



***Macchi C205 “Veltro”  
IL2 Sturmovik - Forgotten Battles***



***- Chapter 1 -***

**About MC 205 in combat by Luigi Gorrini**

Translated by SUPERAEREO

*“It was the finest aeroplane I had during the war, the Germans themselves valued it highly and would have liked to have flown it and it was feared by the enemy...”*

I believe, if memory serves me right, to have been one of the first pilots in the 3<sup>o</sup> *Stormo Caccia* to have a Macchi 205/V assigned to him; at the same time *Ten. Bordoni* and *Maresciallo Fibbia* received one each as a reward for achieving the highest number of enemy kills during the previous month. This “ad personam” assignation was envied and wished for by all the other pilots of the Stormo led by *Falconi*.

My first sortie with the *Veltro* was on 27 August 1943, and to tell the truth it had a rather positive outcome, seen the results obtained. The following is the description of that mission. «*Cerveteri Airport* – wartime base of the 3<sup>o</sup> *Stormo Caccia*, 27.8.43, 11:05 hours. Scramble following RDL sighting of allied bombers in flight from the sea towards the coast of Lazio. The “Angry Wasp” Stormo climbs into the sky with its *Mc.202* and *Me.109* mixed together in the 6 *Squadriglie* of the 18<sup>o</sup> and 23<sup>o</sup> *Gruppo* composing the Stormo led by *Ten. Col. Tito Falconi*, holder of the endurance world

record for inverted flight. Together with the "Folgores" and the "Gustavs" are some "Veltros".



A.N.R. "Asso di Bastoni"

As soon as I gain height I take my position beside *Ten. Mario Melis*, commander of the 85<sup>a</sup> Squadriglia, as his first left wingman. During the previous days I had barely had the time, in between combats, to try out the MC.205 I was given... and now I was looking forward to test her in combat and to

exploit her exceptional speed, manoeuvrability and powerful armament. After a few minutes of flight we spot from a distance the shining B-17's. I feel impatient and signal in every possible way to Melis to let me go to the attack, but the Sardinian refuses and makes me wait while I keep shuffling and gesturing to him with impatience. I find the wait almost impossible to bear and keep insisting with him, and he finally lets me go, not without signalling me to be prudent. I abandon the formation and climb to 8,500 metres, while the group banks to the left in order to meet a second formation of bombers reported to be arriving from the sea.

The Fortresses' formation is now below me, imposing and majestic in its tactical disposition; I choose the last aircraft on the right and prepare to attack according to my personal system, which consists in overtaking the plane in a shallow dive, diving in front of it and rolling inverted to the left or to the right with a 45° angle, and from there pointing towards the nose of the bomber; maybe an overcomplicated manoeuvre, but also one which had previously given me excellent results in several occasions. I rapidly execute the movements and start to aim while levelling out, and at around 200 metres I fire a first burst to adjust my aim and then keep going forward targeting the right-hand side engines, which I set on fire with a more prolonged burst from the Macchi's four weapons; I pass by vertically at full disengagement speed over the enormous fuselage of the four-engined bomber, followed by intense machine-gun fire from the other planes, and with an upward turn I get out of the formation, ready for another passage. I see the first parachutes

open up in the sky while the B-17 still flies calmly even with its engines in flames. This enrages me and I decide to make another pass to finish it off. Under a burst of my bullets the right wing suddenly breaks off and falls earthwards with the propellers still turning while the rest of the aircraft, lost any stability, rolls over and falls in a very tight vertical spin near the shooting range at Nettuno, exploding with an enormous roar that I can briskly feel under the fuselage of the Macchi. I just have the time to regain control of the situation that a burst of tracers passes me by in front and on the right; I suddenly realize the situation I'm in and climb sharply gunning the engine to its maximum in order to evade the attacker, which I finally manage to see after much neck-twisting: a Lightning P-



