

## Combat Story Episode List - Episodes 1-105

Find all of the below episodes on [YouTube](#), [Spotify](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google](#), and anywhere else you get your podcasts. If you have suggestions for new guests, send them to Ryan at [ryan@combatstory.com](mailto:ryan@combatstory.com).

Green Beret Silver Star Destroying Enemy Tanks with a Javelin | 3rd Special Forces Group | Changing Hearts and Minds Podcast | Jeff Adamec

Episode Number 105

Today we hear the Combat Story of Jeff Adamec, a longtime Green Beret with six combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan as an 18B and a K9 handler. Jeff earned the Silver Star during the Battle of Debeka Pass in Iraq in 2003 during his first deployment. In his final deployment, Jeff was knocked unconscious by an RPG during a gunfight in Afghanistan while based out of FOB Cobra. He broke his back in four places and was medically retired for those injuries and the TBI sustained as a result. He went on to find success in the corporate sector in network engineering and logistics and hosts the Changing Hearts and Minds podcast that focuses on military history of all eras prior to 1995. Jeff's understanding of military history and weaponry absolutely shines through in this episode and will, I hope, attract some more listeners to his podcast. I hope you enjoy this fast paced and wide ranging interview with Jeff as much as I did.

Aircraft Crash on Robert's Ridge | 160th Night Stalker | MH-47 Chinook Combat Aviator | Alan Mack

Episode Number 104

Today we hear the Combat Story of a long time aviator and CH-47 and MH-47 pilot who spent years with the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR), Alan Mack. Alan served over 35 years in the Army and retired with 6700 flight hours, including 3200 hours in NVGs. Alan survived an aircraft shutdown and multiple near death experiences in his time in uniform. He was a part of iconic operations including Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Operations Anaconda and Redwings, and many others he can't discuss because they remain classified. He was a part of iconic operations including Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Operations Anaconda and Redwings, and many others he can't discuss because they remain classified.

UK SBS (Special Boat Service) | World Record Holder | Security Expert Relentless | Prince Harry Close Friend | Dean Stott

## Episode Number 103

Today we hear the Combat Story of Dean Stott, a former operator with the UK Special Boat Service (SBS) who saw combat with both SBS and the Commandos. Dean would eventually injury his leg in a HAHO (high altitude high opening) accident getting ready for another deployment that would end his military career but would not end his thrill seeking sense of adventure. In fact, only two days after leaving the military, Dean was providing security for people in remote and dangerous parts of the world, eventually standing up his own security company. Dean, like many former operators, tried a more predictable existence in an office but quickly found himself searching for the adrenaline highs he'd left behind. As a result, he found his way to biking and set two world records. Dean's book *Relentless* will be available on November 28th in the US that details some of the topics we discuss in this interview and more, including his close friendship to Prince Harry, who listeners will know I appreciate given his background flying Apaches. Dean's got more adventures ahead including another record breaking task in Africa. I hope you enjoy this discussion of what can only be called a full life lived to the edge as much as I did (and if you're like me, you'll also be a little jealous!).

160th Night Stalker | AH-6 & MH-6 Pilot | DFC | Silver Star | CW5 Steve Lapping

## Episode Number 101

Today we hear the Combat Story of a long-time Night Stalker from the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR), Steve Lapping. Steve participated in multiple high-profile operations that many of us have heard of like the Jessica Lynch rescue and the Saddam Hussein capture, and many operations we have not like Objectives REINDEER and LEADVILLE. This was a special interview for me as you can imagine given Steve's storied background as an elite pilot, spending over two decades in 160th. We also touch on some of the heartbreak that comes with years in the cockpit with accidents, shootdowns, and crashes, including the feeling in SOAR following Operation GOTHIC SERPENT (aka Blackhawk Down). Steve is one of the most humble individuals you're going to encounter. In fact, I had to dig to figure out that Steve was a CW5, which is a very difficult rank to reach and to learn about his awards and decorations in combat. I hope you enjoy this Combat Story from inside one of the most lethal cockpits from such a humble warrior as much as I did.

Medal of Honor | Only Living Iraq MOH | Infantry Squad Ldr | 2-2 Infantry | Author | David Bellavia

## Episode Number 99

Today we hear our first ever Combat Story from a Medal of Honor recipient David Bellavia. David was a squad leader in Task Force 2-2 with the storied 1st Infantry Division during the

brutal second battle of Fallujah. At one point, his fellow soldiers were pinned down and David cleared a building in a way that, in his words, 9 times out of 10, would have ended up very differently and with him losing his life and included hand to hand combat with an insurgent.. David shares so much insight into how the military transformed him and gave him some of the most real love he'd ever experienced with his brothers in arms. His second book, Remember the Ramrods: An Army Brotherhood in War and Peace just came out and speaks directly to the bonds that can truly only be forged in combat. I highly recommend you listen all the way through to hear not just the event for which David would eventually receive the Medal of Honor, but also his response to the question if he would do it all again. It was something I never could have imagined. With that, I hope you enjoy this very, very rare glimpse into someone who truly risked everything for a handful of others. #veteran #medalofhonor #army #combat

Marine Corps Silver Star Recipient | Operation Utah | Vietnam Veteran | Community Activist | Danny Hernandez

