

## **112 Victories: Aerial Victory Credits of the Tuskegee Airmen**

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The only African-American pilots in combat with the Army Air Forces during World War II believed they had something to prove. They knew that if they performed well in battle, the decision to accept them in a role from which they had previously been excluded would be vindicated. Excellent combat performance would also contribute to expanding opportunities for African Americans, not only in the armed forces of the United States, but in American society as a whole. Later known as “Tuskegee Airmen” because they had trained to fly at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama, members of the 332d Fighter Group and its four squadrons, the 99<sup>th</sup>, 100<sup>th</sup>, 301<sup>st</sup>, and 302d, more than met the challenge. They shot down 112 enemy aircraft in flight. This paper describes that important part of their story.

Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. served as the most famous of the 332d Fighter Group commanders. His father had been the first African-American general in the U.S. Army. Partly because he was a graduate of West Point, Colonel Davis had already been commander of the 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, the first black flying unit in the Army Air Corps. The squadron was more than a year older than the group.<sup>1</sup>

The 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron deployed from Tuskegee, Alabama, to French Morocco in April 1943. Originally flying the P-40 Warhawk aircraft, the 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron began combat operations from Tunisia on June 2. While serving under the Twelfth Air Force, the 99<sup>th</sup> and other fighter and bomber squadrons attacked enemy installations in Tunisia and Sicily and on the island of Pantelleria in the Mediterranean

Sea. The defenders of Pantelleria, heavily bombarded from the air and sea, surrendered on June 11 without the need for an invasion.<sup>2</sup>

On 2 July 1943, 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron pilots escorted B-25 medium bombers in an attack on Castelvetro, Italy. Enemy FW-190 fighters rose to intercept the bombers, and the Tuskegee P-40s intervened. On that day Lt. Charles B. Hall scored the squadron's first aerial victory. Never before had an African-American fighter pilot in the U.S. armed forces shot down an enemy aircraft.<sup>3</sup>

Hall's was the only squadron aerial victory for all of 1943. On June 9, a squadron formation had scattered when a German fighter force twice its size and flying superior aircraft attacked it from above and out of the sun. Army Air Force generals questioned whether the 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron should remain in combat. In testimony before the War Department's Advisory Committee on Negro Troop Policies, Colonel Davis convinced committee members to endorse his squadron's continued combat role.<sup>4</sup>

From the spring of 1943 until May of 1944, the 99<sup>th</sup> was assigned to the XII Air Support Command but attached at various times to white fighter groups, including the 324<sup>th</sup>, the 33d, and the 79<sup>th</sup>. During that time, the squadron supported the Allied invasion of Sicily, to which it moved in late July 1943, and the mainland of Italy, to which it moved in October. On January 16, 1944, the squadron moved again, this time to Capodichino Airdrome near Naples.<sup>5</sup>

Less than one week later, more than 37,000 Allied troops launched an amphibious invasion of Anzio, about 35 miles south of Rome. Although they established a beachhead by nightfall, they could not break out of the city. On January 23, Luftwaffe aircraft attacked the Allied positions and two hospital ships in the harbor. Four Army Air

Forces fighter groups and their squadrons took on the task of repelling enemy air raids. Among them was the 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron.<sup>6</sup>

On January 27 and 28, formations of FW-190 German warplanes raided Anzio. Eleven of the squadron's pilots shot down enemy fighters in those two days. Among the victors was Captain Charles B. Hall, who had already scored the squadron's first aerial victory almost seven months earlier. Hall shot down two, bringing his aerial victory total to three.<sup>7</sup>

Eight fighter squadrons were involved in the air defense of Anzio on January 27 and 28, and together they shot down a total of 32 enemy aircraft. Of these, the 99<sup>th</sup> had the highest score, with 13. The most enemy aircraft shot down by any of the other squadrons in those two days was seven. Black fighter pilots proved that they could shoot down enemy aircraft as well as their white counterparts after all.<sup>8</sup>

99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron pilots earned four more aerial victory credits on February 5 and 7, 1944, shooting down German FW-190s raiding Anzio and driving off others. Now the squadron total was 18. By the end of the war, the squadron had also earned three Distinguished Unit Citations.<sup>9</sup>

Former squadron commander Col. Benjamin O. Davis had returned to the United States in October 1943 to assume command of the 332d Fighter Group, the first African-American fighter group. In February 1944, the group moved to the Mediterranean Theater with three assigned squadrons, the 100<sup>th</sup>, 301<sup>st</sup>, and 302d. On May 1, the 99<sup>th</sup> joined the group.<sup>10</sup>

Members of the 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron would still have the opportunity to shoot down enemy aircraft, but no longer for the Twelfth Air Force on close air support and

interdiction missions. The new mission of the 332d Fighter Group was to escort heavy bombers of the Fifteenth Air Force on raids against enemy strategic targets in southern and central Europe. They served as one of seven such groups. By the end of May, the group was equipped with P-47 Thunderbolt fighters and settled at Ramitelli Airfield in Italy.<sup>11</sup>

