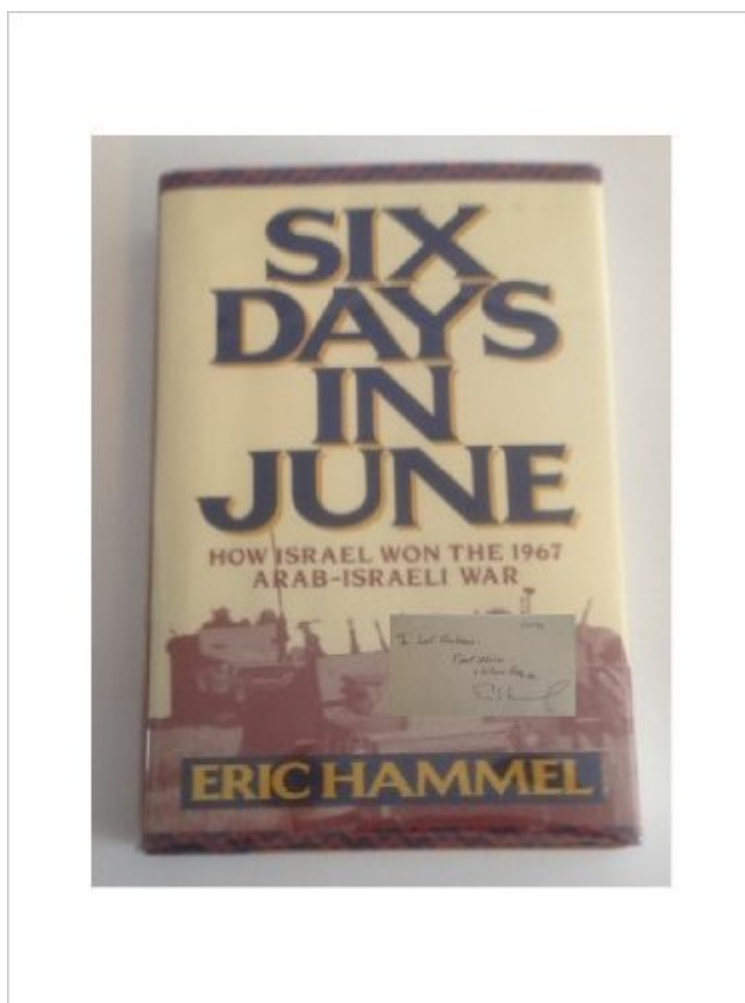


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Six Days In June: How Israel Won The 1967 Arab-Israeli War



Synopsis

A look at the Six-Day War describes how the Israelis adopted German World War II tactics--including lightning fast attacks and shock air assaults--to defeat the Arab armies.

Book Information

Hardcover: 480 pages

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Customer Reviews

Hammel's "Six Days of War" is one of the best secondary sources available regarding the 1967 Six-Day War. It is written in a popular format rather than an academic research format although it does have extensive references and a large bibliography. The book is clearly intended for popular consumption rather than discussion of university academics. Hammel is a well-known military writer and has extensively written about WWII although this is his first foray into the volatile military environment of the Middle East. Many read this book expecting a full account of the war including every aspect manageable: political, economic, military, etc. Hammel's specialty is military history from the tactical perspective (that is to say devoid of all but the most important political and economic factors) and this book is no exception. Hammel focuses very tightly upon analysis and retelling of the battles that occurred and the military factors that led to them. This tendency leads Hammel to discuss the many terrorist intrusions into Israel that the Israeli military was forced to learn how to counter (a factor that contributed greatly to the effectiveness and readiness of the Israeli military), but to leave out much of the bitter inter-Arab politics preceding the 1967 Six Day War. The book lacks footnotes, but has an excellent bibliography, which includes not only books, but periodicals and special studies. An additional bonus is a complete Order of battle for the Israeli, Egyptian, Jordanian, and Syrian forces of the 1967 Six Day War. I definitely prefer this well-written

book to but A.J. Barker's "The Arab-Israeli Wars," which shows a unsettling bias towards the Arab side of the conflict. I highly recommend this excellent account of the 1967 Six Day War.

By any standard the Israeli victory in six days, 1967, was a great military accomplishment. This book, however, is the worst kind of history book--an unabashedly triumphalist, chest-thumping gloatfest by a horribly one-sided writer. One of Eric Hammel's grandfathers was murdered in the Holocaust, and the other helped found Israel. So the bias comes from a real place. However, as a military historian his job is to report what happens in an at least slightly even way. Instead we hear crowing from first place to last about Israel's chutzpah, their gumption, their fight against odds, their brilliant military planning, their valour, what not. The least relevant Israeli operation by the lowest-ranking soldier gets pages of discussion, while the Arab side gets only the breeziest, rather contemptuous, overview. Which is a shame because the writer's style shows he could have done a much, much better job had he taken off his rose-tinted lens. Israeli soldiers are each referred to by a fond nickname (Ariel Sharon is referred to throughout as Ari, for instance); their appearances and general characters, even their habits, are fawningly recounted. One soldier, therefore, features "curly hair and a shy toothy smile"; another, Hammel proclaims, was tipped to become a chief-of-staff many times--if, that is, he chuckles fondly, the soldier survived his notorious penchant for killing enemies face to face. Charming.

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