Episode Number 98

Today we hear the Combat Story of Danny Hernandez, a Vietnam Veteran who served as a Marine rifleman in Operation Utah in March 1966. Danny would later be awarded the Silver Star and there is currently a push to have that upgraded to a Medal of Honor. Danny came from the rough streets of East LA and after Vietnam would return to be a committed community activist and mentor for many of the kids who were not as fortunate as he was. The Silver Star was certainly earned as Danny was shot twice while providing medical aid to a stranded and wounded Marine on the battlefield; refusing to be evacuated, and killing several enemy soldiers as they flanked the casualty collection point that Danny had just been sitting in. Danny's work on mentoring and building the community in his hometown is inspiring and you can't help but laugh as you hear some of the stories of the Marine Corps back in the Vietnam era. His story is documented in his book, titled Silver Star: An American Story in much greater detail for those who are left wanting more.

Prisoner of War | Ukraine Marines | Tortured in Captivity by Russia | Aiden Aslin (Round 2)

Episode Number 97

Today we hear the true and frightening Combat Story of Aiden Aslin, a British citizen fighting for the Ukrainian military who was taken as a POW in February 2022 and then beaten and stabbed by his Russian captors for over five months. Listeners will recall our first interview with Aiden from Feb 5th, 2022 (<https://youtu.be/lbHSQ1xzpRc>), just weeks before the Russian invasion where he predicted what would come after two deployments to the frontlines in Ukraine and significant fighting in Syria. Aiden was fighting on the front lines in the Donbas region of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, when Russia, completely unprovoked, invaded Ukraine. His unit fell back to the steel factory Mariupol where it was surrounded by Russian and Donetsk People's

Republic (or DPR, which is Russia's foot soldiers and lackeys in Donetsk). Out of food and ammunition, Aiden's unit would eventually surrender to the Russian military which promptly handed Aiden over to the DPR for regular beatings and violations of the Geneva Convention which surprised nobody. In our interview, Aiden recounts the harrowing experience of being on the frontlines when Russia invaded and how he survived captivity, without any of the advanced training that people like myself received regularly while in service to survive and escape these situations to return with dignity. I'm sure you will be amazed at Aiden's spirit and strength that pulled him through this difficult time and it will be a stark reminder for each of us that our day-to-day problems are not as hard as we might think when compared with what he endured. As you can imagine, I was elated to hear of Aiden's release in September and was nearly brought to tears after seeing his face again as we started this interview. Please enjoy this rare glimpse of hope and optimism from someone who survived a history-altering invasion and months in captivity as a modern-day POW as much as I did. Definitions: You'll hear a reference to GRADS which is a mobile artillery vehicle used by the Russians that fire 122mm rounds ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BM-21\\_Grad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BM-21_Grad)). You'll hear DPR, which is the Donetsk People's Republic.

Marine Special Operator | CIA Global Response Staff | Savage Actual | Jason Lilley (Round 2)

Episode Number 96

Today we hear the second round of our Combat Story with Jason Lilley, a former Marine, MARSOC operator, Global Response Staff (GRS) with the CIA, and co-host of Savage Actual with co-host Patrick Moltrup having been a guest on our show on Episode 26 (<https://youtu.be/YmOkCKtpvGk>). You can find Savage Actual at <https://www.youtube.com/c/savageactual>. We left off our first interview (which you can find at <https://youtu.be/jYzw5zGR5SE>) hearing about Jason's first deployments with Marine Recon in OIF I going into Iraq, in which his unit was featured in the HBO show Generation Kill, and a subsequent deployment when Jason earned a Silver Star. At that point, Jason got out of the service, seemingly to find another path, got a lip ring as he said, and started surfing. He still had years of service ahead of him, and that's exactly what we touch on in this episode. We get into some interesting aspects of combat this time around but we also dive pretty deep into the psychological aspects of war and the insight that time and age bring. Listeners really connected with Jason the first time around, noting how genuine and down to earth he is, with one person saying that he comes across as both deadly and chill at the same time, which is absolutely the case. There were so many calls for us to do round two from our listeners and it was worth waiting for. As you all know, you can catch Jason on Savage Actual with his co-host Patrick Moltrup, both of whom I consider great people, Americans, and friends. With that, please enjoy this insightful, selfless, and yet somehow equally hilarious discussion with Jason Lilley.

1st SFOD-D Operator | Delta Force | Sniper | Ranger Battalion | MusiCorps | Derek Nadalini

## Episode Number 95

Today we hear the Combat Story of Derek Nadalini, who spent decades in the Army with both Ranger Battalion and 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment - Delta, better known as The Unit. This is one of the most interesting interviews we've ever done. Derek deployed countless times beginning in Afghanistan in 2002 and conducted HVT operations, hostage rescue (including the rescue of Roy Hallums), ran low visibility and sniper operations, and eventually volunteered to execute singleton missions. After leaving the service, Derek went through a painful and long process to manage traumatic brain injury (TBI). Despite those challenges, he would go on to help sell the company Spatial Networks (earning what he aptly refers to as his Business Ranger tab), became a certified life and wellness coach providing pro bono support to Veterans, and is now the Director of Outreach and Development at MusiCorps, which is a music rehabilitation program that helps wounded warriors play music and recover their lives. Derek is easily one of the most accomplished people we've had on the podcast and I hope you enjoy this funny but also very personal experience and highs and lows of the elite as much as I did.

