

U.S. 99th Infantry Division







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The "Checkerboard" Division was totally inexperienced and had been in France less than one month at the start of the offensive. They had been sent to this quiet sector of the front to get acclimatized. Their baptism of fire came against the 1st SS Panzer and LXVII Korps as they were struck at dawn on December 16 and heavily engaged. The division somehow hung together and retreated back to Elsenborn ridge and, with the other U.S. troops there, was able to hold that critical high ground and put a serious twist in the German plan. When the American counterattack came in January, the 99th spearheaded the attack into the Monschau Forest.