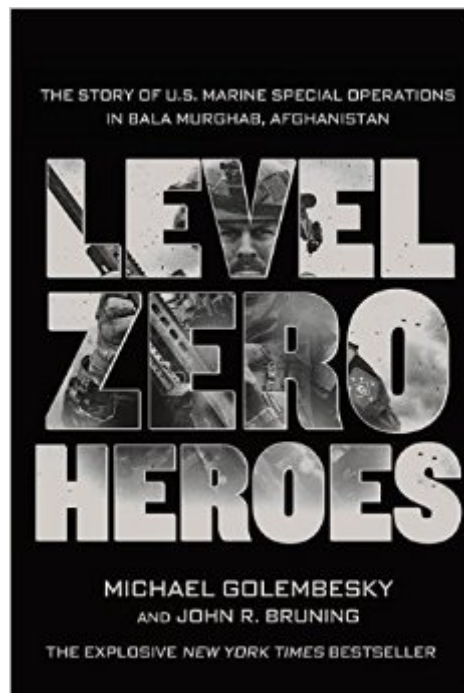


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# Level Zero Heroes: The Story Of U.S. Marine Special Operations In Bala Murghab, Afghanistan



## Synopsis

A New York Times Best seller! In *Level Zero Heroes*, Michael Golembesky follows the members of U.S. Marine Special Operations Team 8222 on their assignment to the remote and isolated Taliban stronghold known as Bala Murghab as they conduct special operations in an effort to break the Taliban's grip on the Valley. What started out as a routine mission changed when two 82nd Airborne Paratroopers tragically drowned in the Bala Murghab River while trying to retrieve vital supplies from an air drop that had gone terribly wrong. In this one moment, the focus and purpose of the friendly forces at Forward Operating Base Todd, where Team 8222 was assigned, was forever altered as a massive clearing operation was initiated to break the Taliban's stranglehold on the valley and recover the bodies. From close-quarters firefights in Afghan villages to capturing key-terrain from the Taliban in the unforgiving Afghan winter, this intense and personal story depicts the brave actions and sacrifices of MSOT 8222. Readers will understand the hopelessness of being pinned down under a hail of enemy gunfire and the quake of the earth as a 2000 lb. guided bomb levels a fortified Taliban fighting position. A powerful and moving story of Marine Operators doing what they do best, *Level Zero Heroes* brings to life the mission of these selected few that fought side-by-side in Afghanistan, in a narrative as action-packed and emotional as anything to emerge from the Special Operations community contribution to the Afghan War.

## Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: St. Martin's Griffin (September 1, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1250070295

ISBN-13: 978-1250070296

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.9 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (533 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #17,734 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #19 in [Books > History > Military > United States > Veterans](#) #32 in [Books > History > Military > Afghan War](#) #32 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Military > Afghan & Iraq Wars > Afghan War](#)

## Customer Reviews

LEVEL ZERO HEROES is one of but a handful of first account books of combat in Iraq & Afghanistan I've read to date. Generally, I prefer to wait for time to pass and history to sort out the

