

G-12

RICHARD PAVER WITNESSED THE FIRST FLIGHT
OF AN EXTRAORDINARY WARBIRO –
A TWO-SEAT MESSERSCHMITT BF 109G-12

summit



In April 2013, the Heringsdorf, Germany-based Hangar 10 team was preparing its Hispano Buchón D-FMVS (formerly N109W) for the year's airshow season. Sadly, during that month, the aircraft suffered a nose-over on soft ground during taxi trials.

When owner Volker Schulke telephoned Elmar Meier of restoration specialists Meier Motors to discuss the repair work needed, Elmar put forward an interesting

proposal. His idea was to use the damaged Buchón as the basis for a project to complete an airworthy Messerschmitt Bf 109G-12.

From early 1944 a number of single-seat 'G variants of the successful Bf 109 fighter were converted into two-seat trainers. Equipped with a full set of dual controls installed in the second, instructor's cockpit, these variants were known as G-12s.

At the time of the Buchón's taxiing

accident there were no G-12s in existence. After discussing the viability of such a major restoration, Volker gave Meier Motors the go-ahead to begin the project. The damaged Hispano was moved by road to Bremgarten in southern Germany, and work began in May 2013.

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This undoubtedly complicated and very ambitious initiative was



completed in August 2016. I was fortunate enough to be invited to Bremgarten by the owner to witness the aircraft's first flight. The Meier Motors team had completed the Bf 109 to a superb standard. It now looks completely authentic, and is powered by a very rare Daimler-Benz DB605 engine. This unit was acquired from Sweden and overhauled prior to installation by engine expert Mike Nixon in the US. Before undertaking the first flight,

the Meier team had completed all the necessary engine runs and taxi trials. British pilot Charlie Brown had been asked to take the fighter up for its debut flight. Charlie is among the world's most experienced Messerschmitt pilots, having flown several examples in recent years. He was also one of the regular display pilots of UK-based Bf 109G *Black 6* during the 1990s.

I travelled out to Germany with Charlie and during our journey he

described his proposed test flight programme to me. Due to the installation of the second cockpit, the fuel capacity of the aircraft in the main fuselage tank had been significantly reduced, giving only 165 litres of useable fuel. Charlie planned to limit each test flight to no more than 15 minutes in the air to allow a comfortable safety margin for landing.

Meier Motors is currently assessing other options to increase the

Top
Charlie running up the Daimler-Benz engine at Bremgarten.
ALL RICHARD PAVER

Above
Taxiing at Bremgarten in the hands of Charlie Brown.





“After Charlie had completed some ground tethered power runs and taxi trials he successfully lifted the G-12 into the air on Thursday, August 4”



Top
Charlie Brown airborne in Messerschmitt Bf 109G-12 D-FMGZ.

Above left
The uncluttered instrument panel in the aircraft's second cockpit.

Above
British pilot Charlie Brown with Bf 109G-12 D-FMGZ on August 4.

Left
Engine trials prior to the first flight.

Far left
Originally a Buchón, the aircraft has been expertly transformed by the team at Meier Motors.

aircraft's endurance. These include adding either a secondary fuselage tank or a belly tank, but prior to any further changes it was decided to go ahead with the initial short test flights.

He completed a number of wide circuits and some basic handling trials. A second flight was conducted the following day.

After completion of the test flight programme, the Bf 109G-12 will be put on display at the Air Fighter Academy at Heringsdorf airfield, near Usedom in Germany, from where it will be regularly flown. The aircraft has joined the German civil register as D-FMGZ and in another nod to authenticity, has been allocated an original G-12 serial number, 15208.

Hopefully it will not be long before this remarkable machine is a regular on the European airshow 'circuit'.
www.meiermotors.com

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