

Fighting with the Pony

by sick

In my time in the Mustang, I have made some observations about what kinds of tactics are suited for each kind of enemy you may face in the arena. Although you will often see the 'stang flown as a strict boom and zoom fighter (with the extensions to 6000 or more yards that gave rise to its 'Runstang' monicker), this is not always the most successful tactic.

The Pony excels in a few areas:

1. Sheer unbridled speed, for which it is the master at high altitudes (altitudes you may never fight at in Warbirds). The Frank and the Dora will keep up with you or catch you in level flight at low level, however.
2. Maneuvering at high speed. At 300+ kias, the Pony can actually out-turn almost anything, especially if you sneak down one notch of flaps. If you get below 250 kias, however, you can bet on being out-turned unless you're fighting a real truck like a Butcher Bird or a Jug. A note about flaps: never use more than one notch in combat. It won't actually turn you any faster, and will bleed a lot of energy.
3. Energy retention. It is quite possible to make a nose low flat turn in the Pony through 180 degrees at 300 kias and not lose a knot of airspeed.

With these advantages in mind, check out the tactics I've found effective against various opponents. In the tactics section I will refer to maneuvers covered in the ACM section, so you may want to either familiarize yourself with the terms or use the ACM section as an on-hand reference.

Remember that it's one thing to fight and win. It's another to fight and get home alive. The latter is your real goal, and your first job. Be patient and careful, paying strict attention to your opponents, and you can land a Pony almost every time. After a while, you may even score a triple doing it.