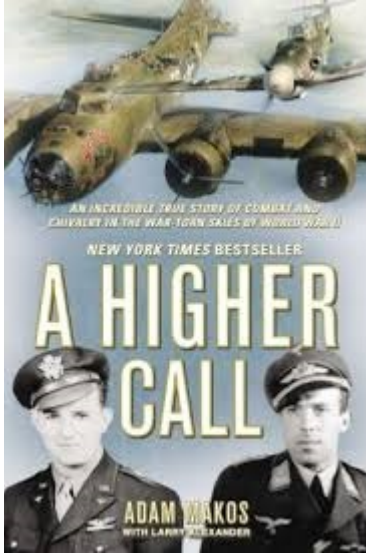


Book Review – Higher Call **by Adam Makos**

Review by Chris Hope, Master CFI



An interesting aspect of this true story is that the event that inspired the book only takes about four pages to relate, and it occurs about half way through the book. But it is an event and a story that truly did change the author's view of World War II pilots.

Adam Makos grew up enamored with the stories that both of his grandfathers told of their flying in World War II. He built model airplanes, and loved going with them to airshows. This love of WW II pilots and aircrewmembers, coupled with his love of writing and reporting, and the crash of TWA flight 800, led him to interviewing his aviation heroes and writing a newsletters of those interviews. He began actively searching out veterans and writing down their stories. But not everyone's stories. He had no interest in the stories of German or Japanese pilots.

But one story kept coming up that intrigued him. It was the story of a German fighter pilot escorting a battle-damaged B-17 back from their bomb run, trying to make it home. He eventually finds Charlie Brown, the pilot. And he is amazed when Charlie Brown tells him, "I am not the man you want to talk to. You want to Franz Stigler. He is the real hero of this story."

Although Adam tells the story of both pilots involved in this event, the focus is really on Franz. It is the story of the making of a Luftwaffe pilot, and it is the story of the war in North Africa and Europe from the point of view of a Luftwaffe fighter pilot. Franz Stigler learned to fly gliders between the wars, flew his Bf 109 against the American P-40s in Libya and against B-24s in Yugoslavia and Italy. As the Allied forces began to close in on Berlin in the spring of 1945, Franz found himself flying Germany's (and the world's) first jet fighter, the Me 262. But by this time all of the pilots knew that the war was over for the Luftwaffe. There was no fuel, no replacement parts, and no replacement pilots.

But the tale does not end there. Adam takes us through the rest of the story, the story of how these two pilots who had only seen each other for a few minutes during an air battle, met and formed a new relationship in the war's aftermath.

This book is definitely worth your time.

Chris loves to read, write, and fly, but not necessarily in that order

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And here are more favorites: www.ChrisHopeFAAFlightInstructor.com/books/books.html