*Splinter A.N.R. "Asso di Bastoni"*

38, which, initially surprised by my manoeuvre, was now following me up close, firing like a madman with all his 5 weapons. While I was trying to hide in a cloud I was thinking about where it could have come from and how to get out of that situation, and I could not find anything better to do than to use the scarce visibility to make an inverted turn and shortly afterwards to resume my climb towards the top of the cloud, just in time to see my stalker coming out of it, now transformed in the one who was being stalked; after a short diversion and having reached ballistic range, I shoot a long burst and the twin-engined fighter explodes into pieces, which then fall near the Lake of Nemi. I have been very lucky, I have got out of a bad predicament and within a short time I shot down two enemy planes. Now I am really alone in the sky of Rome, but I still have enough petrol and ammunition, so I decide to follow the course of the B-17's formation towards the East. I climb again and I find the B-17's between Sulmona and Avezzano, which have just been hit by their bombs. I attempt a new attack, choosing this time the last aircraft to the left of the formation. I repeat with more resolution the usual tried and tested attack manoeuvre, aiming at the cockpit, which bursts into fragments under the cadenced hail of my bullets. The crew quickly bale out and I count 9 parachutes opening in the

sky; maybe somebody stayed on board, seen that the B-17 still flies well and even if out of formation doesn't look as if it's going to fall down. I make another pass firing only with the 12.7 and shortly afterwards two men jump out with their parachutes. The aircraft leans slightly to the left and with a steep dive crashes to the ground. They are now three the kills of the day, but I have no time to rejoice for the excellent debut with the Macchi 205, because suddenly about ten P-38's of the long distance escort appear from above and It's lucky for me that they start shooting from a distance, unequivocally alerting me of their intentions. I dive into a controlled spin to spoil the aim of the ones closest to me, choosing such a difficult and



*Splinter A.N.R." Incocca Tende Scaglia"*

dangerous aerobatic figure because of its vertical asset, putting my trust into the Macchi's structure, which is under enormous pressure, close to its safety limits, and hoping that the Lightnings will give up the chase because of their particular structural shape. After a while into this whirling carousel I notice that the P-38's are giving up and I breathe more freely, concentrating on bringing the plane out of the dive. The speed indicator vibrates, its hand unable to move any further, and the whole aircraft shakes, moaning amongst vibrations and shudders, with sinister cracking sounds coming from the plates exposed to the formidable attrition of the air. Suddenly, making the situation worse, I hear a formidable detonation and a visible flash of flame on the left wing chills my heart; I can't find the courage to look around to see what happened and concentrate on steadying the aircraft, which still responds well. Then I resolve to look and see a hole on the trailing edge of the wing, caused by the explosion of the overheated chamber of the cannon. But my troubles are far from ended because shortly afterwards, maybe because of the explosion, the strong vibrations or the hard solicitations underwent by the Macchi, the cockpit hood suddenly unlocks, pivots to the right and breaking its hinges spins away into the air, not without first bashing against the radio aerial and then the elevator. The chilling air invades the cockpit,

literally blowing away everything that is not fixed: objects, maps, instructions holders, knobs. Luckily the aircraft survives bravely this new violent and unforeseen blow. Now my only thought is to concentrate on bringing the plane up again without putting her through any further stresses, but I have to be quick because the earth is approaching fast; I pull the stick gently but steadily and it feels as hard as rock, but slowly the plane starts to respond to the controls and the nose moves upwards until I can just see the line of the horizon, I steady her up and the sea, beautiful and blue and reassuring appears in my field of vision. I am saved!

I go through the usual checks on the instruments and I notice all is regular even if the televel shows a minimum fuel level; I want to know where I am and I call the base to have a radio goniometric fix: "Campanile from Vespa 2, Campanile from Vespa 2, do you read me?" I repeat the call several times and after a time that seems interminable to me, a friendly voice answers: "Vespa 2 come in! Campanile here". I quickly explain my situation in technical terms and I receive confirmation that I am in front of Pescara. They advise me to climb to 3,000 metres and to keep

the engine under 1,750 rpm to reduce fuel consumption. They will assist me during my approach to the strips at Palidoro, towards which have decided to direct my plane. I cross the Apennines and head towards the coast hoping that my good luck will hold; all of a sudden the engine stutters something



to the propeller and as a result of the strange conversation, the latter stops with its blades in a cross: the fuel has run out!

