



Hellcats: The Epic Story of World War II's Most Daring Submarine Raid

Peter Sasgen

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By 1945, the U.S. Navy's submarine force in the Pacific had sunk over a thousand enemy cargo ships and tankers supplying the food, weapons, and oil Japan needed to continue to fight. Yet this once mighty merchant fleet continued to thrive in the Sea of Japan, where, protected from American submarines by a seemingly impenetrable barrier of deadly minefields, they provided a tenuous lifeline for the Japanese.

With no knowledge of the secret development of the atomic bomb, senior American sub force commanders, desperate to avoid an invasion of the home islands, believed that if these enemy ships, vitally important to the enemy's war effort, were sunk, Japan would be forced to surrender.

For the first time ever, author Peter Sasgen tells the complete, incredible story of Operation Barney, the daring plot to penetrate the dense minefields protecting the Sea of Japan and decimate the enemy fleet. The brainchild of the dedicated sub commander Vice Admiral Charles Lockwood, the mission would hinge on a new experimental sonar system that would, with luck, guide American submarines safely past the mines and into the open sea.

The nine submarines chosen, nicknamed Hellcats, were tasked with the impossible—the combined crews of 760 submariners all knew their chances of survival were slim. Based on original documents and the poignant personal letters of one doomed Hellcat commander, Sasgen crafts a classic naval tale of one of World War II's most dangerous missions.



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