



Arabs at War: Military Effectiveness, 1948-1991 (Studies in War, Society, and the Military)

By Kenneth M. Pollack

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Kenneth M. Pollack, formerly a Persian Gulf military analyst at the CIA and Director for Persian Gulf Affairs at the National Security Council, describes and analyzes the military history of the six key Arab states—Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Syria—during the post-World War II era. He shows in detail how each Arab military grew and learned from its own experiences in response to the specific objectives set for it and within often constrained political, economic, and social circumstances. This first-ever overview of the modern Arab approach to warfare provides a better understanding of the capabilities and limitations of the Arab militaries, some of which are the United States' most likely adversaries, and some of which are our most important allies.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

As the U.S. rather publicly contemplates a strike against Iraq, Kenneth M. Pollack, the Council on Foreign Relations' deputy director for National Security Studies, offers a frank and statistically based historical assessment of Iraq's performance in war, along with the performances of Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Saudi Arabia and Syria. *Arabs at War: Military Effectiveness, 1948-1991* begins with the first of Egypt's engagements with Israel, and ends with the Gulf War, devoting a chapter each to the aforementioned nations (Iraq gets more than 100 pages), and focusing on everything from preparedness to unit cohesion. While it is often more technical than most readers will want, expect journalists to be combing the book (which includes 36 maps) in search of backstory.

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From Library Journal

In the March/April 2002 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Pollack, who is deputy director of National Security Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, bluntly addressed what should be done once the al Qaeda has been dealt with: "The United States should invade Iraq, eliminate the present regime, and pave the way for a successor prepared to abide by its international commitments and live in peace with its neighbors." This forthrightness is evident throughout Pollack's significant albeit highly specialized military history of the tactical and strategic performance of six key Arab states Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Syria during the post-World War II era. Each broad analysis covers the strategies and goals of both the various militaries and their adversaries to provide a full political context. Pollack achieves the dual purpose of analyzing the factors that have consistently hindered these armed forces and providing a robust assessment of their strengths and weaknesses during various battles. Since the experiences of these forces continue to shape military action around the world, this important overview belongs in all military research libraries and larger university libraries. Dale Farris, Groves, TX

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Review

"This encyclopedic study will be of great interest to scholars, military planners and analysts, and policy makers. A must-read with Middle East 'military balance' studies, particularly those by Anthony H. Cordesman."

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