

Fokker D-8 78" Wing Span Plan.

(Other 57" Plan included)



The **Fokker E.V** was a [German parasol](#)-monoplane [fighter aircraft](#) designed by Reinhold Platz and built by [Fokker-Flugzeugwerke](#). It entered service with the [Luftstreitkräfte](#) in the last months of [World War I](#). After several fatal accidents due to wing failures, the aircraft was modified and redesignated **Fokker D.VIII**. Dubbed the *Flying Razor* by Allied pilots, the D.VIII had the distinction of scoring the last aerial victory of the war.

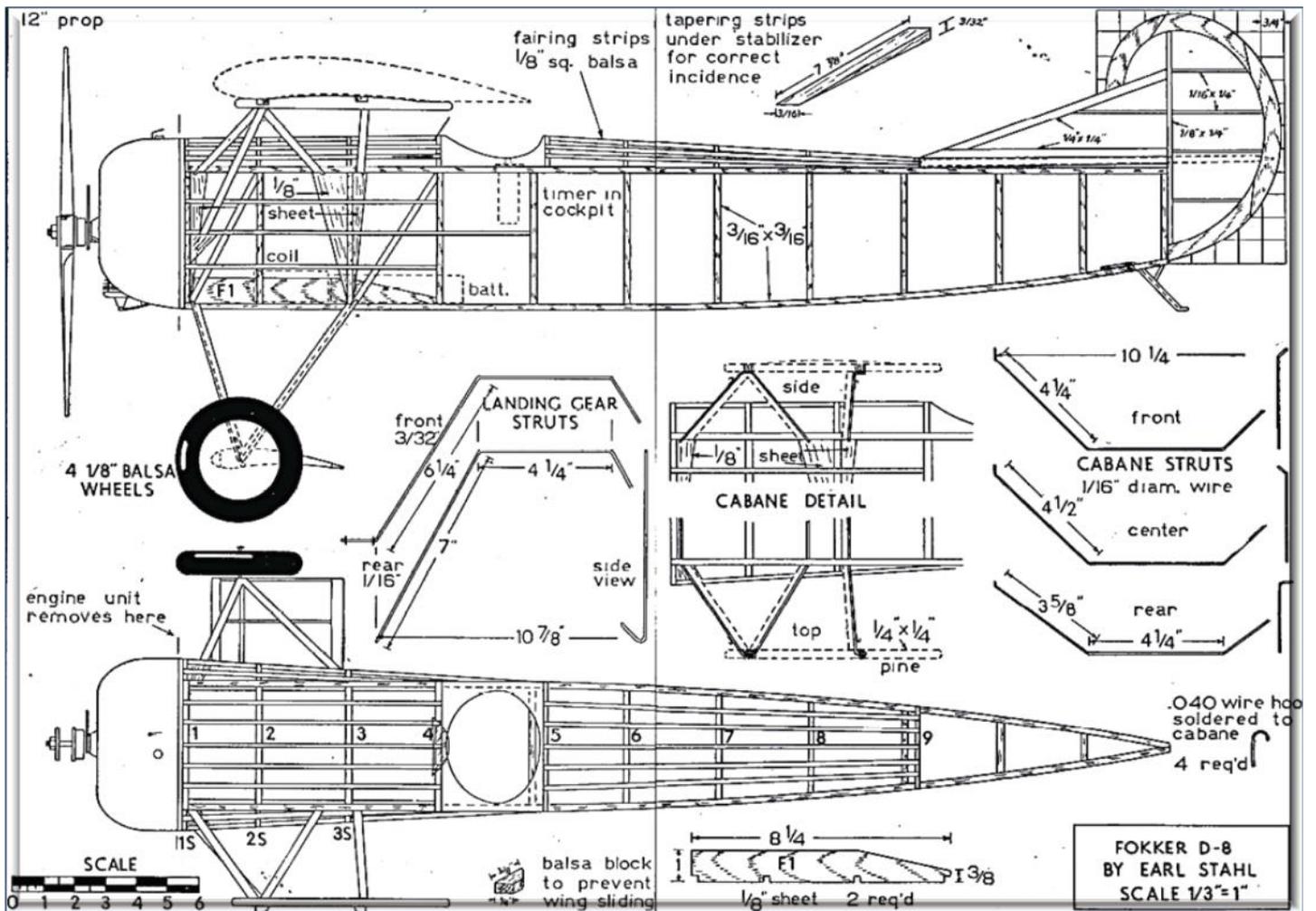
Design and development

In early 1918, Fokker produced several rotary-powered monoplane prototypes. Of these, Fokker submitted the **V.26** and **V.28**, small parasol-winged monoplanes with his usual steel-tube fuselages, for the second fighter trials at [Adlershof](#) in May/June 1918. The V.28 was tested with both the 108 kW (145 hp) [Oberursel UR.III](#) and 119 kW (160 hp) Goebel Goe.III, though neither of these engines were ready for operational service. The V.26 utilized the standard [Oberursel](#) UR.II engine, producing only 82 kW (110 hp). While this engine was obsolete, the V.26's low drag and light weight meant that it was nevertheless quite fast. The Fokker designs were only barely beaten by the [Siemens-Schuckert D.III](#) with the complex bi-rotary [Siemens-Halske Sh.III](#) engine.

