering assured the generals that Germany would destroy Russia's air defense capability. They very nearly succeeded. Caught by surprise, Russia's air force was decimated on the ground and in the air. Moving his design and manufacturing facilities east of the Ural Mountains, Alexander Yakovlev's design bureau began production of the Yak-9 in 1942, with delivery of the light, versatile craft to fighter regiments by October of that year. Eventually, a record 16,769 Yak-9's of all models would be built.

The single engine Yak-9 operated with a wide variety of armament for use in anti-tank, light bomber and long-range escort roles, first seeing combat during the Battle of Stalingrad. The standard version, the **Yak-9M**, had 20mm cannon and two 12.7mm machine guns. As one German survivor of the air battles over Russia stated, "The Yak was no match for the ME-109 but there were always so many...they swarmed like bees whenever we showed up." As the war progressed more advanced models made their debut:

Yak-9DD -- With enlarged fuel tanks, this model had an ultra long range of 1,367 miles. It was used to escort American bombers on raids against Romanian oil fields.

Yak-9B -- Using an internal bay behind the cockpit, this bomber version could carry four 220 lb. bombs or containers with light anti-personnel armament.

Yak-9R -- A special photo-reconnaissance variant fitted with specialized camera gear.

Yak-9PD -- To deal with high altitude German reconnaissance aircraft, this model was fitted with a two-stage, gear-driven supercharger and single 20mm cannon.

Production ceased in 1947, but not before a number of communist-bloc countries took delivery of later models. There are several static Yak-9's in private hands today, and beginning in 1996, several airworthy Russian-built replicas have been built. [History by [Jeff VanDerford](#)]

NICKNAMES:

Frank (NATO code name); *Yastrebok* ("Little Hawk"); *Ostronosyi* ("Sharp Nose" -- Generic name for all inline-engine powered Yak fighters).

SPECIFICATIONS (YAK-9U):

Engine: One 1,650-hp Klimov VK-107A V-12 piston engine

Weight: Empty 5,988 lbs., Max Takeoff 6,830 lbs.

Wing Span: 32ft. 0.75in.

Length: 28ft. 0.5in.

Height: 9ft. 8.5in.

Performance:

Maximum Speed: 434 mph

Ceiling: 39,040 ft.

Range: 541 miles

Armament:

One engine-mounted 20-mm MP-20 cannon;

Two 12.7-mm (0.5-inch) UBS machine guns;

Two 220-pound bombs on underwing racks

NUMBER BUILT: 16,769

NUMBER STILL AIRWORTHY: At least 4.