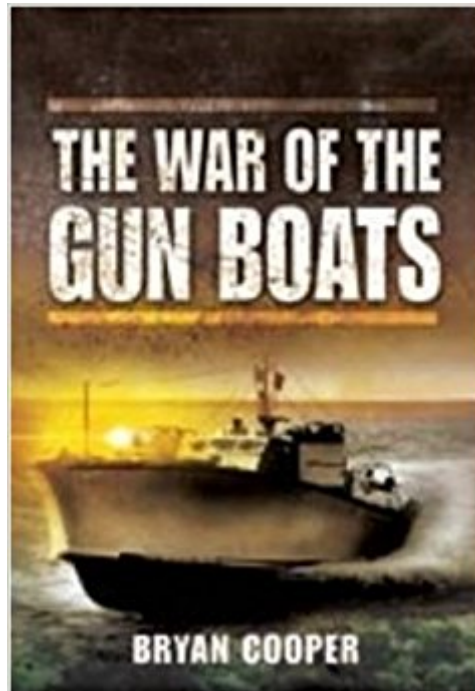




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The War Of The Gun Boats



Synopsis

The 'little ships' of the Second World War - the fast and highly maneuverable motor torpedo boats and gunboats which fought in coastal waters all over the world - developed a special kind of naval warfare. With their daring nightly raids against an enemy's coastal shipping - and sometimes much larger warships - they acquired the buccaneering spirit of an earlier age. And never more so than in the close hand-to-hand battles which raged between opposing craft when they met in open waters. Large numbers of these small fighting boats were built by the major naval powers. The Germans called them Schnellboote (Fast Boats), referred to by the British as E-boats (E for Enemy). In the Royal Navy they were MTBs and MGBs. The American equivalent were PT boats (for Patrol Torpedo). They fought in the narrow waters of the English Channel and the stormy North Sea, in the Mediterranean off the coasts of North Africa and Italy and among the islands of the Aegean, across the Pacific from Pearl Harbour to Leyte Gulf, in Hong Kong and Singapore, and off Burma's Arakan coast. Bryan Cooper's book traces the history and development of these craft from their first limited use in the First World War and the fast motor boats designed in the 1930s for wealthy private clients and water speed record attempts. With account of the battles which took place during the Second World War, when the vital importance of coastal waters came to be recognized, he captures the drama of this highly individual form of combat. And not least the sea itself which was the common enemy of all who crewed these frail craft.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book covers not only the history of the American PTs in the Pacific, but also the German, British, and American in the Atlantic and Mediterranean.

Many books on this topic are very brief, very technical or focussed on one aspect, such as PT 109. This book covers the range of information from the history of the development of torpedo and gunboats to the technical improvements over time and between the various nations operating them. It also lays out the operations conducted by these benefits as chronologically and by theatre of war. Perhaps the most compelling part is the account of individual acts of bravery and the highlighting of the number of decorations these men won in the course of their duties. Citing examples of each operation is a nice way of showing how the boats worked without becoming repetitive and boring. A truly a heartfelt and appropriate tribute to their sacrifices and a terrific reference on the history of this underemphasized group of warriors.

I enjoyed the book very much but I wish you could enlarge the pictures and graphics in the Kindle edition.

Gives a very good picture of what the narrow seas war was like - wait - wait - and then short sharp mayhem.....reliability was the downside for the boats..real pirate stuff

President J F Kennedy commanded a small boat, PT 109. These small boats did things that other ships couldn't do. Speed was one thing, they could reach a speed of 40 kt. From dropping of secret agents in far off places, to keeping shipping lanes clear & open.

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