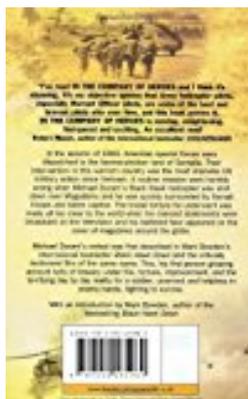


[PDF] In The Company Of Heroes

Michael J. Durant - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: In the Company of Heroes

Author: Michael J. Durant

Released: 2004-07-05

Language:

Pages: 480

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Description:

From Publishers Weekly The 1993 battle in Mogadishu between American soldiers and Somali militiamen gets a human-scale retelling in this jaunty but harrowing memoir. Durant went down with the Black Hawk he piloted; after a terrifying crash in which his back and leg were broken and a violent fire-fight, he was held captive for ten days by Somali militiamen as a pawn in their stand-off with American peacekeeping forces. Frightened and in agony from his wounds, he called on his survival training to help him endure, but he also relied on the empathy of some of his Somali captors, especially the gruff but sympathetic guard who feeds, bathes and bonds with him. Durant is a gung-ho army honcho, not much given to introspection, and the book often takes leave of the captivity narrative to recount his exploits in conflicts from Panama to Iraq, and to celebrate the

bravado and leave-no-man-behind esprit-de-corps of his élite "Night Stalkers" helicopter unit. The writing is full of terse jargon, weapons specs, helicopter-assault procedural and special-ops swagger ("They were the kind of professionals who could pick off a rabbit from a roller-coaster with a BB gun"). But overall the story remains taut, and the prose evokes both the chaos of combat and the anxiety of confinement. Durant's perspective on the Somalia conflict is somewhat limited and jingoistic ("Mogadishu was Tombstone, and we were Wyatt Earp"), but his is a revealing portrait of the human face of war. 16 pages of b&w photos.

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From School Library Journal Adult/High School-A decade ago, Durant and his crew were shot down while flying a U.S. Army Special Operations Black Hawk helicopter in the heart of Mogadishu. The only survivor after a firefight with hostile forces of warlord Mohamed Farah Aidid, the author recounts the conditions of his 11 days in captivity, with experiences that ranged from heroic to gruesome, harrowing, bizarre, and compassionate. Suffering severe injuries to his back, leg, and face, moved under guard through a sequence of rudimentary facilities in a volatile combat environment, and facing the deadly risk of discovery by rival clans, Durant became a political pawn receiving global media attention. Readers of Mark Bowden's *Black Hawk Down* (Atlantic Monthly, 1999) who wished for a more technically detailed analysis of the mission's operational aspects will savor this account. The book also incorporates chapters on the arduous training required to earn a spot in an elite squadron and lays groundwork for appreciating the Mogadishu engagement by describing prior high-risk special operations in Korea, Panama, and Iraq in which Durant participated. Each episode resonates with the sense of bonding among combat brethren, and the professional esprit and conviction behind mottoes such as "NSDQ" (Night Stalkers Don't Quit), as exemplified by Durant's squadron mates who flew above the embattled city in the days after his shoot-down, broadcasting: "Mike Durant-. We will not leave without you." A dramatic narrative by a talented storyteller.

Lynn Nutwell, Fairfax City Regional Library, VA

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