On June 9, 1944, Col. Davis led 332d Fighter Group as it escorted bombers of the 304<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing on a raid to Munich, Germany. Over the Udine area of northeastern Italy, up to 20 enemy fighters challenged the formations, and a series of dogfights ensued. Four of the Tuskegee Airmen shot down five ME-109s that day. Success was dampened by the fact that one of the Tuskegee flyers failed to return. 332d Fighter Group commander Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroism that day.<sup>12</sup>

During July, 1944, the Tuskegee Airmen downed 36 enemy aircraft, the most they ever scored in a single month. One reason was that the group had begun flying the P-51 Mustang, which was faster and more maneuverable than the previous types the group had flown. The 332d Fighter Group pilots proudly painted their aircraft tails red to distinguish them from the fighters of the other six groups of the Fifteenth Air Force, each of which had its own color scheme.<sup>13</sup>

On July 12, group fighters escorted a formation of B-24 heavy bombers of the 49<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing to bomb the marshalling yards at Nimes in southern France. Near the target, enemy FW-190 fighters attacked the formation from above, diving through it. 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Harold E. Sawyer of the 301<sup>st</sup> Fighter Squadron shot down one of the FW-

190s. Another Tuskegee Airman, Joseph D. Elsberry, shot down three of the enemy aircraft. Elsberry earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions that day.<sup>14</sup>

On July 16, the 332d Fighter Group sent more than 40 P-51s on a fighter sweep of Vienna, Austria. On departing the target area, a few of the Mustang pilots spotted an Italian-made enemy aircraft approaching a straggling B-24 from another Allied mission. The group's operations officer chased the enemy pilot and hit him with several bullets as he descended and turned to escape. Trailing thick black smoke, the quarry struck a mountain and burst into flames. Another Tuskegee Airman spotted a similar enemy airplane below him and shot pieces of the airplane off before it also crashed into the ground.<sup>15</sup>

The next day, July 17, members of the 332d Fighter Group escorted Fifteenth Air Force B-24 Liberators on a raid against a marshalling yard and railroad bridge at Avignon in southern France. Three ME-109s from a distant larger formation of enemy fighters approached in a string to attack the Liberators. Three Tuskegee pilots each chose one of the enemy fighters and chased it into the ground.<sup>16</sup>

As far as aerial victories are concerned, July 18 was the best day yet. The red-tailed Mustangs shot down 12 enemy airplanes, beating the previous one-day record of 10. While escorting 5<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing B-17s on a raid against an airfield at Memmingen, they encountered at least 30 German ME-109s over the Udine and Treviso areas of Italy. The enemy fighters approached from different directions and altitudes in groups of two and five. Most of the day's victories belonged to the 21 Tuskegee Airmen P-51s that engaged these German aircraft, but the P-51s that continued to the target area

also shot down two of four FW-190s that dove on the bomber formations over Memmingen. Three of the group's pilots went missing that day. <sup>17</sup>

On July 20, 1944, the 332d Fighter Group escorted heavy bombers of three wings to their targets in the Friedrichshafen area of Germany. They also conducted a fighter sweep northeast of the target. Of the 44 P-51 escorts on the raid 20 peeled off to engage an equal number of fighters that attacked the rear wave of bombers in the Udine area. The Tuskegee pilots shot down four ME-109s. No Tuskegee Airmen fell that day.<sup>18</sup>

Both bombers and fighters sometimes faced more danger from anti-aircraft artillery than from enemy aircraft. On July 21 and 22, for example, 332d Fighter Group pilots escorting B-17s and B-24s to Brux and Ploesti encountered no enemy air resistance, but lost two P-51s to flak.<sup>19</sup>

On other days, enemy fighters were out in force. On July 25, while escorting B-24s on a raid against a tank factory at Linz, Austria, 44 Tuskegee fighters encountered an almost equal number of ME-109s. Most of the enemy fighters provided top cover for their attacking compatriots, who struck the bombers in groups of three and four. In the ensuing air battle, 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Harold E. Sawyer of the 301<sup>st</sup> Fighter Squadron shot down one ME-109 and damaged two others, but the same squadron lost two pilots in the engagement.<sup>20</sup>

July 26, 1944 was a day of triumph and tragedy. On the positive side, the Tuskegee Airmen shot down four ME-109s while escorting the 47<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing on a mission against Markendorf airdrome, Austria. At least 18 enemy ME-109 fighters, peeling off in pairs, attacked the bombers in the target area. The victory for Captain Edward L. Toppins was his fourth, more than any other Tuskegee pilot to that time. On

the negative side, 2d Lieutenant Charles B. Jackson of the 100<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron was lost.<sup>21</sup>

