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Point No. 4: In the 109, the top of the cockpit cover is flat, but in the P-51 it is well rounded.

Point No. 5: The positions of the tailplanes. In the 109 it is mounted part-way up the fin, and therefore shows high as it approaches. In the P-51 it is quite a bit lower.

Point No. 6: The spinner of the Messerschmitt is so large that it is much more a part of the total bullet shape of the plane than is the case with the P-51.

Point No. 7: The supercharger air intake on the Me-109 sticks out on the port side somewhat more than is shown in the ordinary recognition silhouette, and, of course, there is nothing like it on the P-51.

FIGHTER ENCOUNTER REPORTS

P-47 Pilots Describe Engagements With The Enemy During 7 January Missions

SEVERAL ENCOUNTER reports from Eighth Air Force fighter pilots give interesting details on unusual incidents which occurred during recent missions.

A pilot from a flight of P-47s which started to come in on an enemy airfield which they mistook for a friendly field during the mission of 7 January (SUMMARY No. 10, page 16) describes the incident as follows:

"We left the bombers on course . . . and commenced to come home on a heading of 300 degrees. We were losing altitude all the way out. About 1210 hours we believed ourselves to be over England and let down through the overcast in order to look for a field at which to land. Thinking we were in England, we turned and flew east for several minutes. While flying at an altitude of 700 feet, we observed what appeared to be a landing field. . . . Leader began a circle of the field with the rest of the flight following in a loose formation.

"I then observed four aircraft, which I assumed to be Spitfires, off to my left. I looked back over my left shoulder, and saw numerous gun flashes coming from a wooded section on the edge of the field. On looking forward, I saw an aircraft coming head-on at me, firing. I pulled back hard on the stick and the aircraft passed under me. At the same time an aircraft passed just off to my left in a vertical bank, and I saw the German markings on its wings, also recognizing it as an Me-109. I called 'Messerschmitts' over the radio three times.

"We had been flying with very low RPM and manifold pressure when attacked. I ran my RPM

IF A PILOT or gunner can get a view other than the true head-on, the differences between the two planes are much more marked. The outstanding length of the P-51's nose, the square tips of the wing and tailplane, and the short distance between the wing root and the leading edge of the tailplane—not to mention the square-cut top of the fin and rudder—are all outstanding in themselves, and all shout "Mustang."

All in all, a parallel can be drawn between this problem and that of distinguishing in a split second between a black-haired, yellow-skinned Chinese and a black-haired, yellow-skinned white. The broad description of each is the same, but the skullbones are different enough to provide the right answer.

full forward and ran my throttle through the gate to get water injection, at the same time pulling up in a steep climb. At this same time I was being attacked by an Me-109 from about ten o'clock. I broke hard into him and as he passed under me. I rolled out in a steep climb trying to make the overcast.

"I immediately noticed another Me-109 coming in on me from about 2 o'clock, so again I broke hard into the attacking aircraft and he passed under me. At this time I had almost reached the base of the overcast, and I rolled out of my turn and dropped my nose slightly to enter the overcast. . . .

"I glanced in my rear-view mirror and saw an aircraft on my tail. Not recognizing it, but assuming it to be an enemy, I pulled back on the stick and entered the overcast in almost a vertical position. I then concentrated on getting the plane's nose down, keeping my needle centered. Very soon I broke out of the overcast in a spin and recovered (pulling out) and nearly hitting the ground. Realizing my turn and bank indicator was out, I uncaged my artificial horizon as I again climbed for the overcast. . . ." He made it, and returned home without further incident.

ON THE same mission RAF Spitfires were detailed to take over withdrawal escort from the P-47s over northern France. But German FW-190s also made the rendezvous, with the following results reported by a P-47 pilot from an engagement near Arras, France:

"Leading Green Section in Shirtblue Squadron, I started down with the Group leader, who was

making White Section. At this moment my o'clock, Shirtblue Group cut inside my turn 7 o'clock or in that the bounce our FW-190s had slipped down on to formation, without

"We had started immediately, for craft were certainly not a started down but to 15 to 18,000 gone on the bomb at the time I lost in my pretty violent.

"Green 3 away at 18,000 was rather pe he was going squadron. F 190 attacking behind the hurdled the The latter in the sun.

"He slow steep wing began firing fast and m I thought I saw str deflection Spitfires out of t before I very un engine, followe pilot began

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making White Section accompanied by Red Section. At this moment my No. 4 reported, saying, '7 o'clock, Shirtblue Green 4.' Looking at him I saw him cut inside my turn, and since I saw nothing at 7 o'clock or in that area I felt he was referring to the bounce our squadron was going on. The FW-190s had slipped in under the Spit IXs and slashed down on the rear elements of the bomber formation, without the Spits seeing them.

"We had started toward the diving planes immediately, for though we were not sure the aircraft were enemies, the maneuver was most certainly not a friendly one. Then the Spits started down but pulled back up after getting down to 15 to 18,000 feet. I saw that Green 2 had gone on the bounce with Green 4 . . . though at the time I thought he and Green 4 had been lost in my break to go down, since it was pretty violent.

