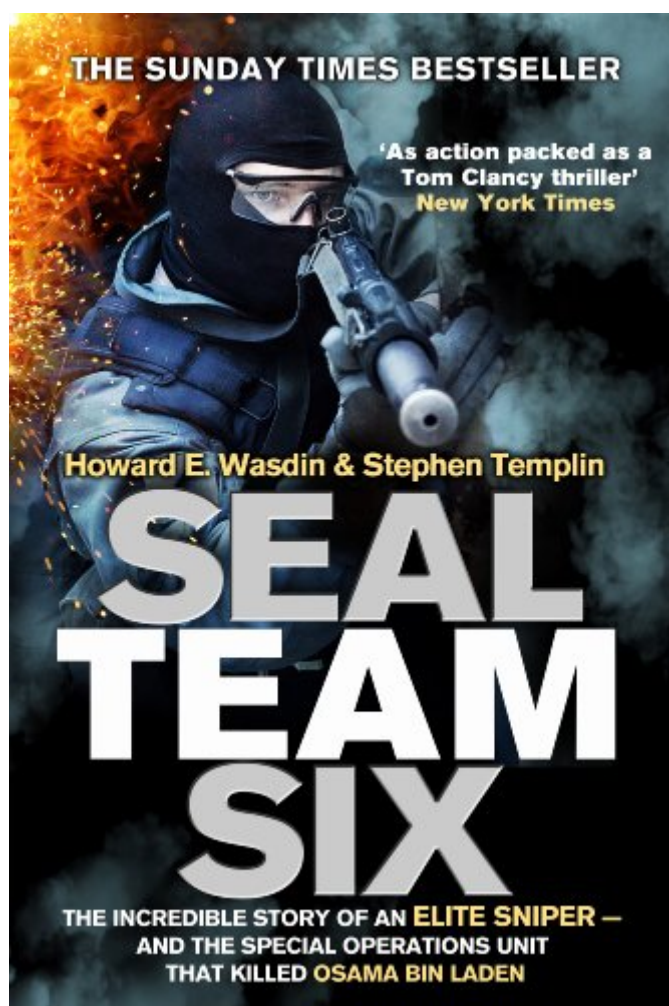


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Seal Team Six: The Incredible Story Of An Elite Sniper - And The Special Operations Unit That Killed Osama Bin Laden



Synopsis

When the US Navy send their elite, they send the SEALs. When the SEALs send their elite, they send SEAL Team Six. SEAL Team Six is a clandestine unit tasked with counterterrorism, hostage rescue and counterinsurgency. Until recently its existence was a closely-guarded secret. Then ST6 took down Osama bin Laden, and the operatives within it were thrust into the global spotlight. In this internationally bestselling chronicle, former ST6 shooter Howard Wasdin takes readers deep inside the world of Navy SEALs and Special Forces snipers. From the inside track on the operation that killed the world's most wanted man to his own experience of the gruelling ST6 selection processes to his terrifying ordeal at the 'Black Hawk Down' battle in Somalia, Wasdin's book is one of the most explosive military memoirs in years.

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Customer Reviews

An excellent read for those of you who are either former military or thinking about starting a military career. This book is a well written account of Howard E. Wasdin's exploits as a U.S. Navy Seal. It starts with his childhood and progresses into his military career in the Seals. The book also

addresses specific details of the battle which occurred at Mogadishu; the battle in which the U.S. Army lost a couple of Blackhawk helicopters, as depicted in the Hollywood movie, "Blackhawk Down."

