

# ‘Red Tails’ only manages to fly level

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George Lucas has gone from being merely a film director to a household name. Lucas is known around the world for his success in the “Indiana Jones” and “Star Wars” trilogies. Unfortunately, he’s also contributed bombs like “Howard the Duck,” “Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull,” and the new “Star Wars” trilogy. “Red Tails” is another bomb in the payload that Lucas has dropped hard on the film industry.

The movie takes place during World War II and centers around the struggles and conflict of the 332 Fighter Group of the U.S. Army Air Corps, which is a unit made up of only African-American soldiers. Due to racial tensions, these airmen have yet to experience any real combat and are typically assigned less glamorous missions, such as attacking supply trains and trucks. Due to the continued efforts of their commander (played by Terrence Howard), they are

given their time to shine by protecting bombers during bomb raids in Germany. Tensions arise inside and outside the cockpit as the pilots’ deal with the conflicts of war, personal issues and their relationships with each other.



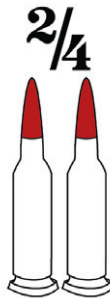
Initially, after watching the trailer, I thought this film was going to be groundbreaking and award winning. It had all the makings of a great film, an academy award-winning cast and producer, as well as a decent plot. But it goes to show that you can have all the big names and still crash and burn.

The film began in the middle of the story like Star Wars Episode IV, except with less character development and not enough backstory. The dialogue was cliché at best and most of the supporting characters had thick, over-the-top accents and appeared unintelligent. One of the main characters, Joe “Lighting” Little (David Oyelowo),

not only detracted from the story, he also came across as an overzealous “Maverick,” minus Tom Cruise’s “award-winning” personality. The writing, as a whole, was a formulaic, patchwork of different aviation films and was more about making a statement and less about telling a story.

One redeeming factor of the movie were the dog fights and special effects. Unfortunately, for aviation and history enthusiasts, the portrayal of aircraft was both inaccurate and unrealistic. All realism aside, it was still entertaining to watch things blow up and planes zooming through the sky.

Overall “Red Tails” had potential to be great, but it failed in the most critical part, takeoff and landing. This film was just another link in the chain of movies that are “all flash and no substance.” If you’re into watching over-the-top explosions and overused computer animation, this is the film for you. If not, you should probably try reading a book instead.



(High and to the Right)