Marine Infantry & Civil Affairs | The Wolves of Helmand | Author | Attorney | Frank Gus Biggio

## Episode Number 94

Today we hear our first Combat Story from a former Marine Corps Infantry Officer turned Civil Affairs Officer Frank Gus Biggio. Gus has a very unusual history in that he served his initial five years in the Marine Corps pre-9/11 and then got out to begin a very promising and successful career as an attorney. Join our Patreon community for additional content at <https://www.patreon.com/combatastory> In the years following 9/11, however, Gus felt the need to return to service and support the war effort. So rather than hold onto a profitable and cushy corporate career, Gus did what many of dream of doing and went back in. He deployed in 2009 as a Civil Affairs officer which you can think of as a local mayor or governor of a particular area - in his case Nawa - where he settled local disputes, funded development efforts, compensated families for losses as a result of the war and far more. This required significant time outside the wire and in harm's way. Do not be fooled into thinking that this is an administrative role. I spoke to now Sergeant Major David Wilson who led the patrols that protected Gus as he moved around the battlespace and he confirmed that it was anything but quiet and that Gus shifted the balance of power locally, driving significant counterinsurgency wins. Gus chronicled his experience and the service of his fellow Marines in the book 'The Wolves of Helmand: A View from Inside the Den of Modern War' (which is a great read) and is now directing proceeds to a charitable cause supporting efforts in Ukraine. This is a wide-ranging discussion with the laughs, heartache and nostalgia of someone who gave up everything (including missing the birth of his second child) to be downrange with his fellow Marines and I hope you enjoy his Combat Story as much as I did. #marines #veteran #helmand #army

Delta Force Operator | 3rd Special Forces Group | Green Beret 18B | Hades Consulting | Zack Harrison

Episode Number 93

Today we hear the Combat Story of Zack Harrison, a former Green Beret (18B) and 1st Special Forces Detachment - Delta (aka The Unit) operator. [If you want more about our guests and some behind the scenes insights, join our Patreon community at <https://www.patreon.com/combatastory>] Unlike many of our guests, Zack never planned to join the military. Like many people, however, 9/11 changed that. He used the 18X program to get his foot in the door and was in combat with the 3rd Special Forces Group in 2005 and 2006, which include being part of Operation Medusa, one of, if not the, largest NATO coalition operations in Afghanistan. He then transitioned to Delta Force where he honed his shooting, CQB, and tactical skills that he now uses to teach military, law enforcement, and civilians through his company, Hades Consulting, which he co-owns with another former Delta Operator. I hope you enjoy this wide-ranging discussion with a very humble and thoughtful warrior as much as I did.

UK SAS Sergeant Major | 7/7 SAS Ground CDR | Who Dares Wins TV | The Hard Way | Billy Billingham

Episode Number 92

Today we hear an incredible Combat Story from across the pond from a legendary UK SAS operator Billy Billingham who served over 30 years with deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, South America, Africa, and many other places we can't discuss. Billy came from an extremely challenging childhood drinking and fighting on the streets of Birmingham to being appointed a Member of the British Empire by Her Majesty the Queen for his efforts on select hostage rescues and serving as the SAS Ground Commander on what is known as 7/7 or the deadly coordinated attacks in London on July 7th, 2005. Billy went from being the absolute elite leader, working alongside our own Delta and DEVGRU operators for years in the post-9/11 world, to hanging up his uniform and finding a new path. He has now written an autobiography aptly titled 'The Hard Way' and two fiction novels based on his own exploits titled 'Call to Kill' and 'Survive to Fight' (think SAS meets 007). He is also a lead on two incredibly successful programs in the UK and Australia titled SAS: Who Dares Wins where he and other special operators take civilians and celebrities through punishing special ops training; he shared that the show is coming to the US soon! He and his wife run a charity organization and he does public speaking engagements across the UK. I hope you enjoy this incredibly humble story that takes us inside the Interest Room (which I learned is the term for the SAS Team Room) and the highs and lows of a life well-lived at the tip of the spear from our UK brothers and sisters as much as I did. #military #veteran

Combat Engineer | First Female Reservist Ranger School Graduate | Engineer | Talent War |  
Lisa Jaster

Episode Number 91

Today we hear a unique Combat Story from Ranger-qualified and former Engineer in combat Lisa Jaster who was the first female reservist to complete Ranger School...at the age of 37 with two kids! Lisa is still in the reserves and recently rotated out of Battalion Command where she led Combat Engineers as she did early in the post-9/11 era as a young active-duty lieutenant, including in 2002 in Afghanistan, 2003 in Iraq, and back to Iraq 15 years later. Her story is remarkable and highlights how much harder she worked to reach levels many others take for granted. She's a West Point grad and stood on the shoulders of the brave women who came before her in breaking the barrier of women at the Academy only to break a similar barrier herself. Beyond being a sought-after public speaker, accomplished entrepreneur, and part of retired DEVGRU Mike Sarraille's Talent War Group, Lisa is also a competitive Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu fighter and CrossFit athlete and is getting ready to release her first book that describes her journey. This is a phenomenal and wide-ranging interview with an accomplished, tough-as-nails Ranger and I hope you enjoy her story of perseverance as much as I did. #army #military #veteran #rangers

