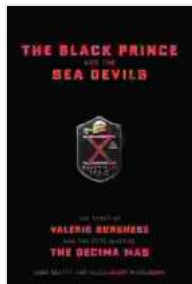


The Story of Valerio Borghese and the Elite Units of the Decima Mas



The Black Prince And The Sea Devils: The Story Of Valerio Borghese And The Elite Units Of The Decima

Mas by Jack Greene

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

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In the annals of military history, few units have captured the imagination like the elite units of the Decima Mas, the Italian Navy's Special Forces during World War II. Led by the enigmatic and daring Prince Valerio Borghese, these highly skilled frogmen, combat swimmers, and midget submarine operators conducted audacious missions that defied the odds and left an indelible mark on the conflict. This article delves into the extraordinary story

of the Decima Mas and its fearless commander, shedding light on their groundbreaking innovations, daring exploits, and enduring legacy.

Valerio Borghese: The Charismatic Leader

Prince Valerio Borghese, born in 1906, was a charismatic naval officer with a thirst for adventure. His deep-seated patriotism and belief in Italy's destiny inspired him to create an elite force that would excel in unconventional warfare. In 1941, Borghese established the Decima Mas (Xth Assault Means), a unit dedicated to specialized amphibious and underwater operations.

Borghese was a visionary leader who instilled in his men a sense of purpose and unwavering determination. He believed in leading from the front and often participated in the most dangerous missions, earning the respect and admiration of his troops. His charismatic personality and unwavering patriotism inspired his men to push the boundaries of what was deemed possible in naval warfare.

The Creation of the Decima Mas

The Decima Mas was meticulously crafted to become a formidable fighting force. Its ranks included highly skilled frogmen, combat swimmers, and midget submarine operators, all trained to execute complex and dangerous missions in enemy waters. The unit also possessed a fleet of advanced midget submarines, known as SLCs (Submersible Assault Craft) and MAIALE (Swine), designed to infiltrate heavily defended enemy harbors and deliver explosive payloads.

The Decima Mas's training was rigorous and relentless, pushing the limits of human endurance. Trainees underwent grueling physical exercises,

diving drills, and combat simulations to prepare them for the extreme conditions they would face in battle. Borghese himself set the highest standards, demanding excellence from every member of his unit.

Daring Exploits and Groundbreaking Innovations

The Decima Mas quickly gained notoriety for its audacity and groundbreaking tactics. In July 1941, the unit conducted its first major operation, a daring raid on the British naval base at Alexandria, Egypt. Using SLC midget submarines, frogmen successfully penetrated the heavily guarded harbor and attached explosive charges to two battleships, HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Valiant, disabling both vessels.

The Raid on Alexandria sent shock waves throughout the Royal Navy and demonstrated the effectiveness of the Decima Mas's unconventional tactics. The unit continued to push the boundaries of naval warfare, developing new technologies and innovative strategies that gave them an edge over their adversaries.

In 1943, the Decima Mas carried out another audacious operation, an assault on the British fortress of Gibraltar. Using MAIALE midget submarines, six frogmen breached the formidable defenses of the harbor and planted explosive charges on two merchant ships. The explosions caused significant damage and disrupted the vital supply lines to the garrison.

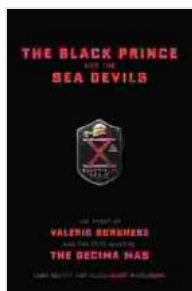
The End of the War and the Legacy of the Decima Mas

After Italy's surrender in 1943, the Decima Mas continued to operate on the side of the German forces. The unit conducted numerous anti-shipping

operations and played a role in defending the Italian coast from Allied landings.

Valerio Borghese and his elite units of the Decima Mas left an enduring legacy in the annals of naval warfare. Their daring exploits, groundbreaking innovations, and unwavering determination continue to inspire awe and respect. Today, the Decima Mas stands as a testament to the ingenuity and courage of its members, who pushed the boundaries of human endeavor and left a lasting mark on military history.

The story of Valerio Borghese and the elite units of the Decima Mas is a gripping tale of daring, innovation, and unwavering patriotism. Their exploits during World War II showcased the remarkable capabilities of specialized forces and solidified their place in the pantheon of military history. The legacy of the Decima Mas continues to inspire and motivate generations of naval personnel, reminding them that even the most audacious missions can be accomplished with courage, determination, and a belief in one's abilities.



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