

# *Fighting Bombers*

## *by sick*

The Pony wasn't built to hunt bombers, it was built to protect them. But it can be a fairly effective interceptor if you are both careful and willing to glide home. The in-line Merlin that powers the 'Stang is not a particularly durable engine, and a few pings into your cowling and you'll be leaking oil like a sieve. But you can limit your damage to a leaky engine or escape unscathed (occasionally) if you're careful.

When making a pass on a bomber, its best to make forward quarter attacks. This limits the number of guns that will train on you at one time, and also limits their firing window. Unfortunately, it also limits your own firing window, and with the Pony's guns, you may have to make a whole lot of forward quarter passes to bring down a bomber. I usually resort to a slashing attack that begins with a split-s onto the bombers high six. Make sure you have constant stick pressure on your approach, whether you split-s high and maintain forward stick, or split-s low and pull back up a bit to make the attack. Constant pressure on the stick means just enough changing angle to fox Otto most of the way in if not all the way. At a distance of about 6 or 7, depending on how accurate you're feeling, open up. If you can concentrate fire on one wing, you will be far more effective in taking the buffs down. At a distance of 1 or 2, break hard obliquely to the bomber, either a pitchback or an oblique split-s. If you have the energy, prefer the pitchback, as it allows you to come over the top and make a second, almost identical, pass.

You're most likely to get pinged during your break away from the bomber rather than on your approach. If you pull maximum g's and roll a lot, you can get away, but really only on a nose low break; with a pitchback you'll run out of E before you're out of Otto's awesome range. For pure survivability, break low, but with the six fifties on the Pony, you'll need multiple passes, and climbing back to the attack will take a while.

Basically, the Pony's weak guns and vulnerable in-line, liquid cooled engine make her a second rate buff buster. But if you are willing to glide home or take the time to make a number of long extensions and passes, you can kill any one buff that has to die. More than one and you may want to call on your local JG to come up in the K4 or the A8, the true masters of the hunt.