



Spitfire V vs C.202 Folgore: Malta 1942 (Duel)

By Donald Nijboer

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The inability of the Italians and Germans to invade Malta proved decisive for Allied victory in the Mediterranean during World War II, as the islands provided the Allies with a base from which to project air power. Early Italian efforts to pound the islands into submission were supplemented by major German forces from January 1942 and in a few weeks the situation for the defenders reached a critical stage; in response, in March 1942 the first Spitfires were delivered to Malta. That April the Macchi C.202 was introduced to combat over Malta, the fighter downing its first Spitfire on 2 June. Throughout the summer C.202s fought over Malta escorting tiny formations of Cant Z.1007s, SM.79s and Ju 88s. The fighting subsided in August and September, but grew in strength with the arrival of more C.202s. In October the Regia Aeronautica could muster three Gruppi with a total of 74 C.202s. For ten days the Italians pressed a relentless attack before attrition brought the offensive to a halt. Throughout the bombing campaign the British were able to supply Malta with ever increasing numbers of Spitfires. By the end of June air commanders felt secure enough to pass one of the Spitfire squadrons to Egypt. Here, the Spitfire V would again encounter the C.202 in the long drive to expel the Germans and Italians from North Africa, then Sicily and Italy in 1943. Fully illustrated with specially commissioned artwork, this is the engaging story of the clash between two of World War II's finest piston-engine fighters in the skies over the Mediterranean and North Africa.

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Spitfire V vs C.202 Folgore: Malta 1942 (Duel) By Donald Nijboer Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #789552 in Books
- Brand: Duel - Aircraft
- Published on: 2014-04-22
- Released on: 2014-04-22
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.27" h x .29" w x 6.59" l, .52 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 80 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

“...a book that is well written, has a gob of period photos, some excellent art work and is well worth reading. Pick it up, I know you'll be pleased.” ?*Scott Van Aken, www.modelingmadness.com*

About the Author

Donald Nijboer is a freelance writer who lives in Toronto, Canada. He teaches courses in radio broadcasting at Humber College of Technology and Advanced Learning. His four books, Cockpit: An Illustrated History of World War II Aircraft Interiors, Gunner: An Illustrated History of World War II Aircraft Turrets and Gun Positions, Cockpits of the Cold War and Graphic War - The Secret Aviation Drawings and Illustrations of World War Two have been published by the Boston Mills Press. He has also written articles for Flight Journal, Aviation History and Aeroplane Monthly. The author lives in Toronto, Canada.

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