



Fokker D.XXI Aces of World War 2 (Aircraft of the Aces)

By Kari Stenman, Peter de Jong

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Entering service with the Dutch air force from early 1938, the aircraft was also built under license in Denmark and Finland. Production was also scheduled to commence in Spain too but Nationalist forces overran the factory before this commenced. The Dutch D.XXIs saw less than a week of action following the German invasion of the west on 10 May 1940, with many of the country's 28 fighters being destroyed on the ground. However, those that survived the initial onslaught inflicted losses on the Luftwaffe, 15 pilots sharing in the destruction of 14 German aircraft (fighters, bombers and transports). By then, however, the D.XXI had found everlasting fame in Finland during the Winter War of 1939-40. Proving itself a real thorn in the side of the Soviets, the fighter, operating in primitive conditions and against vastly superior numbers, Finnish D.XXIs racked up an incredible score against the Red Air Force, and in particular its bomber units. No fewer than ten pilots became aces during this brief, but bloody, campaign, with a similar number claiming four victories and subsequently 'making ace' in later types. The sturdy D.XXI was highly rated by the leading Finnish pilots of the time, boasting a good rate of climb and the ability to break off combat when required thanks to its high speed in a dive. The D.XXI also has the distinction of producing the first 'ace in a single mission' in World War 2, when then 1Lt Jorma Sarvanto shot down six Ilyushin DB-3 bombers on 6 January 1940. After spending a year providing home defence and flying coastal patrols during the early stages of the Continuation War in 1941, all surviving Finnish Fokker D.XXIs were relegated to the reconnaissance role, which they performed through to the end of hostilities in September 1944.

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Editorial Review

Review

“This celebration focuses on the planes, pilots and battle experiences, blending vintage black and white photos with color illustrations throughout, and is a pick for any military or aviation history collection.” *The Midwest Book Review (July 2013)*

“This book covers the development of the D.XXI as well as its use by all the nations that flew it. Naturally, most of the book covers the Finnish AF use followed by a good sized section on the Dutch A.F. during its homeland defense use. This is further enhanced by a great selection of period photos and the usual collection of full color profiles. Several charts make up the appendices to add additional flavor to the book. It all makes for a very interesting read, especially if you are looking for something a bit different from the norm. It is well written and tells the tales well.” *Scott Van Aken, Modeling Madness (May 2013)*

“As a D.XXI devotee, I absolutely loved [this book].” *David L. Veres, www.cybermodeler.com (June 2013)*

About the Author

Kari Stenman is the world's leading authority on the Finnish Air Force during World War 2, and has written or co-authored many books on the units and aircraft of this most interesting service. He has previously co-authored volumes for Osprey on Finnish Aces in the renowned Aircraft of the Aces series and on their leading fighter unit LeLv 24 for the Aviation Elite series.

Peter de Jong is a professional editor and translator, and has collaborated on numerous modern history and aviation history books, as well as having written numerous magazine articles since 1995. His comprehensive work on the most historically significant Fokker aircraft of World War 2, the D.XXI, was published in French in 2005, and is soon to be followed by a revised volume in his native Dutch.

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