

STURMGESCHÜTZ III

Development • Production • Deployment

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The Sturmgeschütz III, or Assault Gun Model III, was a fully tracked armoured vehicle originally designed to provide the infantry of the Wehrmacht with direct fire support. In addition to admirably fulfilling that role, it also served for the better part of World War II as a self-propelled antitank weapon, a role for which it was never intended. As the war dragged on, it performed this important function with increasing regularity throughout all of the Wehrmacht's theatres of operation; from Norway to North Africa; from France to the Soviet Union; across Italy and the Balkans; and finally, within Germany itself.

This publication documents the developmental history, mass production, deployment and combat operations of Germany's Sturmgeschütz III during World War II.

In order to provide a better appreciation of the historical significance of the Sturmgeschütz III, this study first examines its technical design and development, production, modification and the fielding of the different versions, ranging from models A through G, as well as a survey of Sturmgeschütz III production assembly plants at Daimler-Benz, Alkett, and MIAG, where more than 10,500 of these vehicles were produced between 1940 until the end of the war in Europe. Other chapters cover the Sturmgeschütz III's operational history, including its combat debut and remarkable success as an antitank weapon. As the reader will discover, the German General Staff's and upper echelons of the Wehrmacht's growing appreciation of this remarkable weapons system ultimately led to an overestimation of its capabilities, contributing to Germany's defeat as both Sturmgeschütz III crewman and vehicles themselves were over-committed to the point of collapse.

In this study, the authors have drawn almost exclusively on primary source material rather than the existing body of secondary literature, tapping into a vast reservoir of original files, reports and operational records. In all, some 400 different sources were used during the production of this reference work and are listed in the bibliography. The authors have verified production figures by cross-referencing and recomputing dozens of original source documents, resulting in the most up-to-date and comprehensive information about the Sturmgeschütz III's to appear in print. To round out this volume, it includes 125 historical photographs, many of them reproduced for the first time, as well as seventy charts and tables that verify the authors' conclusions.



Hardcover, 316 pages, 125 wartime photographs, many published for the first time and 70 charts and tables.


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