In the end, the V.26 was ordered into production as the **Fokker E.V**. Four hundred were ordered immediately with either the UR.III or Goe.III. Because neither engine was available in any quantity, all production examples mounted the UR.II.

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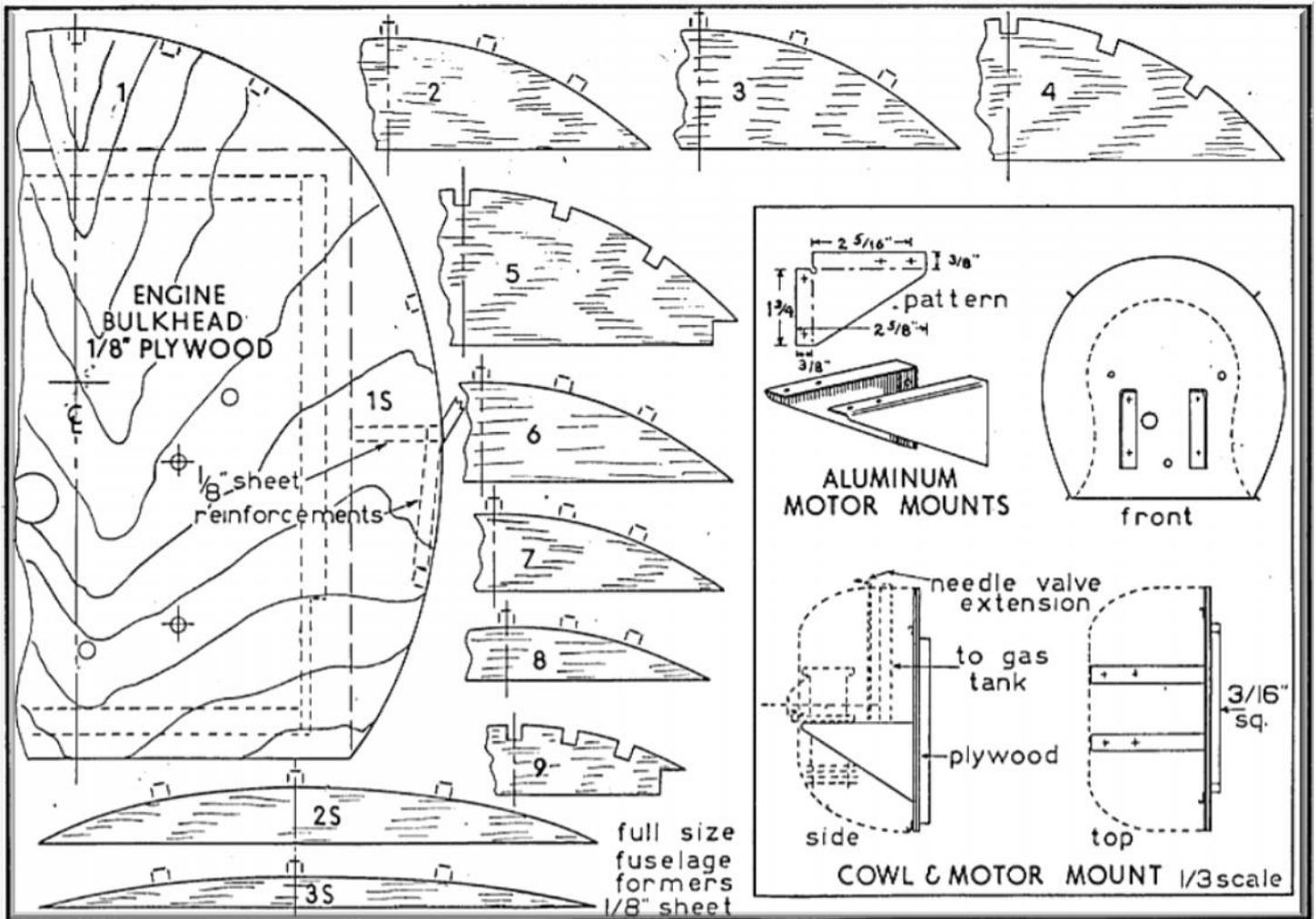
Operational history