Marine Corps Officer | Combat Leadership | Talent War Group | Joe McNamara

Episode Number 89

Today we hear the Combat Story of Joe McNamara, a former Marine Corps officer who experienced a unique kind of violence from his time on campus at Virginia Tech during the horrific 2007 shooting to leading Marines in combat in Afghanistan. After leaving the service, Joe founded a leadership development company called Impact USA that trained both elite athletes and private sector leaders. Impact was recently acquired by Mike Sarraille's Talent War Group, where Joe is now a partner and Chief Revenue Officer. Many will recall a fantastic interview with Mike (episode 70 <https://youtu.be/v4TPJtkZrek>), the former enlisted Marine who went on to Force Recon then served as an officer in SEALs and, eventually, Naval Special Warfare Development Group (DEVGRU). The fact that someone like Mike who went through that crucible of leadership experiences went on to acquire Impact says a lot about what Joe does to develop leaders. This episode dives between combat experiences and the leadership lessons we can apply to our lives, from the foxhole to athletics to the office. In fact, Joe answers two questions I've always had: how do you create a sense of shared adversity in a corporate setting and how do you find time to train corporate leaders without taking them off operations for a full six to 12 months the way the military does it. I hope you enjoy this Combat Story with a battle hardened Marine Corps officer and some of the tangible leadership lessons we can all apply from his experiences as much as I did.

Marine Sniper from D1 College Football | Team Rubicon & Groundswell Founder | Jake Wood | Combat Story Episode 88

Episode Number 88

Today we hear the Combat Story of Jake Wood, a former University of Wisconsin football player who enlisted in the Marine Corps and fought in both Iraq and Afghanistan as a Marine Rifleman and Sniper. One of the key moments that led him to the Marine Corps was the death of Pat Tillman, the legendary NFL Safety who walked away from the League and joined the Army after 9/11, eventually being killed while serving as a Ranger in Afghanistan. Jake found himself leading Marines at the very front end of the Surge in Iraq and the bloodiest year of the wars, stepping into a kinetic environment only weeks after arriving in the theater. He was then in Helmand Province in Afghanistan as a sniper. Only two months after leaving the Marine Corps, Jake went on to found the humanitarian support organization Team Rubicon after hastily organizing what he describes as a Motley Crew of veterans and doctors to help the people of Haiti after the devastating 2010 earthquake. He recently created another charitable giving business called Groundswell which seeks to democratize philanthropic giving. In 2018, Jake was awarded the Pat Tillman ESPY for service (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7Xef8StXi8>), bringing his story full circle from Tillman's death that propelled Jake into this life of service. I hope you enjoy this unique and insightful interview with someone who played football at the highest level and then selflessly decided to put on a different uniform to help others as much as I did.

Marine Special Operator | Silver Star | CIA GRS | Savage Actual | Jason Lilley (Combat Story Ep. 87)

Episode Number 87

Today we hear the Combat Story of Jason Lilley, a former Marine infantryman, Marine Recon, sniper, MARSOC, and then CIA Global Response Staff (or GRS) operator. As many are aware, Jason is the other half of the veteran media company Savage Actual (<https://www.youtube.com/c/savageactual>), with his co-host Patrick Moltrup having been a guest on our show on Episode 26 (<https://youtu.be/YmOkCKtpvGk>). Jason survived brutal fighting in the initial invasion of Iraq with the 1st Reconnaissance Battalion alongside journalist Evan Wright who would go on to write the book Generation Kill which was transformed into an HBO series by the same name, depicting some of the battles we talk about in this episode (watch more at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLIHcwJ5vS4>). In another deployment, Jason earned a Silver Star during a battle on April 7th, 2004 in Iraq that was later depicted in the History Channel program Ambush of April 7th (<https://www.history.com/shows/the-warfighters/season-1/episode-5#:~:text=On%20April%20%2C%202004%20a,in%20the%20War%20on%20Terror>). It is believed to be the most decorations awarded for a single battle during the war, which included four Silver Stars, multiple Purple

Hearts, and two Navy Crosses (one award posthumously). We didn't want to shortchange listeners on Jason's incredible stories so we'll schedule a round two to dive into his time with MARSOC and the CIA. This episode is chalked full of combat experiences with a very human, empathetic, and thoughtful lens that I know you will enjoy as much as I did. #military #veteran #marines #combat Support us on Patreon and get exclusive content and insights at [www.patreon.com/combatastory](http://www.patreon.com/combatastory)

Marine Special Operator | Battle of Fallujah | MARSOC | Financial Podcaster | Christian Holloway | Combat Story Ep. 86

Episode Number 86

Today we hear a Combat Story from a long-time Combat Story listener Christian Holloway, a former Marine who was part of the initial invasion into Iraq, fought in both Fallujah I and II, and was one of the first Marines in what we now know as Marine Special Operations Command or MARSOC. [Support us on Patreon and get exclusive content and insights at [www.patreon.com/combatastory](http://www.patreon.com/combatastory)] Christian was just 18 years old when he crossed the line of departure into Iraq for the initial invasion alongside M1A1 tanks in his Marine Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAV). He was then clearing buildings on foot in Fallujah alongside his Marine brothers, was among the first to see the effects of IEDs and what later became a very common and lethal enemy TTP, and was then in the elite special operations community training foreign militaries as a force multiplier. Since leaving the military, Christian continued to train service members in Survival, Evasion, Resistance, Escape (SERE) as a contractor and now hosts a financial information program on YouTube. This is a great Combat Story that follows the path from the tactical perspective of the Marine infantryman to the strategic MARSOC operator and I hope you enjoy his humble insights as much as I did.

