



MACCHI M.7 by Gregory Alegi. Windsock Datafile No.162, 32 pages plus covers, illustrated. Published by Albatros Productions Ltd. 10 Long View, Chiltern Park Estate, Berkhamsted, Herts.,HP4 1BY, U.K. and available from the publisher at £11.75 plus post and packing.

The final Datafile for 2013 covers the Italian Macchi M.7 flying boats, which flew from May 1918 until the late 1930s, making it one of the longest serving Great War aircraft types to serve in any country. Coming just too late for more than a handful of the types to see limited operational service in Italy before the Armistice, the M.7 nonetheless continued in production for years to come, going through a number of design modifications along the way and proving to be an outstanding racing 'plane and an excellent training aircraft in the latter stages of its service life.

The M.7 was also operated by a number of foreign air forces, both in Europe and South America, and the author covers the entire development of Macchi flying boats post-war and the history in an interesting if somewhat limited narrative. I hasten to add that this brevity is due to a paucity of information available rather than any lack of diligence on the author's part. The narrative concludes with information on the colours and markings used, the latter well illustrated by Ronny Bar's six colourful profiles of Italian, Argentinian and Swedish examples of the M.7 and M.7ter. There are also appendices giving specifications of the M.7 and its variants as well as Production and Military Serials and a page of data on the M.7 on the Italian Civil Register.

Again, I must say that the most invaluable aspect of this Datafile are the 80 plus photographs of the M.7 in its various guises, most archive but some of these being colour images of restored or historic components still around today. Marty Digmayer's eight pages of scale drawings, showing both M.7 and M.7ter variants in 1/48 and 1/72 scales, are again without doubt the best available of this aircraft type, and they are complimented by a few contemporary drawings showing cockpit layouts and instrumentation.

This reviewer keeps wondering when Albatros Productions are going to run out of aircraft to write interesting accounts about, and I am delighted to say this isn't likely to be any time soon. This Macchi M.7 Datafile is another fine addition to the long list of subjects in the series, and is recommended to all our members. For more details on this and other Albatros Productions Ltd. publications, visit their web site at www.windsockdatafilespecials.co.uk. **Peter Chapman** (Journal Editor)