



Fifteenth Air Force against the Axis: Combat Missions over Europe during World War II

Kevin A. Mahoney

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In *Fifteenth Air Force against the Axis: Combat Missions over Europe during World War II*, historian Kevin A. Mahoney provides a detailed combat history of the crucial role played by this air force from November 1943 through May 1945. Presented by month in chronological order, Mahoney describes all the major bombing and fighter missions carried out by this air force within a strategic context. Each chapter includes an introduction describing developments in the evolution of the strategic air campaign against the Germans, highlights the purpose and importance of the month's operations, and reviews the Luftwaffe's resistance and changes in tactics and important developments in the Fifteenth Air Force's organization.

Each monthly narrative further explores most missions, detailing the number of aircraft lost during these missions. Losses are based on an exhaustively researched database compiled by Mahoney that contains details of almost 3,000 aircraft. Target damage is mentioned, while enemy opposition is also described for each mission. Appendices include four short essays on bombing operations (planning and flying of missions, tactics and techniques, bomb types, and bombing accuracy), tactics employed by fighter escort in aerial combat and strafing, combat crews and their aircraft (including a comparison of American fighters and bombers, the training of the crews, and their combat tours), and the Fifteenth Air Force command structure (including the use of intelligence, photo and weather reconnaissance, and the considerable effect of weather on Fifteenth Air Force operations). This work of military history is ideal for students and scholars of the air war in Europe.

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