SEAL Team 3 & DEVGRU Intel Officer | Silicon Valley | Kristen Murdock | Combat Story (Ep 85)

Episode Number 85

Today we hear the Combat Story of Kristen Murdock, who spent 13 years in the Navy as a Naval Intelligence Officer from an Aviation Squadron off a carrier to Naval Special Warfare Development Group (DEVGRU). [Check out our Patreon page for more images of Kristen and for an upcoming Q&A with Ryan] Kristen spent most of her military time deployed around the world and focused primarily on intelligence in the Middle East, South Asia, North Africa, and the Horn of Africa, including deployments at the strategic level with joint staffs to the tactical with SEAL Team 3 and DEVGRU. After her time in service, Kristen transitioned thanks to a phenomenal program designed for Special Operations service members and support staff called The Honor Foundation which helped her find her next career in Silicon Valley working in the Trust and Safety space at Facebook and, most recently, Twitch, as a senior leader. Kristen narrowly avoided be kicked out of the Naval Academy and had her dreams of flying shattered at

the last moment but ended up hustling to find a more rewarding path in Intel that serves as a great lessons for those still rising through the ranks and I hope you enjoy her insights into the shadowy world of intel at a Tier 1 unit as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep. 80): Green Beret | Sergeant Major | Australian SASR Exchange | Talent War Group | Josh Johnson

#### Episode Number 80

Today we hear the Combat Story of a long-time Green Beret, combat veteran, and retired Sergeant Major Josh Johnson. Josh spent multiple years downrange in Iraq and Afghanistan, many with 1st Special Forces Group, in combat where he led from the front but also spent years teaching other Green Berets and partner forces. [Support us on Patreon and get exclusive content and insights at [www.patreon.com/combatstory](http://www.patreon.com/combatstory)] Josh was selected as an Exchange Officer to the Australian Special Air Services Regiment where he trained and fought alongside our very close Australian brethren. In his last two years of service, Josh focused specifically on leadership development and training. Since leaving the service, Josh has continued training and developing leaders, this time with Mike Sarraille's Talent War Group where Josh is a Partner and Senior VP of Leadership Development. I hope you enjoy this interesting and wide-ranging Combat Story as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep. 79): SAS Operator (Australian & New Zealand) | Tier 1 | Entrepreneur | Podcast Host | Joe Hotai

#### Episode Number 79

Today we hear our first Combat Story from a member of our close partners in New Zealand: Joe Hotai. Joe successfully completed not only the New Zealand SAS Selection and Training Course, but then (likely because he enjoys pain) also went on to complete the Australian SAS Selection and Training course. Joe then served in combat with the Australian SAS in direct action operations. [Support us on Patreon and get exclusive content and insights at [www.patreon.com/combatstory](http://www.patreon.com/combatstory)] Since leaving the service, Joe overcame a childhood fear of putting himself out there and has created two podcasts (the Epich Podcast which explores people making a positive change in the world - and which he has graciously invited me to be on - and the Move Sweat Suffer Podcast which promotes a more healthy way of life). Joe has also co-founded the Mill Gym in Australia and is the founder of Zero Alpha, which puts on ultra endurance events combining some of the experiences from his time in Special Operations, and is also a consultant. His YouTube channel is full of pragmatic workouts that remind me of Pat Mac! Joe has an incredibly humble persona with a great sense of humor. In fact, he's described himself as 'imperfect, annoying, and striving to improve as a husband, father, and human being on a daily basis. I hope you enjoy this interview of highs and lows and overcoming difficult situations from someone at the forefront of the Special Operations community, as much as I did.

CS#75: The Real 12 Strong Green Beret | Horse Soldier | Special Forces HoF | Author | Bob Pennington

Episode Number 75

Today we hear a Combat Story that I've been looking forward to for years. As many listeners know, I closely followed the war in Afghanistan immediately following 9/11 and revered the Green Berets who rode into combat on horseback to take America's fight to the enemy. [Call to Action: Please refer your friends to [www.trustsafetyinstitute.com](http://www.trustsafetyinstitute.com) if they're looking for high paying jobs where they can still help people and fight bad actors.] Today we hear from one of the very few men who was there, one of the Horse Soldiers as they've been called: Bob Pennington. Bob spent more than 30 years in the service, much of that with Special Forces, including kinetic operations in the Gulf War to one of the first teams on the ground in Afghanistan and more. He's a Distinguished Member of the Special Forces Regiment and in the Georgia Military Veterans' Hall of Fame. He and his Horse Soldier teammate Mark Nutsch have just released a book about their experiences in the days after 9/11 titled *Swords of Lightning: Green Beret Horse Soldiers and America's Response to 9/11*. And if his life can't get any better, he and Mark are also principals in the company that produces Horse Soldier Bourbon. I hope you enjoy this inside look into what happened from 9/10 (the day before the world changed) through the some of the first operations on the ground in Afghanistan (and enjoy some of Bob's celebrity moments given his representation as a key role in the movie *12 Strong*) as much as I did. #military #veteran #greenberet #horsesoldier