I've now read three books on the US Navy SEALs. This will be a combined review I'll post on all three books, because I feel each one is important to understanding these elite warriors. Ever since Operation Neptune Spear, and the announcement that SEAL Team Six had successfully raided a compound in Pakistan and killed Osama bin Laden, I had been wondering why it was that SEAL Team Six had been sent, rather than our other elite counterterrorism unit, the mysterious Delta Force. After all, the mission took off from an airbase in a land-locked country, traveled over land to their target hundreds of miles inland, and then returned, having not flown over any major bodies of water at all. Why send the Navy, when an Army unit presumably could do the job just as well? I've always been interested in the military, and military training. Though that particular life was not for me, I've always admired those who choose it, and been proud of my veteran relatives. I've watched countless boot camp documentaries, shows on special forces fiction and non-, and I want to understand what it takes to be a warrior. To understand what it takes to be a warrior tasked with taking down the most wanted terrorist in the world, I wanted to read books that would explain their training, their lives, and their physical and mental toughness. *The Warrior Elite: The Forging of SEAL Class 228* by Dick Couch was the first book I read. It covers the entire Basic Underwater Demolitions/SEAL training course for Class 228. In the introduction, the making of a SEAL warrior is already made clear. Couch, a former Navy SEAL himself, Class 45 during the Vietnam era, explains that the Marine Corps builds 20,000 new marines a year for a force of 174,000, trained over eleven weeks. For the Army, the very tough Ranger School graduates 1,500 soldiers a year from their eight week course. With a twenty-seven week course, only 250 men a year graduate BUD/S, and even then, they are not yet SEALs. BUD/S only earns you a chance, and at least another six months of training await these men before they earn their Trident, and become a SEAL. *The Warrior Elite* covers the 27 weeks of BUD/S, following along a single class from day one of Indoc to graduation. But first Dick Couch tells the story of Kim Erksine in Grenada, a SEAL who led his eleven men during a mission that went bad when they were unable to use their radios. Along the way, he describes how their training, beginning with BUD/S, shaped their decisions and actions each step of the way. They made it to the water, many of them wounded, but all of them alive and still fighting. Eventually they swam out into the ocean and were picked up. Kim Erskine credits his and his men's survival to the knowledge that each of them had survived BUD/S. Already, it's clear. SEALs don't

quit. So how does the Navy find men who just won't quit? They do everything they can to make BUD/S volunteers quit, and then trains the rest. 114 men had orders to BUD/S Class 228, and on Day 1, only 98 are still on the roster, 16 gave up before it even started. At any time, a BUD/S student can quit, and many do. After two weeks of Indoc, where BUD/S hasn't even begun yet, the class is down to 69 men. At graduation, 10 men remain from the original class. Another six would graduate later with another class, having been rolled back for medical reasons. The story of what those men went through to graduate, and to earn the right to continue their training and perhaps become SEALs someday, is what *The Warrior Elite* explores. Frequently reading the book, I exclaimed out loud "wow", I just couldn't believe it. Everyone talks about Hell Week, the week in Phase One that weeds out a significant number of students, most on the very first day, but that is just one very hard week out of 27 very hard weeks, and the men who survive it learn that to be a SEAL is to only have harder weeks ahead. While *The Warrior Elite* covers post-BUD/S training briefly in the epilogue, *The Finishing School: Earning the Navy SEAL Trident*, by the same author Dick Couch, covers this training in much greater depth. This second book is a sequel researched and written in the years following 9/11, and as such a higher emphasis is placed on protecting the identities of the warriors who are training to become qualified SEALs in the platoons, and the secret tactics used by SEALs in their operations. In that regard, the book is much less comprehensive, and much less personal. While a great deal of information is given on the recent reorganization of the SEAL Teams and their deployments, less information is given about actual training. It's hard to read *The Warrior Elite* without also reading *The Finishing School*, without the second book you're missing half the story, but *The Finishing Book* is sadly not the complete story, either. It's understandable for security reasons, but for somebody with a fascination for military training and tactics, as well as the men who go through it all, it's disappointing. Again, though, the lesson is clear in *The Finishing School*. Not everyone who gets through BUD/S is going to become a SEAL. Some quit, some disqualify for medical or performance reasons, and the graduating class is smaller than the class coming in. One thing that *The Finishing School* does very well is explain the warrior culture of the SEAL Teams. These are quiet professionals who work together in close-knit groups. All of them are eager to get on deployment, and each of them maximizes their opportunities to continually learn and get better whenever they can. Those who are lone wolves, and can't work safely in a team, are quickly removed from the organization. As always, it pays to be a winner, and no man is left behind. The third book is *SEAL Team Six: Memoirs of an Elite Navy SEAL Sniper*, by Howard E. Wasdin and Steven Templin. This book is very much a memoir, rather than a detailed day-by-day log of the training done in SEAL Team Six. In fact, for somebody wanting to read about the internal

