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FE 2b/d Vs Albatros Scouts: Western Front 1916-17 (Duel)



Synopsis

World War I aerial combat went through periods of alternating aerial superiority based on technology leaps. Sopwith Camels, Fokkers, and Spads became famous because they dominated later in the war, but this was an ongoing cycle for years. In the spring of 1916 the deployment of the RFC's FE 2 - with its rotary engine 'pusher' configuration affording excellent visibility for its pilot and observer, and removing the need for synchronized machine guns - helped wrest aerial dominance from Imperial Germany's Fokker Eindecker monoplanes, and then contributed to retaining it throughout the Somme battles of that fateful summer. However, by autumn German reorganization saw the birth of the Jagdstaffeln (specialised fighter squadrons) and the arrival of the new Albatros D scout, a sleek inline-engined machine built for speed and twin-gun firepower. Thus, for the remainder of 1916 and well into the next year an epic struggle for aerial superiority raged above the horrors of the Somme and Passchendaele battlefields, pitting the FE 2 against the better-armed and faster Albatros scouts that were focused on attacking and destroying their two-seater opponents. In the end the Germans would regain air superiority, and hold it into the following summer with the employment of their new Jagdgeschwader (larger fighter groupings), but the FE 2 remained a tenacious foe that inflicted many casualties - some of whom were Germany's best aces (including 'The Red Baron').

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

James F. Miller lives in Naples, Florida. A commercial pilot and lifelong student of all aspects of

aviation, his current research focuses on the middle years of World War I. The author lives in Naples, Florida.

This volume is one of the latest editions to the Osprey Duel series. The British FE 2 was a "pusher" type fighter/reconnaissance plane with its engine and propeller placed behind the pilot and the observer/gunner sat in a "tub" in front of the plane. This plane along with the DH 2 fighter plane (another "pusher" type) helped gain air supremacy over the German Fokker Eindecker. The Germans countered the "pusher" airplanes with the Albatros scout series (DI, DII, DIII, and DV.) James F. Miller has capably executed an examination of this historic confrontation from WWI aviation history. Some of the best artwork by Jim Laurier and Mark Postlethwaite supports the text as well as black and white photos. The cockpit views of the aircraft are awesome! The dogfight between Manfred Von Richthofen, the "Red Baron" and the FE 2 manned by Cunnell and Woodbridge on July 6, 1917 is featured. I highly recommend this title! This is one of the best Duel volumes yet! I also recommend James F. Miller's other Duel series title.~ DH 2 vs Albatros D I/D II: Western Front 1916 (Duel). James F. Miller also has a volume dedicated to the Albatros D.III, which is due out in March of 2014.~ DH 2 vs Albatros D.III: Johannisthal, OAW and Oeffag variants (Air Vanguard). Albatros D.I and D.II.~ DH 2 vs Albatros D.I-D.II (Air Vanguard)~ DH 2 vs Albatros D.III is also available!

Another great book from the Osprey series.

Another great book concerning the early days of flight. The book gives a good comparison of the types of aircraft flown by the RAF and German Air force in WW1. The courage of all the flyers in this time comes out in the writing, but I was stunned by the courage that was displayed on a daily basis by the gunner in the FE 2. It is somewhat damning that the Germans were so far ahead of the British in the caliber of aircraft that they were able field at this time of the war.

I found this educational and interesting. There are great color images and descriptions of aerial battle. Tactics and technology is discussed.

Wonderful item.

thank you

Outstanding

I believe this to be on one of the most poorly written professional publications I have ever read. If Mr Miller is not ashamed of this composition then his editor certainly should be. Content and illustrations are probably worth 2 to 3 stars although one wonders if Mr Miller's admiration for the FE 2b/d isn't a little fulsome for a plane which suffered such horrendous losses. Meat on the table for the Albatros, very likely!

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