

YELLOWJACKETS: THE 361ST FIGHTER GROUP  
IN WORLD WAR II (SCHIFFER MILITARY HISTORY)

By Paul B. Cora

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REVIEWED BY

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Truth is more exciting than fiction.

Whoever it was that said "Truth is stranger than fiction" was right. If he had said, "Truth is more exciting than fiction," he'd have been right, too. In tracing the exploits of the 361st Fighter Group from the cold, gray days of the winter of '43 when it was first formed, to the warm, deadly days of the spring of '45, Paul B. Cora aptly demonstrates this fact.

This is a history of people and planes; the pilots and ground crews of the 374th, 375th and 367th Fighter Squadrons which made up the 361st Fighter Group, known as the "yellowjackets" because of the bright yellow color painted on the noses of their aircraft, and the P-47 Thunderbolt and P-51 Mustang, which they flew into combat daily, sometimes against great odds.

It's also about duty, sacrifice and heroism; about ordinary men who did extraordinary things every day, without fanfare or complaint, risking their lives while accompanying and protecting the heavy B-24 and B-25 bombers as they penetrated German airspace on bombing raids during the spring of 1944. Whether you're a WWII history buff, or like me, simply fascinated by the American warplanes of that era, reading this book will add to your store of knowledge about that slice of history, while providing hours of enjoyable reading about the contributions made by American fighter pilots in the air war over Europe. This is a must-read, a valuable read. I heartily recommend it.