

1943

SPITFIRE T.9

MJ772



- MJ772 was built at Castle Bromwich in late 1943 and was delivered to RAF Lyneham in mid-December.
- In January 1944, MJ was delivered to a French unit, 341 (Alsace) Squadron in Perranporth, Cornwall.
- Flew 50 operational sorties before being damaged in action whilst being flown by Sgt Dabos.
- When repaired, MJ772 was delivered to 340 (Ile-de-France) Squadron in June 1944. On arrival to Funtington, Sussex, the Spitfire was given the code GW-A, and flew in a number of sorties over the Normandy beachhead area.
- In August 1944, MJ772 was with No.84 GSU (Group Support Unit), based at Thruxton, and a few days later was moved to No.33 MU at Lyneham. In September 1944, MJ was allocated to No.83 GSU.
- After being damaged in January 1945, MJ772 was then with No.83 GSU until January 1946, when it was moved to No.29 MU. It was then re-sold back to Vickers-Armstrong to be converted into a two-seat trainer for the Irish Air Corps.
- MJ772 was given the Vickers test serial G-15-172, and was then changed to 159 upon delivery to the IAC at Baldonnell in 1951. Under this number, 159 served with "A" Flight Fighter Squadron of the IAC until it was withdrawn from use in January 1960 with 1402 flying hours.
- In 1963 it was sold to the Film Aviation Services Ltd and came to FAS Biggin Hill Base in November the same year.
- By March 1964 it had been sold again to the COGEA of Ostend, Belgium, as part payment for a single seater. As it left Biggin Hill, another two-seat Spitfire took its place (MJ627).
- It was stored in Belgium until 1965, when it was bought and shipped to Elstree to be rebuilt by Simpson Aero-Services Ltd. It was registered as G-AVAV. It was first test flown in 1967.
- Permission was given for it to be used in the Battle of Britain film where it was used to train the pilots who were going to be flying the aircraft in the film. Whilst the Spitfire was filming, it had to force land and was badly damaged. It was sent to Duxford to be repaired once filming was over.
- When back with its owner after restoration from Simpsons Aero-Services for a second time, it was put up for sale with the Hurricane.
- It was bought and taken to Shoreham, where it was overhauled and repainted in 341 Squadron's markings and NL-R. It was moved between Shoreham and the owners Scottish base before being sold again.
- It was shipped over to a museum in Oklahoma in 1974 under the registration of N8R, and whilst being moved to another museum location in Mesa, the ferry flight took a forced landing which damaged the Spitfire's undercarriage, wings and fuselage. It was rebuilt at Mesa and later flew in October 1985.
- It was later registered again in Germany as D-FMKN, but suffered a wheel's up landing in a field in Woodchurch, Kent.
- It is now registered as MJ772, with 341 squadron markings of NL-R and is based at the Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar with its sister aircraft MJ627.