



LUFTWAFFE EXPERTEN 1939-1945



Werner Streib

Knights Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords
67 victories
(66 night and 1 day)



Born
June 13th, 1911
Pforzheim / Baden

Passed away
June 15th, 1986
Buried in Munich at
the Ostfriedhof.

Often called the Father of the Nachtjagd, he would be the first to admit he did not do it alone. While Werner Streib did indeed have quite an influence of the emergence and success of these units during the battles against the RAF over the skies of Europe during WW2, it was his cooperation with men like Wolfgang Falck that made the nightfighters such an effective fighting force. And the fact that this force was built-up "on the fly" shortly after the war began only attests to his organizational abilities.



Werner Streib and Wolfgang Falck - two of the most influential NJG figures. Georg-Hermann Grenier, Streib, Heinz-Wolfgang Schnauffer and Edrich Weissflog.

Werner Streib was born on June 13th, 1911 in the Black Forest town of Pforzheim, Germany (outside Stuttgart). A career in the military was not his first calling, as he planned on a life in finance. A three year apprenticeship in banking left he yearning for more, and the growing German armed forces were a way for a young man to see the world. He joined the Wehrmacht as an infantryman. However, like many other future pilots the idea of wallowing in the mud had little appeal and he effected a transfer to the fledgling Luftwaffe. At first, he was trained as an observer in a reconnaissance unit but later was trained as a fighter pilot. In 1937, he was assigned to JG2 Richthofen at Jüterbog-Damm.

He was a Me-110 Zerstorer pilot in Wolfgang Falck's ZG1 when the war began and he served as Communication officer. It was here in 1940 that the

experiments with nightfighters and the Me-110 would begin in earnest. Though he did not hold much hope for night fighting at first, he was soon to be one of its leading personalities. His first victory and only daylight victory was over a RAF Blenheim on May 10th, 1940.

On May 15/16, 1940 the RAF officially began it's night campaign that would continue until wars end in 1945 with an attack on the German industrial area in the Ruhr. It was these raids that forced Göring to react and order the creation of the Nachtjagd.

On July 20th, 1940 as *Staffelkapitän* of 2/NJG1, Werner Streib would score his first night victory and the first official Nachtjagd victory of the conflict over a RAF Whitley.



Another shot of Falck and Streib, and on the motorcycle fender is Streib along with two I / NJG1 comrades at Gilze-Rijen in the Summer of 1940.

By October of 1940 he was *Gruppenkommandeur* of I / NJG1. His unit was moved to Venlo, Holland at this time in order to have a shorter intercept time to the known RAF bomber routes to the Ruhr Valley in Germany.

He would be awarded the Knights Cross for his efforts on October 6th, 1940 as an Oberleutnant with eight victories.

This move to Holland allowed him and his unit to significantly add to their scores and by May, 1941 he had twenty six confirmed victories. The Nachtjagd was indeed a force to be reckoned with.

He was awarded the Oak Leaves to his Knights Cross on February 26th, 1943 as a Major and Kommodore of NJG1 with forty two confirmed victories.

By June, 1943 he had more night victories than any Allied fighter pilot would have during the entire conflict with a total of fifty confirmed.



Werner Streib and Helmut Lent at Speith on July 26th, 1943. In the photo on the right, late 1944 at Bremen. Adolf Galland (General of Fighters), Werner Streib (Inspector of Night Fighters), Professor Kurt Tank of Focke-Wulf, and Hannes Trautloft (Inspector of Day Fighters - East).

He had by now gained considerable fame due to his fighting skills,

leadership abilities and organizational talents. He was asked for input in the design of a new, dedicated night fighter. He was instrumental in the design and introduction of the best night fighter of the war - the [Heinkel He-219 Owl](#). The night of July 11th, 1943 saw him use this amazing machine in combat for the first time. He downed five RAF Lancaster bombers in this planes first ever combat sortie. However, he destroyed the Heinkel upon landing due to an equipment failure. This did not dampen his enthusiasm for the aircraft at all and he demanded them to be built as fast as possible. To his dismay, the material situation and continuous bombing of the factories would never permit this to happen. If built in sufficient numbers, the He-219 could well have changed the outcome of the night battles against the RAF.

On March 11th, 1944 he would be awarded the Swords to his Knights Cross as a Major with sixty seven confirmed victories.

On March 23rd, 1944 he was made Inspector of Night Fighters and he would stay in this post as Colonel until the end of the war.

Post-war, there was little need for German fighter pilots and he landed a job in food packaging. He also married in 1947, and over time built a very successful career in the food business.

However, the times were again changing and NATO was helping to rebuild the West German armed forces.

The new German Air Force - The *Bundesluftwaffe* - was looking for experienced leaders and like many ex-Luftwaffe officers he was asked to join. He accepted, and in 1956 was the Commanding Officer of the Flight Training School at Landsberg, Germany. He rose to the rank of Lieutenant General in the new Luftwaffe and finally retired in 1966.

He passed away on June 15th, 1986 and is buried in Munich, Germany.



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