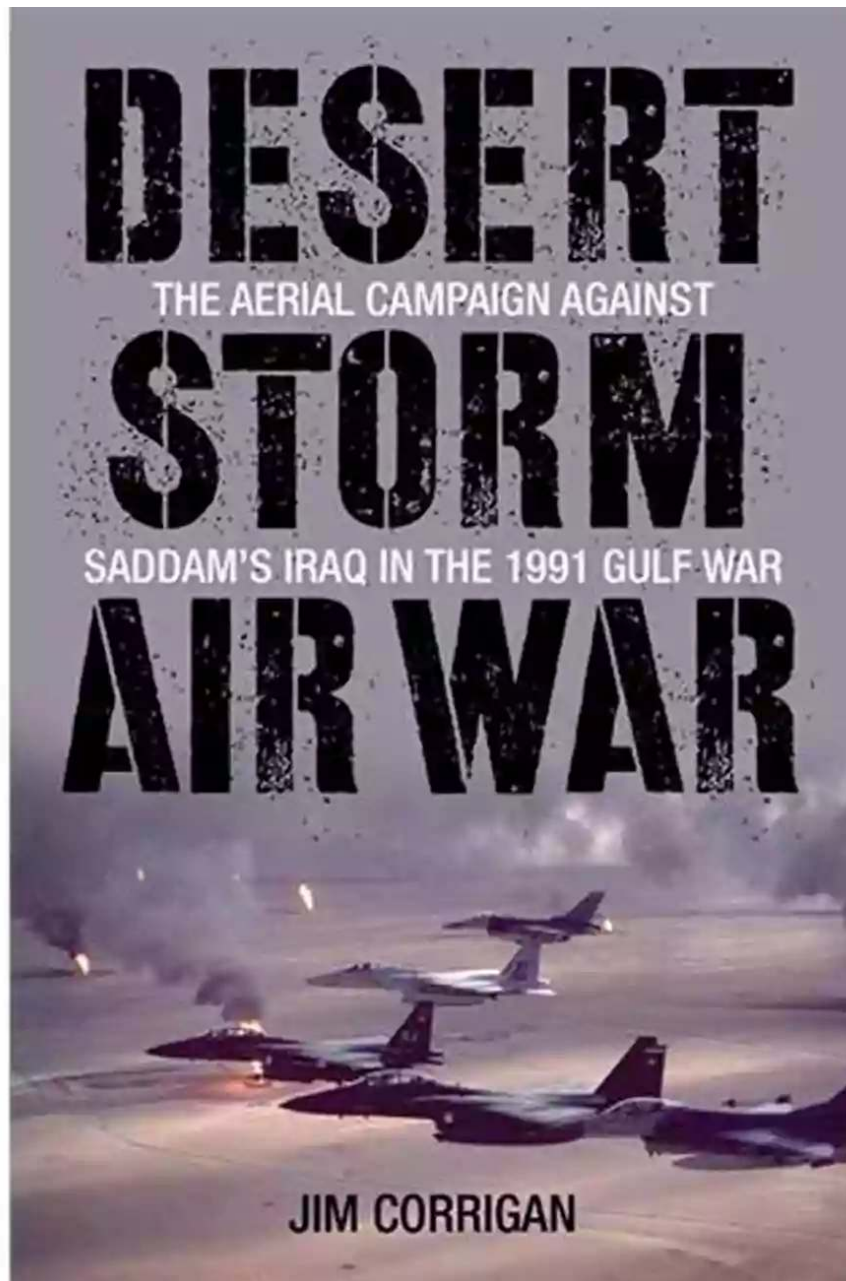


The Aerial Campaign Against Saddam Iraq In The 1991 Gulf War: Unveiling the Tactics and Outcomes



The 1991 Gulf War marked a defining moment in modern military history, as it showcased the tremendous power and effectiveness of aerial campaigns. As the

world watched in awe, an unprecedented coalition force led by the United States unleashed a relentless aerial assault against Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

Revealing the devastating tactics and outcomes of this aerial campaign provides valuable insights into the nature of modern warfare and the consequences it brings. Let's explore the details of this historic event and understand why it had such a profound impact on how military strategies are devised and executed.



