‘TANGMERE PILOTS’

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PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

Preface

The Pilot's Handbook is standard issue to all No.11 Fighter Group personnel. It is there to ensure all Tangmere Pilots have an understanding of the various 'Rules & Regulations', as well as being a permanent reference in cases of dispute or misunderstanding. In order to maintain this handbook's relevance, it will inevitably need to be constantly revised and updated, and will therefore always reflect No.11 Group's current perspective.

All items contained within the handbook are clearly categorized, and are easily accessible. It is essential that all squadron personnel, as well as those thinking of becoming a Tangmere Pilot, thoroughly acquaint themselves with its contents.

1.01 Who are the Tangmere Pilots?

The Tangmere Pilots exist in the virtual world of 1940's Britain. King George VI is on the throne, and Prime Minister Winston Churchill is leading the nation in a desperate fight for survival against Adolf Hitler's Third Reich. The men and women of the British & Commonwealth Armed forces stand alone against the irrepressible might of the Axis war machine. In the skies above the British Isles and mainland Europe, as well as in the Mediterranean and the Far East, the aircraft of Royal Air Force, and the Royal Fleet Air Arm, strike relentlessly at the enemy.

1.02 The Operational Structure

At home, the four Groups of Fighter Command are tasked with defending our skies; none more so than No.11 Fighter Group. The Group is divided into seven 'Sectors' – A, B, C, D, E, F, and Z. The Tangmere Pilots operate within Sector ‘A’, and are based at the Sector Station at RAF Tangmere, and it’s ‘satellite’ RAF Westhampnett.

The following shows the organisational structure from which the Tangmere Pilots operate.
PART 2 - A (VIRTUAL) CAREER

1.03 Virtual Reality

a) Your Alter Ego. Why fly a WWII flight sim? And why join a fighter squadron in the Royal Air Force of the 1940’s? If the answer is because you are interested in all things WWII, and especially military aviation, then you have come to the right place.

Tangmere Pilots live, for the most part, in the real world, with all its complicated responsibilities and potential consequences. But the virtual world allows him to climb into the cockpit of a 1940’s fighter aircraft, and soar into the virtual sky of WWII.

Knowledge of the period, as well as the ability to ‘live the part’, is essential if one is to get the most out of your time with the Tangmere Pilots. Leave the stresses of the real world behind, and be your virtual pilot.

b) Your Virtual Name. As part of ‘getting in role’ it is essential that you choose an appropriate virtual pilot’s name. If you are familiar with the RAF of the 1940s, then you will be aware that pilots had nicknames. These nicknames generally took two forms, descriptive: ‘Titch’, ‘Tubby’, ‘Cobber’ etc. And shortened real names: ‘Dickie’, ‘Billy’, (first names), or ‘Bea’ (Beaumont), or ‘Birdy’ (Bird), (second names). Names such as ‘Killerbuzzsaw’, or ‘Death Man’ are not appropriate, and will not be allowed.

1.04 Promotions & Medals

a) Promotion. This is a vital part of ensuring each squadron continues to grow and positively evolve. As with medals, promotion has traditionally been used to reward individual achievement. However, unlike medals, promotion carries with it greater responsibility, and so has to be primarily determined by an individual’s suitability for the job. Promoting someone to a level of responsibility they cannot cope with is ultimately harmful to both the individual and their squadron. Those seeking promotion should first demonstrate their commitment to their squadron, both in time and ability, as well as demonstrate their personal aptitude for management. All squadron members are required to serve through the ranks.

The following rank structure is applicable to all RAF Aircrew within No.11 Group – Tangmere Sector:

i. Trainee Pilot (No.6 Operational Training Unit). All new recruits commence their squadron careers at No.6 Operational Training Unit (OTU) based at RAF Sutton Bridge. This period lasts for approximately 4 weeks, and trainees will wear the prefix ‘No6_OTU_’ in front of their virtual name. At the end of the training period trainees will be required to undertake the ‘Squadron Entrants Examination’. This will test the Trainee Pilot’s flying abilities, his understanding of No.11 Group’s Rules & Regulations, as well as demonstrating he has a good basic knowledge of RAF Fighter Group history and tactics from 1939 to 1945. On successful completion the new pilot is presented with his wings and promoted to Sergeant Pilot.

ii. Sergeant Pilot. Having now arrived at RAF Tangmere, the new Sergeant Pilot will be assigned to one of the Sector Squadrons. He will now wear the prefix appropriate to his new squadron, e.g. ‘No1_(Virtual Name)’. As a member of an RAF Fighter Squadron he will have the opportunity to prove himself, win medals, have fun, and ultimately get promotion. (Please see Basic Fighter Squadron Formation).

