



Air Apaches: The True Story of the 345th Bomb Group and Its Low, Fast, and Deadly Missions in World War II

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The American 345th Bomb Group--the Air Apaches--was legendary in the war against Japan. The first fully trained and fully equipped group sent to the South Pacific, the 345th racked up a devastating score against the enemy. Armed to the teeth with machine guns and fragmentation bombs, and flying their B-25s at impossibly low altitudes--often below fifty feet--the pilots and air crews strafed and bombed enemy installations and shipping with a fury that helped cripple Japan. One of the sharpest tools in the U.S. arsenal, the 345th performed essential missions during Gen. Douglas MacArthur's campaigns in New Guinea and the Philippines, earning an impressive four Distinguished Unit Citations. This was punishingly dangerous work, and the 345th lost 177 aircraft and 712 men--young men doing their duty in the spirit of the Greatest Generation. Neither was this the more gentlemanly war of Europe, with its more temperate climate, resistance networks aiding downed crews, and POW camps. Airmen shot down in the Pacific theater faced drowning in the ocean, disappearing in the jungle, or torturing and beheading by the Japanese in a war of no quarter expected, no quarter given. A compelling follow-up to Stout's Hell's Angels, Air Apaches reconstructs the missions of the 345th Bomb Group in striking detail, with laser focus on the men who manned the cockpits, navigated the B-25s, dropped the bombs, serviced the planes, and helped win the war. To tell this remarkable story, Stout worked closely with the group's surviving veterans and dug deep into firsthand accounts. The result is a compelling narrative of men at war that will keep readers on the edge of their seats.

Air Apaches: The True Story of the 345th Bomb Group and Its Low, Fast, and Deadly Missions in World War II Details

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From Reader Review Air Apaches: The True Story of the 345th Bomb Group and Its Low, Fast, and Deadly Missions in World War II for online ebook

Cozy Cat Reviews says

The author has written a detailed meticulously well researched book on the subject that is both educational and informative to the reader. As one who had family in WWII that flew bombers I enjoyed this read and learned more about the Air Apaches.

This book is broad in scope including the implementation of the mission strategy of B-25's, used heavily for low level bombing in the American 345th Bomb Group. in the Pacific Theater of war.

The airmen were primary in destroying Japanese supply lines, ships and garrisons. The inroads they made with their bombings made a important difference in the fight. They were able to often fly undetected and surprised their victims .

The author has brought the war to our armchairs in a very realistic and educational way that is enthralling and at times heart stopping. I enjoyed it from beginning to end and highly recommend this book for all that enjoy reading about history. .These men need their story to be known . Their efforts were remarkable and their time in history is respectfully well documented here. Very well done to the author. This book is a excellent addition to any history buff of WWII to add to their library.

William Harris says

I have just finished reading a prepublication galley of "Air Apaches," thoughtfully provided to me by Stackpole Books and written by Jay Stout. If you are at all interested in the air war in the Pacific Theater of action during WWII, this is a worthwhile read. At the center of the action are a group of heavily modified B 25 Mitchell bombers which were expressly armed for low level attacks and strafing runs designed to cripple IJN air and sea forces in the South Pacific. The text is engaging and heavily documented through primary sources. For those of you not immediately familiar with the aircraft and their exploits, these are the medium bombers, often garishly painted in a manner not very different than the better known Flying Tigers. They learned to use special weapons and tactics to engage their enemies at very low level, often relying on the element of surprise since they had been stripped of the defensive armaments ordinarily associated with medium U.S. bombers of the time in order to allow them to support the weight of a massive battery of forward firing heavy caliber machine guns. In effect they were as much gunships as bombers, and the men who flew and maintained them in often abysmal conditions deserve to have their stories told. The text is sometimes somewhat ponderous in its use of lengthy quotes from primary sources, but this is easily overlooked once you become engaged in the author's tale.

Steve says

A great book and an interesting read on the American 345th Bomb Group who was one of the most effective and dangerous units in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II, known as the Air Apaches. This unit wrecked havoc on the Japanese flying at low altitudes and destroying Japanese supply lines and transports as well as installations around New Guinea and the Philippines. The 345th earned four

Distinguished Unit Citations. This book tells of the courage and the effectiveness of this unit that used B-25's in their strafing and bombing missions.

Marc says

Just as he's done with the 303rd Bomb Group (The Hell's Angels) and the 352nd Fighter Group (The Blue-Nosed Bastards of Bodney), author Jay Stout has once again given us a great book on the men who served in one of the premier B-25 units of the Pacific War: the 345th Bomb Group, aka "The Air Apaches".

Arriving in the Pacific Theater in mid-1943, the group originally flew missions out of the Port Moresby area before re-locating across the Owen Stanley Mountains of New Guinea into a succession of air bases closer to their intended targets. As they moved across New Guinea, and eventually further north into the Philippines and Ie Shima, the 345th achieved a spectacular record of success in destroying Japanese military targets on the land, in the air and at sea. Almost always flying at very low altitude, the group was originally known as "The Tree-Top Terrors" before coming up with a name change in 1944. Major Japanese bases such as Rabaul, Wewak and Clark Field were all subjected to the Air Apaches' wrath, and oftentimes they exacted a high toll for these intrusions.

The book isn't a comprehensive account of the group and all their missions (see Lawrence Hickey's book, "Warpath Across the Pacific" if comprehensive is what you want), but more about the men who made up the unit and what they went through in oftentimes primitive environments while fighting a determined and hostile enemy. There are plenty of personal stories about what happened on various missions, mostly from official reports, personal recollections and correspondence of those who were there. Along the way, you'll get to know some of the men very personally from diary excerpts, letters to family and loved ones and remembrances of those who paid the ultimate price.