Desert Storm Air War: The Aerial Campaign against Saddam's Iraq in the 1991 Gulf War

by Jim Corrigan (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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The Rationale Behind the Aerial Campaign

Following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the international community responded swiftly, condemning Saddam's actions and demanding an immediate withdrawal. Diplomatic efforts failed to achieve the desired objective, forcing the coalition to resort to military force. However, instead of launching a ground invasion, a decision was made to embark on an extensive aerial campaign.

The primary reason for this strategic choice was to minimize casualties and destruction on the ground. By relying heavily on air power, the coalition aimed to

weaken Saddam's military capabilities before launching a ground assault. The aerial campaign sought to neutralize Iraq's air defense systems, effectively cutting off their ability to strike back and limiting the risks to coalition forces.

The Tactical Execution

The scope and intensity of the aerial campaign were unmatched by anything witnessed before. Over the course of 42 consecutive days, coalition forces launched over 100,000 sorties, unleashing a continuous onslaught on Saddam's forces and infrastructure. Various aircraft, including bombers, fighter jets, and attack helicopters, inflicted significant damage on enemy assets.

The campaign involved the extensive use of precision-guided munitions (PGMs) such as laser-guided bombs and cruise missiles. This marked a turning point in military technology, as these advanced weaponry systems greatly increased accuracy and minimized collateral damage. The coalition exploited the advantage of having air superiority, allowing them to strike with surgical precision and effectiveness, obliterating selected targets without mercy.

Taking Down Saddam's Air Defense

One of the primary objectives of the aerial campaign was to disable Iraq's air defense systems, which posed a severe threat to coalition aircraft. Advanced aircraft such as the F-117 Nighthawk stealth fighter played a vital role by infiltrating Iraqi airspace undetected, delivering devastating blows to key targets related to air defense.

Suppressing the enemy's ability to detect, track, and target coalition aircraft significantly disrupted Iraq's defensive capabilities. Targeting and destroying radar installations and communication centers crippled the coordination and

effectiveness of Saddam's air defenses. By eliminating these threats, the coalition gained air superiority, laying the groundwork for a successful military campaign.

Devastating Strikes on Infrastructure

While disabling Saddam's air defenses was essential, the aerial campaign went beyond purely military targets. It aimed to cripple the infrastructure that supported Iraq's military machinery and its capacity to sustain wartime operations. Key facilities such as communication networks, power plants, roads, bridges, and transportation networks became prime objectives.

The strategic strikes on infrastructure proved highly effective in limiting Iraq's ability to mobilize and maintain its forces. By targeting critical supply routes and logistics hubs, the coalition made it difficult for Saddam to receive reinforcements and supply his troops adequately. Destroying transportation infrastructure forced Iraq to rely on irregular supply lines, thus further weakening their military might.

The Ultimate Outcome

After weeks of relentless bombing, Saddam's forces suffered severe losses, both in terms of personnel and equipment. The aerial campaign degraded Iraq's military infrastructure to a point where a ground invasion became nearly inevitable. On February 24, 1991, Operation Desert Storm commenced as coalition forces launched a massive ground assault against the weakened Iraqi army.

The aerial campaign and subsequent ground operation liberated Kuwait and effectively expelled Saddam's forces from the country. The Gulf War marked a turning point in military operations, highlighting the effectiveness of aerial campaigns in achieving strategic objectives with minimal risks to the attacking force.

The Lessons Learned

The Aerial Campaign Against Saddam Iraq In The 1991 Gulf War brought about significant changes in how warfare is conducted. It highlighted the power of air superiority and precision-guided munitions, leading to an increased reliance on aerial campaigns in subsequent conflicts. The lessons learned from this historic campaign influenced the development of military strategies for years to come.