Instinctively I deploy flaps and gear, with the result of losing even more speed and risking a stall. A quick reaction to retract everything back in and progressively manoeuvring again while regaining speed, I start again to glide towards Palidoro, of which I start to recognise the environs: the fields, the brush of the Tolfa on the right, the railway line, all the while the air whistles on the wingtips. I lose height further and see in front of me, quite close, the suspended electric cables of the



railway; what shall I do? To pass underneath them is too risky because of the very limited clearance and I have nothing left but to try and jump over them with a sudden pull on the stick: the "Veltro" rears up like a thoroughbred, jumps over the obstacle and noses back down while landing gear and

flaps come out, this time with impeccable timing. I touch down rather heavily and the plane slows down to a halt on the friendly airfield, suddenly remaining silent as if expecting a well deserved word of thanks. I get out of the cockpit in time to see my Siberian dog Flak jumping on the wing and towards me to greet me, mad with joy, then the other pilots arrive running, assaulting me with a thousand questions: I lift three fingers of my hand and say: "I shot down two four-engined bombers and a fighter" while affectionate slaps land on my shoulders together with the congratulations from my friends; then everyone looks toward the battered plane, her wings in tatters, the aerial snapped off, the rudder deformed. In the morning she was still brand new, she didn't even have any insignias painted on yet, apart from the white identification band on the fuselage; now she's unrecognizable, even if she only flew for just 95 minutes firing 750 12.7mm and 380 20mm rounds. But she had loyally performed her duty, bringing me back home in one piece and having destroyed 3 enemy aircraft on top of that».

This was my combat debut in the Macchi 205 "Veltro". Maybe, had we been given them a little earlier, we would have been able to accomplish some useful war actions with them, and history might have followed a different course.

The Macchi C.205 V was the fighter I had been waiting for to put me in conditions of parity with the enemy. If in her external appearance she was very similar to the Mc.202, her specifications and characteristics were everything one could wish for.

With this aircraft I reached a maximum height of 10,800-11,000 metres, noticing at that height the controls becoming sluggish, a phenomenon common to other planes as well. In this respect I found the 205 falling behind the Fiat G.55, which having

more lift and a wider airframe section was better able of sustained flight at such heights. The 205 responded with absolute fidelity to any manoeuvre, allowing even take-offs and landings from restricted spaces, as long as one knew how to treat her acting properly on engine and flaps. In some conditions I executed sideways landings like the ones possible with the Cr.42. The landing approach presented no problems whatsoever with such a plane, in some respects as manoeuvrable as a bicycle. What really impressed me with this fighter was the responsiveness she always showed me in the most critical of conditions. In particular I had been able to experience in person the sturdiness of her airframe and the safety of her resistance parameters during the 27 August 1943 combat and in various other occasions.

She also possessed a perfect harmonisation which allowed for take-offs with the trim



*Splinter A.N.R. "Vespa Arrabbiata"*

**Type: M.C.205V Serie III**

Function: fighter  
 Year: 1943  
 Crew: 1  
 Engines: 1 \* 1475 hp Fiat RA.1050  
 RC 58 Tifone  
 Wing Span: 10.58 m  
 Length: 8.85 m  
 Height: 3.04 m  
 Wing Area: 16.80 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Empty Weight: 2581 kg  
 Max.Weight: 3408 kg  
 Speed: 650 km/h  
 Ceiling: 11350 m  
 Range: 1040 km  
 Armament: 2\*mg 12.7 mm 2\*g 20 mm

set on 0. Such characteristic made her preferable to the Me.109, which, even if more powerful, had rather stiff controls. More than once the good balance of her lifting surfaces allowed me to pilot her for several kilometres on a gliding flight, like that time when I managed to come back gliding from the Volturno to Pratica di Mare with the engine hit by bullets and seized because of overheating.



