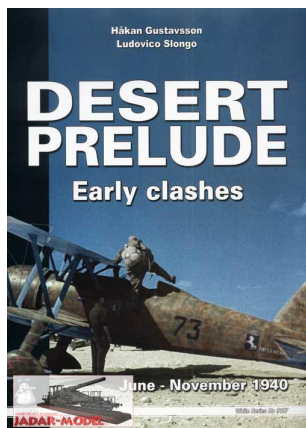


## Mushroom White 9107 - Desert Prelude (książka)



**Cena :**

**127,50 PLN**

Producent : **Stratus**

Dostępność : **Na zamówienie (Oczekiwanie: 7~14 dni)**

Stan magazynowy : **bardzo wysoki**

Średnia ocena : **brak recenzji**



**Mushroom 9107 Desert Prelude (książka)**

**Early Clashes**

**Author: Hakan Gustavsson, Ludovico Slongo**

**Uwaga: Tekst wyłącznie angielski.**

Książka opisuje lotnicze działania wojenne na Afrykę północną w 1940. Doskonale ilustrowana zdjęciami z tego okresu, większości nie publikowanymi, oraz kolorowymi sylwetkami samolotów używanych przez obie strony konfliktu.

Książkę uzupełnia pełny indeks nazwisk.

**Książka zawiera 224 strony (z czego 14 w kolorze).**

Wydrukowano na błyszczącym papierze, format **297x210 mm (A4)**, miękka oprawa.

**Polecamy modelarzom oraz entuzjastom lotnictwa!**

Wydawca: **Stratus** (Polska 2010)

Håkan Gustavsson  
Ludovico Slongo

# DESERT PRELUDE

Early clashes



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# Introduction

The first North African Campaign was a very interesting one for several reasons. North Africa was Italy's main front in what was later called the "Parallel War", i.e. the period during which Italy tried to fight the Commonwealth autonomously, without the help of the German Armed Forces, and thus a period during which achievements and defeats were due only to Italian merits or mistakes. This period is one of the very few where historians can try to assess the real effectiveness of the Italian war effort, without being confused by the presence of German forces, and this is obviously true also in the field of air warfare.

With the Battle of Britain absorbing practically all the best resources, the Commonwealth forces on the North African front had to rely mostly on second line machines, sometimes already put out of service at home. This, together with the Italian trust in the biplane formula, meant that the Western Desert was (together with Greece and East Africa) the last battlefield in the history of air warfare where biplanes confronted each other. Needless to say, pilots of these archaic aircraft were by no means inferior in determination or skill to their colleagues fighting in Spitfires or Messerschmitts over the English Channel. Many of the most important Italian and Commonwealth pilots of the conflict drew first blood during this campaign, notably amongst them the top Italian and RAF aces of WW II, Teresio Martinoli and Thomas Pattle.

Despite this, the air war during this campaign has been rather neglected by historians, being treated only as a marginal sideshow overshadowed by events of the subsequent periods, after the Luftwaffe intervention. This book is an attempt to correct this negligence, and show that these eight months were a period of heavy fighting where large formations of aircraft clashed under the burning North African sun, with heavy losses suffered by both sides in the air.

Maggiore Ernesto Botto  
in an aircraft from the  
73<sup>a</sup> Squadriglia, leading  
a formation from the  
9<sup>o</sup> Gruppo over North  
Africa during the return  
from a mission. Identified  
in the image are fighters  
from the 96<sup>a</sup> Squadriglia.  
[via Fulvio Chianese at  
Associazione Culturale  
4<sup>o</sup> Stormo di Gorizia]



## Royal Air Force

### Fighters

Early in October 'A' Flight of 33 Sqn rejoined the unit with their new Hurricanes, and 'B' Flight began receiving these also.

Three fighter Blenheims from 'A' Flight of 30 Sqn were detached to Haifa. The detachment was increased during the month. Two aircraft were lost in accidents during the period.

### Bombers

A detached Flight of five Blenheims from 84 Sqn, led by F/Lt Cathill, arrived on attachment to 211 Sqn at 12.00 on 22 October. The rest of 84 Sqn arrived from Iraq around the same period. This unit was equipped with Bristol Blenheim Mk.IIs.

For a short period 202 Group had six modern bomber squadrons on strength (30, 55, 84, 113 and 211 Sqn with Blenheims and 70 Sqn with Wellingtons), plus the older Bombays of 216 Sqn for night bombing duties.

On 1 October, Wing Commander Lainé took command of 216 Sqn from Wing Commander



Early in October 'A' Flight of 33 Sqn rejoined the unit with their new Hurricanes.  
[via Robert Gretzynger]

Chichester. On the same date S/Ldr Dudgeon was posted to 55 Sqn from 45 Sqn.