The next day was better. 37 pilots of the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s on a raid against an arms factory in the Budapest area of Hungary. North of Lake Balaton, they were met by more than 25 enemy fighters, which attacked from all directions. In the ensuing dogfights, the Tuskegee pilots shot down eight enemy aircraft, including four FW-190s and four ME-109s. In the target area, 12 additional FW-190s attacked the bomber formations, but 332d Fighter Group P-51s easily dispersed them.<sup>22</sup>

On July 30, the 332d Fighter Group closed out its aerial victories for the month. 2d Lieutenant Carl E. Johnson of the 100 Fighter Squadron, having joined 42 other P-51 pilots in escorting bombers attacking Budapest, shot down an Italian-made RE-2001 that attempted to shoot down one of the Mustangs on the way back.<sup>23</sup>

During August, 1944, the Tuskegee Airmen encountered less enemy aircraft opposition, but there were a few outstanding days. On August 14, more than 60 of the 332d Fighter Group P-51s strafed targets in southern France. Two ME-109s and two FW-190s attacked the Mustangs at about 15,000 feet in the Toulon area, coming from high and behind. 2d Lieutenant George M. Rhodes, Jr. of the 100<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron chased one of the FW-190s as it descended to the deck, hitting the left wing and causing it to crash. While enemy aircraft shot down no Tuskegee Airmen that day, two were lost to flak.<sup>24</sup>

On August 23, the group escorted bombers to Markersdorf Airdrome in Germany. Sixty P-51s accompanied the bombers to the target area and spotted 14 ME-109s at 28,000 to 30,000 feet. Seven of the enemy airplanes dived through the formation, and

some of the Tuskegee pilots gave chase. Flight Officer William L. Hill of the 302d Fighter Squadron shot down one of the ME-109s.<sup>25</sup>

The next aerial encounter occurred the next day, as 52 P-51s of the 332d Fighter Group escorted 5<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing B-24 and B-17 bombers to Pardubice Airdrome in Czechoslovakia. 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant John F. Briggs attacked one ME-109 that approached the formation. His bullets knocked pieces off the enemy aircraft and the pilot bailed out. During the same mission, two 302d Fighter Squadron pilots each destroyed an FW-190 as they dove toward the deck. One of the enemy planes crashed into the ground while attempting to evade, and the other one succumbed to gunfire.<sup>26</sup>

Opportunities for Tuskegee victories diminished as the war continued. During September, the 332d Fighter Group rarely encountered any enemy aircraft, and thus shot down none. October was the same, except for one memorable day. On Columbus Day, October 12, 1944, the group destroyed nine enemy airplanes as it strafed railroad traffic in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The 302d Fighter Squadron encountered a lone twin-engine HE-111 near Tapolca, Hungary, and Capt. Wendell O. Pruitt peeled off to attack it. When he did, nine other enemy airplanes arrived, including two other HE-111s and seven ME-109s that were probably escorting them. A furious air battle followed during the next fifteen minutes, ranging between the altitudes of 7,000 and a few hundred feet. 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Lee A. Archer shot down three of the ME-109s in rapid succession, bringing his total of enemy aircraft destroyed to four. Pruitt got the HE-111 he originally targeted, plus another ME-109 besides. Only one of the enemy airplanes, an ME-109, got away. Flak got the only Tuskegee Airman lost that day.<sup>27</sup>



On November 16, the 332d Fighter Group experienced its only other aerial encounter of 1944. As three of the 332d Group's P-51s escorted a crippled B-24 heavy bomber of the 304<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing toward Allied territory, they were attacked by eight ME-109s near the Udine area of Italy. The enemy planes came in from high and behind, attacking in a string from an altitude of 24,000 feet. Captain Luke J. Weathers of the 302d Fighter Squadron chased one of the ME-109s as it descended rapidly in a defensive Lufberry maneuver. His guns hit their target, and it smoked before crashing into the ground. Another ME-109 got behind Weathers, who chopped his throttle. The enemy airplane overshot and ended up in front of the P-51. Weathers fired short bursts and the enemy pilot, attempting to evade, crashed into a mountainside. The encounter was over in less than ten minutes. The other six ME-109s got away. The month was bittersweet. Many of the group's best pilots, including Lee Archer, completed their quota of missions and returned home.<sup>28</sup>

In the four months between November 16, 1944 and March 16, 1945, the Tuskegee Airmen scored no aerial victories, partly because harsh winter weather and shortages of enemy pilots and fuel discouraged aerial encounters. The Luftwaffe also concentrated its forces in northern Europe, where Allied forces advanced from both east and west. In January and February, 1945, pilots of the 332d Fighter Group occasionally spotted enemy aircraft, probably jets, but they were too fast and far away to challenge.<sup>29</sup>

As the weather improved in March, so did the opportunity to shoot down enemy airplanes. On March 16, 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant William S. Price III and four of his fellow Tuskegee Airmen descended on Mettenheim airfield to strafe enemy aircraft on the

ground. Price shot at an ME-109 just as it became airborne, and it quickly cartwheeled into the ground. It was the first of 16 Tuskegee victories for the month.<sup>30</sup>

