

## Spitfires— Australian, New Zealand and Israeli

From the books 'Spitfire the ANZACs' and 'Spitfire - Star of Israel'



Flying Officer J Boulton's Spitfire Mk IXc coded 'FUN' June 1944,



Flight Lieutenant Alan Peart's Spitfire Mk VIII, at Kanglatombe, India, March 1944.



D-130 "Israel 1" at Ma'arbarot air strip, August 1948

### Flight Lieutenant Alan Peart and Flying Officer Larry Cronin

Peart and Cronin were with 81 Squadron when the Squadron flew its aircraft from Cairo to India in January 1944.

The desperately needed Spitfires were re-camouflaged in *Dark Green* and chocolate brown (Peart recalls this brown as being quite different from the *Dark Earth* colour used in Europe) upper surfaces with light blue lower surfaces.

In March it was decided by the Allied commanders that each day six aircraft from 81 Squadron would fly 200 miles into the Imphal valley to the temporary landing strip code named Broadway.

The Squadron's final day there was 17 March 1944 Six Spitfires flew in at dawn led by Squadron Leader W M 'Babe' Whitmore. A radar contact was made, and Whitmore had to decide how many of his small force to scramble. He delayed as long as he dared and decided that just himself and Peart would intercept, leaving the others in reserve. The two were just at the point of takeoff when four Ki43 'Oscars' appeared overhead and made a strafing run at the Spitfires.



Flying Officer Larry Cronin, centre, with his ground crew in front of his Spitfire Mk VIII in India. This aircraft was marked identically to FL-D, except for the code 'L', serial FJ294 and victory markings on the Squadron emblem. (A Peart)

The pair clawed for height as another force of about 24 Ki43s arrived over the horizon. Whitmore shot down one Ki43 before being shot down and killed. Peart flew and fought just to survive for the next 40 minutes claiming one Ki43 destroyed.

### Flight Lieutenant Warren Schrader

In October 1943 Warren Schrader was a pilot with 1435 Squadron at Brindisi in Italy. On 17 December 1943 he achieved his first "kills" shooting down two Me 109s.

'Over the Adriatic just off the coast of Yugoslavia, two Me 109s came in below us. I fired at the first one just blew up, but I had to pursue the other for some time. He was taking evasive action and for some reason eventually baled out, I don't know if the pilot was wounded,



but his parachute opened immediately, caught on the tailplane and did not open properly. It just streamed above him not decelerating him much as he fell straight down and hit the ground.'



## Flying Officer J Boulton

On 20 January 1944, 453 Squadron moving to Detling in Kent and received Spitfire Mk IXc aircraft. In June 1944, the unit was heavily involved in dive bombing missions against V1 sites with each Spitfire typically carrying one 500 lb bomb rather than a drop tank. Also, many escort missions were flown for American B-26 'Marauders' attacking the same targets for which 90 gallon cylindrical drop tanks were used to extend the Spitfires limited range.

On 6 June the long awaited invasion of Northern Europe began and an intensive period of operations for the squadrons of the 2nd Tactical Air Force, including 453 Squadron ensued. The Squadron formed 125 Wing together with 132 and 602 Squadrons RAF. Flown by Flying



Spitfire Mk IXc 'FU-N'. Note the full invasion stripes (RAAF Official)

Officer Boulton and others 'FU-N' took part in numerous escort, armed reconnaissance and ground attack sorties during the two months following the invasion.

## D-130 'Israel 1' & 'RG-W'

D-130 was painted in patchy dark green primer at this very early stage of its life with no national insignia. The technicians chalked it with the name "Israel 1", its serial number, their names and various inscriptions in English and Hebrew.

Note the chalked on Donald Duck cartoon head, a good indication of the influence of former USAAF/USN pilots at this formative stage of the IAF.

D-130 had an unpainted radio mast and cannon bay panel, no yellow prop tips and heavily scuffed wing root. By the time it was delivered to 101 Squadron other new parts had been added and its colour scheme included hand painted national insignia

Spitfire Mk IX 'RG-W' served with 208 Squadron RAF in 1945 and is thought to have formed the basis of D-130. It was recovered from the aircraft dump near Haifa, in July

These two decal options are from the Ventura book 'Spitfire - Star of Israel' ISBN 0-9583594-0-7



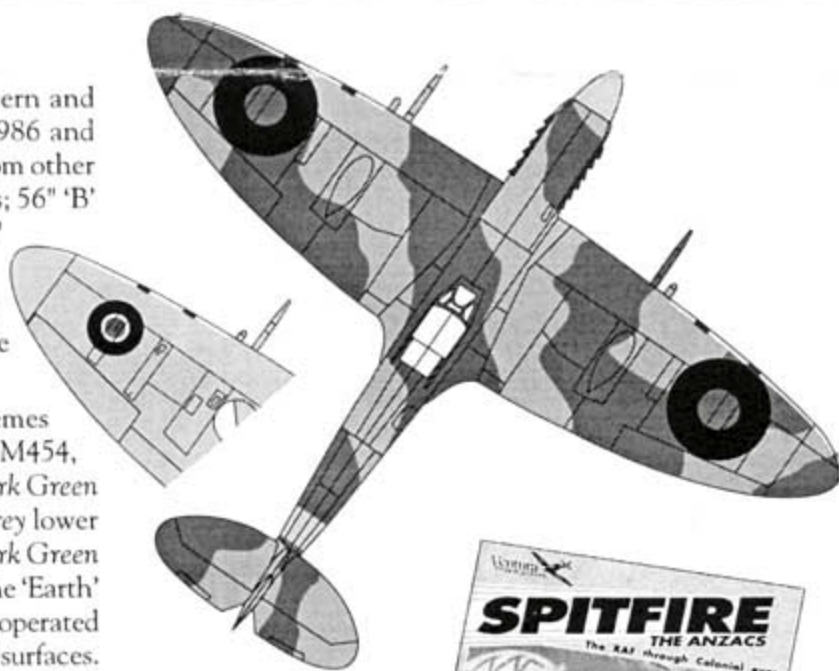
1948. Its colour scheme was standard Ocean Grey & Dark Green upper surfaces with Medium Sea Grey under surfaces, sky rear fuselage band, white codes and black spinner.

## Camouflage and Markings

These two illustrations show the camouflage pattern and wing roundels placement for HM454, FJ799, AB986 and PV120. These must be provided by the modeller from other sources and were in the RAF standard six positions; 56" 'B' type, upper wings; 32" 'C' type, under wings; 36" 'C1' type, fuselage and 24" by 24" fin flashes.

For FJ277 and FJ294 the small SEAC roundels supplied should be applied centred over the same locations as the larger European roundels.

The camouflage pattern is very similar on all schemes on this sheet, although the colours vary as follows: HM454, FJ799, AB986 and PV120 were camouflaged in Dark Green and Ocean Grey upper surfaces with Medium Sea Grey lower surfaces. FJ277 and FJ294 were camouflaged in Dark Green and chocolate brown (this brown was darker than the 'Earth' colour used in Europe and on later Spitfire Mk VIIIs operated in the Far East) upper surfaces with light blue lower surfaces.



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by Ventura Publications for further reading and information about these colour schemes. Ask your book seller to consult their Book Data compact disk catalogue for the name of your country's distributor.