actual details. But what I'm finding is that, given the nature of communication in the current age, authors are able to compile information and accurately recreate events much faster and often with greater detail than in past conflicts. And Michael Golembesky's memoir is a perfect example of just that. As a chronicle of combat in the hinterlands of Afghanistan, Golembesky gives us insight into the daily lives of his MARSOC (Marine Special Operations Command) unit (i.e. Force Recon Marines), their interaction among themselves, Afghan National Police (ANP) and Afghan National Army (ANA) personnel stationed alongside, as well as the US Army's 82nd Airborne and local dignitaries - and, of course, the ever present Taliban. In doing so, we're made privy to the bonds formed in battle (and the bitterness). The bonds with his brothers in arms, the bitterness toward the local dignitaries (whose loyalty I a always in question), as well as the overall Battalion Commander (an 82nd Airborne Colonel). The Battalion Commander because he all too often seems preoccupied with "cooperating" with the locals at the expense - and sometimes the safety - of those under his command. Coupled with the insane Rules of Engagement and you have a very sound picture of the way our nation fights it's wars these days - and perhaps why we're still fighting there 13 years later. But what stands out above all else is Golebesky's (or Ski's) forthright manner in telling the story. He pulls no punches. Makes no excuses. And fumes right along with the reader at the insanity of it all. In fact, I've heard LEVEL ZERO HEROES described as this generation's CATCH-22. Not certain I'd go that far - but it does skirt around the edges of getting there. Only because of Ski's brutal honesty. Anyone whose served in the Middle East recently, or been in combat the past 50 years or more can relate - and anyone who's ever been a Force Recon Marine will relate VERY well. I know I did. And Ski's job as a Joint Tactical Air Controller (JTAC), who calls in bombing runs on enemy positions, is a particularly dicey one. Placing him in everyone's bullseye. His fellow Marines depend in him for assistance, his Battalion Commander 2nd guesses his every move, and JAG lawyers abound awaiting his mistakes. The writing, though, flows easily. Almost stream of consciousness. The tense moments, be they battle scenes or in-rank politics ;often the same) are quite tense - but reassuring. No horrific bloody scenes are bared to scare the young ones, though the ferocity of combat is not lost on the reader either. All in all a first rate memoir.

Couldn't put it down! I was Transported into the field with these incredible men and could feel what they felt- a page turner that I didn't want to end. Marine special op have a tough enough time but this gives insight as to the real life frustrations! No candy coated view but an amazing story of these brave Marines that just blew my mind ! You think you know ? You really don't until you read this account -This book should be made into a movie - it will rock your socks !

I received this book yesterday on my Kindle and read the entire book. This is a real life story on the war in Afghanistan and allows the American People to understand what is actually taking place in this country. While it gives us the truth about how the political agenda is, it gives an even better account what our troops give to our Country. God Bless our Troops for their service. Thanks to Michael Golembesky for writing this account of his service to our country.

Golembesky hit a home run with this one. In the beginning I enjoyed reading about his perspective coming into MARSOC and being thrown onto a team as an outsider (he was a JTAC, not an operator). Also how he navigated the very close-knit team dynamic he encountered during the work up, and how he had to prove himself worthy to the guys. The author strikes me as an introverted, reflective, deeply compassionate warrior who has a strong moral base and it showed in his writing. At times in the book it was all I could do but shake my head at the TYPICAL bone-headed officers who haven't a clue about combat and put people's lives at risk ignorantly. The WORST type of officer you can have leading a unit in combat is one worried about his next promotion. In all, an outstanding tribute to all the warriors we have lost in the Bala Murghab Valley. If it weren't for guys like Golembesky and his brothers doing such skilled work surely they would have taken a lot more casualties. Hey Ski, Semper Fi brother.

Great book that shows what is going on in Afghanistan. I've read several books about the SOF and their missions, and I have yet found a book that wasn't only about being a jarhead or how tough and better they were because of their extra training. Instead he focuses on telling what is going on Afghanistan and how the corruption, bad leaders, and the ROE are making it impossible for the soldiers to do their job. He also shows us that top tier operators are humans too, and they bleed, get emotional, lose focus, and make mistakes. In the end, Afghanistan is just a hopeless place that won't get better with anything. You will understand this better once you read the book.

This book is AMAZING!! I bought it and read it all within 24 hours. I'm going to reread it again I enjoyed it that much. Once you order it go to page 251 and check out the bonus stuff. It's truly a cool experience. Ski did a WONDERFUL job writing this. I waited three years for this book and couldn't be happier. Great War read. HIGHLY recommend for the love of god buy it.

Level Zero Heroes is a very personal story of a Marine assigned to a MARSOC (U.S Marine Corps

Forces Special Operations Command) unit deployed to Afghanistan as a Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC). SSGT Golembesky's job was to coordinate with air assets in support of his team. It is a fast paced and gritty book that brings to the reader a vivid picture of the battlefield in which they fought. SSGT Golembesky spares no punches (but protects the IDs) describing the frequent idiocy of battlefield politics and the courageous men who endured under very hazardous conditions. A very good book and intimate portrayal of modern warfare in all its glory and flaws.

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