

Profile provided by Warbird Alley, with permission of Buck Wyndham

PROFILE: Hawker Fury / Sea Fury

(Variants/Other Names: See *History* below)

HISTORY: As with many aircraft of the 1940s, the Hawker Sea Fury fighter-bomber design was the result of a British wartime design specification which called for certain performance levels to be met by the new aircraft. To meet Specification F.6/42, the Hawker design team began by modifying the Hawker Tempest into a smaller, lightweight version. By 1943, six prototypes had been ordered, five to be flown with three different engines, and one to be used as a test airframe.

The first flight of the new airplane (by now named the **Fury**) took place on 1 September 1944. Production contracts for the airplane had already been placed, with 200 land-based Furies to be delivered to the Royal Air Force, and another 200 carrier-based **Sea Furies** to be delivered to the Fleet Air Arm. (100 of the Sea Furies were to be built by Boulton Paul.) When the war ended, the RAF order was cancelled, but the design and development of the Sea Fury continued.

The first Sea Fury prototype, powered by a Bristol Centaurus XII, had first flown on 21 February 1945, but the first fully-navalized version with folding wings did not fly until 12 October 1947. The Boulton Paul contract was cancelled in early 1945, and of the 100 Sea Furies that remained on order, the first 50 were completed under the designation Sea Fury **Mk X**. In May 1948, the first Sea Furies became operational with No. 802 Squadron, in the form of the Sea Fury **FB.Mk 11**, of which 615 were built. At least 66 of these were delivered to Australia and Canada. Early in the Korean war, Sea Furies operated very successfully in the ground attack role from the decks of Royal Navy aircraft carriers. The RN also received 60 two-seat **T.Mk 20** trainers in the early 1950s. Sea Furies were exported to several other countries, including the Netherlands, Pakistan, Egypt, Burma, Cuba and Iraq.

Today, the few remaining Sea Furies are highly prized, with at least ten having been modified for air racing. Several others are very active on the air show circuit.

NICKNAMES:

Unknown

SPECIFICATIONS (SEA FURY FB.MK 11):

Engine: One 2,480-hp Bristol Centaurus 18, 18-cylinder radial piston engine.

Weight: Empty 9,240 lbs., Max Takeoff 12,500 lbs.

Wing Span: 38ft. 4.75in.

Length: 34ft. 8in.

Height: 15ft. 10.5in.

Performance:

Maximum Speed: 435 mph

Ceiling: 34,300 ft.

Range: 680 miles

Armament:

Four 20-mm cannon in wings

Underwing racks for eight 60-pound rockets or two bombs

NUMBER BUILT: 860

NUMBER STILL AIRWORTHY: ~15