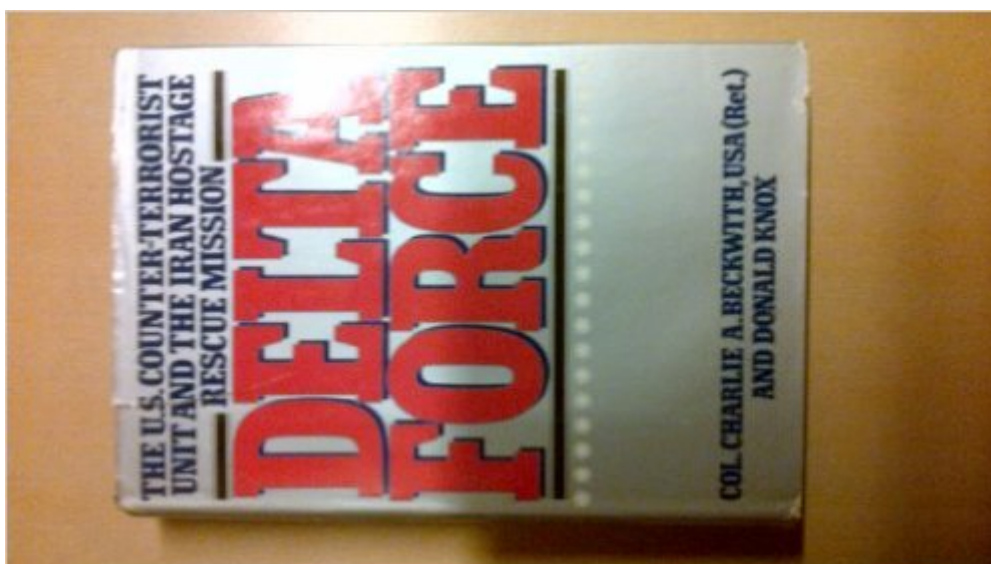


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Delta Force



Synopsis

The definitive insider's account of the U.S. Army's most elite and secretive special-ops unit, written by the legendary founder and first commanding officer of Delta Force. Will guarantee you a medal. A body bag. Or both. With this call to arms, Charlie Beckwith revolutionized American armed combat. Beckwith's acclaimed memoir tells the story of Delta Force ("the Army's most elite commando unit." - Los Angeles Times) as only its maverick creator could tell it - from the bloody baptism of Vietnam to the top-secret training grounds of North Carolina to political battles in the upper levels of the Pentagon itself. This is the heart-pounding, first-person, insider's view of the missions that made Delta Force legendary.

--This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book was very difficult to put down once I started reading it. Beckwith has a way with words that makes it seem like he's sitting next to you telling you a story. While reading the book, I felt like I knew Charlie Beckwith and his way of thinking--that's how much personality he put into this book.

1st Special Forces Operational Detachment--Delta (SFOD-D) is the military's formal name for Delta Force. Delta is perhaps America's foremost elite counterterrorist unit along with the FBI's Hostage Rescue Team (HRT) and Navy SEAL Team Six. Beckwith created Delta Force after spending a year with the British Special Air Service (SAS) and seeing how the US had a void that a unit like the SAS could fill. Thus, Delta was formed with the SAS in mind.

A word of caution to people who are considering reading this book. The book tells of how Delta Force was formed...from its beginnings

as a US version of the British SAS to its failed first mission freeing the hostages in the Iran. If you're looking for something on what Delta Force currently does and how its operators are currently trained or selected, this isn't the book for you. Beckwith tells us how the first Delta operators were trained and selected, but that selection process has probably changed some by now. This book is more a detailed history on the formation of the Delta Force, and not a book on its current engagements and operations (which are most likely classified anyway). I HIGHLY recommend this book.

...Rather, Delta Force is the plain-spoken memoir of a real-life Special Forces officer's long career advancing his art, if not his army career. Charlie Beckwith was a prophet before his time, and his campaign for the creation of an SAS-style special ops unit in the U.S. Army was stymied at every turn for nearly his entire career. Branded a rogue, even a traitor to the S.F. community, in the end, of course, his ideas won out, and Delta came into being, with Beckwith as its first commander. There are Vietnam war stories here, but this is not a book of "there I was. . ." tales. Beckwith also offers the reader a glimpse of Army politics, but this is not a book about vain and self-absorbed senior officers. A few chapters are devoted to Delta's baptism by fire in the Iranian Hostage rescue operation, but it's not really a book about the debacle at Desert One. In Delta Force, the reader will find a memoir of one of the pivotal figures in modern ground warfare. This is the story of one tough, dedicated hombre; what he learned, and how he learned it. I'm not sure the average reader would get all of Colonel Beckwith's humorous asides and throwaway lines. Some are pretty wry, and would probably require that the reader have a military background to even notice. This edition has a few annoying typographical errors (is proofreading truly a lost art?), and Beckwith's prose occasionally lapses from one tense to another and then back again, which creates a slight feeling of disjointedness. Given those very minor caveats, for a reader with some familiarity and interest in the operational art, this is a must read. Sua Sponte.

Great book. Outlines the difficulties in getting a new idea sold in a rather inflexible/bureaucratic system. It is a long way from identifying a requirement, to actually get someone interested to set measures to fill a deficiency. A lot of turf wars involved. I actually expected a fact book on Delta's history/capabilities and ops involved. What I found was a really well written story of the man who pursued the issue of creating Anti-Terrorist capability within the US Forces. Now everybody will understand the vision this man had and how important this topic always was and always will be. I liked the credit given to the SAS, that I consider the finest unit in this area of work. I would have liked for the book to continue further than the Iran operation (especially as I actually bought the book for

the purpose of getting information about the Somalia Ops), but it is clear that it ends when Col Beckwith left the unit, as he is the author. Great book that is really hard to put down.

Charlie Beckwith founded Delta Force and decided to write a book about it. And that's mainly what the reader gets: the founding details and problems of this highly skilled American counterterrorist unit. If you expect blazing action sequences like the '85 rescue attempt of the hijacked cruise liner Achille Lauro or the destruction of SCUD missile sites in the Gulf War by Delta in '91, you'll be disappointed. All that happened after the publication of the book in 1983. At least a third of it consists of rather boring meetings, talks, and frustration, that Beckwith goes through trying to set up his unit, and that's a pity. Like buying a book about the Chicago Bulls and reading all about its organization and stadium but no basketball. The last third of the book fortunately is somewhat better. It's about Delta's extensive preparations to rescue 53 Americans held hostage in the American Embassy in Iran in '79. Alas, again not much 'bullet ducking action' because, as many people probably remember, the actual rescue mission hardly got started, unable even to pass the first chopper refuelling point in the desert. What went wrong? Beckwith here explains too little. Something with the RH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters went wrong, but afterwards the reader still doesn't know **why** that one chopper crashed into the EC-130 transport plane and what **exactly** went wrong flying through the sand storm to the meeting point 'Desert One'. Some inside pilot information afterwards would have been more than welcome. For a more action-oriented book that involves Delta, I recommend Mark Bowden's "Black Hawk Down" about the '93 Mogadishu (Somalia) firefight in pursuit of warlord Aidid.

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