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William T. Y'Blood

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William T. Y'Blood : The Little Giants: U.S. Escort Carriers Against Japan (Bluejacket Books) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Little Giants: U.S. Escort Carriers Against Japan (Bluejacket Books):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Little giants indeed!By Stone DogWilliam Y'Blood has given us a much needed account of the CVE's or escort carriers of the US Navy in the Pacific during WWII. The class of small

carriers was desperately needed not just in the war in the Pacific against Japan, but also played a major role in the Allies' victory in the Battle of the Atlantic versus German U-Boats. This book focuses solely on the war in the Pacific where naval airpower was the decisive weapon in naval combat. In the early part of the Pacific war, the need for carriers was desperate and the decision was made to convert merchant hulls into small carriers. Later, Henry Kaiser, maker of the prolific "Liberty" ships, began building small carriers on those hulls. I think the author covered the career of these small ships well, stressing the difference between the CVE carriers and the "big boys" - the fast, glamorous fleet carriers as well as the types of jobs the escort carriers found themselves in - everything from anti-submarine warfare to transporting replacement aircraft and pilots for the main, fleet carriers to support for invasion fleets specializing in ground attack and even artillery spotting. The author did an excellent job of covering the routine air operations as well as the desperate combat against Japanese air and surface forces. There is a lot of the kind of "action" here that any WWII reader wants: the fighter pilots desperately trying to shoot down their Japanese opponents, the TBM crews bombing enemy positions on land as well as enemy vessels at sea including submarines. Of course, the author shines light on the "jeep" carriers' finest hour in the Battle off Samar when the small escort carriers took on the big guns of Japanese battleships and cruisers. The tales of combat are wonderful to read. Also, I would point out the excellent pictures (sadly, all black and white) of the CVE carriers and their aircraft in combat operations. This is a bonus. My criticisms are two-fold: firstly, I would have liked more specifications to know the difference between the various classes of CVE's. Secondly, why were some CVE's armed differently than others even though they were performing the same tasks? It seemed to me that the Chenango and Suwannee type carriers were armed with F6F Hellcat fighters while the Kaiser/Casablanca-class ships had to make do with FM2 Wildcat fighters which were clearly obsolete and seemed to me to be less effective at combat air patrols. In spite of my relatively mild criticisms, I think this is an excellent work on a topic that clearly doesn't get enough "press" - the small, escort carriers of WWII. In an age of budget cuts, could there be a role for the small carrier in the future US Navy? This is an excellent work that is also an enjoyable read. I recommend this book with four stars.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good book about a sometimes not super exciting mission
By Jonathan Mattson
This was a good book, not as enjoyable as his book covering the escort carriers in the Atlantic, but an enjoyable book still. While the Atlantic book had the ongoing struggle against the German U-boats, this book has the flaw there wasn't a central theme like that for the Pacific carriers. Instead they were lugging replacement aircraft to the fleet carriers or sailing around the beaches during an amphibious assault to provide close air support planes. To me, it just doesn't make for as interesting subject material as chasing down submarines. When the Philippines are invaded, you do get to see interesting action that is explained by Y'Blood excellently. One thing that stood out to me was how the damage control procedures on the different carriers seemed to make a difference if the carriers survived the invasion or are sitting on the bottom of the ocean surrounding the islands.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book!
By Scott Reeves
Outstanding history of the escort carriers. I've read extensively on WWII history and there were numerous facts and insights I had seen nowhere else. Great book!

The substantial accomplishments of the U.S. Navy's mini-carriers in such battles as Leyte Gulf, Guadalcanal, the Marianas, and Okinawa never gained the attention given the fast carriers, but there is little question that their vital operations played an important role in the Pacific campaign. These remarkably versatile vessels--called CVEs, baby flattops, and even jeeps--hunted submarines, escorted convoys, provided air support, and performed dozens of other tasks that are vividly described in this book. Based on interviews with the CVE crewmen and on war diaries, ship histories, and other documents, it tells a moving story of escort carrier operations, from the work of the first CVEs to their final assignment transporting GIs home after the war. Seldom-seen photographs add to this fascinating portrait of the little giants.

About the Author
William T. Y'Blood, a pilot in the U.S. Air Force and later in commercial aviation, served as a historian for the Air Force. The author of eight books on World War II aviation topics, he died in 2006.