The next victories came on March 24. 43 of the 332d Fighter Group's P-51s escorted B-17s of the 5<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing on a raid against the Daimler-Benz tank factory in Berlin. A total of 25 enemy airplanes rose up to challenge the bombers. Among them were FW-190s, jet ME-262s, and rocket-propelled ME-163s. While both of the latter two aircraft types could fly at least 100 miles per hour faster than the P-51 Mustangs, they could not turn as quickly. Rapid fuel consumption also restricted the time jets and rockets could engage in aerial combat. Short of fuel, the Germans limited use of the new airplanes, and training was restricted. Three of the 100<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron pilots each shot down one of the ME-262s, the first time members of the 332d Fighter Group destroyed any jets. The pilots were 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenants Roscoe C. Brown and Earl R. Lane, and 2d Lieutenant Charles V. Brantley. For its outstanding performance in combat that day, the 332d Fighter Group earned the Distinguished Unit Citation. The day was not unmitigated triumph for the Americans, however. One of the jets shot the right wing off a P-51, and its pilot, Captain Armour G. McDaniel, went down.<sup>31</sup>

In terms of aerial victory credits, the best day for the Tuskegee Airmen was March 31. Members of the 332d Fighter Group shot down 13 airplanes, the most since the 12 they got on July 18, 1944. The red-tailed Mustangs were conducting a fighter sweep of the Munich area and strafing rail targets in southern Germany when they were challenged by German ME-109s and FW-190s. Six members of the 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron shot down five ME-109s and one FW-190, all of the enemy fighters that challenged them in their assigned western sector of the target area. The 100<sup>th</sup> Fighter

Squadron also produced six victors that day. They shot down five FW-190s and two ME-109s. The eleven enemy fighters that challenged the 100<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron in its eastern sector of the target area were more aggressive than those that confronted the 99th, and four got away.<sup>32</sup>

On April 1, the primary mission of the 332d Fighter Group was to escort B-24s raiding St. Polten marshalling yard. Eight of the 47 red-tailed P-51s that launched preceded the bombers and then flew a fighter sweep of the Linz area of Austria. Flying at an altitude of 5,000 feet, the Mustang pilots spotted four FW-190s near Wels flying in the same direction but about 2,000 feet below them. They dived to attack, but at that point, 12 additional enemy aircraft appeared from a higher altitude. A series of individual dogfights ensued, ranging from altitudes of 5,000 feet to the deck. The enemy pilots attempted to out-turn the P-51s or to lead them over antiaircraft artillery. Seven members of the 301<sup>st</sup> Fighter Squadron shot down 12 enemy airplanes that day, including eight FW-190s and four ME-109s. Unfortunately, three of the P-51s failed to return.<sup>33</sup>

On April 15, the 332d Fighter Group launched 37 P-51s to strafe rail targets in southern Germany and Austria. Mustangs of the 99<sup>th</sup>, 100<sup>th</sup>, and 301<sup>st</sup> Fighter Squadrons each took a separate area. While two of the 301<sup>st</sup> pilots were strafing rail traffic, they spotted an ME-109 and chased him. 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Jimmy Lanham's shots hit the enemy aircraft in the engine, and it burst into flames before crashing into the ground. Four of the Tuskegee pilots failed to return to Ramitelli that day, but they were not all lost. Two landed at alternate fields.<sup>34</sup>

The final day for Tuskegee Airmen aerial victories was April 26. Three of six group P-51s escorting a reconnaissance airplane peeled off to investigate an unidentified

aircraft that turned out to be an Allied Mosquito. On their way back, they encountered five ME-109s that rocked their wings to appear to be friendly. Not fooled, the Mustang pilots turned toward the enemy, who took evasive action. Only one of the ME-109s escaped. A few days later, the war ended.<sup>35</sup>

During World War II, 72 Tuskegee Airmen shot down 112 enemy aircraft, including the best of the German fighters. Members of the 332d Fighter Group downed at least ten airplanes on four separate days in 1944 and 1945. Three of the Tuskegee Airmen, the 301<sup>st</sup> Fighter Squadron's Captain Joseph D. Elsberry, the 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron's Captain Edward L. Toppins and the 302d Fighter Squadron's Lieutenant Lee A. Archer, each shot down four enemy planes. On most missions, the group escorted heavy bombers of the Fifteenth Air Force on raids against targets in Germany, Austria, and other parts of central Europe. The Tuskegee Airmen proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that African-Americans were capable of flying the best of the Allied fighters to victory against the best of the enemy fighters. They earned an indelible place in the history not only of their service, but also in the history of their country and of the world.<sup>36</sup>

**CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE  
AIRMEN AERIAL VICTORY CREDITS**

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Downed</b>	<b>GO #</b>
2 Jul 1943	1 Lt Charles B. Hall	99 FS	1 FW-190	32 XII ASC 7 Sep 43
27 Jan 1944	2 Lt Clarence W. Allen	99 FS	0.5 FW-190	66 XII AF 24 May 44
	1 Lt Willie Ashley Jr.	99 FS	1 FW-190	122 XII AF 7 Aug 44
	2 Lt Charles P. Bailey	99 FS	1 FW-190	66 XII AF 24 May 44
	1 Lt Howard Baugh	99 FS	1 FW-190 0.5 FW-190	122 XII AF 7 Aug 44 66 XII AF 24 May 44
	Cpt Lemuel R. Custis	99 FS	1 FW-190	122 XII AF 7 Aug 44
	1 Lt Robert W. Deiz	99 FS	1 FW-190	66 XII AF 24 May 44
	2 Lt Wilson V. Eagleson	99 FS	1 FW-190	66 XII AF 24 May 44
	1 Lt Leon C. Roberts	99 FS	1 FW-190	122 XII AF 7 Aug 44
	2 Lt Lewis C. Smith	99 FS	1 FW-190	66 XII AF 24 May 44
	1 Lt Edward L. Toppins	99 FS	1 FW-190	81 XII AF 22 Jun 44
28 Jan 1944	1 Lt Robert W. Deiz	99 FS	1 FW-190	122 XII AF 7 Aug 44
	Cpt Charles B. Hall	99 FS	1 FW-190 1 ME-109	64 XII AF 22 May 44
5 Feb 1944	1 Lt Elwood T. Driver	99 FS	1 FW-190	66 XII AF 24 May 44
7 Feb 1944	2 Lt Wilson V. Eagleson	99 FS	1 FW-190	122 XII AF 7 Aug 44
	2 Lt Leonard M. Jackson	99 FS	1 FW-190	66 XII AF 24 May 44
	1 Lt Clinton B. Mills	99 FS	1 FW-190	66 XII AF 24 May 44
9 Jun 1944	1 Lt Charles M. Bussy	302 FS	1 ME-109	1473 XV AF 30 Jun 44
	2 Lt Frederick D. Funderburg	301 FS	2 ME-109s	1473 XV AF 30 Jun 44
	1 Lt Melvin T. Jackson	302 FS	1 ME-109	1473 XV AF 30 Jun 44
	1 Lt Wendell O. Pruitt	302 FS	1 ME-109	1473 XV AF 30 Jun 44
12 Jul 1944	1 Lt Harold E. Sawyer	301 FS	1 FW-190	2032 XV AF 23 Jul 44
	1 Lt. Joseph D. Elsberry	301 FS	3 FW-190s	2466 XV AF Aug 44
16 Jul 1944	1 Lt Alfonza W. Davis	332 FG	1 MA-205	2030 XV AF 23 Jul 44

	2 Lt William W. Green Jr	302 FS	1 MA-202	2029 XV AF 23 Jul 44
17 Jul 1944	1 Lt Luther H. Smith Jr.	302 FS	1 ME-109	2350 XV AF 6 Aug 44
	2 Lt Robert H. Smith	302 FS	1 ME-109	2350 XV AF 6 Aug 44
	1 Lt Laurence D. Wilkins	302 FS	1 ME-109	2350 XV AF 6 Aug 44
18 Jul 1944	2 Lt Lee A. Archer	302 FS	1 ME-109	2350 XV AF 6 Aug 44
	1 Lt Charles P. Bailey	99 FS	1 FW-190	2484 XV AF 11 Aug 44
	1 Lt Weldon K. Groves	302 FS	1 ME-109	2350 XV AF 6 Aug 44
18 Jul 1944	1 Lt Jack D. Holsclaw	100 FS	2 ME-109s	2202 XV AF 31 Jul 44
	2 Lt Clarence D. Lester	100 FS	3 ME-109s	2202 XV AF 31 Jul 44
	2 Lt Walter J. A. Palmer	100 FS	1 ME-109	2202 XV AF 31 Jul 44
	2 Lt Roger Romine	302 FS	1 ME-109	2350 XV AF 6 Aug 44
	Cpt Edward L. Toppins	99 FS	1 FW-190	2484 XV AF 11 Aug 44*
	2 Lt Hugh S. Warner	302 FS	1 ME-109	2350 XV AF 6 Aug 44
20 Jul 1944	Cpt Joseph D. Elsberry	301 FS	1 ME-109	2284 XV AF 3 Aug 44
	1 Lt Langdon E. Johnson	100 FS	1 ME-109	2202 XV AF 31 Jul 44
	Cpt Armour G. McDaniel	301 FS	1 ME-109	2284 XV AF 3 Aug 44
	Cpt Edward L. Toppins	99 FS	1 ME-109	2484 XV AF 11 Aug 44
25 Jul 1944	1 Lt Harold E. Sawyer	301 FS	1 ME-109	2284 XV AF 3 Aug 44
26 Jul 1944	1 Lt Freddie E. Hutchins	302 FS	1 ME-109	2350 XV AF 6 Aug 44
	1 Lt Leonard M. Jackson	99 FS	1 ME-109	2484 XV AF 11 Aug 44
	2 Lt Roger Romine	302 FS	1 ME-109	2350 XV AF 6 Aug 44
	Cpt Edward L. Toppins	99 FS	1 ME-109	2484 XV AF 11 Aug 44
27 Jul 1944	1 Lt Edward C. Gleed	301 FS	2 FW-190s	2284 XV AF 3 Aug 44
	2 Lt Alfred M. Gorham	301 FS	2 FW-190s	2284 XV AF 3 Aug 44
	Cpt Claude B. Govan	301 FS	1 ME-109	2284 XV AF 3 Aug 44
	2 Lt Richard W. Hall	100 FS	1 ME-109	2485 XV AF 11 Aug 44
	1 Lt Leonard M. Jackson	99 FS	1 ME-109	2484 XV AF 11 Aug 44
	1 Lt Felix J. Kirkpatrick	302 FS	1 ME-109	2350 XV AF 6 Aug 44
30 Jul 1944	2 Lt Carl E. Johnson	100 FS	1 RE-2001	2485 XV AF 11 Aug 44
14	2 Lt George M. Rhodes Jr.	100 FS	1 FW-190	2831 XV AF 25 Aug

