



HANS ULRICH RUDEL

Hans Ulrich Rudel, the greatest pilot of all time. Born in Seiferdau, Silesia, Germany, in 1916. Hans Ulrich Rudel became the best dive-bomber pilot in history. Since the age of eight he had a love of flying and a fascination with aircraft. Growing up in the turbulent post World War I period, he found solace in his childhood fascination with airplanes.

Beginning his aviation career with average marks he soon developed a flying style uniquely his own. Spending the beginning of WWII in reconnaissance formations, and in cadet training he soon gained a mastery of his aircraft unequalled by his peers. When war was declared on the Communist Soviet Union, Hans had his chance to finally strike the enemies of the Fatherland. He participated in the invasion of the U.S.S.R. in ground support roles and in bombing Soviet columns and troop concentrations. His superiors soon recognized his ability, but gave him a short lease on life due to his daring and willingness to undertake the most dangerous missions.

He repeatedly risked his aircraft and his life to save his comrades which soon won him the love of his peers. His eagerness for battle soon became well known among his squadron, he went to any extreme to never miss a mission. He is credited with the sinking of the Russian battle ship, "Marat", and a Russian cruiser.

Through out the campaign in the East he served valiantly, performing mission after mission. He was the first in his squadron to receive the German Golden Cross, soon after he received the Knight's Iron Cross.

In 1945 he lost his right foot from enemy anti-aircraft fire, and was shot down several times during the war. Ordered by Hitler to take a medical leave and not to return to the front, he twice disobeyed and returned to the front as he felt his duty was to defend the Fatherland to the last drop of his blood. Before the end of the war he was awarded a medal especially made for him by the Fuhrer, he was the only soldier in German history to receive this medal, the Golden Oakleaves with Swords and Diamonds to the Knight's Iron Cross. By the end of the war he was credited with 519 enemy tanks destroyed, 50 gun emplacements destroyed, over 800 combat vehicles destroyed, 1 battleship and 1 cruiser. Hans Ulrich Rudel had over 2,530 operational flights to his credit, unmatched by any pilot in history.

Not content to surrender he moved to Argentina at the end of the war, and continued working for the cause of German and European freedom, he participated in Nationalist rallies in Germany and refused till his death to renounce National Socialism. He died in December of 1982 of a brain hemorrhage. Unrepentant and proud Hans Ulrich Rudel was a National Socialist and a soldier until his dying day.

You are never forgotten comrade...

Hail Hans Ulrich Rudel!

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