

SWEEPING THE SKIES

Spitfire Mk II, Spitfire Mk Vb and Messerschmitt Bf 109F Technical Data

	Spitfire Mk II	Spitfire Mk Vb	Messerschmitt Bf 109F
Power Plant	1,175hp Merlin	1,470hp Merlin	1,300 hp Daimler Benz 601N
Dimensions			
Span	36 feet 10 inches	36 feet 10 inches	32 feet 6 inches
Length	29 feet 11 inches	29 feet 11 inches	29 feet
Height	11 feet 5 inches	11 feet 5 inches	11 feet 6 inches
Weights			
Empty	4,900 lbs	5,065 lbs	5,269 lbs
Loaded	5,900 lbs	6,622 lbs	6,393 lbs
Max	6,317 lbs	6,700 lbs	6,872 lbs
Performance			
Max Speed	357 mph	371 mph	388 mph
Cruising Speed	195 mph	226 mph	348 mph
Rate of Climb	2,995 ft/min	3,250 ft/min	4,290 ft/min
Service Ceiling	33,900 ft	37,000 ft	37,700 ft
Normal Range	-	470 miles	-
Max Range	500 miles	1,170 miles	410 miles
Armament	IIA – 8 x 0.303-inch MG IIB – 2 x 20mm cannon & 4 x 0.303-inch MG	2 x 20mm cannon & 4 x 0.303-inch MG	1 x 20mm cannon & 2 x 7.9mm MG



Spitfire Mk Vb AB852 (UD-W) as flown by "Paddy" Finucane. Note the shamrock forward of the cockpit.

By now, No. 452 Squadron's pilots were beginning to perform like experienced fighter pilots. The prangs of the early days had virtually ceased, and the squadron's tally began to steadily rise. So too did its losses. It was during *Circus* 68 against Gosnay power station as the target that on 9 August five Bf 109s were shot down, for three own losses. Finucane as usual was in the thick of it, as were the Australians. Flying at 20,000 feet over the Mardyck-Bethune area, Red and Yellow Sections encountered about thirty Bf 109s of JG 26 led by their