



Book: P-47 Thunderbolt vs Bf 109G/K: Europe 1943-45 (Duel)

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The P-47 climbed like a homesick angel and dived for the deck like a rock. This was due to the mighty power of its air-cooled, turbo-supercharged Double Wasp engine, combined with a brutish barrel-shaped airframe. The deadly firepower was totally destructive. The world's largest single-engined fighter when the USA entered the war, the P-47's 18 cylinders vibrated the whole aircraft like it was going to destroy itself. More Thunderbolts were built than any other American fighter in history. In December 1942, the P-47 was the only readily available American-produced high performance fighter. At altitudes up to 15,000 ft, its rival, the Bf 109G, had all-round better performance than the P-47C, most notably in rate of climb. The Thunderbolt's performance progressively improved above 15,000 ft, and between 25,000 to 30,000 ft it surpassed those of the enemy fighters,.