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Tom Blackburn

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Tom Blackburn : The Jolly Rogers: The Story of Tom Blackburn and Navy Fighting Squadron VF-17 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Jolly Rogers: The Story of Tom Blackburn and Navy Fighting Squadron VF-17:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. which adds to the enjoyment of readingBy PhredBlackburn was a career Navy air officer, and noted pilot. His writing reflects the typical pilot profile - Type A, and perhaps a bit too proud of his actions. HE did this, and HE did that, and was always the gung ho Commander. If you just accept this, there is a lot of inside info on the workings of the Navy, and the south pacific air war. If you are a WWII aviation enthusiast, this will add to your understanding of the pilots mind set and actions in combat. For this content alone I gave it four stars. I've read quite a few WWII pilot autobiographies. This is a different view of one pilot in WWII, which adds to the enjoyment of reading. My father flew in WWII, and I'm sure he, as all pilots have embellish there stories a bit. I probably wouldn't buy the hard copy, but as an inexpensive e-reader it's good to go!2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Skull and Bones Corsairs -- Jolly Rogers Indeed...By Jerry Brooks Bannister, Retired Prof., West Ct State UnivFollowing his WW II commands, Admiral Tom Blackburn also commanded the aircraft carrier, Midway, in the 1950s. He retired as a Captain, USN. His (and co-writer Eric Hammel's) book, The Jolly Rogers, gives a very detailed account of how he trained fighter pilots at the Opa-Locka air field in Florida at the outset of WW II; of the various planes they flew; and of the specific air combat tactics taught. But most of the book is

devoted to the story of fighter squadron VF - 17, The Fighting Seventeenth. In January 1943 Blackburn is ordered to form the VF - 17, the second fighter squadron to receive the new Corsair fighter, known as the "Hog" as it was as tricky to handle "as a hog on ice." Blackburn's squadron was posted on and around Guadalcanal from October 1943 to March 1944. There the VF - 17 squadron scored an outstanding record of 154.5 credits for Japanese planes destroyed; not to mention one of their last missions, a nuisance bombing (on purpose, very near misses) of a Japanese army officers' "comfort station" (The House of Flowers) on Rabaul -- the "climax" of their very successful tour of duty. Thirteen squadron pilots became aces, including Blackburn with eleven confirmed kills. Blackburn uses the first person narrator's voice throughout the book with some dialog here and there. I think you do have to be really interested in military aviation and Navy lore to fully appreciate his writing which is often dry but precise, especially in the first part of the book. But I found that once I had immersed myself in the details, his narration steadily pushed me along. By the time the Corsairs arrived and by the time the gull-winged fighters had the Skull and Cross Bones emblazoned on their engine cowls, I was hooked. His air combat descriptions are in fact enhanced by his style of writing -- no hyperbole needed. This is a first class historical memoir which chronicles the defeat of Japanese air power in the Solomons. Is it colored by his view that the Fighting Seventeenth was superior (as was his leadership) to most other squadrons and services? Sure -- but that's the fun of it. Perhaps not intended by Blackburn, but his narration clearly reveals how his character plays a significant role in his leadership skills. As he time and again ponders how to teach his squadron pilots, and to also learn from them, as to how and why to do this and not that, he is in effect writing a model of what a leader should be. I highly recommend this book to the serious reader who wishes to learn about naval aviators (and of course about their Corsairs); and about their many sacrifices and accomplishments in the Pacific Theater of WW II.-- J.B. Bannister

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A compelling account of a breed of men that must never be forgotten. By M. Franks Blackburn has saved for history the blow-by-blow account of the bravery of the officers and men of Fighting 17 in the face of a formidable aggressor, the Nation of Japan. He spares no detail of the aircraft, tactics, support and camaraderie including the elation of victory and the deep pain of loss. I wish that I could have had the honor of serving under such a leader.

The story of the Navy's foremost fighter squadrons in World War II is told from the viewpoint of their leader, Lieutenant Commander Tom Blackburn, and follows their daring adventures in the sky. Reissue.

From Publishers Weekly Blackburn is not self-effacing about his World War II service, referring to "my fantastically successful tour" as pilot and commanding officer. Retired Admiral James Stockdale's introduction and the text itself leave no doubt that modesty in this case would be practically impossible. Blackburn was an exceptionally talented, resourceful, inspiring leader who imparted to his men a fierce warrior ethic. Equipped with F4U Corsair fighter planes, his squadron downed at least 154 Japanese planes during the 76 days they were in combat in the South Pacific. Thirteen of the "Jolly Rogers," including the author, became air aces. The book is a seemingly complete history of the squadron from its commissioning in January 1943 to its disbandment in April 1944, and what makes it especially noteworthy is the author's straight-forward description of the methods he used organizing, training, leading his pilots in combat, and developing air tactics. Clearly Blackburn knew what he wanted and how to obtain results. Photos. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. The Jolly Rogers is the true story of one of the U. S. Navy's foremost World War II fighter squadrons, VF-17, and its charismatic commander, fighter ace Tom Blackburn. The Jolly Rogers is an action packed war memoir and unit history, Blackburn describes VF-17's intense, winning campaign against the Japanese over the northern Solomon Islands and Rabaul in late 1943 and early 1944. Beginning with his own experiences as a trainer of fighter pilots early in World War II and his leadership of a small carrier-based fighter squadron supporting the invasion of North Africa, Blackburn goes on to provide a rich, detailed account of how he shaped a crew of over-eager hotshots into one of the highest scoring fighter squadrons of World War II and U. S. Navy history. In only 76 days of combat, Lieutenant Commander Tom Blackburn's Jolly Rogers knocked down a record of 154 enemy warplanes, and Blackburn himself emerged as one of VF-17's leading aces with eleven aerial combat victories to his credit. The Jolly Rogers is both a valued contribution to military aviation history, and an exciting story that will fascinate the military buff simply in search of a good read. -- Midwest Book About the Author Tom Blackburn continued his Navy career following World War II, ultimately retiring as a captain. He is now deceased. Eric Hammel is a well respected military historian and the author of thirty works of military history including the critically acclaimed Pacific Warriors: the U.S. Marines in World War II: A Pictorial Tribute. He lives in northern California.