### Reconnaissance forces

On 28 October, 'C' Flight of 208 Sqn relieved 'A' Flight at Siwa.

During the month, many flying-boats from 230 Sqn flew from Malta on attachment to the depleted 228 Sqn.

Sunderland LS807/R of 228 Sqn flew back to England for major overhaul. The aircraft was back in the Mediterranean on 7 November.

On 18 October, S/Ldr K. V. Garside took over command of 230 Sqn from Wing Commander G. Francis.

## Royal Australian Air Force

F/O Wilfred Arthur of 3 Sqn RAAF force-landed Gladiator NS769 on 5 October after the engine cut while practising formation flying with the whole squadron. Arthur was uninjured, but the aircraft was extensively damaged when it hit a drum during the forced landing ¼ mile north-west of Helwan.

Peter Turnbull was evacuated to hospital from the detached flight with 208 Sqn on 6 October. He was replaced by F/Lt Gordon Steege. Turnbull re-joined the unit at Helwan on 14 October.





Squadra Aerea awaiting Felice Porro's return from Italy, wasn't satisfied. In a reserved note regarding the 31 October engagement Matriciardi commented:

*"Indirect protection in the sky over the target was not reliable for the protection of big formations of S79s (...) so, it happened that the S79 had to fight hard (...) while the fighters, in areas far from the fighting, (...) didn't do anything!"*

Looking at RAF losses the judgement of Matriciardi seems to be (undeservedly) too hard. But indeed, such were the losses of the bomber force that for some weeks after the 31 October daylight operations had to be curtailed. On the other hand, Calosso, in his relation of the combat, openly complained about the extreme dilution of the bomber formation whose last aircraft arrived 12 minutes from the first ones thus making the task of the escorting fighters almost impossible.

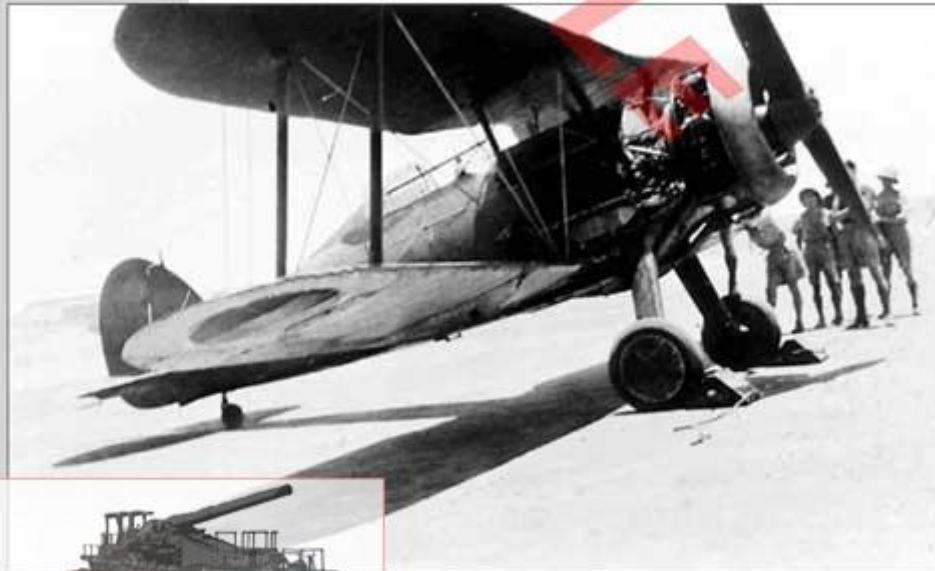
This remarkable combat was remembered by Joseph Fraser and Richard Acworth with two short poems as follows:

**MUNKEY – MUNK** (Apologies to Stanley Holloway)

*You've 'eard of 112 per'aps of Western Desert fame  
'oo braved the Eastern mysteries to earn their bloody name.  
At 'Munkey-Munk' they fought & bled till battle came to stop  
And only aircraft left on line were one with busted prop.  
Some lost their wings-some lost their tails but 'It is' lost by far  
For though we flew to Munkey-Munk, we did come back by car.*

*By F/O Acworth DFC - Oct.1940*

*A 112 Sqn Gladiator  
undergoes some outdoor  
maintenance. The oil tank  
has been removed.  
[via Alfred Thorne]*







Fiat CR.32 MM 4666 of 160<sup>a</sup> Sq. (12<sup>a</sup> Gr., 50<sup>a</sup> St. Asalto) Libya, June 1940.



Fiat CR.32 MM. ? of 160<sup>a</sup> Sq. (12<sup>a</sup> Gr., 50<sup>a</sup> St. Asalto) Libya, June 1940.