*M.llo Pilota Luigi Gorrini*

*I wonder how many other planes would have endured so much in such conditions. Given her characteristics of speed, manoeuvrability and robustness that also made her able to take a good deal of punishment, she had excellent qualities as a combat craft and was a stable firing platform which in practice*

*proved more solid than the manufacturer expected, since the latter had advised against firing all weapons contemporarily. In fact simultaneous fire with cannons and machine-guns never had any negative impact on the solidity of the structures which had to withstand the vibrations from the firing. She was the most beautiful plane I had during the war, appreciated and envied by the Germans themselves, feared by the enemy.*

**Luigi Gorrini**

**(M.Ilo Pilota, 3° Stormo Caccia – M.O.V.M.)**

<http://www.anrvirtual.com/gorrini.htm>

## **- Chapter 2 -**

### **Macchi C.205 versus Spitfires**

**Translated by Bear EAF51**



*The following two stories come from the book "Un Pilota del Cavallino Rampante", (edition La Galaverna-Flaviana, Battaglia Terme, Padova, 1990) written by **Tenente Pilota Paolo Voltan, 4° Stormo Caccia, Regia Aeronautica Italiana**. They refer to two different missions, flew by Paolo Voltan on August 14<sup>th</sup>*

*and September 8<sup>th</sup>, 1943.*

*I think the following descriptions may be helpful in order to understand the performances of the Macchi C.205, one of the best fighters of the Regia Aeronautica in WW2. This plane was equipped by a FIAT RA 1050 Tifone (same as DB 605 A-1, build under license by FIAT), developing 1450 HP (the same engine mounted on Me 109 G and H1).*

*Reading the following stories, you can easily understand the C.205 was much more maneuverable than the Me109, being able to outturn the allied Spitfires MkVb and Mk.IX, at that time operational over Italy.*

*I decided to translate this text in English, so other people of the IL-2 community can enjoy the description. Have fun.*

**EAF 51 Bear, C.O. 51° Stormo, European Air Force**

<http://ruffini.freeweb.net/HomeE.htm>



## August 14<sup>th</sup>, 1943, over Sicily

On 14th of August our flight took off with 8 planes. They were all Macchi C.205, armed with two 20mm cannon (finally!) and the usual two 12,7 mm. machine guns. I was the wingman of Ten. Querci, and we were the third section, flying close to him on his right side, as for the general rule in combat flying....

...Our flight of eight planes climb to 3.000 mt. Our orders were to climb to 6.000 mt., escorting a flight o RE.2002, flying at 5.000 mt. The difference in height of 1.000 mt. Should have allowed us diving attack, in case an enemy formation would attempt to intercept the RE.2002 in order to stop their bombing attack....

...We were flying over Milazzo, when a short burst from our flight leader warned us that an enemy formation was in sight. I rased the head, and high in front of us, a little on the left, I saw a formation of not less than fourty Spitfires, diving toward us. As soon they were about 300 meters from us, they opened fire all together, and an avalanche of red tracers hit us, while our sections break on the left or on the right,



attempting to avoid the enemy fire.

Querci made an hard break on the right, and I followed him carefully, while feeling my sweat on my head. My hand was firmly keeping the stick, my finger ready on the firing button, in order to open fire as soon as needed.

Closing on maximum turn,

Querci was trying to position himself at 6 o clock of some bandit, because after the first merge it was only a matter of ability. In fact the manoeuvrability of our Macchi enabled us to engage the whole enemy formation, until the RE.2002 were on target.

The Spitfires, meanwhile, were all around us in the sky, flying in sections of two planes.

I was still flying near Querci, continuously checking around to watch possible treats. Suddenly in front of us we saw two Spitfires turning hard on the left. Querci opened

fire, but due to the turning rate, the tracers missed them near their tail. I was ready to engage them, but then I saw two other Spitfires coming from the right, aiming at Querci plane. With an hard bank on the right I turned toward them, hardly missing to hit them both, but making impossible to them to open fire on Querci.