The book is also a testament to the remarkable plane the men flew in combat: the B-25 Mitchell bomber. Originally fitted with a glass-enclosed nose, the B-25s were field-modified to incorporate several machine guns in the nose, thus turning the bombers into far more deadly strafing machines. As the war progressed and the bombers gained even more firepower, up to 12 forward-firing .50 caliber machine guns on the latest models, the Air Apaches cut a swath of destruction through Japanese shipping, air bases, military targets and pretty much anything which got in their path. The planes carried a variety of bombs on their missions, from general purpose 500 and 1000 pound high explosives to smaller 23 pound fragmentation bombs attached to parachutes. At one point, they even fashioned a kitchen sink to drop on the Japanese, and there's a photo of the sink included in the many which the book contains. While the group was known for its colorful artwork on many of its planes, the photos only show a bit of this, so don't get your hopes too high if aircraft nose art is your thing.

Overall, another excellent book on a fine American aerial combat group by Jay Stout.

CoffeeBreakBooks says

Overall, Air Apaches is an educational, powerful, and intense read covering the evolution and implementation of the mission strategy of B-25's, used heavily for low level bombing and strafing, in the American 345th Bomb Group. The story is gripping, with tension and danger throughout. Jay Stout, through

meticulous research including diaries, interviews, and archives, both educates and surprises us with this not well known aspect of Pacific War strategy. General George Kenney, serving under theater commander General Douglas MacArthur, was a "fixer", organizing and energizing the command and encouraging new weapons and new tactics using airpower. His airmen, whose stories we follow, hammered Japanese supply lines, along with destroying numerous ships and effectively isolating Japanese garrisons. Air Apaches was very readable and almost impossible to put down. Enjoying history, I have read a number of books regarding the war, along with hearing stories from family members who served, including a B-26 pilot and another serving in a B-17. I received a complimentary copy of this book from the publisher, through NetGalley. Opinions expressed in this review are completely my own.

John Purvis says

"Air Apaches" eBook was published in 2019 and was written by Jay A. Stout (<https://www.jayastout.com>). Mr. Stout has published more than 10 books on military aviation.

I received an ARC of this novel through <https://www.netgalley.com> in return for a fair and honest review. I categorize this novel as 'R' because it contains scenes of Vionence. The story is set in the South Pacific during World War II, starting in 1943 and continuing thru the end of the war. The book did not focus on one set of men, but covered the entire 345th Bomb Group.

I thoroughly enjoyed the nearly 12 hours I spent reading this 432-page history of World War II. I learned a lot about the B-25 bomber which the 345th flew more as a fighter bomber. With the large number of .50 caliber machine guns, it proved to be a formidable gunship. I like the chosen cover art. I give this book a 4 out of 5.

Further book reviews I have written can be accessed at <https://johnpurvis.wordpress.com/blog/>.

Dianne McMahan says

This is a true and factual account of the 345th Air Apaches that fought the Japanese in WWII. While most of the world was fixated on Hitler and the war in Europe,thousands of our men were living and dying in a Japanese nightmare.

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This book was very hard to read,because of all the personal stories of the men who fought and the many that didn't make it home.

There was a lot of technical information about the Airplanes used and the size of the bombs and the destruction they wrought. I could only read this a little at a time,as my father served in the War

and never talked about his time spent there.

Now I understand why?

The Japanese were very cunning and when they saw a plane fall from the sky,they raced to it.If they didn't kill the Airmen immediately,they took them captive and tortured them by withholding food and denying them medical care.

Towards the end of the War, when the Japanese men were starving, there was even talk of cannibalism. Anyone interested in a story about Planes and Airmen will certainly enjoy this book, but remember this isn't a made up story it's all true.

Thanks to Netgalley for the opportunity to read and review and also to the publisher and the author Jay Stout, for writing such a factual account of a horrible time in our History.

Zeb Kantrowitz says

This was a free book from NetGalley
A Review of "Air Apaches" by Jay Stout

The 345th Bomber Group was part of the AAF (Army Air Force) that fought in the Pacific Theater during World War Two under General MacArthur, and the Fifth Air Force. Made up of the 498th, 499th, 500th and 501st Bomber Squadrons, they mainly flew Mitchel B-25 bombers. They were active from September 1942 thought December 1945. They went combat operational from July 1943 through the end of the war.

The men of the 345th Group, were involved in every campaign in the Pacific Theater, beginning with the Solomon Islands, New Guinea, the Philippines, Formosa, and Okinawa. They were positioned on Io Shima (near Iwo Jima), at the end of July 1945, preparing to support the invasion of the Japanese main islands, which were superseded by the Surrender after the dropping of the A-Bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They stayed on Io Shima until the disbanding of the Group at the end of 1945.

Originally known at the "Tree Top Terrors" because of their propensity to fly at altitudes of under 300 feet when attacking a target with bombs and 50 caliber machine guns, they later changed to the "Air Apaches" because it sounded more military. After the war, Japanese veterans remembered the 345th as the most feared and effective of all the bombardment groups in the Pacific.

The book is a paean of a marine retired fighter pilot (he flew in Iraq as part of Desert Storm), who has written about other fighter and bomber groups from World War 2. He writes using information, daily logs, and personal diaries and interviews, to give a seat of the pants feeling of being a member of these bomber groups. He tells the story with all the warts and follies, as well as the everyday heroism of these civilian flyers.

Zeb Kantrowitz zebsblog@gmail.com zworstblog.blogspot.com