iii. Flight Sergeant. Obviously, this non-commissioned rank recognises an individual’s acquired experience, as well as his aptitude for greater responsibility. Flight Sergeants have responsibility to look after the less experienced squadron members, and to ensure they ‘learn the ropes’ as it were.

iv. Pilot Officer. Pilot Officer is the first of the commissioned ranks. He has achieved this rank through ability and hard work, and has become experienced in leading a section, and in some instances a flight. He may also hold an Executive Rank such as Squadron Adjutant. (Please see Executive Ranks).
1.04 Promotion & Medals – Cont.

v. **Flying Officer.** Promotion to Flying Officer recognises an individual’s understanding of battle tactics and strategic planning, as well as acknowledging their potential to lead larger formations such as a flight. He may also hold an Executive Rank such as Squadron Training Officer. (Please see Executive Ranks).

vi. **Flight Lieutenant.** The Squadron Flight Lieutenant will command his own flight as well as hold an Executive Rank, (Please see Executive Ranks). He will have an in-depth knowledge of battle tactics and strategic planning, as well as a proven ability to manage his flight under battle conditions. The Squadron Flight Lieutenant will also be the squadron second in command, and will lead the squadron in the C.O.’s absence. Recommendations for medals and/or promotion are made to the Squadron C.O. via the Flight Lieutenant. (Please see Medals).

vii. **Squadron Leader.** The Squadron Leader actively leads the Squadron whilst on operational sorties. He also oversees the day-to-day management of Squadron business, including promotions, postings, and matters relating to Squadron discipline, (Please see Discipline & Disciplinary Procedures). It is also the Squadron C.O.’s task to approve all recommendations for medals, and to pass the appropriate recommendation on to Group H.Q.

2. Executive Ranks

Each squadron has an Executive Staff made up of commissioned officers. The responsibility of the Executive Staff is to manage the various administrative and command requirements necessary in maintaining the operational status of each Sector Squadron.

The Executive Ranks are as follows (most senior first):

i. **Commanding Officer.** This executive rank is permanently held by the Squadron Leader, or in the Squadron Leader’s absence, by his Executive Officer.

ii. **Executive Officer, (second in command).** The Squadron Flight Lieutenant holds this executive rank, and will deputise for the Commanding Officer in his absence. He will also command his own flight.

iii. **Training Officer, No.6 OTU.** This is a ‘Sector’ executive rank, and is co-worked between the sector squadrons. It is their responsibility to ensure all Trainee Pilots receive the high quality of instruction necessary to pass the ‘Squadron Entrants Examination’.

iv. **Squadron Adjutant.** The Squadron Adjutant will be responsible for ensuring squadron harmony, and be like all good squadron adjutants; the mentor, the confidant, the friend, the councillor and the organiser. This post requires the recipient to commit more on-line hours than any other executive rank.

b) **Medals.** Military decorations are primarily awarded for bravery and acts of devotion – ‘above the call of duty’. Flight Leaders will be responsible for recommending pilots for an appropriate award. For instance, a pilot will certainly get ‘mentioned in despatches’ or ‘gazetted’ if he successfully rescues a fellow pilot brought down in enemy held territory. To earn a medal, a pilot has to undertake numerous acts of courage and daring over an extended time period, and is therefore more difficult to come by. In the RAF there are six main awards.

i. **Mentioned in Despatches (MID).** This means that a pilot, as well as his valiant actions are personally mentioned in the Squadron C.O.’s despatches to Group H.Q. These despatches are quite often printed in the London Gazette, but up to the Great War, being mentioned in a despatch did not result in the officer of non-commissioned officer receiving any visible mark (for example a medal) to show that he had been mentioned. It was only after the Great War had finished that it was decided to issue a small bronze oakleaf to any officer or non-commissioned officer who had been mentioned in a despatch. This emblem was usually worn on a medal ribbon that he had been awarded.
1.04 Promotion & Medals - Cont.

ii. **Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC).** This award is for officers and warrant officers, for ‘an act of valour, courage, or devotion to duty, performed whilst in active operations against the enemy’.

iii. **Distinguished Flying Medal (DFM).** This is equivalent to the DFC but for non-commissioned officers (Sgts), and other ranks.

iv. **Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (CGM).** In 1943 the CGM was extended to the RAF to recognise gallantry whilst flying in operations against the enemy. A total of 103 RAF CGMs were awarded during World War Two.

