

THE EXPERTEN

A guide to the Experte counters. *Third edition*

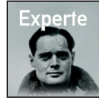
By Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, Ron Artigues, Dean Dastoli, and David Meyler

DOUGLAS BADER DSO* DFC*

Royal Air Force, 22 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Victories 1940-1942

A notoriously difficult man, Douglas Robert Stuart Bader overcame the loss of his legs in a flying accident to become a hard-fighting squadron leader. In the Battle of Britain he turned around the failing 242 Squadron, a Canadian unit that was suffering from bad morale. A keen proponent of the offensive, he was most famous for promoting wing operations, with varying levels of success. After being shot down in August 1941, he spent the remainder of the war trying to escape from various prison camps.

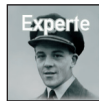


ROLAND BEAMONT DSO* DFC*

Royal Air Force, 9 Victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Eagles 1943-1945

Beamont's operational career began in 1939 and ended with nine aircraft and 32 V-1s shot down, after completing almost 500 sorties. He scored in France and the Battle of Britain before joining 609 Squadron in 1942, one of the first units to fly the technically troublesome Typhoon. Promoted to squadron leader, Beamont achieved his ninth and final victory on 2 October 1944 over the Netherlands. On 12 October, he was shot down and finished the war as a POW. After the war Beamont had a stellar career as a test pilot.

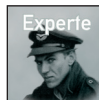


'SCREWBALL' BEURLING DSO DFC DFM*

Royal Air Force and Royal Canadian Air Force, 31 victories

Appears in C3i Magazine #29

A true original, the Canadian pilot George Frederick Beurling was a skilful pilot with exceptional eyesight. Through obsessive study and practice Beurling became a first-class shot. However, he was something of a loner on the ground and in the air, prone to disciplinary problems when away from the action. Towards the end of the war he transferred to the RCAF, where he acquired the nickname 'Buzz'. His stunting and poor attitude towards officers were to get him grounded. He survived the war, only to die in a flying accident when flying with the Israeli Air Force.

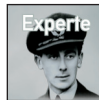


NEVILLE DUKE DSO DFC**

Royal Air Force, 28 Victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Eagles 1943-1945

Neville Duke ended the war as the most successful Western Allied ace in the Mediterranean Theatre, credited with 27 enemy aircraft and two shared claims. He began active duty in 1941, flying as wingman to the renowned Adolph "Sailor" Malan. Transferred to North Africa, his transition to P-40s was not smooth and Duke was shot down twice in late 1941. But his skill soon began to show, and by February 1942 Duke had eight victories against both Italian and German formations. He scored his final kill in September 1944 and survived the war to become a legendary test pilot.



'JOHNNIE' JOHNSON DSO** DFC*

Royal Air Force, 38 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Supremacy 1943-1945

The greatest of the RAF's fighter leaders, Johnson missed the Battles of France and Britain due to injury. After returning to flying he forged a reputation as a wing leader in the Circus sweeps over France. Given command of a Canadian wing, he led them to France after D-Day, providing air cover for the Allied advance to the Rhine, and onward until the German capitulation.



'PAT' PATTLE DFC*

Royal Air Force, 40+ victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Victories 1940-1942

Possibly the highest-scoring Commonwealth ace was the South African-born Marmaduke Thomas St. John Pattle. 'Pat' opened his account in 1940 in North Africa, before racking up huge numbers of claims over Greece. He was finally killed over Piraeus Harbour in April 1941 (see scenario V16, *Nemesis*), possibly by Franco Lucchini (see below). Provisionally credited with 50 victories, historians can only be certain of 40 or so.



ADOLF GALLAND

Luftwaffe, 104 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Victories 1940-1942

Adolf Joseph Ferdinand Galland was a larger-than-life figure who fought in Spain and played a major part in developing Luftwaffe fighter doctrine. After fighting over France and Britain in 1940 and '41, he rose to command the Luftwaffe fighter arm as *General der Jagdflieger*. In this role he was a fierce advocate for his fighter pilots but also made poor decisions regarding the training and leadership of his command. Eventually, he fell out with Göring and returned to combat, flying jets in the final months of the war.



WERNER MÖLDERS

Luftwaffe, 115 victories

Appears in C3i Magazine #29

Werner Mölders had his first combat experience with the Condor Legion in Spain, scoring a total of 14 victories. He was to revolutionize air combat tactics by replacing the 'vic' tactical formation, then in use with the Luftwaffe, with the far more powerful and effective four-ship *Schwarm*. After scoring 115 kills in the West and East, Mölders was removed from flying and promoted to *General der Jagdflieger*, inspector all of Germany's fighter units. However, he was to die in an air accident aboard a transport in 1941. His replacement as *General der Jagdflieger* was Galland.

