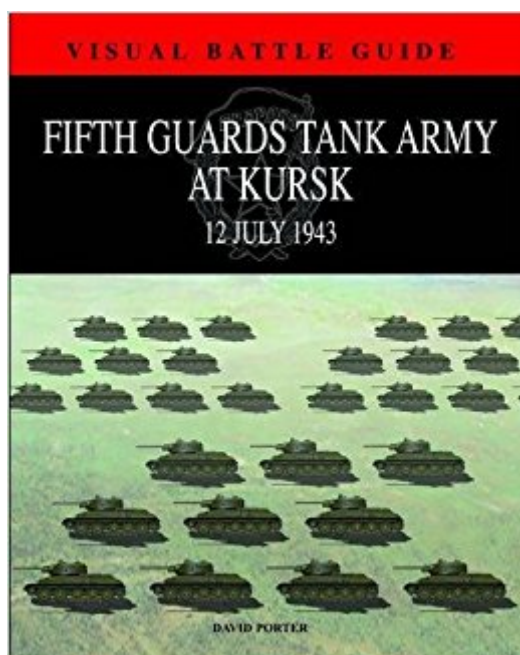


The book was found

FIFTH GUARDS TANK ARMY AT KURSK: 12 July 1943 (Visual Battle Guide)



Synopsis

In the early summer of 1943, following the German defeat at Stalingrad, Hitler sought a decisive battle that would turn the struggle on the Eastern Front in the Germans' favor. On the 5th July 1943, the Wehrmacht launched Operation Citadel. Attacking with a force of 3000 tanks and assault guns, the Germans faced a well dug-in force of more than 3900 Soviet tanks, with another 1500 tanks in reserve. The tanks advanced with as many as 50 vehicles packed together per kilometer of line. What followed was the largest tank battle the world has ever seen, with both sides suffering heavy casualties. On the 11th July, three SS divisions – Totenkopf, Das Reich and Leibstandarte – attempted to break through the Soviet lines at the village of Prokhorovka, and so force the flank of the Soviet defensive position. Facing them were the newly deployed Soviet 5th Guards Tank Army. It was the Germans' last chance for a potential breakthrough on the Eastern Front. The battle raged all day, with German attack followed by Soviet counterattack. By nightfall the Germans had lost more than 300 tanks and the 5th Guards Tank Army 50 percent of their strength. Despite their heavy losses, the Soviet defenders had achieved their aim: the German attack had been halted and all hope of their regaining the initiative lost.

5th Guards Tank Army at Kursk has an eight-page gatefold depicting one of the brigades from the Soviet 5th Guards Tank Army in an innovative and fresh manner. This brigade is shown in battle deployment, with reconnaissance units, advance companies, the main body, the brigade command section, plus all the supporting engineers, signalers, artillery etc to provide a visual guide to exactly how many tanks and other armored vehicles were advancing on the 11th July. The book itself is broken down by these sections, looking at each component part of the brigade in turn, their structure, equipment and what they did on 11th July. Maps will be used where appropriate to show the location of each element on the battlefield. The description of each part includes action reports, organization, equipment, unit commanders and much more. Thanks to its novel and accessible approach, the book will appeal to both the enthusiast and the general reader interested in World War II.

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Customer Reviews

Excellent book.

This is a good book which explains the organization of the famous Soviet 5th Guards Tank Army. They were a huge factor in the Nazi's decision to suspend Operation Citadel despite suffering heavy losses to the 2nd SS Panzer Corps. They prevented the Nazis from achieving their strategic goals, at Kursk, despite being tactically inferior to them.

Recommended. This is a companion volume to the referenced book and its review was covered in my review of that book. Recommended as a good Russian side summary book of the battle with background on the Soviet Army, Soviet Armor, and the battle from the Soviet viewpoint, including the myths and truths about the campaign.

terrific for my reference library

I have found all of David Porters books very interesting, and use the as a reference. They are very colorful and very much in detail.

Excellent for a look at the opponents of the Germans at Kursk. Found it exceptional value for my model making

This is Mr Porter's companion book to "Das Reich at Kursk". The two books have many things in common. They have the same general layout, sharing respective chapter titles and almost identical page lengths. The exact twelve maps are shared as are the comparison charts. They also have the same strengths and weaknesses. One difference between the two books is the German book covers a division while the Soviet book covers a whole army. Since the chapters are basically the same including page lengths, the coverage of 5th GTA while having good width, its depth of

coverage suffers a little. The book begins with the start of the Red Army under Trotsky after WWI before moving on to the war with Poland that was lost, to the troubles Stalin's Army had in the first 18 months of the war and finally to the setback of Kharkov 1943. After the history, specifics of the start and organization of 5th GTA and Rotmistrov's rise to be the head of that Army are presented. Afterwards a fairly extensive Order of Battle is presented that not only includes the 18th TC, 29th TC, the 5th GMC but also the 2nd TC and 2nd GTC. The OB filters down to Brigade and Battalion level and includes the commanders of the key units. This chart will be especially helpful when you are reading more detailed accounts of the campaign. There are also many org charts of these formations to allow the reader to understand the many facets of 5th GTA. As in "Das Reich", the key weapons, especially the T-34, equipment and vehicles that this army used along with many illustrations are presented. A chapter on the contributions of the Red Air Force at Kursk is also interesting. Illustrations of their aircraft was included. This "front end" of this primer was good, informative and while the rest of the book wasn't bad, the coverage of this tank army at Kursk was very, very brief. The coverage provided only the smallest window of how the different corps of the 5th GTA performed and impacted the German forces. After the 12th, coverage surprisingly continues to include Operation Roland and a few key Soviet victories up to the Korsun Pocket in early 1944. There are 12 computer generated color maps that begin by showing the entire Soviet front at different times of the war and then the maps drill down to the Ukraine, then the Kursk sector to the Kursk salient, to the southern portion of the salient. Half of these maps can be seen in popular atlases. Of the salient maps, there are three maps that include Das Reich. They have good eye appeal but from my perspective are modestly populated, showing only some of key villages, no fortified hills and with the exception of the Psel River are devoid of labels for the other five rivers (when they're shown) that were a major part of the battle field. Also the deployment of forces and axes of advance are not precise but close enough to give an indication of the progress the Germans made and their final positions before they had to retreat. There are no notes but a brief Bibliography and Index along with a few photos are included. Overall, these complementary primers by Mr Porter have some fine features and provide good reference material about the respective units but I couldn't give five stars due to the secondary role the author gives to the actual battlefield events south of Kursk.

I own now the 1 SS Panzer Corps at Villers Bocage, 7th Armoured Division at Villers Bocage and Fifth Guards Tank Army at Kursk and they are excellent books. They are very detailed and have a lot of good pictures.

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