I suddenly realised I was alone, while all around I can see a furball of British and Italian planes, firing and running the ones after the others, in the middle of an hell

dogfight. In that moment two Spitfires crossed in front of my plane, flying in very close formation. They should have miss me, because they were turning on the left, following an isolated talian plane. In a matter of seconds I close on their six, pushing my Macchi on maximum turn without



falling in a spin. A few seconds again and I would have been able to put the enemy wingman in my gun sight. I felt the plane trembling and shaking as usual, announcing the beginning of an horizontal spin. Pushing a little forward the stick I succeeded in stabilizing her, while I realised I was slowly gaining advantage on the bandis, that probably did not spot me yet. Shooting at the wingman would give me an advantage. If the leader would not know the wingman was hit, I could lately attack the second target with another burst.

The progresses I was making spiralling totally took my attention, and I forgot to check my six, where suddenly I could find another section of Spitfires. The bandits were finally in my gun sight. I knew that if I wanted to hit them, I should aim ahead of them. On the contray our continuous turn on the left would have pushed my bullets away from the target. When I let the first burst go, I had the confirmation of my thoughts. In fact the tracers showed my burst were missing the bandit, sliding down, away from his tail, leaving the two planes still free to aim to their hunt to the other Macchi. A second burst hit the wingman Spit. The plane banked: initially a dark smoke burst out of his engine, than a sudden fire blow on the whole plane, that went down as a torch. I got him!

The other was not yet aware of having lost his wingman, because was still engaging the other Macchi. This was still turning on the left while climbing, knowing this was the best way to get free from the dog on his tail. Looking around I could see planes flying in all directions, but no one of the British was following the RE.2002, that in the mean time should have accomplished their mission. On my gun sight I still had the other Spit, and I was committed not to leave him for any reason.



*Regia Aeronautica "51° Stormo"*

The victory I got on his wingman push me to a wider turn, and I had to close again, if I wanted to get the other too. The hard turn was pushing me on my seat, and moving my head in the different directions was an enormous effort. A few seconds again, and I could fire another burst on my

target.

The shape of the spit was slowly entering in my gun sight, well centred in the external circle. I should just wait a little, to put it right in the central cross of my gun sight. Than I had to go further ahead, in order to aim before the Spit, and balance the turn speed. When I shoot, a burst erupted from the Macchi's guns, shaking the whole plane.

My tracers hit the target that, being turning, was totally exposing his full shape in gun sight. I can see my bullets entering his wing, the cockpit, the engine, but the plane was still flying as nothing was happened. I was ready to shoot again, when I saw some red lights passing near my plane. I turned suddenly my head, and what I can see where the turning propeller blades of two Spits, with a spiral painted on the nose, creating a strange visual effect, and together with tem, the flashing machine guns shooting at me.

At that moment I was not really thinking what I was doing. My reaction was pure instinct. With a sudden break I turned my plane on the right, closing the throttles. The two Spits passed over me in overshooting, and I found myself on their six, but unfortunately too far from them.

I opened full throttle, trying to catch them, but they were really too far, and I would have needed too time to do that.. I needed some rest after all that emotions: I had a look around, and I realised I was alone.

The remaining Spits were heading toward the Mount Etna. No other Macchi in sight. My altimeter was showing 6.000 meters... Watching the clock and the televel, I understood I was flying since 70 minutes, and it was time to return to homebase...

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## September 8<sup>th</sup>, 1943

My Squadron, 73<sup>^</sup> Squadriglia, belonging to the 9<sup>th</sup> Group of 4<sup>o</sup> Stormo (Wing), was based at Gioua del Colle since August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1943. We were flying Macchi C.205, finally armed with 20mm. cannons, and a maximum speed of over 650 Km/h. We scrambled at around 10,30 AM.