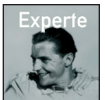


HANS-JOACHIM MARSEILLE

Luftwaffe, 157 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Victories 1940-1942

Hans-Joachim Marseille made his name with JG 27 in North Africa, where the press dubbed him the 'Star of Africa' for scoring most of his kills against the Desert Air Force. A precise shooter, his unit became reliant on him to score kills, often at the expense of other pilots who had to sit back and watch him take victories. Marseille died in September 1942 when his Bf 109 caught fire and his parachute failed to open. Without the maestro, there was no one in JG 27 with the stature or experience to replace him.

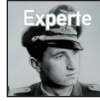


WALTER NOWOTNY

Luftwaffe, 258 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Supremacy 1943-1945

The Austrian-born Nowotny spent most of his career on the Eastern Front with JG 54. His first kills were scored over the Gulf of Riga when he was shot down and spent three days in a life raft. After that, each time he flew he wore the same trousers—his ‘victory trousers’—that he’d worn in that first fight. In 1943 Nowotny began scoring at a prodigious rate, forming a flight known as the *Teufelskette* with three other aces and becoming the first pilot to reach 250 victories. Late in the war a much-decorated 23 year-old Nowotny was assigned to lead an Me 262 unit and shake out the bugs of the new jet in combat. However, he lacked the leadership and technical knowledge for the job and his *Kommando Nowotny* was a failure. He was to claim three victories in the Me 262 before being shot down and killed by the Americans.

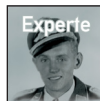


ERICH ‘BUBI’ HARTMANN

Luftwaffe, 352 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Supremacy 1943-1945

Erich Alfred Hartmann is the most successful fighter ace in history, racking up an incredible number of victories—all but seven of them against the Soviets. It took many missions before Hartmann achieved his first scores, but when he began to roll the victories kept coming. Hartmann was a master of stalking and ambushing aircraft. He was no marksman like Marseille. Instead, he flew as close as possible to targets before letting fly with his guns and found this technique worked reliably. He was also cautious enough to disengage after each kill before deciding whether to attack again. Towards the end of the war, Hartmann refused a transfer to a jet unit, preferring to stay with JG 52, which he would eventually surrender to the Americans, who then handed him into Soviet custody. After a ten year internment with the Soviets, Hartmann returned to West Germany and a career with the post-war Luftwaffe.

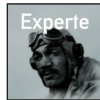


‘BUDDY’ ARCHER

United States Army Air Forces, 4.5 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Supremacy 1943-1945

Lee Andrew Archer Jr. flew 169 combat missions in the European Theatre in a variety of fighters. However, his first kill was in a red-tailed P-51C of the 332nd Fighter Group, and Archer was to make his name in a series of dogfights over Hungary, where he shot down three enemy fighters at ten-minute intervals. Archer was to survive the war and fly missions over Korea.

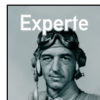


JOHN THACH

United States Navy, 6 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Victories 1940-1942

Originator of the ‘Thach Weave’, John Thach was a U.S. Navy pilot on the outbreak of World War 2. Faced with the more manoeuvrable Zero fighter, Thach devised a tactic whereby pairs of fighters would weave to cover each other. This teamwork allowed them to shoot down a more nimble foe, turning a disadvantage to an advantage. Thach used his manoeuvre during the Battle of Midway to down three aircraft. Following the battle he was assigned to instruct new naval aviators in this tactic, and he went on to survive the war with 6 aerial victories to his credit.



‘SWEDE’ VEJTASA

United States Navy, 10 victories

Appears in C3i Magazine #29

Originally a dive-bomber pilot for the U.S. Navy, Stanley ‘Swede’ Vejtasa is credited with downing 3 enemy fighters in his Dauntless during the battle of the Coral Sea, as well as scoring a bomb hit on the carrier *Shoho*. He then transferred to fighters and served during the Guadalcanal campaign, where he downed 7 aircraft in one action, making ace status in one day. Vejtasa later returned to the U.S. and served the rest of the war as an instructor and test pilot.



