

# Thunderbolts Over Europe:

## The 405th F.G. in Color

### Part 2



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### CHIEF SKI-U-MAH II

P-47D-27-RE • 42-27316 • 509 FS/405 FG

Piloted by Lt. Duane Buholz. There were at least three SKI-U-MAH aircraft according to Duane. All were painted by Sgt. Eli Gutierrez who was responsible for many, but not all 509th artwork. The artwork came about when Lt. Buholz asked Sgt. Gutierrez to paint a huge Indian chief on the cowling of his aircraft. Inspiration was derived from pronounced facial features on the back side of a buffalo nickel. Duane said that the feathers were always chipping around the cowl flaps so he was always touching them up, hence they went from plain white to multi shades. The origin of the name SKI-U-MAH (pronounced sky) came from the University of Minnesota Rouser. The squadron emblem was also designed by Lt. Buholz and drawn by Sgt. Gutierrez. Notice the small White J on the lower cowling ring.



### PILOTS DREAM

P-47D-28-RA • 42-29173 • 510 FS/405 FG

Flown by Lt. Francis M. Norr. Lt. Norr's aircraft featured another piece of Lynn Trank's artwork, titled Pilots Dream. He was credited with four aerial victories, all Fw 190's, within 3 days. Usual Dk. Blue trim for the 510 FS and full lower surface invasion ID stripes complete the decoration of this A/C.



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### THE MOLE

P-47D-26-RA • 42-28354 • 509 FS/405 FG

Flown by Lt. Michael Titre, who was a member of the Brow Organization and known as "The Mole" within that group. As a result, Mike claimed that he had no control over what artwork was painted to the port side of his P-47D as the subject was ordered by "The Brow" and applied by Sgt Gutierrez. His beautiful A/C was decorated in typical 509 scheme of Reds and Natural Metal. The front exhaust door was also Red and it had a small letter C on the rudder trim tab. Notice the alternating Red/Natural Metal cowl flaps, three Red ones on each side, and the Black gun leading edge panel.



### TOUCH OF TEXAS

P-47D-16-RE • 42-76076 • 510 FS/405 FG

This machine was Lt. Mohrle's A/C during most of 1944 (see Pt. I for the later version). Notice that the White code section laying on the invasion stripes is edged in Olive Drab. Aircraft camouflaged in Olive Drab and Neutral Gray with White cowling band.



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### CHOWHOUND 2ND

P-47D-28-RA • 42-28445 • 509 FS/405 FG

A/C flown by Capt. Robert Blackburn. This is another version of Chowhound, this time with Black cowling ring and stripes, but with Red canopy frame. This is the same aircraft, but this scheme predates the Red cowled version featured in Pt. I of the 405th series. Full lower surface invasion ID bands. Notice the front anti-glare panel is Black from and including the cowling flaps to the windscreen area. Very unusual. The Red heart was on the right side as on the other A/C. Also notice the very unusual color demarcation on the left wheel cover. Unknown if right side is the same.



### HONEY BUCKET JOE

P-47D-28-RE • 42-19128 • 509 FS/405 FG

Lt. Doyle lost two aircraft on combat missions. The first aircraft was lost June 22, 1944 while on a mission over Cherbourg when he lost three feet off one wing tip due to flak. While nursing his aircraft home, the engine quit, hence forcing him to bail out. Picked up by a British air/sea rescue launch, he soon returned to the squadron. On December 12, 1944 the 509th was on an armed recce in the Kraiserlautern area when bounced by 20 or more Fw-190's and Bf-109's. Lt. Doyle, leader of Blue flight, was killed by a Fw-190 while flying 42-29128. A captured German report stated that all that remained intact of his aircraft was a cigarette case containing six snapshots. Notice missing Black band under the wings, as well as part of the last fuselage White band. No invasion stripes on wheel doors. Colorful enough for you?



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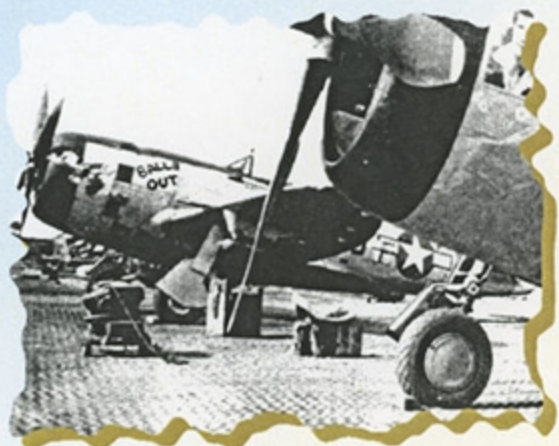
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### UNNAMED

P-47D-30-RA • 44-32989 • 509 FS/405 FG

One of the very few unnamed A/C was G9W, S/N 44-32989 flown by Lt. Robert Whitehead. The nose art was another creation of Sgt. Gutierrez, who probably had no other duty but decorating the squadron's A/C. Notice the Red alternating cowling flaps, exhaust front door and the small letter D on the rudder trim tab.



### BALLS OUT

P-47D-28-RA • 42-29170 • 509 FS/405 FG

Another version of Balls Out featured on this series (the other version is featured on part 1). We have several pictures of this A/C. The only one that shows the dorsal fillet, shows it unpainted, but also the cowling flaps are Natural Metal. Other pictures show the cowl flaps in Red, but we can not see the dorsal fillet. It is possible that at a later date the fillet may have been painted Red, matching the cowl flaps and wing tips (only the front half of the wing tip).



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### NEMANIE II

P-47D-27-RE • 42-27210 • 509 FS/405 FG

Piloted by Lt. Dan Eckes. There were several Indian themes within the 509th FS including Dan Eckes aircraft, Nemanie II and his tent mate, Duane Buholz who flew Chief Ski-U-Mah. Like Buholz, Lt. Eckes enlisted the aid of Sgt. Gutierrez to paint the princess on the cowling of his Thunderbolt. Fellow pilots told Dan that being assigned an aircraft with the X was unlucky, but he thought differently as he was known as DR X because of his initials (D.R.) and his last name Eckes which sounds very close to "X". Also note that he is labeled "driver" instead of pilot and the assistant listed below his name is not his crew chief, but rather, is his wife's name. This is another typical 509 FS bird with the following addition; Red wing tips, alternating cowl flaps and Black gun panel



### STINKEY

P-47D-26-RA • 42-28370 • 509 FS/405 FG

Stinkey had two different pilots. The first was 1st Lt. Arthur J. Roehling. After he left the squadron, Lt. William C. Scott inherited the aircraft. Other than names and a different style of victory marker under the cockpit, markings remained the same. Lt. Scott kept the same artwork, and photos indicate that the scoreboard remained unchanged. It is interesting to note that both pilots claimed one kill on the same mission. This was the mission on which Lt. Doyle was lost. Note the White R under the cowling.