Aug 1944				44
23 Aug 1944	FO William L. Hill	302 FS	1 ME-109	3538 XV AF 21 Sep 44
24 Aug 1944	1 Lt John F. Briggs	100 FS	1 ME-109	3153 XV AF 6 Sep 44
	1 Lt Charles E. McGee	302 FS	1 FW-190	3174 XV AF 7 Sep 44
	1 Lt William H. Thomas	302 FS	1 FW-190	449 XV AF 31 Jan 45
12 Oct 1944	1 Lt Lee A. Archer	302 FS	3 ME-109s	4287 XV AF 1 Nov 44
	Cpt Milton R. Brooks	302 FS	1 ME-109	4287 XV AF 1 Nov 44
	1 Lt William W. Green Jr.	302 FS	1 HE-111	4287 XV AF 1 Nov 44
	Cpt Wendell O. Pruitt	302 FS	1 HE-111 1 ME-109	4287 XV AF 1 Nov 44
	1 Lt Roger Romine	302 FS	1 ME-109	4287 XV AF 1 Nov 44
	1 Lt Luther H. Smith Jr.	302 FS	1 HE-111	4604 XV AF 21 Nov 44
16 Nov 1944	Cpt Luke J. Weathers	302 FS	2 ME-109s	4990 XV AF 13 Dec 44
16 Mar 1945	1 Lt William S. Price III	301 FS	1 ME-109	1734 XV AF 24 Mar 45
24 Mar 1945	2 Lt Charles V. Brantley	100 FS	1 ME-262	2293 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	1 Lt Roscoe C. Brown	100 FS	1 ME-262	2293 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	1 Lt Earl R. Lane	100 FS	1 ME-262	2293 XV AF 12 Apr 45
31 Mar 1945	2 Lt Raul W. Bell	100 FS	1 FW-190	2293 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	2 Lt Thomas P. Brasswell	99 FS	1 FW-190	2292 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	1 Lt Roscoe C. Brown	100 FS	1 FW-190	2293 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	Maj William A. Campbell	99 FS	1 ME-109	2292 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	2 Lt John W. Davis	99 FS	1 ME-109	2292 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	2 Lt James L. Hall	99 FS	1 ME-109	2292 XV AF 12 Apr 45
31 Mar 1945	1 Lt Earl R. Lane	100 FS	1 ME-109	2293 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	FO John H. Lyle	100 FS	1 ME-109	2293 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	1 Lt Daniel L. Rich	99 FS	1 ME-109	2292 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	2 Lt Hugh J. White	99 FS	1 ME-109	2292 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	1 Lt Robert W. Williams	100 FS	2 FW-190s	2293 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	2 Lt Bertram W. Wilson Jr.	100 FS	1 FW-190	2293 XV AF 12 Apr 45
1 Apr 1945	2 Lt Carl E. Carey	301 FS	2 FW-190s	2294 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	2 Lt John E. Edwards	301 FS	2 ME-109s	2294 XV AF 12 Apr 45

	FO James H. Fischer	301 FS	1 FW-190	2294 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	2 Lt Walter P. Manning	301 FS	1 FW-190	2294 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	2 Lt Harold M. Morris	301 FS	1 FW-190	2294 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	1 Lt Harry T. Stewart	301 FS	3 FW-190s	2294 XV AF 12 Apr 45
	1 Lt Charles L. White	301 FS	2 ME-109s	2294 XV AF 12 Apr 45
15 Apr 1945	1 Lt Jimmy Lanham	301 FS	1 ME-109	3484 XV AF 29 May 45
26 Apr 1945	2 Lt Thomas W. Jefferson	301 FS	2 ME-109s	3362 XV AF 23 May 45
	1 Lt Jimmy Lanham	301 FS	1 ME-109	3362 XV AF 23 May 45
	2 Lt Richard A. Simons	100 FS	1 ME-109	2990 XV AF 4 May 45

