



US Airborne Units in the Mediterranean Theater 1942-44 (Battle Orders)

Gordon L. Rottman

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While the best-known multi-division airborne operations were carried out in the European Theater of Operations (such as the Normandy landings and Market Garden), a significant number of airborne assaults were conducted in the Mediterranean Theater in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, and Southern France. These included parachute drops and in some instances glider assaults and provided valuable learning experience for the men and units that would lead the invasion of Europe in June 1944.

This author discusses each unit's internal organization, weapons and equipment (focusing on unique and unusual items), commanders, training, how the unit was raised, its missions, and the extensive combat operations it was involved in, with special attention given to airborne operations. Task organization for combat and details of attached units are also dealt with, together with the unit's command relationship with higher headquarters. The units that discussed in this book include the 82d Airborne Division, 1st Special Service Force, 1st Airborne Task Force (1ATF), 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, 325th Glider Infantry Regiment, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Battalion, 551st Parachute Infantry Regiment, and the 550th Airborne Infantry Battalion.

The book also covers pre-war and early-war airborne units, detailing how the first ones were formed and the tactical thinking involved. Additionally it provides the context and background information for the other two titles on US Airborne Units in the European Theater 1944-45 (Spring 2007) and US Airborne Units in the Pacific Theater 1941-45 (Spring 2007). These volumes will ultimately provide a complete organizational record of all US Airborne units in World War II.

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