



Transforming Joint Air Power

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‘Russia’s Air-launched Weapons – Russian-made Aircraft Ordnance Today’



By Piotr Butowski,
Harpia Publishing L.L.C., 2017
Reviewed by:
Lt Col Ralf Korus, DEU A, JAPCC

Since Russia’s economy has been affected by sanctions for several years, one could expect the ambitious modernization process of the Russian Federation military to be slowed down or delayed. Nevertheless, Russia is back on the international scene and underlining its global power claim through intervention in the Syrian civil war. The deployment of air and maritime assets into theatre, to include air operations from their single aircraft carrier as well as cruise missile launches from warships and submarines out of the Caspian and Mediterranean Seas could also be seen as test and demonstration of current Russian air force armament.

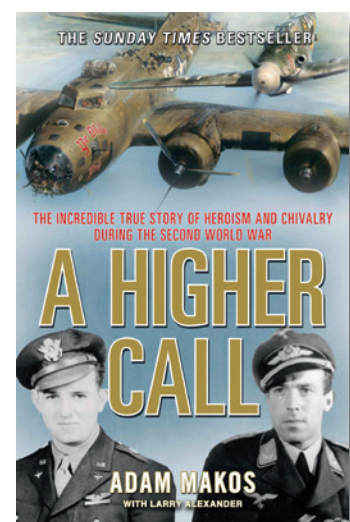
Russia’s Air-launched Weapons is the third volume of a series of publications to describe Russia’s tactical and strategic aircraft inventory and their possibilities employing air power. As a supplement to the previous books, this new issue describes the inventory of strategic weapons, tactical air-to-surface and air-to-air missiles (including helicopter-launched missiles), aerial bombs and rockets, guns, pods, and naval weapons, while not only detailing the history and current status of ordnance but also the prospective development of future generations. The book thus provides in depth knowledge of Russia’s current and future military capabilities serving well the needs of military analysts to understand such worldwide development. This book is very valuable and should be of great interest to anyone generally interested in Russian military aviation. ●

‘A Higher Call’

A Higher Call is the story of two World War II veterans, US Army Air Corps pilot Charlie Brown and German Airforce pilot Franz Stigler. They encountered each other by accident in the contested skies over Europe and still live today to tell their story.

Brown’s flies his first WWII mission on 20 December 1943, heading together with around 475 other bombers towards the city of Bremen/Germany. Due to heavy flak over the target area his B-17 sustains heavy damage, his left waist-gunner is severely wounded, and his tail gunner dies. In addition, all but one board machine guns are frozen solid. Unable to keep up, Brown has no choice than to leave the formation and become a ‘straggler’. When Luftwaffe pilot Stigler intercepts Brown’s B-17, he is not engaged by any of the adversary gunners. Coming closer, Stigler notices the tail gunner is dead. Through the battered and torn sides of the B-17 he observes the crew is fighting for the life of their waist gunner. Remarkably, Stigler, decides not to attack but escorts the bomber safely along the coast through German air defences. Flak gunners on the ground are astounded to find a B-17 being escorted by one of their own BF-109’s. Not a single shot is fired.

This episode would haunt both pilots well over 40 years until they eventually met face-to-face in 1990. Through the incident they have become attached for the rest of their lives. *A Higher Call* is a very well written book that immediately grips the reader. Just too difficult to put it away until finished. ●



By Adam Makos with
Larry Alexander,
Atlantic Books, 2013
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