CS#74: Special Forces | Green Beret | Ranger | Sniper | MOH Museum Foundation | Darrell Utt

Episode Number 74

Today we hear the Combat Story of long-time Special Forces veteran, Ranger, and sniper Darrell Utt, who spent 26 years in the service, most of that in special operations across 10 deployments. Call to Action: For former military, government and law enforcement, if you're looking for a high paying and meaningful job, check out our Trust & Safety Institute at [www.trustsafetyinstitute.com](http://www.trustsafetyinstitute.com). Darrell tracked down PIFWICs (Persons Indicted for War Crimes) in Kosovo, was part of one of the craziest infils into Iraq you'll ever hear, used a honeypot to lure out an HVT, developed a devastatingly effective HUMINT network, and led countless kill/capture operations, taking down dozens of HVTs and detaining hundreds of extremists and their leaders. What's great about Darrell is that he always put himself in harm's way ahead of troops, which is not always the case. His ODA unit earned the coveted Larry Thorne award which goes to the best Special Forces unit for the work they did during one deployment to Iraq. Darrell himself earned the MG Robert T. Frederick Top Operator Award, which goes to the top Special Forces NCO. Since leaving the service, Darrell has taken on a role helping to build the future of the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation, which is on a mission to deliver education,

leadership, and inspiring spaces for learning and reflection, to preserve, share, and harness the stories, lives, and impact of Medal of Honor recipients. I couldn't imagine anyone better to represent the stories and lives of our Medal of Honor brethren than Darrell. I hope you enjoy this interview chalked full of creative and gut-wrenching combat stories as much as I did.

CS#73: Lessons from a Delta Force Commander from Afghanistan to Panama | CEO | Author | Pete Blaber

Episode Number 73

Today we hear a rare Combat Story from a long-time Delta Force Commander and operator, Pete Blaber, who served in Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Somalia, Colombia, and Panama. Call to Action: For former military, government and law enforcement, if you're looking for a high paying and meaningful job, check out our Trust & Safety Institute. Pete is an understated, humble, and soft spoken warrior leader who applies a commonsense approach to all of his decisions, to include those in combat. His decision to join the military came from studying centuries of warfare and how seemingly brilliant leaders made senseless decisions and wanting to avoid making the same mistakes. He spent most of his career in the special operations side of the Army from Ranger Battalion to Delta Force and then, after retiring, took on a role as a senior leader in a multi-billion dollar tech company. He has since written two books (The Mission, The Men, and Me: Lessons from a Former Delta Force Commander, and, more recently, The Common Sense Way: A New Way to Think About Leading and Organizing) that share the lessons he learned from leading in some of the most historic and high intensity conflicts in the past 35 years. I hope you enjoy this humble, understated, and unique perspective into the life and thinking of a Tier 1 operator and officer as much as I did.

CS#72: Fighting Russia in Ukraine | Ukrainian Special Forces | Territorial Defense Force | Sergey Dyadkin

Episode Number 72

Today we hear a very different Combat Story from Sergey Dyadkin, a Ukrainian patriot, Special Forces and Territorial Defense Force soldier fighting in Ukraine against Russia today. Help support Combat Story on Patreon. We have a special segment from this interview only available on our Patreon at [www.patreon.com/combatstory](http://www.patreon.com/combatstory) Sergey fought back some of the first Russian incursions into Kiev and was in the city of Schastia in eastern Ukraine just 20 miles from the Russian border when the shelling, tanks, and invasion began. He captured some of the first Russian prisoners of the war and, you'll note in the discussion, treated them humanely, which we've seen is not the case for both sides in this war. We found Sergey thanks to Ryan Hendrickson, who many will recall from two previous Combat Story episodes where Ryan described having his leg mangled by an IED only to return to combat and earn a Silver Star. In true Ryan fashion, he voluntarily left the US and his life to help the people in Ukraine. While in

Kiev, Ryan met Sergey and they connected over a shared Special Forces background. Sergey's Special Forces operational tempo was so high that he was sent to the Territorial Defense Forces to escort humanitarian aid efforts as a break! I hope you enjoy this important and unique insight into the experiences of a frontline soldier fighting against Russia who, at such a young age, can differentiate between the Russian people and a Russian tyrant, who can already forgive, and who just wishes people could go back to a peaceful co-existence. You'll notice we're using a translator. Sergey speaks English but I wanted him to be able to express himself more in his native language. We've also got Ryan Hendrickson just off-screen for most of the interview helping provide some additional context as his and Sergey's paths are now intertwined. For those listening and who aren't watching the video on YouTube or Spotify, Sergey is sitting at his Army base and wearing his military fatigues with his weapon slung throughout the interview, reminding us that when the interview ended and we all go back to our lives, he went back to war. This is one I'll never forget and I hope you enjoy this as much as I did.

