

The Argentine Macchi MB.308Gs

written by Mario Overall | March 15, 2021



The MB.308 was a high-wing cantilever light plane designed by Ermanno Bazzochi for Aeronáutica Macchi and first appeared in 1946, achieving full production the following year. It accommodated pilot and co-pilot side by side, and had fixed tricycle landing gear, making it a superb mount for primary training and sport flying.

The MB.308 achieved considerable success at post-war sporting meetings and contests, with both private owners and aero-clubs. As expected, the *Aeronautica Militare* (Italian Air Force) also pushed it into service and for more than fifteen years it was the most widely used Italian-built light plane. The variants of the MB.308 included the two-seaters, powered by Continental C.85 and C.90 engines, and the funny looking MB.308 *Idro* equipped with floats. Later on, Macchi began production of a three-seater version, from which the Argentine MB.308G would evolve.

We make furniture... And airplanes too!!!

Established in 1891, the Argentine Company *Germán Bianco, S.A.* was famous for its magnificent carpentry products, whether it was furniture or complicated wooden structures. In 1944, as a result of its experience and knowledge, the company applied for a license to produce primary training sail-planes.

After receiving the license from the government, the company built a hangar and a workshop at the village of San Andrés, near Argentina's capital, Buenos Aires, and began the construction of several *Escuela 38*, *Grunau 9a* and *Grunau Baby* sail-planes which were very well accepted by the aeroclub community of the region.

At this point, the sail-plane factory was transitioned into a division of Germán Bianco, S.A. and christened *Fábrica Argentina de Aerodinos, S.A.* (Argentine Factory of Aerodynos.) For a while, at least, the division enjoyed the sweet taste of success as sales went ballistic.

By the mid fifties, the *Fábrica* began a series of seemingly endless negotiations with Aeronáutica Macchi to acquire the right to produce one hundred MB.308s in Argentina. It is important to note that the MB.308, being a product of the post-war era, was made of non-strategic materials (i.e. wood) and thus very attractive to the Argentine company, who saw in the plane an excellent business opportunity at a relatively low cost. When Macchi finally accepted, three disassembled MB.308s, together with 85 *detail part* kits were shipped to Argentina so the *Fabrica's* engineers could come to terms with the design and establish their own building patterns. With that stage complete, production began in late 1958.



LV-GHP (C/N 511) was still current by 2005. (Photo: Gabriel Pavlovic via Francisco Halbritter.)

The first Argentine-produced MB.308 rolled out in January 1959, at the *Fábrica's* hangar at the *Don Torcuato* airfield (Buenos Aires), where a final assembly plant had been built. As expected, the private pilots and aeroclubs received the MB.308s very well, since, according to Mr. Francisco Halbritter's article "*El Macchi MB.308 en Argentina*" it was a real bargain.

It's interesting to note that all Argentine production was three-seaters, powered by Continental C.90

engines, making them MB.308G variants. The *Fábrica* marketed them as excellent mounts for business flying, crop-dusting, sport-flying and even medical evacuation!!!

Truncated Dreams and Hybrid Hopes

As mentioned earlier, the *Fábrica's* goal was to produce one hundred MB.308s. However, due to complications within the Argentine economy, problems in the procurement of suitable wood and the ruthless competition posed by foreign aircraft firms (Cessna among them), only 46 examples were completed, with the last being delivered in 1967. A couple of years later, the German Bianco company was dissolved and its assets sold, leaving only good memories behind.

By 2005, only four MB.308Gs were still flying in Argentina, with a handful more in *restorable* condition, but abandoned nevertheless. Surprisingly, during the course of this research work, Mr. Halbritter told us that, in the town of *González Chávez* (South of Buenos Aires), work was in progress to mate an MB.308G fuselage with the wings of a Fairchild M.62. This hybrid, aside from being a low wing cantilever plane, would be powered by a Subaru engine or even a Kinner K5.

MB.308G Technical Stuff

Wingspan: 10mts.

Long: 6.52mts.

Wing Surface: 15.72 square mts.

Height: 2.17mts.

Load Coefficient: 11.4 G

Max. Speed: 203km/h

Cruise Speed: 170km/h

Landing Speed: 65km/h

Empty Weight: 430Kg

Max. Load: 300Kg

Max. Ceiling: 4000mts.

Range: 720Kms.

Fuel Time: 4:30 Hrs.

Theoretically, the MB.308G needed only 60 meters for taking off and 55 for landing, making it a truly STOL airplane.

