

Night Witches At War: Uncovering the Unstoppable Female Pilots of World War II



During the darkest days of World War II, when the Nazi war machine seemed unstoppable, a group of extraordinary women emerged from the shadows to fight back: the Night Witches. These brave female pilots of the

Soviet Air Force flew rickety biplanes on daring bombing missions against the enemy, becoming legends in the process.



Night Witches at War: The Soviet Women Pilots of World War II (Amazing World War II Stories)

by Bruce Berglund

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 63900 KB

Print length : 32 pages



The Birth of the Night Witches

The Night Witches were born out of necessity. In 1941, as the German army swept across the Soviet Union, the Soviet Air Force was desperate for pilots. With few men available due to heavy casualties, the Soviet government turned to women for help.

A group of young women, mostly in their early 20s, were recruited and trained as pilots. They were known as the "Night Witches" because they flew mostly at night, using the darkness to evade enemy detection.

Their Aircraft: The Polikarpov Po-2

The Night Witches flew a unique aircraft, the Polikarpov Po-2. This biplane, designed in the 1920s, was outdated and slow, but it had one key advantage: it could take off and land in very short distances. This made it ideal for operating from hidden airstrips in the forests and fields of the Soviet Union.

Their Tactics: Hit-and-Run Bombing

The Night Witches' tactics were simple but effective. They would fly low and slow, approaching their targets from behind enemy lines. They would then drop their bombs on the enemy positions and quickly retreat before the enemy could react.

Their hit-and-run tactics proved to be devastatingly effective. The Night Witches flew over 23,000 sorties during the war, dropping over 3,000 tons of bombs on enemy targets. They destroyed hundreds of enemy aircraft, tanks, and other military equipment.

Their Legacy

The Night Witches were a true inspiration to the Soviet people and to women around the world. They showed that women could be just as capable as men in combat, and they helped to pave the way for greater gender equality in the military.

After the war, the Night Witches were awarded numerous honors and decorations for their bravery. Their story continues to be told today, inspiring generations of young people to overcome adversity and pursue their dreams.

The Book: Night Witches At War

The book "Night Witches At War" tells the story of these extraordinary women in their own words. The book is based on interviews with the surviving Night Witches, as well as archival research. It provides a firsthand account of their experiences during the war, including their training, their missions, and their personal lives.

"Night Witches At War" is a must-read for anyone interested in World War II, women's history, or aviation history. It is a gripping and inspiring story that will stay with you long after you finish reading it.

The Night Witches were an extraordinary group of women who made a significant contribution to the Allied victory in World War II. Their story is one of courage, determination, and inspiration. It is a story that should be told and remembered for generations to come.



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