v. **Distinguished Service Order (DSO).** Ranking as an Order of Distinction (as opposed to an Order of Knighthood), the DSO was founded in 1886 to reward officers for ‘meritorious and distinguished service in war’.

vi. **Campaign Medals.** These medals are struck to mark an individual active participation in a ‘Campaign’ or ‘Theatre of Operations’. A special clasp is often awarded to commemorate a specific battle within a campaign, e.g. the ‘Battle of Britain’ clasp was awarded to those who actively took part in that particular battle, and was worn on the 1939 – 1945 Star.

vii. **Bar.** For the second and the subsequent award of the same medal, an individual would receive a bar to wear across the ribbon of the first gallantry medal. E.g. if a pilot had a DFM and bar, he has won two DFMs and would wear a metal bar across the ribbon of his first DFM.

1.05 Scoring for Career Missions

**1.05 Scoring for Career Missions - Cont.**

### a) Kill Streak.

#### i. Score Streak Thresholds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Confirmed Kills</th>
<th>Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>MID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ace status ('kill' swastikas applied to personal a/c skin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>DFC/DFM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Bar to DFC/DFM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Second Bar to DFC/DFM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kill streak reset to zero when pilot is KIA or captured (including by friendly fire).

#### ii. Notes to Kill Streak System.

- **1 plane destroyed = 1 kill, regardless of number of engines.**

- **Confirmed kills to be primarily decided by in-game scoring system. Visual confirmation by other pilots is not mandatory, but can be taken into account, if required. Intel Officer can award a kill, after track review, if an e/a has crash landed in friendly territory, but hasn’t showed up on in-game scoring system. (this will reflect kill confirmation by Observer Corp etc).**

- **Shared kills to be confirmed, by the Intel Officer. Adopt the 43 squadron model of any share = 0.5 kills (145 squadron until now have third, quarter, etc, kills – but 43’s system easier to implement into scores).**

- **Probable & damaged claims to be taken into account. Intel Officer to have final say on whether claim qualifies for probable or damaged. Only damaged & probable claims made by pilots at mission end to be considered (ie, retrospective claims not awarded to pilot by Intel Officer after any track review). Probable worth 0.5 kills, damaged worth 0.25 kills (shared probable or damaged worth half those amounts).**

- **As soon as last pilot lands or is shot down, mission ends. No waiting to see if damaged enemy crash – these will be awarded as probables (intel officer to use judgement – ie; if e/a is 10ft off the ground with both engines smoking = confirmed kill).**

- **Ground targets are not included in the Kill Streak system.**

**ALL POINT VALUES & THRESHOLDS FOR AWARDS ARE ESTIMATES - TO BE FINALISED AFTER MORE EXPERIENCE IS GAINED WITH 'CLIFFS OF DOVER.'**

The two systems to run side by side are **a) Kill Streak** and **b) Cumulative Score.**
1.05 Scoring for Career Missions - Cont.

b) Cumulative Score.

i. Point Values (for Individual Pilots).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flight / squadron / wing mission success in your game</td>
<td>+5 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landing at a friendly airfield undamaged, or in “repairable” condition</td>
<td>+3 pts*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In bombing missions; if you destroy any number of enemy targets</td>
<td>+3 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For each enemy a/c confirmed destroyed, regardless of number of engines</td>
<td>+1 pt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For each shared enemy confirmed destroyed</td>
<td>+0.5 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For each probable / damaged claim</td>
<td>+0.5 pts / +0.25 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For each shared probable / damaged claim</td>
<td>+0.25 pts / +0.125 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailing out over friendly territory or crash landing in friendly territory</td>
<td>no penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accidental collision with a team mate</td>
<td>no penalty**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailing out or crash landing in the channel</td>
<td>-2 pts***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you are captured</td>
<td>-5 pts****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you are KIA</td>
<td>-7 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you shoot down a friendly aircraft</td>
<td>-10 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Non-repairable means loss of wing / break in fuselage / loss of tail / loss of engine.
** Other than KIA / captured penalty if applicable.
*** Reflecting that a lot of pilots weren’t rescued and drowned.
**** Lower penalty than KIA reflecting that you are at least still alive!

If a pilot reaches 30 bombing points (i.e. after 10 successful bombing missions) he will receive The Aircrew Medal.

ii. Cumulative Score Targets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>150 points</td>
<td>Award of MID.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 points</td>
<td>Award of King’s Commendation for valuable service in the air.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600 points</td>
<td>Award of The Long Service &amp; Good Conduct Medal (RAF).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900 points</td>
<td>Award of The British Empire Medal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a pilot reaches 30 bombing points (i.e. after 10 successful bombing missions) he will receive The Aircrew Medal.

iii. Notes to Cumulative Score System.