‘TEX’ HILL

American Volunteer Group and US Army Air Forces, 18.25 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Victories 1940-1942

Already a U.S. Naval aviator before the war broke out, David Lee ‘Tex’ Hill resigned his commission to join the American Volunteer Group, the famous ‘Flying Tigers’, which were then forming in China. He flew as a squadron leader with the Tigers, scoring 12.25 victories against the Japanese. When the AVG was deactivated, Hill, now a double-ace, joined the United States Army Air Force, remaining in the China theatre to command the 23rd Fighter Group. ‘Tex’ Hill eventually took command of the first American jet fighter group and would later serve in Korea.

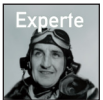


‘GABBY’ GABRESKI

United States Army Air Forces, 34.5 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Supremacy 1943-1945

Francis Stanley Gabreski was the top American fighter ace of the war, but his first experience of combat was with the Royal Air Force while serving as a liaison with the Polish-manned 315 (Deblin) Squadron. The Poles’ experience rubbed off on Gabreski, who on returning to the USAAF began to rack up kills in the European Theatre, tying with Johnnie Johnson before he was shot down over Germany. He spent the rest of the war as a prisoner before being liberated by the Soviet Army.



HUBERT ‘HUB’ ZEMKE

United States Army Air Forces, 17.75 Victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Eagles 1943-1945

Though he had no particular interest in flying as a youth, Hubert ‘Hub’ Zemke became one of the pre-eminent World War II fighter commanders in the European theater. His 56th Fighter Group, the ‘Wolfpack’, was credited with 665 air-to-air victories, leading all fighter groups in the European Theater of Operations. Rising to the rank of colonel, Zemke alone had 17.75 confirmed victories in 154 combat missions, putting him in the top 25 of all Army Air Forces World War II fighter pilots. He originated the Zemke Fan, allowing fighter escorts more freedom to ‘fan out’ to engage enemy fighters rather than await their attack. He ended the war in a POW camp after his P-51 lost a wing in turbulence over Germany.

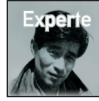


TETSUZO IWAMOTO

Imperial Japanese Navy, 202 Victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Eagles 1943-1945

Iwamoto's first combat occurred over China in early 1938, where he scored 14 victories and emerged as one of the top Japanese aces, credited with up to 202 victories according to his own combat reports (although US sources tally 80-90 victories). Iwamoto's long career stretched over both the Indian and Pacific oceans. He served in the carrier *Zuikaku* until after the battle of the Coral Sea in mid-1942. He then operated from land bases. Iwamoto gained more than half of his victories at Rabaul and also saw action at Truk Atoll, the Philippines, and Okinawa. One of the few Japanese fighter pilots from 1938 to survive the entire war, he died from complications resulting from abdominal surgery in 1955.

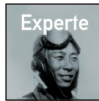


ISAMU KASHIIDE

Imperial Japanese Army, 9 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Supremacy 1943-1945

Isamu Kashiide's long career encompassed the Battles of Khalkin Gol in Mongolia, where he opened his account against the Soviets, as well as the defence of the Home Islands. After participating in the invasion of the Philippines, he flew mainly in home defence and began to specialise in attacks on B-29 Superfortress raids. He was to end the war with claims of 26 B-29s and 7 Soviet fighters, though this has since been revised down to 7 B-29s and 2 Soviet I-16s.



SABURO SAKAI

Imperial Japanese Navy, 28 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Victories 1940-1942

A pilot with the Imperial Japanese Naval Air Force, Saburo Sakai was one of the leading aces of the Pacific War, starting his flying career in China before transferring to the Solomon Islands and New Guinea theatres. While on a mission over Guadalcanal, Sakai sustained a loss of vision to one eye, leading to his posting as a flight instructor back in Japan. With the war going badly, Sakai eventually persuaded his superiors to let him return to combat. In the final months of the war he flew escort for Kamikaze missions against the Allies. Sakai survived the war credited with approximately 28 aerial victories, though post-war authors have attributed as many as 64 to him.

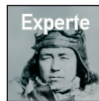


SADAAKI AKAMATSU

Imperial Japanese Navy, 30 victories

Appears in C3i Magazine #29

Considered a maverick in the strict Imperial Japanese Naval Air Force, Sadaaki Akamatsu fought in China before flying in the Philippines and Dutch East Indies theatres at the outbreak of the Pacific War. Posted back to Japan, Akamatsu flew numerous missions against Allied air attacks on the home islands. Rising and falling in rank due to his notorious lack of discipline—he was said to have flown many missions while drunk—Akamatsu was considered a skilled dogfighter by his contemporaries. He survived the war with approximately 30 aerial victories, but in peacetime eventually succumbed to alcoholism.