\*order says credit was 16 Jul 1944, but history says 18 Jul 1944



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<sup>1</sup> Biographies of Generals Benjamin O. Davis Sr. and Benjamin O. Davis Jr. in the official biographies file of the Research Division of the Air Force Historical Research Agency; John L. Frisbee, "Out of the Wilderness," *Air Force Magazine*, Mar 1985, 121. Harry R. Fletcher, Lineage and Honors History of the 99<sup>th</sup> Flying Training Squadron, prepared on 23 May 1988 at the USAF Historical Research Center, later the Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

<sup>2</sup> Fletcher. Maurer, *Combat Squadrons*, 329-330. Robert Goralski, *World War II Almanac: 1931-1945* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 287-288; Herman S. Wolk, "Pantelleria, 1943," *Air Force Magazine*, vol. 85 no. 6 (Jun 2002), 64-68.

<sup>3</sup> XII Air Support Command general order 32 dated 7 Sep 1943. Charlie and Ann Cooper, *Tuskegee's Heroes* (Osceola, WI: Motorbooks International, 1996), 75.

<sup>4</sup> Alan L. Gropman, *The Air Force Integrates, 1945-1964* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1978), 12-14; <http://www.aviation-history.com/airmen/davis.htm>; Cooper, 77-79.

<sup>5</sup> Fletcher. Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units*, 144-145.

<sup>6</sup> Kit C. Carter and Robert Mueller, *The Army Air Forces in World War II: Combat Chronology, 1941-1945* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1973), 256; Goralski, 301-302; Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units*, 205-206.

<sup>7</sup> Twelfth Air Force general order 64 dated 22 May 1944; Twelfth Air Force general order 66 dated 24 May 1944; Twelfth Air Force general order 81 dated 22 Jun 1944; Twelfth Air Force general order 122 dated 7 Aug 1944.

<sup>8</sup> USAF Historical Study 85, 413-414; Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units*, 83-87, 144-145, 205-206; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons*, 230-231, 295, 297-300, 329-330, 371-373, 385; Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., *Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., American* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 114.

<sup>9</sup> Twelfth Air Force general order 66 dated 24 May 1944; Twelfth Air Force General Order 122 dated 7 Aug 1944; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons*, 329-330.

<sup>10</sup> Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units*, 212-213; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons*, 329-330.

<sup>11</sup> Charles A. Ravenstein, *The Organization and Lineage of the United States Air Force* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1986), 33-35; Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units*, 213.

<sup>12</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 1473 dated 30 Jun 1944; 332d Fighter Group history, June 1944 (GP-332-HI Jun 1944 at the Air Force Historical Research Agency); Davis, 122-123; Missing Air Crew Reports numbered 6317 and 6179; Fifteenth Air Force General Order number 2972 dated 31 Aug 1944, AFHRA call number 670.193.

<sup>13</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general orders 2029, 2030, and 2032, all dated 23 Jul 1944; Fifteenth Air Force general order 2202 dated 31 Jul 1944; Fifteenth Air Force general order 2284 dated 3 Aug 1944; Fifteenth Air Force general order 2350 dated 6 Aug 1944, and Fifteenth Air Force general orders 2484 and 2485, both dated 11 Aug 1944. 332d Fighter Group history, July 1944 (GP-332-HI Jul 1944 at the Air Force Historical Research Agency).

<sup>14</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 2032 dated 23 Jul 1944; 332 Fighter Group history, Jul 1944, including 332 Fighter Group narrative mission report 23 dated 12 Jul 1944 and supplement to that report; 461<sup>st</sup> Bombardment Group mission report for 12 July 1944; Fifteenth Air Force mission folder for 12 July 1944; missing air crew reports 6808, 6894, 6895, and 7034; Fifteenth Air Force general order 2466 dated 10 Aug 1944.

<sup>15</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general orders 2029 and 2030, both dated 23 Jul 1944; 332 Fighter Group History, Jul 1944; 332 Fighter Group mission report 26 dated 16 Jul 1944.

<sup>16</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 2350 dated 6 Aug 1944; 332 Fighter Group history, Jul 1944; 322 Fighter Group mission report 27 dated 17 Jul 1944; Davis, 123.

<sup>17</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 2350 dated 6 Aug 1944; Fifteenth Air Force general order 2484 dated 11 Aug 1944; Fifteenth Air Force general order 2202 dated 31 Jul 1944; 332d Fighter Group History, July 1944; 332d Fighter Group Mission Report 28 dated 18 Jul 1944; Fifteenth Air Force Mission Folder for 18 July 1944, AFHRA call number 670.332; Missing Air Crew Report numbers 6856, 6953, 6954, 6975, 6976, 6977, 6978, 6979, 6980, 6981, 7097, 7098, 7099, 7153, and 7310.