- The cumulative score system is loaded in favour of mission success / survival / successful landing. Enemy aircraft shot down are more of a bonus.
- All KIA / captured / penalties include being shot down by a team mate or friendly flak - unfortunately it will be tough luck.
- The cumulative score will never go below zero.
PART 3 - OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

1.06 Battle Tactics

This section does not set out to determine how each individual pilot should fight, that is his affair, rather it attempts to explain how we, as individuals, can work together as an effective fighting unit.

a) Basic Fighter Squadron Formation. Each of the Tangmere fighter squadrons consists of 12 fighter aircraft. These are divided into 2 Flights – ‘A’ and ‘B’. Each flight contains 6 aircraft, and this again is sub-divided into 2 sections of 3 aircraft each.

‘A’ Flight

Red Section (No. 1 Section)
- Red Leader - Flight Leader (Squadron Leader)
- Red Two - F/O, P/O or F/Sgt
- Red Three - P/O, F/Sgt or Sgt

Yellow Section (No. 2 Section)
- Yellow Leader - F/O, P/O or F/Sgt
- Yellow Two - F/O, P/O or F/Sgt
- Yellow Three - P/O, F/Sgt or Sgt

‘B’ Flight

Blue Section (No. 3 Section)
- Blue Leader - Flight Leader - F/Lt (Exec. Officer)
- Blue Two - F/O, P/O or F/Sgt
- Blue Three - P/O, F/Sgt or Sgt

Green Section (No. 4 Section)
- Green Leader - F/O, P/O or F/Sgt
- Green Two - F/O, P/O or F/Sgt
- Green Three - P/O, F/Sgt or Sgt

1.06 Battle Tactics - Cont.

As you will note, the squadron has a clear ‘management’ structure. This is essential to ensure unit cohesion, as well as enabling each pilot to feel part of something bigger. It is to be remembered that a formation has limitations, and is to be used appropriately. As Douglas Bader observed, “The job of the formation is to get as many aeroplanes to the enemy as quickly as possible”. He went on to say, “But once in a dogfight, it is everyman for himself”.

Section Leaders are to ensure their section attacks on command, and to regroup following the battle. Section pilots are to pay special attention to their respective section leaders. The use of voice communication is essential under battle conditions, and strict R/T (Radio Telephone) procedures are to be maintained. (Please see Radio Telephone).

b) Radio Telephone (R/T). During an operational sortie, voice communication is essential, and each pilot is required to use ‘Battlecom’ compatible communication software as a means of achieving this. However, having the airwaves cluttered with a dozen different conversations would somewhat defeat the object of the exercise. It is therefore essential that each pilot observe the correct procedures when using the R/T. They are as follows

i. Maintain radio silence when asked to do so, unless it is to give vital information, or confirm an order.

ii. Constantly listen out for your section leader’s instructions.

iii. Always use yours, as well as another pilot’s ‘section designation’ when addressing them, i.e. “Blue Three to Blue Leader”.

iv. Do exactly what you are instructed to do, unless it is physically impossible, or from your field of vision, totally implausible.

1.07 Squadron Aircraft

a) Aircraft Availability. No.11 Fighter Group will endeavour to equip the Tangmere Squadrons with historically accurate machines. However, this may not always be possible, and pilots may be forced to use fighter aircraft of a non-historical, or foreign type. Whatever the type, pilots are required to become well acquainted with the squadron mount; becoming expert in both it’s gunnery, and handling characteristics.
b) ‘Individualising’ Squadron Aircraft. The Squadron Commander will decide what camouflage pattern is to be adopted for all squadron aircraft. This will be in accordance with official RAF regulations of the time, and will be either the ‘A’ or ‘B’ scheme camouflage pattern for UK operated aircraft, (this will be modified for overseas service). Squadron pilots will no doubt wish to ‘individualize’ their respective ‘mounts’, and this may be done providing it is in accordance with standard squadron practice. Please note the following: ‘mounts’, and this may be done providing it is in accordance with standard squadron practice. Please note the following:

i. All squadron pilots may add their own appropriately sized motif to the port side of the fuselage, beneath the exhaust stacks. This may take the form of a national emblem, or a cartoon character, etc. All designs must be submitted to the Squadron Commander for approval.

PART 4 - SQUADRON DISCIPLINE

1.08 Pilot’s Code of Conduct

The squadrons of No.11 Fighter Group – Tangmere Sector, have an enviable reputation within the flight sim community. This is based on our dedication to ‘getting it right’, as well as the honourable way the squadron personnel conduct themselves. One hasn’t got to be a brutal thug to kill effectively; we prefer to do it in style. To illustrate our adopted code of conduct, please see the following excerpt taken from Dilip Sarkar’s excellent book, ‘Bader’s Tangmere Spitfires – The untold story, 1941’.