workings of the Navy's most elite-of-the-elite warriors, they wouldn't get very many details at all. What you get, instead, is a sense of the sorts of men who do what Howard Wasdin did, volunteer, and then keep volunteering, for the hardest jobs they could find, always looking for a bigger challenge. At times, Wasdin comes across as incredibly arrogant. He seems to put down other members of the special forces community, as well as federal law enforcement, at numerous occasions. We may never know, since members of SEAL Team Six, the CIA, and Delta Force are so tight-lipped, just how much of it is completely accurate. But nonetheless, this is a story of the sorts of brutal childhoods that spawn special forces operators, and the psychology of a warrior during training and in combat. Wasdin, I think, is more humble than he comes across. What he is, is a straight-shooter. If somebody else screwed up, he says so. At times hilarious, and at times horrifying, the story of Howard Wasdin from childhood to adulthood, with military service in between, is incredibly engaging. I had difficulties putting it down, and read through the entire book in just two sittings. While nowhere near as comprehensive as *The Warrior Elite* or *The Finishing School*, it gives us a window into the minds and lives of the men who got bin Laden. I highly recommend all three books, and in the order I read them. Having read each one, I've come to understand, perhaps, some of the reasons why President Obama ordered SEAL Team Six to a compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. I'll leave it put to you to decide for yourself why that might've been, but if I learned anything at all about SEALs, reading these three books, it's that they always work as a team, it pays to be a winner, and they'd rather die than quit. I give this book four stars. While it's a fascinating look into what sort of man decides to have this kind of life, it's sadly not a very comprehensive look into SEAL Team Six, itself. Considering this unit was not even acknowledged to exist until recently, that's understandable. What insights it does give, are invaluable. As others have said, it's not terribly polished, either. Those of us with an interest in special mission units, and the military in general, will find it lacking, but in this dangerous world where these men carry out dangerous missions, it's essential for their safety. If anybody wants the real story, they'll have to join the elite of the elite for themselves. Considering the enormity of that challenge, we'll have to admire these quiet professionals from afar and be satisfied when they tell us anything.

Very well written and worth the time it took to read. A great story about true American Heroes! As a retired Navy Senior Chief I'd like to thank Howard and all the men and women who are willing to risk their lives for their country.

Howards story is amazing, and he is a fantastic story teller. You will laugh, cry he keeps you not

wanting to put it down. I know him personally and so the best part for me was I felt like I was just sitting there and he was telling me stories. Not only Howard but all of our service men and woman are such Hero's and I am thankful for what they do and all the hard work that they endure, because I know I would be one that couldnt make it. But I am so thankful they can. It's a fantastic book a must read.

Wasdin is blessed to be inner driven in all he does...that is his gift! Throughout his chronicled life he has persevered like an Olympian becoming...NO... earning Seal Team as a diverse guy multi-trained, vigilant, and thoughtful. I am glad that he was prepared to write this book (ah-I down-loaded it on my Tablet) surely studying how other successful writers (& referencing those too in the book) and people contribute to our nations security. Stressing Training, training, training, and then more...training so your reflexes are tuned to whatever is happening to what needs to happen by choice is his emphasis and discusses them with my imagination filling in much more so that I/the reader will be beside him in the situations. Organization of the book not only by time but close examination you see where...ah. yes training with awareness of the present instant flows into and out of situations. Not quite done with the book ('bout 81% the tablet says) and so looking for the next chapter. I see Howard Wasdin/Dirty Wasdin has written other books and look forward to reading them too-as you will

Howard Wasdin gives an excellent first hand experience of his service for our country. My admiration for the special forces warriors/heroes grows with every book I read about them! He also gives a great first hand account of his part in the battle of Mogadishu, or the "Black Hawk Down" story. I am hopeful that the compensation he receives from this and other books/accounts he has written will help repay him in at least in part for the service he has done for our country! These warriors deserve our admiration and above all our RESPECT!!

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