HIROYOSHI NISHIZAWA

Imperial Japanese Navy, 36 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Victories 1940-1942

Known to his friend Saburo Sakai as 'The Devil', Hiroyoshi Nishizawa was one of the Imperial Japanese Navy's leading aces, seeing action over New Guinea and Guadalcanal. A reserved loner, Nishizawa fought on despite attacks of malaria and was famed as an aerobatic pilot. After Guadalcanal, Nishizawa served as a pilot instructor before returning to combat in the Philippines to escort the Navy's first organized aerial Kamikaze mission at Mabalacat in 1944. The next day, Nishizawa was killed when the transport plane he was a passenger in was shot down.



ADRIANO VISCONTI

Regia Aeronautica and Aeronautica Nazionale Repubblicana, 10 victories

Appears in C3i Magazine #29

Beginning his career as a ground attack pilot with a reputation for indiscipline, Adriano Visconti di Lampugnano demonstrated such heroism that he was able to switch to fighters and was active in the Mediterranean theatre flying for the Regia Aeronautica. After the Italian Armistice, Visconti defected to the Fascist Social Republic. With the military collapse of Italy, Visconti surrendered to and was shot by communist partisans. Though he never claimed more than 10 victories, later sources would credit him with 26.

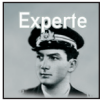


FRANCO LUCCHINI

Regia Aeronautica, 21 victories

Appears in C3i Magazine #29

Already a veteran flier after claiming 5 victories during the Spanish Civil War, Franco Lucchini flew for the Regia Aeronautica over Malta and in the North African theatre, where he is credited with downing, though not killing, the British ace Marmaduke 'Pat' Pattle. Later on, returning from convalescence after being wounded, Lucchini took part in the defence of Sicily. In July 1943 he was shot down and killed over Catania by defensive fire from a B-17. The *Medaglia d'Oro al Valor Militare* was awarded posthumously, after the war.

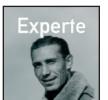


TERESIO MARTINOLI

Regia Aeronautica and Aeronautica Co-Belligerente, 22 victories

Appears in C3i Magazine #29

Earning decorations with both the Axis and the Allies during World War 2, Martinoli began flying for the Regia Aeronautica in the North African and Malta theatres. With the war going against Italy, Martinoli was posted to the defence of Sicily and the Italian mainland, where he was credited with shooting down a P-38 and a B-17. When the Italian Armistice was announced, Martinoli joined the Co-Belligerent air force on the side of the Allies. Martinoli was killed in a flying accident whilst converting from the Italian MC.205 fighter to the American P-39.



LIDYA LITVYAK

Soviet Air Defence Forces, 12 victories

Appears in C3i Magazine #29

Named the 'White Rose of Stalingrad' by Soviet propagandists, Lidya Vladimirovna Litvyak was a member of the 586th Fighter Regiment of the Air Defence Forces. However, she fought mostly in men's regiments, eventually being appointed a flight commander in the 73rd Guards Fighter Regiment. Operating in the Stalingrad, Orel, and Kursk theatres, Litvyak built her scores until she failed to return from a mission one day in 1943. Her remains were not discovered until the 1970s and she was awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union posthumously.



MIKHAIL BARANOV

Soviet Frontal Aviation, 24 victories

Appears in C3i Magazine #29

Mikhail Dmitriyevich Baranov was the leading Soviet ace of 1942. Flying for Frontal Aviation in the Stalingrad area, he claimed several victories before being shot down. He evaded capture with a wounded leg for two weeks before returning to his unit. On another mission, in August 1942, Baranov shot down 3 aircraft and then, when out of ammunition, rammed and destroyed a fourth. Now a Hero of the Soviet Union, Baranov was feted by the press and performed various publicity tours. Returning to combat duty with the all-ace unit, the 9th Guards Fighter Regiment, Baranov was killed in January 1943 when performing aerobatics over his aerodrome.

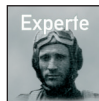


IVAN SYTOV

Soviet Frontal Aviation, 26 victories

Appears in C3i Magazine #29

Serving in the Stalingrad and Kursk areas of Russia for the Soviet Air Force, Ivan Nikitovich Sytov flew with the 788th Fighter Regiment, scoring several victories. Later, when flying with the 5th Guards Fighter Regiment, Sytov scored the majority of his 26 credited aerial victories before being shot down and killed in October 1943.