<sup>18</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 2202 dated 31 Jul 1944; Fifteenth Air Force general order 2284 dated 3 Aug 1944; Fifteenth Air Force general order 2484 dated 11 Aug 1944; 332d Fighter Group History, July

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1944; 332d Fighter Group Mission Report 30 dated 20 Jul 1944; Missing Air Crew Reports numbered 6914 and 6919.

<sup>19</sup> 332d Fighter Group History, July 1944; 332d Fighter Group Mission Reports 33 and 34.

<sup>20</sup> 332d Fighter Group History, July 1944; 332d Fighter Group Mission Report 36.

<sup>21</sup> Fifteenth Air Force GO#2350 dated 6 Aug 1944; Fifteenth Air Force GO#2484 dated 11 Aug 1944; 332d Fighter Group history, July 1944; 332d Fighter Group mission report 37 dated 26 Jul 1944.

<sup>22</sup> Fifteenth Air Force GO#2284 dated 3 Aug 1944; Fifteenth Air Force GO#2350 dated 6 Aug 1944; Fifteenth Air Force GO#2484 dated 11 Aug 1944; Fifteenth Air Force GO#2485 also dated 11 Aug 1944; 332d Fighter Group history, July 1944; 332d Fighter Group mission report 38 dated 27 Jul 1944.

<sup>23</sup> Fifteenth Air Force GO#2485 dated 11 Aug 1944; 332d Fighter Group History, Jul 1944; 332d Fighter Group mission report 40 dated 30 Jul 1944.

<sup>24</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 2831 dated 25 Aug 1944; 332d Fighter Group history, Aug 1944; 332d Fighter Group mission report 51 dated 14 Aug 1944.

<sup>25</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 3538 dated 21 Sep 1944; 332d Fighter Group history, Aug 1944; 332d Fighter Group mission report 60 dated 23 Aug 1944 and its supplement.

<sup>26</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 3153 dated 6 Sep 1944; Fifteenth Air Force general order 3174 dated 7 Sep 1944; Fifteenth Air Force general order 449 dated 31 Jan 1945; 332d Fighter Group history, Aug 1944; 332d Fighter Group mission report 61 dated 24 Aug 1944.

<sup>27</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 4287 dated 1 Nov 1944; Fifteenth Air Force general order 4604 dated 21 Nov 1944; 332 Fighter Group history, Oct 1944; 332d Fighter Group narrative mission report 92 dated 12 Oct 1944, and supplement to that report; Davis, 130.

<sup>28</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 4990 dated 13 Dec 1944; 332 Fighter Group History, Nov 1944; 332 Mission Report 119 dated 16 Nov 1944; Davis, 130.

<sup>29</sup> 332d Fighter Group histories, Jan and Feb 1945.

<sup>30</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 1734 dated 24 Mar 1945; 332 Fighter Group history, Mar 1945; 332 Fighter Group mission report 227 dated 16 Mar 1945.

<sup>31</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 2293 dated 12 Apr 1945; 332d Fighter Group history, Mar 1945; 332 Fighter Group mission report 246 dated 24 Mar 1945; Karen Leverington, *Fighting Aircraft of World War II* (Shrewsbury, England: Airlife, 1995), 81, 83, 99; Davis, 133; Fifteenth Air Force mission folder for 24 Mar 1945; Mission reports of the 2d, 463d, and 483d Bombardment Groups for 24 Mar 1945; Missing air crew reports 13278, 13274, 13375, 13374, and 13271.

<sup>32</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general orders 2292 and 2293 dated 12 Apr 1945; 332d Fighter Group history, Mar 1945; 332d Fighter Group mission report 252 dated 31 Mar 1945; Davis, 133-134.

<sup>33</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 2294 dated 12 Apr 1945; 332 Fighter Group history, Apr 1945; 332 Fighter Group mission report 253 dated 1 Apr 1945; Davis, 134.

<sup>34</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 3484 dated 29 May 1945; 332 Fighter Group history, Apr 1945; 332 Fighter Group mission report 282 dated 15 Apr 1945.

<sup>35</sup> Fifteenth Air Force general order 2990 dated 4 May 1945; Fifteenth Air Force general order 3362 dated 23 May 1945; 332d Fighter Group history, Apr 1945; 332 Fighter Group mission report 309 dated 26 Apr 1945; Davis, 135.

<sup>36</sup> Maurer Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1983), 212-213; Maurer Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II* (Washington, DC: USAF Historical Division, 1969), 329-330, 332, 365, 366; USAF Historical Study No. 85, *USAF Credits for the Destruction of Enemy Aircraft, World War II* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1978), 586, 588, 601.