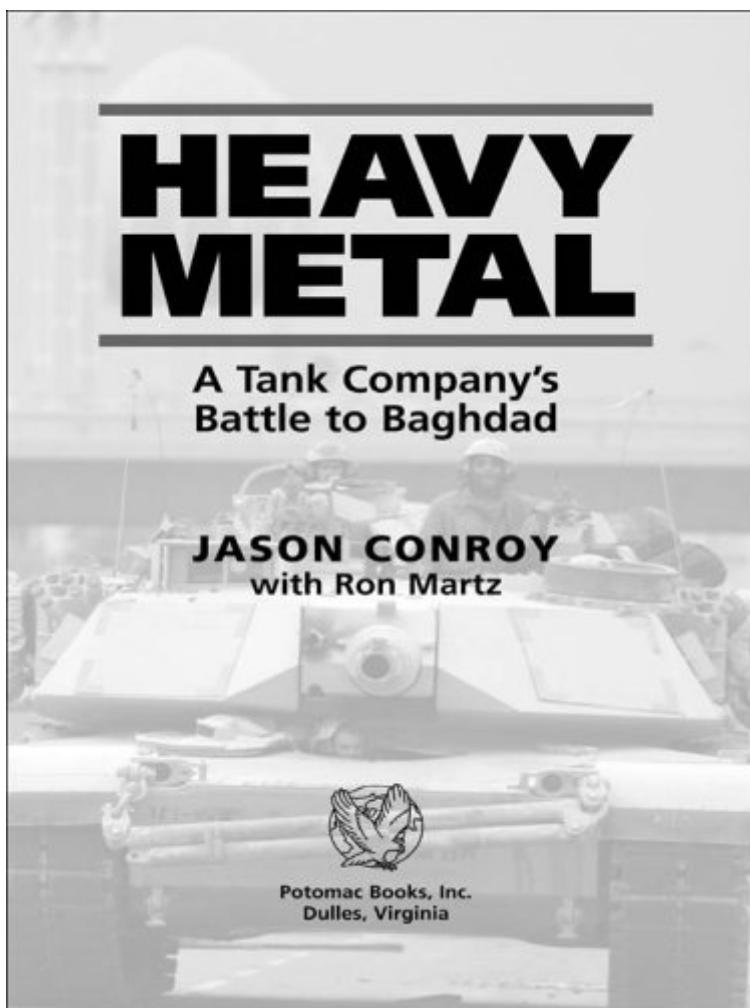


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Heavy Metal: A Tank Company's Battle To Baghdad (Ausa Book)



Synopsis

During the Iraq War, coauthor Capt. Jason Conroy commanded Charlie Company, which was part of Task Force 1-64, 2d Brigade Combat Team, part of the U.S. Army's 3d Infantry Division. A tank unit equipped with mammoth M1A1 Abrams tanks, Conroy's company was literally at the tip of the U.S. Army's spear and one of the first elements into Baghdad. Veteran journalist Ron Martz was embedded in Charlie Company. Together, from the unique perspective of an armor unit that was in nearly continuous combat for four straight weeks, Conroy and Martz tell the unvarnished story of what went right and what went deadly wrong in Iraq. Conroy and his soldiers were able to overcome supply shortages, intelligence failures, and miserable weather to battle their way into downtown Baghdad, a place where they were told they would never have to fight. Heavy Metal evaluates the Army's performance, including its use of tactics that were developed during the war but for which the soldiers had never trained. Through the exciting personal stories of the young troopers of Charlie Company - who experienced a very different war from what was seen back home on TV - Heavy Metal tells us much about the qualities of today's American soldier, about twenty-first-century desert and urban warfare, and about how the Army should prepare to fight future wars.

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Customer Reviews

I remember that some of the most powerful pictures I have seen of the Iraq war in 2003 was an Abrams tank riding along a road in Baghdad with a camera on top and in every street it crossed there was a T-72 destroyed, almost beyond recognition. I was very impressed by this scene and some days later I read that USAF strikes were responsible for that carnage. Although that news was an anticlimax as I had initially supposed that the US tanks had done the damage, I accepted that and felt impressed by the accuracy of modern aerial bombs and missiles. The enigma was revealed finally when I read Jason Conroy's excellent book "Heavy Metal" where I found out that a sole armored company of the 2nd BCT (3rd ID) did all that execution in Baghdad's streets, in an area called Mahmudiyah, within very few minutes and in a fight which resembled a gunfight in a telephone booth. The author has written a marvelous account of his company's war (14 Abrams tanks) from the months leading to the operation "Iraqi Freedom" to the actual battles with the enemy, and his writing style is very factual and right to the point. Conroy gives many details about the kind of personnel that crewed the Abrams tanks, their training and doctrine, the confusion of battles, the atrocious weather in western Iraqi desert, the plight of the Iraqi civilians, the two daring "Thunder Runs" inside Baghdad on April 5 and 7 and the controversial matter of the looting of the Iraqi National Museum. I found extremely interesting the efforts that Conroy's men did in order to save the badly hit tank "Cojone, Eh?" during the first Thunder Run (that particular vehicle was seen destroyed in Iraqi TV with Iraqis triumphantly dancing on it) as well as the description of the first two months after the end of the campaign in Baghdad and Fallujah. This is a highly recommended book for everyone who wants to see how reality does not follow any script and how real battles are full of surprises even in an era of satellite communications and super-accurate weapons.

Excellent narrative written from the company / troop level by an experience officer. This narrative shows the level of flexibility required after the 2003 invasion of Iraq didn't go the way the "experts" predicted. This unit was the first armored unit to enter the capitol after a rapid advance from Kuwait. Not only did they have to fight an unexpected enemy, they were also plagued by maintenance and logistics issues related to their outrunning their support. Well done!

My first rating of this book was two stars because the first part got so bogged down in a who's who of the Tank Command structure that it put me to sleep. However once I pushed on through the book improved considerably. Great descriptions of tank life, boring, terrifying, hard. Also good descriptions of the people of Iraq. The end got a little slow as he justified the war but, on the whole, a good read.

Interesting to read as the author have experienced this himself. Especially goodwill to learn what happened some years after as day to day reports from journalists are not very reliable.

Having experienced the Iraq war only through the eyes of mainstream media this book presented me with the soldiers perspective on modern tank warfare and the front line military experience as a whole. Well done and worth the read.

Ron Martz books is well written and a great first rate account of his Tank Companies operations during his time in Iraqi. I would love to see more small unit commanders write about there accounts in this form. It is a book worthy of being taught at our service academys.

It was riveting! A must read for anyone who just doesn't understand the cost of our freedom and/or why we shouldn't take it for granted or our soldiers who risk life and limbs and sanity to protect that freedom.

Excellent book. Makes it even better when you know some of the young men who participated in this historical event.

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