

Wings of Fury

Robert K. Wilcox

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Vietnam, where the U.S. Navy's kill ratio dropped to a deadly 2:1, became the crucible that forged a Gulf War victory with an astounding 35:0 ratio. Drawing on the experiences of Vietnam combat pilots and the new generation they taught, Robert Wilcox traces the rise of today's fighter pilots and the transformation of aerial warfare. He takes us into previously classified territory with an unprecedented look at the first shoot-down of enemy planes by U.S. fighters since Vietnam, and follows our best fighter pilots as they grow, learn, and finally test themselves in the Gulf War. Here, in their own words, is a vivid portrait of the elite, intense world of the daredevil flyboys competing in a league where there are no points for second place. Seat-of-the-pants navy air warrior Joe "Hoser" Satrapa, one of the early TOPGUNers and an F-14 pilot, shares the highs and lows of his showstopping career, from Vietnam to the Gulf War. Silver Star winner Rob Graeter recalls an experience that nearly triggered World War III as he piloted his F-15 Eagle over Soviet waters in 1983, guarding the P-3 search planes looking for survivors and wreckage of the downed Korean Air Lines 747 passenger jet. Brian "Rocky" Fitzpatrick recounts his days as a hotshot young Navy lieutenant test-flying the F/A-18 Hornet to its limits when it suddenly careened out of control at eight hundred feet, auto systems down, leaving him with a faulty parachute, a plummeting wing - and a prayer.



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