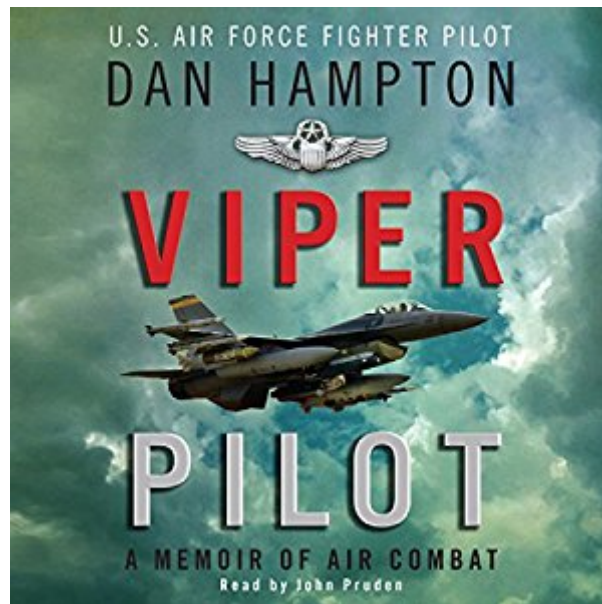


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# Viper Pilot: The Autobiography Of One Of America's Most Decorated Combat Pilots



## Synopsis

151 combat missions 21 hard kills on surface-to-air-missile sites Four Distinguished Flying Crosses with Valor One Purple Heart Sure to rank as one of the greatest aviation memoirs ever written, *Viper Pilot* is an Air Force legend's thrilling eyewitness account of modern air warfare. From 1986 to 2006, Lt. Col. Dan Hampton was a leading member of the Wild Weasels, the elite Air Force fighter squadrons whose mission is recognized as the most dangerous job in modern air combat. Weasels are the first planes sent into a war zone, flying deep behind enemy lines purposely seeking to draw fire from surface-to-air missiles and artillery. They must skillfully evade being shot down - and then return to destroy the threats, thereby making the skies safe for everyone else to follow. Today these vital missions are more hazardous than direct air-to-air engagement with enemy aircraft. Hampton's record number of strikes on high-value targets make him the most lethal F-16 Wild Weasel pilot in American history. This is his remarkable story. Taught to fly at an early age by his father, Hampton logged twenty years and 608 combat hours in the world's most iconic fighter jet: the F-16 "Fighting Falcon", or "Viper" as its pilots call it. Hampton spearheaded the 2003 invasion of Iraq, leading the first flight of fighters over the border en route to strike Baghdad. In the war that followed, he engaged in a series of brilliantly executed missions that earned him three Distinguished Flying Crosses with Valor; he notably saved a U.S. Marine unit from certain death by taking out the surrounding enemy forces near Nasiriyah. Two years earlier, on 9/11, Hampton's father was inside the Pentagon when it was attacked; with his dad's fate unknown, Hampton was scrambled into American skies and given the unprecedented orders to shoot down any unidentified aircraft. Hampton also flew critical missions in the first Gulf War, served on the Air Combat Command staff during the Kosovo War, and was injured in the 1996 Khobar Towers terrorist attack. With manned missions rapidly giving way to remote-controlled UAV drones, *Viper Pilot* may be the last memoir by a true hero of the skies. Gripping and irreverently humorous, it is an unforgettable look into the closed world of fighter pilots and modern air combat.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a young Air Force lieutenant, I read Jack Broughton's "Thud Ridge." After my career was over, I read "Bury Us Upside Down: The Misty Pilots and the Secret Battle for the Ho Chi Minh Trail" by Rick Newman and Don Shepperd. After completing the latter, I asked, "What could be better?" On October 4, 2012, I found my answer. These two classic works of non-fiction about aerial combat have been nicely complemented and, dare I say, surpassed, by Dan Hampton's "Viper Pilot: Memoir of Air Combat." In every respect, Lt. Col. Hampton captures the bullet-sweating fear and exhilaration of air combat in the modern age against enemies conventional and unconventional. Simply put, I ordered my two hardback copies as soon as I found out I could. Dan Hampton is the "real deal." He's irreverent. He's cocky (and I personally never had any use for a USAF pilot who didn't think he was the best thing to ever come down road). He's hilarious. Most of all, he is possessed of a deadpan, gunslinger mentality and a sense of purpose focused on doing the things he promised his country he would do in its defense...without hesitation and with lethal determination. I have known "2Dogs" for well over two decades. He is everything I trained him to be as a USAF student pilot and he became everything I knew he could be as a fighter pilot. For those who have worn the wings of a U.S. Air Force pilot, or the wings of any other military aviator, Dan Hampton's tale will take you back to places in your memory that are familiar, regardless of aircraft flown, and will be a part of you, forever. For those who have never had the privilege of aviation service, Lt. Col.

First of all I wanted to say that having men like Dan Hampton in the Air Force and military for the United States of America is what makes our country the greatest nation in the world! I could not believe the stories that Dan has told throughout the book about all of the missions he has been on, along with all of the other fighters in his unit and in Iraq! From the moment you read this book, you get a thrill ride that puts you in the back seat (if there was one) of the F-16 "Fighting Falcon" or Viper as the fighters call it! Thank you Dan and all of the other fighters, front line and support groups for all that you do to take it to our enemies and keep the fighting away from our homeland! You all deserve

the highest honors our country has to offer and I for one am honored to call you a fellow American! From 1986 to 2006 Lt. Col. Dan Hampton performed 151 combat missions as a Wild Weasel fighter pilot, flew over 600 combat hours around the world and has logged over 3000 flight hours while in the USAF from 1986-2006. He has 21 hard kills on surface-to-air-missile sites. 4 Distinguished Flying Crosses with Valor, 1 Purple Heart, and more medals and accommodations than I can list. He is a graduate of the USAF Fighter Weapons School, USN Top Gun School (TOGS), and USAF Special Operations School. Dan spearheaded the 2003 invasion of Iraq, leading the first flight of fighters over the border and deep into Iraq and Baghdad and also has several awards for tactical innovation. Now retired, he has time to write about all of his experiences within the USAF and all of his missions while in Iraq and other places around the world.

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