We got notice of a formation of 65 B-24 Liberator south of Pescara, flying toward south, returning to their bases in Tunisia. We take off in eight planes... we climbed at maximum rate at 6.000 mt. The possibility of attacking a group of 65 bomber was making all of us excited. The first to spot the Americans was Rinaldi, my wingman.



The American tactic was always the same: flying in boxes, so they can enforce their offensive power. A formation of 65 Liberators may provide firepower of 650 machine guns, and approaching them as very dangerous. We knew that their guns can fire horizontally for about 300 meters, than the bullet would change their trajectory, loosing a great part of their speed. As a consequence Liberators gunner did not open fire until our planes were very near. Our tactic was flying in the same direction as them, on the side of their formation, at a distance of about 500 meters. Their speed was about

450 Km/h, and therefore we had a speed margin of about 200 Km/h. So we flew straight, over passing them, and then with an hard turn, attacking them frontally. This was the side in which B-24 were more vulnerable, due to dead angles caused by the engines, where the gunners cannot fire.

When we over passed the formation of about 500 meters, a little higher than the bombers, dive toward them and firing. The volume of fire hitting our planes was terrible, but the duration of the attack was only a few seconds. As soon we were approaching the closer, we made a roll, turning our plane upside down, and reverse in a half split-s and fast diving toward the ground. While turning, we were showing all our shape to the bombers gunners, but only for a few seconds. Continuing our dive until being out of sight, we climbed again on the opposite side. Then we flew again on the side of the formation, waiting to be again straight in front of them, in order to start the next passage. This kind of maneuver might be repeated several times, at least until the remaining fuel in our fighters allowed us to attack again.



*ICAF "51° Stormo"*

That day, as soon we spot the bombers, while moving on our attacking position, a formation of eight Spitfires suddenly appeared on our right side. Fortunately they were not higher than us, and so they did not dive on us firing. The four Macchis on the right side of the bombers abandoned the attack route,

turning toward the Spits. The other four, including me and Rinaldi, continued in their pursuit of the bombers..

From my cockpit I could see the furball between the others. The altitude was favourable to the Macchis, because until 6.000 meters our planes were practically unbeatable.

Mariotti, followed by his comrades, went into the dogfight with a terrible commitment. In spite of being four against eight, the Italians soon were dominating the situation. The maneuverability of their planes, and the ability of the pilots put them in the

condition of being able to fire without being fired. The duel last about ten minutes, while we were flying south, following the bombers.

The intercept happened south of Termoli, and the fight continued toward Puglia, with our series of attacks ... At the third pass one of the leading planes banked on his wing, while a long black smoke was erupting from his wing. After firing at him, when I rolled upside down and dived, I could see her well and clearly while climbing on the

opposite side. The B-24 was flying without control, in a narrow spiral dive. Was the end: the huge beast was going down smoking, while I could see some parachutes opening over her. But we need to make another attack, although we already flew over Bari, heading to Jonio see.



In the following pass another B-24 started to smoke heavily and to loose hight, without loosing control. At least other five bombers were heavily damaged.. We were now flying over Santa Maria di Leuca, and our fuel level did not allow us to perform another attack, therefore we headed home, very curious about learning the story of the other section.

They were already arrived at home base before us. One spit shot down and confirmed, maybe a second one. A poor score, but obtained by only four Macchis against eight Spitfires, that at the end decided to disengage...

Each fight was always different from the others. After this dogfight our debriefing conclusions were two. The fighters attacking the Spits make a few comments about the ingenuity of the British, being outturned by the Macchis, without succeeding in break, and therefore hit by our fighters, and running home at the end, helped by the fact that our Macchis were out of fuel, and therefore cannot pursue them.

The other section got a good confirmation about their tactics in attacking bombers, able to produce good results. The limited fuel was the main reason why of the limited results. But it is also important to mention that we were only four against 65 of those huge bombers, and the volume of fire shoot at us was really terrible...



*Splinter A.N.R. "Asso di Bastoni....N.18"*

*In memory of*



*Magg. Pil. Adriano Visconti*



<http://www.anrvirtual.com/visconti.htm>