

(Download free pdf) Samurai

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Saburo Sakai

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Saburo Sakai : Samurai before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Samurai:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. View From the Other SideBy Erl Gould PurnellThis excellent first hand account of Japanese naval aviation is quite extraordinary and a must read. Saburo Sakai is an extraordinary pilot with bravery coursing through his veins. Like me, you will find some of his exploits unbelievable except that they actually did occur. The insights from the Japanese side of the Pacific war are extremely educational. For example, they claim that had the Americans invaded Jima in the summer of 1944 the war would have ended sooner as that island had not been yet turned into a fortress. Just imagine the number of lives that would have been saved. For the world war two scholar and those interested in aviation, Samurai is an outstanding book.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Politically correct accounting, but fascinating insight into the simplicity of a Japanese air warriorBy Dave the Train ManThis is clearly a tale in two parts. It starts with the development of a Japanese fighter pilot, including service in China. If the author is to be believed, his and his comrades service was astoundingly simple. They loved their country, saw their country as threatened, and stepped forward to defend it. Zero politics. The story of skill development seemed as much luck as plan. Their own training was more brutal than their enemies. Then comes Pearl Harbor and the narrative changes. No longer glorious victory - this book is being written for an American audience, so mustn't exult over the death of American airman and soldiers. It almost apologizes for every shoot-down. But....still no politics, only fear transitioning slowly to dread, then hopelessness and resignation as America darkened the skies with better equipment, more skilled pilots, and so, so much of it.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Top Gun

of the rising sun. By Stone Dog With Martin Caidin and Fred Saito, Saburo Sakai tells his story as a naval aviator in the Japanese imperial Navy during WWII. The book itself has an authentic feel to it and the reader will be able to immediately recognize the difference in culture and outlook as one reads through this account. The account begins with Sakai's early life as the child of a poor samurai family and leads to his volunteering as a naval recruit. His training is brutally harsh and, as he is able to train for more technical skills, is surprised that even as he advances the treatment is never less brutal and cruel. Finally, he is able to gain pilot training and that is the start of his career. In this book, Sakai comments on his experiences in China where the war has been going on for years before Pearl Harbor drew in the US. China gives him his first aerial victory and his first notoriety in Japan. Even at this time, the reader will note that the Japanese lie to their own people regarding defeats and disasters. I also found it interesting that Sakai claims Soviet pilots flew in China at that time. He guides the reader through his own feelings as he takes part in the early heady victories against western powers. During that time, the highly trained Japanese pilots and their superior Zero fighter ran wild, easily defeating the pilots and aircraft of the allies. The reader should be cautioned that during this time, Sakai was part of an elite unit of the best-of-the-best pilots and their combat record was not representative of Japanese performance at large though certainly Imperial Japanese Navy fliers and their aircraft were markedly superior. Sakai fights in New Guinea first, acquiring a fearsome reputation with his many air-to-air kills. As time goes on, the weight of material coming from the US in the form of numbers of aircraft bodes ill for the Japanese. With the successful invasion by the US of Guadalcanal, the air war takes on a very different tone, with US forces gaining in experience and dealing the IJN defeats. In one operation, Sakai is severely wounded and manages to nurse his crippled fighter back to his base at Rabaul, despite falling in and out of consciousness. The final part of the book deals with his surgeries and recovery in Japan and his relegation as a flight instructor of the new pilots being run through training as fast as possible as well as being a test pilot for new aircraft that came too late to help Japan. The book ends with Japan's surrender in 1945. In many ways, this is a war memoir like those of western pilots. He exults in the thrill of flight and the excitement of aerial combat. He jokes with his friends and comments on his attachment to his fellows. He grieves for his friends that die in combat. On the other hand, his attitude is very different on other matters. The reader will note that he defends the Kamikaze, despite the fact that they did nothing to prevent Japan's defeat despite the waste of human life. The reader will also note that the author and all his comrades fear nothing as much as shame or dishonor. They don't use parachutes for the fear they might bail out over enemy-held territory and be captured. Often they do things that are foolhardy rather than retreat to "live to fight another day". It's an interesting account as much for Sakai's flying prowess and skill as for the window into the mind of the Pacific enemy during WWII. This is a solid four star book.

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