



A Better Comrade You Will Never Find

Helmut Schiebel

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A Better Comrade You Will Never Find presents Eastern Front experiences of Helmut Schiebel from 1941 to the end of WW II. The author took part in the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 as a member of the 43 Motorcycle Infantry Battalion of the 13 Panzer Division. In September he left for an Officer Candidate course in Germany, returning as a Leutnant and platoon leader to the division's reconnaissance battalion at the end of April 1942. He was wounded at the end of June and returned to Russia in September 1943. On the way to the 18 Panzer Division, he found out that the division was being dissolved and opted to transfer to the antitank branch. He arrived at Panzerjager Abteilung 88 in October 1943 where he was given a manual for antitank troops and soon after became a platoon commander on a Marder tank destroyer. After heavy losses, in November 1943 the unit was transferred to Mielau Poland, where it trained on and was equipped with the heavy Hornisse tank destroyer. When the battalion was sent to the Eastern Front in mid-February 1944, the author stayed behind to receive missing equipment and additional personnel. Panzerjager Abteilung 88 was trapped in the Kamenez-Podolsk wandering pocket, and its actions there are recounted through the eyes of some other soldiers. After the battalion escaped the trap, the author rejoined it (as platoon leader) in Galicia in mid-July 1944. Suffering heavy losses, the battalion was withdrawn to receive new equipment and train replacements. It returned to the front at the end of December 1944 in the Krakow area. By that time, Schiebel was the commander of the 2nd company. The unit fought across southern Poland, through Silesia and eastern Germany to the area around Karlsbad. There, on May 7, 1945, Panzerjager Abteilung 88 surrendered to American troops. This book will keep you immersed from the first page to the last; there are hardly any breaks in the action. From the first days of the invasion of the Soviet Union, where the motorcycle troops were always at the front, to the last desperate days of the war, when the few tank destroyers were rushed from one hot spot to another, you will share the full spectrum of emotions of the author and his troops. Life was short and brutal at the front for many soldiers, comrades died suddenly nearby, experience and luck was needed to survive. The descriptions of the combat are detailed and there is much to be learned about armour tactics. This is not just another memoir; the author was an excellent commander and imparts many valuable lessons for those that are interested in small-unit actions. Hard cover, 6" x 9", 266 pages, 5 B&W images, 12 colour images, 45 photos, 4 colour 3D drawings.

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