Macchi-Built MB.308Gs on the Argentine Civil Register

C/N	Registration	Registration Date	Comments
5810	LV-RZF	Feb. 26, 1949	Last registered to Roberto Vera. Still current by 2005.
5818	LV-RZG	Feb. 26, 1949	Last registered to Leonidas Matteri. Rebuilt as LV-X347. Still current in March 2014.
5916	LV-GDZ	Feb. 26, 1949	Last registered to Carlos Galina

Germán Bianco-Built MB.308Gs on the Argentine Civil Register

C/N	Registration	Registration Date	Comments
501	LV-GGO	Mar. 25, 1959	Last registered to Americo Caseb
502	LV-GGP	Mar. 25, 1959	Last registered to Arnaldo Bianco
504	LV-GGX	Apr. 20, 1959	Last registered to Aeroclub La Consulta
505	LV-GHG	May 20, 1959	Registered to Renato Coda
506	LV-GHH	May 20, 1959	Registered to O. Murtagh y J. Pérez
507	LV-GHI	May 20, 1959	Registered to Aeroclub Centenario
508	LV-GHM	Jun. 20, 1959	Registered to Germán Bianco S.A.
509	LV-GHN	Jun. 20, 1959	Registered to La Helada, S.A.
510	LV-GHO	Jul. 20, 1959	Last registered to María C. Andreu
511	LV-GHP	Jul. 20, 1959	Last registered to Gorki Cocari. Still current in 2005.
512	LV-GHS	Oct. 20, 1959	Last registered to Johan Mantle
513	LV-GHT	Aug. 15, 1959	Registered to Aeroclub Bella Vista
514	LV-GHU	Oct. 20, 1959	Registered to Carlos Anders
515	LV-GIM	Oct. 20, 1959	Registered to Iván Costa y G. Cancio
516	LV-GHV	Oct. 20, 1959	Registered to Germán Bianco, S.A.

C/N	Registration	Registration Date	Comments
517	LV-GIN	Jun. 1962	Last registered to Héctor Dinucci
518	LV-GIO	Dec. 20, 1959	Last registered to Carlos A. Corti
520	LV-GIP	Feb 20, 1960	Last registered to Aeroclub Chacabuco
521	LV-GJN	Sep. 1960	Last registered to Francisco Wachs
522	LV-GJO	Nov. 1962	Last registered to Carlos Pozzi
523	LV-GJP		Last registered to Gorleri Lottero
524	LV-GJR		Registered to Germán Bianco, S.A.
525	LV-GLR	Apr. 20, 1961	Last registered to Aeroclub Villa Gesell. Still current by 2005
526	LV-GLS	Aug. 1961	Last registered to Aeroclub Patagonés
527	LV-GLT	Nov. 1962	Registered to Aeroclub Esperanza
528	LV-GLU		Last registered to Antonio Barel
529	LV-HER	Jan. 17, 1962	Last registered to Aeroclub Cruz Alta
530	LV-HES	Jan. 20, 1962	Registered to Aeroclub Vedia
531	LV-HET	Jul. 1962	Registered to Aeroclub Cosquin. W/O Oct. 10, 1963
532	LV-HEU	Jul. 1962	Last registered to Gustavo Camin
533	LV-HML	Jul. 1962	Registered to Germán Bianco, S.A.
534	LV-HMM	Oct. 1963	Last registered to Aeroclub Jachal
535	LV-HMN	Nov. 1962	Registered to Enrique Godoy. Still current by 2005.
536	LV-HMO	Dec. 1962	Registered to Aeroclub Villa María
537	LV-HSE	Feb. 1964	Last registered to Milton Maldana
538	LV-HSF	Feb. 1964	Registered to Centro Universitario de Aviación

C/N	Registration	Registration Date	Comments
539	LV-HSG	Feb. 1964	Last registered to Carlos Schmidt
540	LV-HSH	Aug. 31, 1964	Last registered to Aeroclub Villa Gral. Belgrano
541	LV-IFC	May 31, 1965	Last registered to Aeroclub Mendoza
542	LV-IFD	May 31, 1965	Registered to Aeroclub Bahía Blanca
543	LV-IWM	May 17, 1965	Last registered to Aeroclub San Jorge
544	LV-IYA	Apr. 14, 1967	Last registered to Italo Leopel
545	LV-IMX	Nov. 18, 1966	Registered to Aeroclub Villaguay
546	LV-IYG	Jun. 30, 1967	Last registered to Aeroclub Monte Carlo

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