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The Japanese Army 1931-45 (Volume 2, 1942-45)



Synopsis

Within months of its greatest triumph in 1942, the Japanese Imperial Army began to face the difficulties which would eventually destroy it - overstretched supply lines, and inadequate industrial support. Yet as the Allies grew steadily stronger and more skilful during World War II (1939-1945), the Japanese Army and Naval Landing Forces dug in to defend their conquests with a determination which shocked all who fought them. In this second book the author describes the deployments, organisation, uniforms and equipment of the Army - including the dreaded Kempei-tai military police - the naval infantry, paratroopers, special raiding units, and foreign auxiliaries during the long and savage war in Burma and the Pacific. His text is illustrated with many rare photographs, three insignia charts, and eight highly detailed colour plates.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Although the book is very brief in its description of the JIA's military background, organization and character (due to that information being kept within the series' previous installment), its brilliant artwork coupled with detailed descriptions is a treasure trove for any modeller interested in the subject. • Chas Young, Armorama (March 2008)

Packed with specially commissioned artwork, maps and diagrams, the Men-at-Arms series is an unrivalled illustrated reference on the history, organisation, uniforms and equipment of the world's military forces, past and present.

The Japanese Army 1931-1945 (1-1931-1942) Osprey Man at Arms series has done it once again with this compact booklet by Philip Jowett and illustrated by Stephen Andrew. Jowett has authored other Osprey books. He gives us a solid 20 pages of text on the organization of the Imperial Army in the years up to 1942 with each division located at particular times, weapons descriptions and so on but he also gives us some understanding of the odd political situation in Japan at the time where the armed forces often acted as a government unto themselves. The rest of the book us take up with the 24 color drawings by the talented Mr. Andrew, who by the way has illustrated several other Osprey books, including another co-project with Mr. Jowett. Very detailed text describes the uniforms and equpage of the soldiers and officers. The special uniform items issued to the troops stationed in frigid Manchuria are not neglected nor are the pith helmets of the men in tropical climes. In common with all of the Osprey offerings that I have examined, the quality of the text and photos are high. Jowett manages to give a great deal of factual information in a few pages. I now have enough information to know some of what I don't know. I can delve further in the Imperial Army with a good deal more confidence having been exposed to this small but important book.

Nice compilation of Japanese army uniforms of the early and bulk of World War II years. Comes with good pictures and an English text which is easy to read. This book traces the early years of the 1930's into the 40's when Japan became an aggressive juggernaut in the Far East..

This like the other titles in Osprey's "Men at Arms" series is devoted to the minutia of the soldiers' equipment, uniforms, and life in the military. The difference in quality between these various volumes is quite small- they are all packed with information. None of them pretend to be histories of campaigns or wars. This particular volume covers well, the pre- WWII era to early war of the Japanese Army. It is not a subject on which a great deal is written. I was hoping for some more photos of the Manchurian army and Nomonhan event in particular, than was included in this book. Stephen Andrew's illustrations are among the better in Ospreys' series, but I do think he could do better faces. And I have found some contradictory photo evidence to the descriptions of the uniforms. One last point, since many of us who purchase these volumes use them for reference in modelling and painting would be that they include fairly accurate color samples of the uniforms and equipment rather than descriptive words like brown and khaki which are just too generic; or at least some assurance the color artwork is based on some substantial evidence. All in all this is a really great volume and I would highly recomend it to anyone interested in the Japanese soldier of the

30's and early WWII.

Awesome series

I thought that this was one of Osprey's better books in the "Warrior" series. Some excellent information on unit structure and the various uniforms worn by the Japanese soldiers of this period that is hard to come by in English language references. A previous reviewer criticized the book for spending too much time on the "minutia" of Japanese military uniforms and not enough on tactics. This is, however, akin to complaining that an apple does not taste like an orange; these books are not meant to discuss tactics or campaigns, but are intended to focus on the "minutia" of uniforms and personal equipment. The brief format does not really allow the subject matter to range too far. Anyone interested in more information on Japanese tactics in WW2 should consider some of the excellent Osprey "Campaign" series of books, including ones on Iwo Jima and Peleilui.

I was highly fascinated with Letters from Iwo Jima so I got this little book and its companion in order to understand what I was seeing in the film. Unlike the German army there really isn't that much information available on the Japanese forces of WWII. I suppose Germans make better villains whereas the Japanese have always been copiers throughout the twentieth century though their atrocities in the field were among some of the most savage of the war. This book and its companion are highly informative in regards to uniforms, equipment and organization. As such I would say it is a must for those interested in the subject. However I wish they had put more out on the Gunzoku auxiliaries other than what they had on Korean prison guards since both Army and Navy had them as civilian Labor troops and other auxiliaries. (Perhaps another book on this subject might be produced). Overall I would say these two are good books to have.

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