The first production E.V aircraft were shipped to *Jasta 6* in late July. The new monoplane was also delivered to *Jasta 1*, *Jasta 19*, *Jasta 24* and *Jasta 36*. *Leutnant* Emil Rolff scored the first kill in an E.V on August 17, 1918, but two days later he was killed when his aircraft's wing collapsed in flight. After another E.V of *Jasta 19* crashed, the *Idflieg* grounded all E.V aircraft. Pending the investigation of these wing failures, production ceased at the Fokker Flugzeugwerke. According to Fokker, the wing failures were caused by the army technical bureau, which had forced him to modify the original design by over-strengthening the rear main spar. This faulty design allegedly caused the wing to twist and fail. Fokker claimed that this defect was resolved by reverting to his original design.

According to most other accounts, the source of the wing failures lay not in the design, but in shoddy and rushed construction. Fokker had subcontracted construction of the E.V wings to the Gebrüder Perzina Pianoforte Fabrik factory. Due to poor quality control, inferior timber had been used and the spar "caps", forming the upper and lower members of each spar assembly, had been placed too far apart during the fabrication. Because the resulting spars were vertically too large to pass through the ribs, excess material was simply planed away from the exposed upper and lower surfaces of the cap pieces, leaving the assembled spars dangerously weak. Other problems included water damage to glued parts, and pins that splintered the spars, rather than securing them.^[1]

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Tests showed that, when properly constructed, the original E.V wing had a considerable margin of safety. Satisfied that the basic design was safe, the [Idflieg](#) authorized continued production, after personnel changes and improved quality control measures were introduced at the Perzina factory.

Deliveries resumed in October. At the suggestion of the *Kogenluft* (*Kommandierenden General der Luftstreitkräfte*), the *Idflieg* redesignated the modified aircraft **D.VIII**. Henceforth, the "E." and "Dr." designations were abolished and all fighters received the "D." appellation. The first new examples of the D.VIII started arriving at front-line units late that month and started operations on the 24 October with [Jasta 11](#).

During its short time in service, it had little time to prove its worth. It was agile, easy to fly and proved to be an excellent fighter. Some considered it a worthy rival to the bigger and more powerful D.VII.

Jasta 5 was issued a D.VIII. The famed ace [Erich Lowenhardt](#) used the aircraft for a short time and scored a few victories in it, but he continued to favour the [Fokker D.VII](#).

A total of 381 aircraft were produced, but only some 85 aircraft reached front-line service before the Armistice. Some reached Holland, Italy, Japan, the United States, and England as trophies, but most were scrapped in accordance with the terms of the Armistice.

It was the last Fokker design to fly in the war and the last to score a victory. Allied pilots nicknamed the plane 'The Flying Razor', because of its sleek appearance and single wing.

