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British Paratrooper vs Fallschirmjager: Mediterranean 1942-43 (Combat)

By Greentree, David

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 Summary: By late 1942 Britain had developed an airborne capability that would obtain its baptism of fire versus German airborne in North Africa and Sicily. On three notable occasions British airborne infantry fought intense battles with its German counterpart: twice in North Africa and again at Primosole Bridge in Sicily. Both forces were well trained and equipped, with a similar ethos and role, both thought of themselves as elite units, and both found themselves used by local commanders in a variety of roles that tended to be determined by the emergencies of the moment. On 29 November 1942 Lt Col Frost's 2nd Para dropped at Depienne, Tunisia, with orders to march overnight to Oudna, destroy the aircraft there and then return to Allied lines. Finding no aircraft they retreated, repeatedly combating elements of Oberst Koch's FJR 5, deployed in a ground role. 2nd Para ambushed and drove back Fallschirmjager riding on armoured cars. Nearly surrounded, Frost withdrew to a nearby hill; a battle ensued as both sides raced for the crest. After retreating overnight 2nd Para wiped out an attacking German platoon, and on...



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