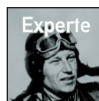


ALEXANDER POKRYSHKIN

Soviet Frontal Aviation, 59 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Supremacy 1943-1945

Alexander Ivanovich Pokryshkin was the great tactician of the Soviet Air Forces. Having survived the early battles of the German invasion, Pokryshkin began to critique Soviet tactics and advocate for new doctrine. This resulted in him being grounded and court-martialed. However, he was soon vindicated and returned to duty in time for the battles over the Kuban. As a high-scoring ace and keen analyst of air combat, he was able to guide the development of new tactics during the Kuban battles. His principles for fighting were simple and derivative, but were founded on hard-earned combat experience. The new doctrine helped the Soviets to an air victory over the Luftwaffe. As the war continued Pokryshkin gave up a safe desk job to continue flying, and when ordered not to fly he frequently disobeyed (see scenario S12, *The Return of the Guards*). After the war he fell out of favour, in part because of his plain speaking as well as his liking for American aircraft like the P-39 fighter. Never rising above middling rank during the war he eventually became a Marshal of the Air Force.

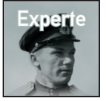


IVAN KOZHEDUB

Soviet Frontal Aviation, 66 victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Supremacy 1943-1945

The top-scoring Allied ace of the war, Ivan Kozhedub spent 1941-42 serving as an instructor pilot before he could wrangle a transfer to the front. Possessing a rare skill for deflection shooting, his first kill came during the Kursk battles and from there his score accumulated. He was most associated with Lavochkin aircraft, such as the La-5 and La-7. After the war he led a jet fighter division in Korea against some of his former American allies.



MARCEL ALBERT

Armée de l'Air, 23 Victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Blitz 1939-1942

Marcel Albert might have the most diverse service record of any WWII fighter pilot. Joining the French Armée de l'Air in 1938, he scored one victory, and two more unconfirmed, flying D.520s during the Battle of France. As part of the Vichy air force, he fought against the RAF over Gibraltar before defecting with two other pilots in October 1940. He then served with 340 Squadron RAF in Spitfires. In late 1942, Albert joined the Free French Normandie-Nieman squadron which fought as part of the Soviet VVS on the Eastern Front, equipped with Yak-1 fighters, and later Yak-9s and Yak-3s. In 1944, Albert was given the Soviet Union's highest decoration, the Gold Star "Hero of the Soviet Union"—an award rarely given to foreigners.



PIERRE CLOSTERMANN

Forces Aériennes Françaises Libres, 33 Victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Blitz 1939-1942

When French military authorities refused his application for service in 1939, Clostermann travelled to America to become a commercial pilot. He joined the Forces Aériennes Françaises Libres (FAFL or Free French Air Force) in Britain in March 1942. January 1943, he was posted to 341 Squadron RAF (known to the Free French as GC III/2 "Alsace"). Clostermann flew a variety of missions including fighter sweeps, bomber escorts, and strafing or dive-bombing attacks on V-1 launch sites. He was one of the first Free French pilots to land on French soil on 18 June 1944. As part of 274 Squadron, equipped with the Tempest, he flew an intensive and highly successful round of fighter sweeps, airfield attacks, and "rat scramble" interceptions of Me 262 jet fighters.



JEAN DEMOZAY DSO DFC*

Royal Air Force, 21 Victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Blitz 1939-1942

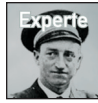
Jean Demozay, rejected as medically unfit by the French military in 1936, managed to join the RAF as an interpreter shortly after the outbreak of war in 1939. Born in Nantes, he was fluent in English having specialized in English studies and then attended college in Portsmouth. After the fall of France, he escaped to England and began training as a fighter pilot. As part of No. 1 Squadron, Hurricanes, Demozay scored his first victory, a Ju 88, in November 1940. In June 1941, now with six victories, he was promoted to flight leader in 91 Squadron, the first for a French officer in the RAF. In January 1943, Demozay was made wing leader. He was killed in a flying accident in December 1945.



PIERRE LE GLOAN

Armée de l'Air, 18 Victories

Appears in Wing Leader: Blitz 1939-1942



Pierre Le Gloan joined the Armée de l'Air 1931. During the Battle of France, flying with GC III/6, Le Gloan downed 11 aircraft. In mid-June, with another pilot, Le Gloan attacked twelve Italian CR.42 fighters and shot down three. On the return flight he shot down one more CR.42 and a BR.20 bomber for a remarkable achievement of five victories in one day. As part of the Vichy air force, GC III/6 was moved to Syria where, during June and July 1941, Le Gloan shot down seven RAF aircraft – an unusual accomplishment of acquiring ace status with both the Allies and the Axis. Following the Vichy surrender Le Gloan continued service with the Free French but, in 1943, was killed in a training accident while flying a P-39.