"Green 3 and myself continued down, but broke away at 18,000 feet when a Spit bounced us. He was rather persistent and by the time I was sure he was going to leave us alone, I had lost the squadron. Pulling up to 20,000 feet, I sighted a 190 attacking a straggling Fort, and a Spitfire behind the 190. . . I broke port immediately, hurdled the Spit and pulled up behind the 190. The latter had broken away up and to the port in the sun.

"He slowed at the top of this zoom as he did a steep wing over, almost a loop or Immelman, so I began firing while still at 400 yards. I was closing fast and my first and second bursts were short ones. I thought I had hit him with the last burst, since I saw strikes, but I felt I didn't have sufficient deflection. So I closed on in and found three Spitfires queued up behind him. They had come out of the sun and were shooting down the 190 before I could do anything about it, which made me very unhappy. I saw strikes on the port side of the engine, the 190 went into a vertical dive, and I followed. However, his canopy sailed off, the pilot bailed out, his chute opened, and the 190 began to burn."

ANOTHER PILOT, leading Red section of the same

squadron on this date reports: "I led the section down covering Lt. Col.— [over Bethune area] when he went down on several FW-190s to the rear of, and below the bombers. These enemy aircraft were eager to engage in dog-fights which took us down to [2 to 3,000 feet]. Lt.Col.—had a dogfight with a 190 during which I followed him line astern to the best of my ability—a rough ride!

"Other 190s attempted to attack, but usually broke away down through the clouds when I turned into them, although I remember squirting at one of them. One, however, made a more determined attack, firing at Lt. Col.— even after I started firing at him. When I started getting strikes on him, he broke hard port, but although he pulled streamers from his wing-tips, I was able to pull my sight through him. He suddenly did two and a half flick rolls, and then split-essed vertically through some light scud cloud. I followed in a steep wingover, and had to pull out hard to miss some trees as the cloud was lower than I had realized. As I did so, I caught sight of an explosion on the deck. Since the 190 had gone through vertically, I feel sure he could not have pulled out even if he had not been damaged.

"[This] had taken only a few seconds, and I was able to join Lt. Col.— again. Before I could get close enough to prevent it, a 190 came in on Lt. Col.— and commenced firing at quite short range. I was able to pull in line astern on him at about 250 yards range, and was relieved to see strikes all over him, and see him peel away and crash in flames on the ground, which was quite close.

"Lt.-Col.—, although I knew he had been hit, was now attacking another FW-190 at very close range, and with very good results, but another 190 was coming in at about 8 o'clock above. This was unfortunate, as I was now completely out of ammunition. However, I turned into him, and he broke away to the deck.

"My wingman . . . deserves the highest credit in that he stuck with me throughout in spite of the violence of the original bounce and the subsequent maneuvers."

P-47s in the Pacific

HOW THE P-47 is shaping up in the Southwest Pacific is told in a report from Headquarters, Allied Air Forces, Southwest Pacific Area, which reveals that since 16 August, when the first Thunderbolt mission was flown there, to 1 January, a total of 350 of the planes have been engaged in combat.

There have been 37 separate engagements involving Thunderbolts, with only two missing,

and it is not yet known whether these were lost to enemy action. Their claims, on the other hand, are 162 enemy aircraft (50 bombers and 112 fighters) destroyed; 46 (11 bombers, 35 fighters) probably destroyed; and 2 bombers and a fighter damaged.

Thunderbolts are used on four-plane fighter sweeps to Wewak, New Guinea; in patrolling beach-heads, and on other missions.

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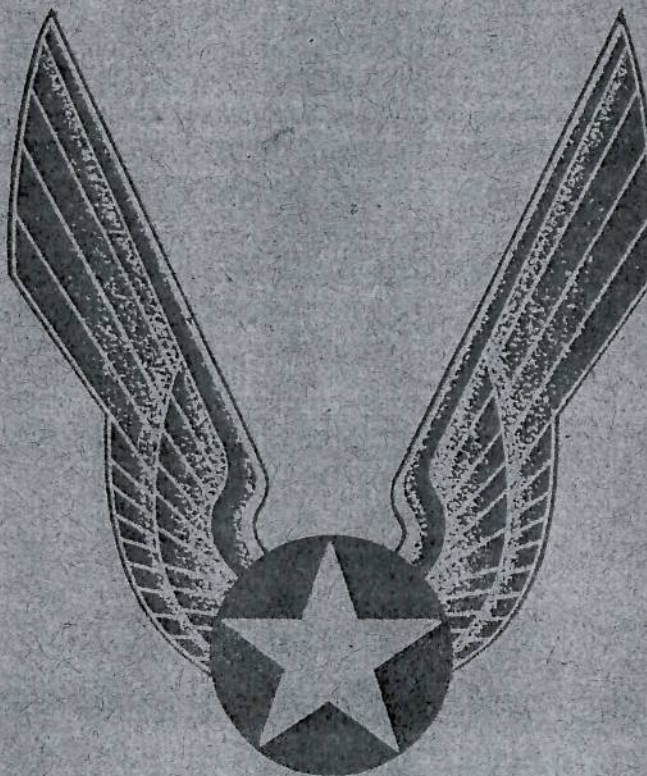
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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY
FOR WEEK ENDING 23 JANUARY 1944

NO. 12

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