Utilizing advanced technology, superior intelligence, and coordinated operations, the coalition forces successfully changed the face of modern warfare. The aerial campaign against Saddam Hussein's Iraq in the 1991 Gulf War proved that air power, when utilized effectively, can provide a decisive advantage.

The Aerial Campaign Against Saddam Iraq In The 1991 Gulf War will forever be remembered as a pivotal moment in military history. It showcased the extensive capabilities of modern air warfare and its ability to shape the outcome of a conflict. The relentless assault on Saddam's forces and infrastructure paved the way for a successful ground invasion and ultimately led to the liberation of Kuwait.

It is crucial to reflect on these events to gain a deeper understanding of the evolving nature of warfare. By analyzing the tactics and outcomes of past conflicts, we can enhance our knowledge and continuously improve military strategies for future challenges.

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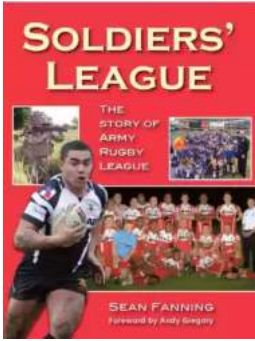
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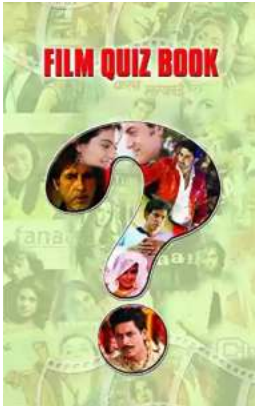


The air campaign that opened the Gulf War in January 1991 was one of the most stunning in history. For five weeks, American and other Coalition aircraft pounded enemy targets with 88,000 tons of bombs. Sorties—more than 100,000 of them—were launched from bases in Saudi Arabia, from aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf and Red Sea, and even from bases in the United States. The skies over Iraq and Kuwait were filled with a dizzying array of new and improved weapons—Tomahawk and Hellfire missiles, stealth aircraft, and laser-guided smart bombs—and the results were impressive. The Coalition swiftly established air superiority and laid the foundation for the successful five-day ground campaign that followed. The results were also highly visible as the American people watched the bombings unfold in grainy green video-game-like footage broadcast on CNN and the nightly news. The overwhelming success of the Desert Storm air campaign has made it influential ever since, from the “shock and awe” bombing during the Iraq War in 2003 to more recent drone operations, but the apparent ease with which the campaign was won has masked the difficulty—and the true achievement—of executing such a vast and complex operation. Using government reports, scholarly studies, and original interviews, Jim Corrigan reconstructs events through the eyes of not only the strategists who planned it, but also the pilots who flew the missions.



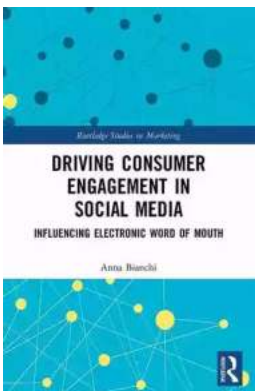
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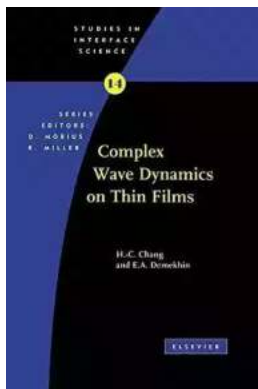
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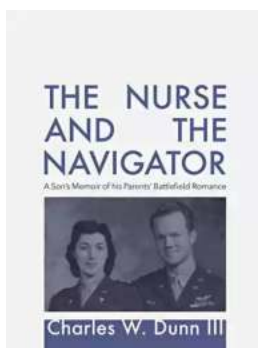
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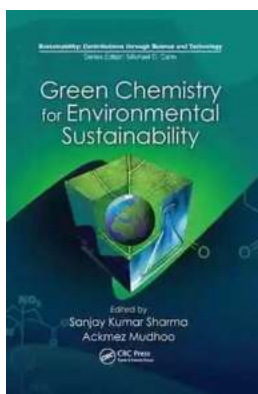
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