While he was hospitalised at Clinique Sterin in St Omer, Bader was actually visited several times by two JG26 pilots. He shared a bottle of champagne with them in the doctor’s room and concluded that they were ‘types’ whom he would have liked in the Tangmere Wing.

Friend or foe, we are all fellow virtual pilots – mutual respect and courtesy, as well as an honourable approach to aerial combat, will show that you are a Tangmere Pilot.

The following Code of Conduct should be observed as much as possible, and especially in your dealings with pilots from other squadrons. They are:

i. All squadron personnel to refrain from using obscene, or offensive language. It is unbecoming a ‘gentleman’, and pilot’s children may be within earshot.

ii. All squadron personnel are to refrain from ‘Vulching’. Give your virtual opponent a fair chance; otherwise what’s the point. (Please ignore this if you have previously agreed ‘No holds barred’.)

iii. All squadron personnel are to break-off from an attack if your enemy activates his ‘Wingtip smoke’. This will indicate he is trying to land and is not prepared to fight. (Please ignore this if you believe they are using it to gain a tactical advantage.)

iv. All squadron personnel are to salute (S!) your opponent following personal combat, regardless of who wins.
1.08 Pilot’s Code of Conduct - Cont.

v. All squadron personnel are to refrain from ‘poaching’ other pilot’s targets. It will not be tolerated – especially by the ‘poached’ pilot!

vi. All squadron personnel are to put the interests of their squadron before personal gain. Don’t forget you are a member of a team.

vii. All squadron personnel are to avoid ‘bitching’ about fellow squadron pilots. Address the problem with those concerned, or shut up.

1.09 Discipline & Disciplinary Procedures

a) Discipline. As with all armed forces, discipline is an essential aspect of military life. Discipline means to be organized, to do things correctly, and to achieve unit cohesion. Throughout your virtual career you will be subject to the rules and regulations contained in this handbook. They will guide you through the complex processes involved in participating in an on-line virtual squadron, as well as clearly setting out the parameters, responsibilities, and possibilities, inherent to your designated rank.

The following Points of Discipline are to be strictly adhered to at all times. They are:

i. All squadron personnel are required to become thoroughly acquainted with the contents of the Pilot’s Handbook, and to strictly adhere to rules and regulations therein.

ii. All squadron personnel are required to always, and without exception, observe the No.11 Fighter Group Pilot’s Code of Conduct. (Please see Pilot’s Code of Conduct).

iii. All squadron personnel are to respect the rank structure, and during operational sorties are to carry out orders and instructions promptly and without argument. Any disagreements can be resolved through the appropriate channels, and at the appropriate time.

iv. All squadron personnel are required to immediately notify their Flight Leader, or the Squadron Adjutant, if they are unable to take part in an operational sortie. This allows time to find a replacement.

b) Disciplinary Procedures. It is assumed that pilot’s of No.11 Fighter Group – Tangmere sector will be ‘first class chaps’. The Points of Discipline are there as a guide to those wanting to act in an honourable manner. It is assumed that most, if not all issues relating to breaches in discipline will be very minor in nature. Many will be due to misunderstandings, or even a clash of personalities but all should be easily resolved. However, from time to time every squadron experiences a problem of discipline, and so disciplinary procedures are in place purely as a precautionary measure.

i. Formal Verbal Warning. Any pilot who deliberately, and continuously is in violation of the Points of Discipline (i – vi) will be given a Formal Verbal Warning. This will be given by the Squadron’s Commanding Officer, and will be recorded on that pilot’s ‘Service Record’ for a period of 3 months. During this period any further violations will be treated very seriously, and may result in a Written Warning and Permanent Demotion.

ii. Written Warning and Permanent Demotion. Any pilot who is deliberately and continuously in violation of the Points of Discipline (vii) will automatically be given a written warning, and demoted. The Written Warning and Permanent Demotion will be given by the Squadron’s Commanding Officer, and will be recorded on that pilot’s ‘Service Record’ for a period of 3 months. During this period any further violations of the same type will result in Dishonourable Discharge with immediate effect.

iii. Dishonourable Discharge. In certain instances it may be necessary to dismiss a pilot. In such cases the discharge will take immediate effect.
1.10 Difficulty / Realism Settings

Below are the settings used for the vast majority of missions throughout the Battle of Britain campaign.