CS#71: Dutch Commando Corps Officer (KCT) | Dutch General Intelligence Service (AIVD) | Triangular Group CEO | Ray Klaassens

Episode Number 71

Today we hear an international Combat Story from Ray Klaassens, a Dutch Special Operator in the Commando Corps (KCT) and former Dutch General Intelligence Service (or AIVD) officer who spent years in combat zones fighting our very same enemies alongside American counterparts. [Join us on Patreon and become part of the Combat Story community at [www.patreon.com/combatsstory](http://www.patreon.com/combatsstory)] Ray comes from very humble origins and the other side of the canal as he likes to say, overcoming so much to reach the pinnacle of intelligence and military units. Both KCT and AIVD, if you ask any American who served alongside them (including myself), are elite units that many of us would happily go down range with. Since leaving the service, Ray overcame even greater odds to create his company, Triangular Group, that provides de-risking and intelligence services for clients globally. I hope you enjoy this international Combat Story from humble roots to true success in military, intel, and business as much as I did.

CS#70: Navy SEAL & Marine Recon | DEVGRU | Skydiving Mt. Everest | Author | CEO | Mike Sarraille

Episode Number 70

Today we hear an incredible Combat Story of Mike Sarraille, former Marine Recon and a SEAL Team leader who served 20 years in the special operations community, earning a Silver Star, multiple Bronze Stars with Valor, and more. He was also part of the Naval Special Warfare Development Group (or DEVGRU). NOTE: We have just launched our Patreon. Join our Combat Story community at <https://www.patreon.com/combatsstory> Mike served in multiple

leadership roles to include the Battles of Ramadi and Sadr City, to name just a few. Since retiring from service, Mike founded and is the CEO of Talent War Group, a specialized executive search firm and talent advisory; he's co-author of 'The Talent War: How Special Operations and Great Organizations Win on Talent' and is the face of Men's Journal's 'The Everyday Warrior.' I stumbled across Mike when I saw posts about a recent expedition to the Himalayas where he did six free fall jumps over Mount Everest. Mike is a very, very humble but distinguished warrior leader and I hope you enjoy this insightful deep dive into the life of a Tier 1 and private sector operator and leader as much as I did.

CS#69: Tanks and Bradleys in Iraq | Death Dealers | 2nd Infantry Division | OIF | Travis Norby

Episode Number 69

Today we hear the Combat Story of Travis Norby, who commanded a mechanized infantry company in Iraq early in the war. [NOTE: We're launching on Patreon NEXT WEEK. Register to get notified at <https://www.combatstory.com/patreon>] Travis is a long-time Combat Story listener who reached out to see if his non-special ops story would be worth our listener's time. As many of our most dedicated listeners know, as you write to me about this, we get many requests to share the stories of conventional soldiers and officers and what life was like for them while the Tier 1 and 2 units were running raids at night. This combat story delivers on what I believe is a very common experience for so many infantry officers in terms of how you lose soldiers and still show up, how you motivate people to keep going in the face of unending days of attacks, and how you lead with the soldier in mind and not your own career advancement. Travis' stories of leadership and loss give us unique insight into the world of an Infantry officer fighting in the post-9/11 era and I hope you enjoy this raw and very real Combat Story as much as we did.

CS#68: Army Ranger | Afghan Female Tactical Platoon (FTP) Special Ops Trainer | Patrick Kinsella

Episode Number 68

Today we hear the Combat Story of Patrick Kinsella and his five deployments with 1st Ranger Battalion to Iraq and Afghanistan. [NOTE: We're launching on Patreon soon. Register to get notified at <https://www.combatstory.com/patreon>] Not only do we get to hear of Patrick's first hand combat experience, which includes nighttime raids on HVTs and Mi-17 crashes, but he also gives us a glimpse into one of the most interesting and relatively unheard of group of special operators in the war: the Afghan Army's Female Tactical Platoons (FTP). Patrick spent years fighting in Afghanistan but found his time training and leading the brave women of the FTPs to be the most rewarding. The FTPs were Afghan women who volunteered to go through special operations training and selection programs, from basic marksmanship to fast roping to explosives training and more, and who would go out in the darkness with US Special Operations Forces on target. Patrick continues to support the women of the FTPs who were evacuated from

Afghanistan in 2021 to help them find a place in the US and share their incredible stories. We'll share some resources to help these women who sacrificed so much for us to make a life here in the US now. I hope you enjoy this selfless Combat Story about so much more than just one man as much as I did. If you'd like to support these brave and selfless women of the FTP, you can go to [www.sistersofservice.org](http://www.sistersofservice.org).

CS #66: Bill Ostlund and The Burden of Commanding the Most Decorated Unit Post-9/11 | 3 x MOH Recipients

Episode Number 66

Today we hear a special Combat Story of one of the military's most revered leaders who many have never heard of (but should). This is the experience of retired Colonel Bill Ostlund, a beloved mentor and leader developer who served 35 years in the Army working his way up from a private and growing into combat command in some of the bloodiest fighting of any unit in the post-9/11 era. [NOTE: We're launching on Patreon soon. Register to get notified at <https://www.combatstory.com/patreon>] Bill's command in Kunar Province, recounted countless times in dozens of books including Sebastian Junger's War and the documentary Restrepo, resulted in over 400 awards for valor and three Medals of Honor (all living honorees). This episode is an embarrassment of riches for those who want to know what real leadership looks like; what the Burden of Command actually means; how you show up after losing a soldier six hours into a 15 month deployment; or leading joint SpecOps task forces with Delta, DEVGRU, 160th, and other Tier 1 elements over thousands of operations. Bill Ostlund will remind so many listeners of Todd Opalski in how he cared for and treated his soldiers and explains why, so many years later, his soldiers and officers still seek his advice as they step into greater roles of responsibility in the military and their personal lives. I'm honored to have had a chance to spend this time with what so many think of as the pinnacle of battlefield leadership and hope you enjoy this Combat Story on leadership as much as I did.

