

Boulton Paul Defiant Mk.I

The Defiant was designed in 1937 to meet a RAF requirement for a turret fighter with the primary mission of destroying enemy bombers. To achieve this the Defiant was equipped with a powered turret with 4 machine guns.

The turret was operated by a second crewman but, due to the weight of the turret, the Defiant had inferior performance to contemporary fighters.

The Defiant was initially successful when German pilots mistook them for conventional fighters and fell victim to the rear firing guns.

The Germans soon learnt to attack from below or from the front and casualties mounted.

During the Battle of Britain, Defiants would be escorted by Hurricanes or Spitfires to allow them to concentrate on destroying bombers. In practice, this was less than successful as the Defiants underbody radio aerial gave poor reception adversely affecting coordination between the groups.

By the end of August, 1940 more than half of the delivered Defiants had been shot down. This loss rate was considered unacceptable and the remaining aircraft were transferred to night fighting and other duties.

1 complete aircraft survived.

Data: *Engine:* Rolls Royce Merlin liquid cooled V-12 770kW. *Wingspan* 11.99m. *Length* 10.77m. *Maximum take off weight* 3,773 kg. *Maximum speed* 489 km/h. *Range* 748km. *Crew* 2. *Armament* four .303 Browning machine guns.

MPM1/72 kit. Completed in 2017 by Steve Pulbrook.



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