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The Six Day War 1967: Sinai (Campaign)



Synopsis

In May 1967, Egypt expelled the United Nations peacekeeping forces stationed in the Sinai desert and deployed its army along its border with Israel, its moves coordinated with those of Jordan and Syria. By June, Israel realized that the international community would not act, and launched a pre-emptive strike against the combined Arab forces. The ensuing Six Day War (June 5-10, 1967) was a crushing defeat for the Arab world, one that tripled the area controlled by Israel and which sowed the seeds for the Yom Kippur War of 1973 and the continuing strife in the region. Written by the author of Osprey's Yom Kippur War, this volume covers the background to the war and the campaign against the Egyptians in the Sinai Peninsula, including the initial devastating air assault that showed the world how vital air supremacy was in modern combat.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Simon Dunstan, who is quickly becoming my favorite Osprey author, does his usual superlative job of telling the story of the conflict between Israel and Egypt in the Sinai campaign... All of this is superbly illustrated by Peter Dennis who does some great art work and...there are the usual great selection of period photos of the war and those who fought in it. You can add this to your list of books that you simply must have. It is a great read and one that I know you will enjoy.”
— Scott Van Aken, Modeling Madness, modelingmadness.com (February 2010)

Simon Dunstan is a well-established author, film-maker and photographer in the field of military

history, with several titles already published with Osprey. He specializes in armored warfare, and has written on this subject for two decades. His books have covered topics such as helicopter and armored warfare in Vietnam, the Challenger main battle tank, the British Guards and armored warfare in Korea. Simon lives and works in London. The author lives in London, England.

This is an excellent account of the Sinai campaign of the six day war in 1967. This battle was focused on actions with the Egyptian Armed Forces notably the Air Force which was decimated very early and the Army which according to Israeli accounts had soldiers who fought bravely but were frequently poorly led. The account consists of mostly Israeli or UN pictures - very few from Egypt. Exception is the pre-war cartoons of the time from arab newspapers which foretold the doom of Israel which never occurred. While the war ended quickly and Israel gained access to east Jerusalem and the Golan Heights which overlooked northern israel and are strategic in that sense.

The product and seller's service was most satisfactory!

excellent, all our purchases are to our expectations,

nice book

A true account of an amazing episode in military history.

A good book that explains the Sinai campaign, a good source for beginners and students.

The 1967 Six Day War is usually remembered as a walk-over but Simon Dunstan's two-part history in Osprey's campaign series demonstrates that this was a conflict that deserves serious study by military professionals. This first volume covers the four-day Israeli attack on Egypt. Dunstan writes almost entirely from the Israeli perspective but he does succeed in adding a level of military detail that has not been present in many earlier, politicized accounts, although it compares favorably with Dupuy's *Elusive Victory*. While the Egyptian military is depicted as stolid but incompetent ciphers, at least they are given credit with putting up a tough fight on the border until betrayed by their supreme commander (who was later executed). The Israeli *Ugda* (division) commanders, including Ariel Sharon, are pretty much the stars of this account, although the author uses a number of lower-level memoirs to provide tactical vignettes. Indeed, Sharon's remarkable night-time assault on the

Egyptian fortified position at Um Katef should rightly be considered a model for the American tactics against Iraqi in Desert Storm in 1991. Dunstan's narrative tends to emphasize the first 24 hours of the war and then skims rather rapidly over the last three days, but overall this is a good volume. The introductory sections in this volume are a bit thin, with a 1-paragraph background on the conflict (which seems almost devoid of much of the political/diplomatic maneuvering), 2 pages on opposing forces and a few pages on opposing commanders. For readers without much background on this conflict, this is insufficient. The 9-page section on opposing plans fills in some gaps and identifies Egypt's strategy based on rhetoric (although it seems to suggest that the Arab plans to attack Israel were illusory, which is questionable) and Israel's pre-emptive strategy. On the military side, Dunstan notes the weaknesses of the Egyptian officer corps but fails to identify two key weaknesses - lack of sufficient anti-armor capability for their infantry and lack of forward air defense - which the Egyptians were quick to recognize and rectify after their defeat with loads of Sagger and SA-6 SAMs from the Soviets. It is also clear that the Israelis had not really adopted a combined arms approach to warfare and that they relied too heavily on armor-heavy task forces and close air support, which would come back to bite them in 1973. Indeed, one lesson of this conflict that the author misses is that the defeated Egyptians learned a great deal from the campaign but the victorious Israelis rested on their laurels. The volume has five 2-D maps (the Middle East in 1967; Arab and Israeli invasion plans; Operation Moked; the Israeli coastal attack to El Arish; the Sinai front) and two 3-D BEV maps (the Battle at Rafah junction; Battle of Abu Ageila/Um Katef), which are quite satisfactory. I particularly liked the map on the Israeli air strikes which not only showed the targets, but also the air routes used. As usual, the three battle scenes by Peter Dennis (Israeli Mirage III jets bombing Cairo West; Israeli air assault against Egyptian artillery batteries at Um Katef; Israeli Centurion tanks race for Mitla Pass) are superb, but all from the Israeli perspective. The author also provides a one-page bibliography, which unfortunately lists no Arab sources. Dunstan gets into the campaign proper with an 8-page section on Operation Moked, the Israeli air strikes that destroyed Egypt's air force. This section is well written and he notes that even though the Egyptian Air Force was clobbered, the Israeli Air Force still lost a quarter of its front-line strength in the four-day war. The heart of the volume lies in the 47-page section on Operation Red Sheet, the ground phase of the war in Sinai. The author quotes large chunks from Israeli first-person accounts of the fighting - almost one quarter of his ground campaign narrative. At times he's a little too much in the turret and it could be easy for readers to lose track of the big picture, particularly since the map that shows the overview of the whole Sinai is misplaced far in the end of the volume. Nevertheless, the author's dissection of Sharon's impressive attack on Um Katef is thorough and very well done. However, he provides very

little information on the Egyptian armored reserves in Sinai (e.g. what was in Task Force Shazli?) or how much escaped across the Suez Canal. The author also avoids any mention of Israeli atrocities in Sinai, even though there have been some credible accounts that Sharon and other commanders may have turned a blind eye to the execution of Egyptian POWs (which was repeated later in Lebanon). Nevertheless, this is a decent if one-sided account and just the right size for military professionals to use as an operational case study.

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