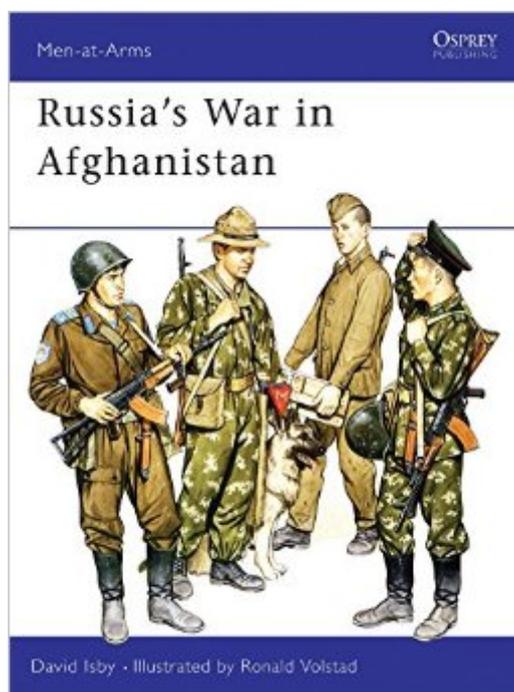


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Russia's War In Afghanistan (Men-at-Arms)



Synopsis

Text by David Isby. Colour plates by Ron Volstad. This book examines Soviet forces in Afghanistan. The origins and conduct of the war and the operational organisation of Soviet forces are discussed. Afghan resistance and weaponry is also examined. A comprehensive study of both sides in the Afghan war.

Book Information

Series: Men-at-Arms (Book 178)

Paperback: 48 pages

Publisher: Osprey Publishing; First Edition edition (June 15, 1986)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0850456916

ISBN-13: 978-0850456912

Product Dimensions: 7.2 x 0.1 x 9.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 2.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (7 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

This book is mainly outdated but it has its value as a historical document. The author makes a good job in presenting both sides, especially the many different Afghan guerrilla groups. The most interesting aspect, in my opinion, is the author's prediction (the book was written in 1986) that the war would last some 20 years and that nobody ever won a war of attrition against Russia (Soviet Union at the time but the author keeps calling it Russia); the author also concedes that the Mujahideen are tough fighters and should not be underestimated. This book makes for a good journalistic account. The book contains information on the Soviet forces, the Army of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) and the many Mujahideen groups. The life of both sides were mainly miserable and the fighting was ruthless. The Soviets were unforgiving and used indiscriminate firepower in their search for the elusive "Dushman" ("Phantoms"), but they not only killed civilians as collateral damage, they completely wiped out villages to show the might of the Soviet Union in an attempt to cower the Afghan population; this "depopulation policy" did prevent the guerrillas from getting food and shelter in the affected regions but ultimately backfired as it hardened the

anti-Soviet sentiment. The DRA was a poorly trained, poorly equipped and poorly led fighting force. It is no surprise that its morale was low and their performance in battle was mainly ineffective. The Mujahideen are a confuse lot of chieftains, ex-military, civilian-turned-guerrilla and CIA-trained militants. As the author says, the Afghans receive a gun when they are considered men but, regardless of their fanfarronic claimings, their marksmanship is poor.

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