

Fighting the P-47D

by sick

The Jug as an opponent is actually not a lot different from fighting an FW, particularly an FW190A-8. Compared to the A8, its a bit faster, dives much better, retains E a bit better, but climbs worse. If firepower differs between the two, its the difference between a giant and a titan; either is likely to crush you in one swipe without thinking too hard.

As an opponent, the hapless Jug doesn't have a lot of advantages over the Pony. You can treat it exactly as you would treat and FW, but with a special note of caution. If someone is driving a Jug, its for one of two reasons: a) they intend to single handedly flatten the nearest large city with their massive ordnance load, or b) they are just the kind of ornery bastard that enjoys flying this beast. If you've happened upon 'a', you will find it very easy to slide onto their six and blast away until the Jug spins down (note that this may take quite some time). If you've happened upon 'b'...

An ornery Jug driver will be a wise energy fighter, and isn't likely to let you start a fight he can't finish. If you start with the advantage, the Jug's first move will probably be to dive away from you. If you want to follow him, you will eventually catch him up when he levels out, but be careful not to be lured low and caught by the Jug's faithful friends. That's about it for the Thunderbolt and defensive flying; if you catch them that way, they're will either be yours or will disengage.

But if that Jug pilot has his way, the fight will start with him diving on you. At this point, don't underestimate either the Jug's energy retention, which is almost as good as yours, or his phenomenal roll rate, which compares with the likes of the FW, the Hog and the P-38L. Also, do not make the mistake of trying to dive away from your opponent to extend. The Jug pilot will put his bib on and tear into you like a Maine lobster. Instead, go vertical. Drop a notch of flaps and fight the angles fight with him. Compared to him, you're a Zeke. An entire glacial epoch could slip by unnoticed while a Jug reverses. But don't just yank and bank; this has to be a careful angles fight that never trades in your last 200 kias of airspeed. If you can spoil a few of his guns passes, you can take advantage of his poor climb to gain the initiative.

The Jug can absorb tremendous punishment, and can energy fight quite handily, especially at nose bleed heights. But the Pony was the Jug's successor in the air superiority role, and every reason the USAAF chose her over the Jug is a reason that help you bag your bandit. The most important advice is to remember the 56th Fighter Group, who flew Jugs the whole war and had the most air to air kills in the 8th Air Force. Don't underestimate your opponent and yank and bank like a Zeke pilot, because that Jug only needs half a second to split your brains like a coconut with those eight 'fifties.