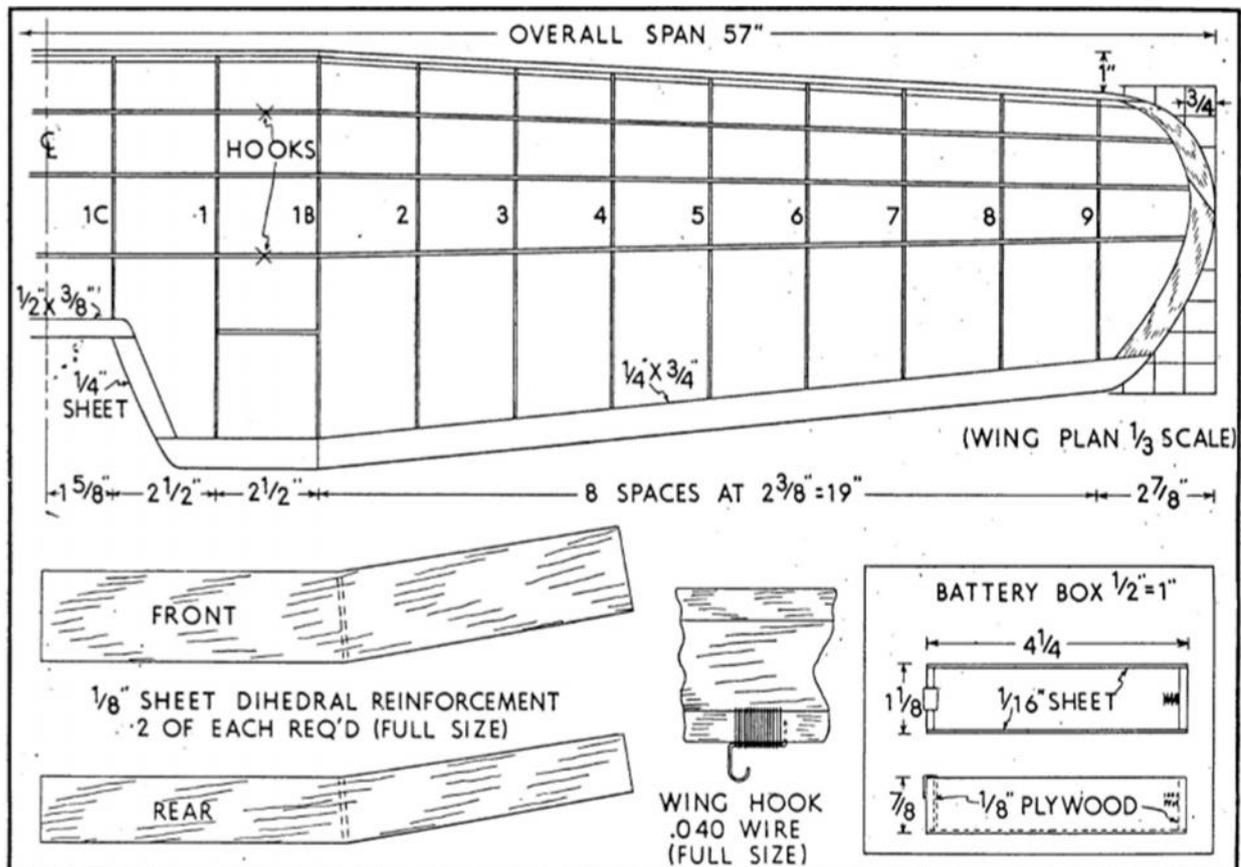
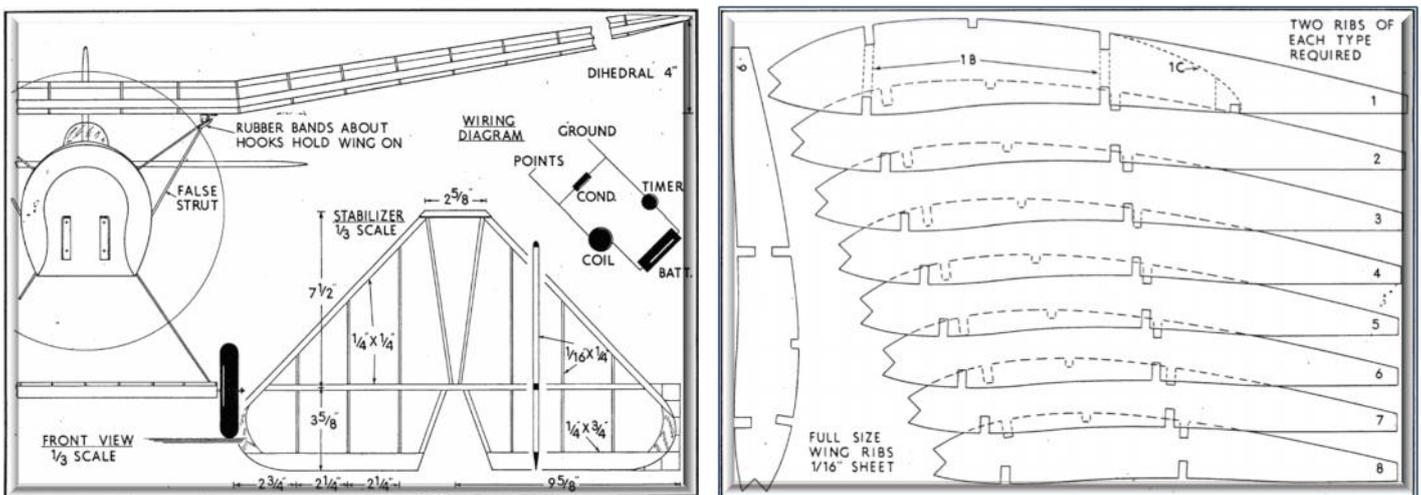
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Postwar

The [Polish Air Force](#) captured 17 aircraft, but only seven (six E.V and one D.VIII) were in airworthy condition. All were used against Soviet forces in the [Polish-Soviet War](#) of 1919-1920. Lieutenant Stefan Stec earned the first kill for the Polish Air Force, by shooting down a [Ukrainian Nieuport](#) fighter on 29 April 1919. In 1921, the remaining Fokkers were withdrawn from front-line units and transferred to the *Szkoła Obsługi Lotniczej* (Air Personnel School) at [Poznań-Lawica](#) airfield.

In late 2011, TVAL of New Zealand, built a faithful reproduction D.VIII, which first flew on 20th October of that year.



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