Combat Story #65: Surviving Near Death with Marines in Vietnam | Silver Star | FBI Agent | Jim Horn

Episode Number 65

Today we hear the Combat Story of Jim Horn, former Marine Corps Platoon and Company Commander and 25 year FBI Agent. [We're launching on Patreon soon. Register to get notified at <https://www.combatstory.com/patreon>] Jim did two tours in Vietnam surviving near death experiences on several occasions. He earned a Silver Star in a company on company-level battle on remote hilltops fighting suicide attackers, recoilless rifles, rockets, and calling in danger close rounds and air strikes. After the Marine Corps, Jim went onto a fascinating career in the field as an FBI Agent that included work with SWAT, a violent crime profiler, and leading the Bureau's trauma program. Jim doesn't hold back when sharing the special bonds he

experienced with his fellow Marines holding the line in these profound but common battles so far from home and I hope you enjoy these down-to-earth and Oklahoman stories as much as I did. Special thanks to Combat Story listener Terry B for suggesting Jim as a guest on the show.

CS#64: Interrogating Terrorists | HUMINT | Best Selling Author | Veteran Mentor | James Rosone

Episode Number 64

Today we hear the Combat Story of James Rosone, best known as a bestselling author but who also interrogated terrorists in Iraq on the frontlines before picking up the pen. [NOTE: We're launching on Patreon soon. Register to get notified at <https://www.combatstory.com/patreon>] James was inside the booth conducting tactical interrogations down range and feeding intel on dangerous routes, IED makers, and High Value Targets to coalition forces (up to Tier 1) on a daily basis. Like so many vets, he dealt with the deep regret of feeling like he didn't do enough and, for years, accepting the blame when an American lost an arm breaching a target he developed or worse, losing a life on the objective. After leaving the service, James found his calling as an author, in part as a way to handle his PTSD. We talk about his experiences with psychedelics and other treatment options he used to keep his demons at bay. He's gone on to write 26 books ranging from a memoir titled Interview with a Terrorist to his well known military and espionage thrillers like the Monroe Doctrine. He's now sharing his writing experience with other vets to help them become successful authors. I hope you enjoy this deep dive into the world of an interrogator at the height of the surge to becoming a wildly successful author as much as I did.

CS#63: Sniper Shots at Night in Combat | 20+ Years Green Beret | Tactical Rifleman | Karl Erickson

Episode Number 63

Today we hear the Combat Story of Karl Erickson, a long time Green Beret, expert sniper, and retired Sergeant Major, who deployed pre- and post-9/11, including into Afghanistan just after the Twin Towers fell to hunt Bin Laden. [NOTE: We're launching on Patreon soon. Register to get notified at <https://www.combatstory.com/patreon>] After the military, Karl took his decades of teaching as a Green Beret into the civilian world and has a huge online following for his Tactical Rifleman brand and I can see why. In this episode, we dive into the deep, deep details of being a sniper in combat, to include taking a sniper shot at night just before breaching a target (scopes, windage, aerodynamics, countdowns for simultaneous shots, round selection, and more), which is just a glimpse of what he shares with his followers online. Karl is a natural born storyteller and I know you'll enjoy this hilarious and deeply technical Combat Story as much as I did.

CS#62: Flying into Enemy Fire ala We Were Soldiers | DFC | Silver Star | Aviator | Diplomat | Ed Fugit

Episode Number 62

Today we hear a special Combat Story of Edward Fugit, my old man, who flew Hueys in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia just after the Tet Offensive. [NOTE: We're launching on Patreon soon. Register to get notified at <https://www.combatstory.com/patreon>] This is a special edition for me personally as long time listeners have heard me refer to my old man and his stories and our similar career paths on several occasions. I wasn't sure I'd be able to do this interview given how close it was to home and I'm so glad I did. From a very young age I remember hearing these stories of my dad in the cockpit and vividly remember looking at his Silver Star and Distinguished Flying Cross on the mantle, wearing his green flight suit when I played Army, and then hugging him before I shipped out to my own war as a combat aviator. His experiences in Vietnam will sound like something from Hollywood's We Were Soldiers where green but determined young aviators flew into hot LZs time and again risking everything for their ground brethren. We also touch on what it was like flying SOG into combat zones on operations nobody would hear about for decades and what it was like to be at the negotiating table as a diplomat with Kissinger at the height of the Cold War in Moscow. I really hope you enjoy this close to home Combat Story with a real hero of mine that was then edited by his grandson.

CS#61: Fighting ISIS in Syria and Russia in Ukraine Freedom Fighter | Fought ISIS in Syria | Fought in Ukraine | Ukraine Military

Episode Number 61

Today we hear the Combat Story of Aiden Aslin, a UK citizen who deployed multiple times into conflict zones to fight ISIS in Syria and Russia in Ukraine. [NOTE: We're launching on Patreon soon. Register to get notified at <https://www.combatstory.com/patreon>] Aiden was not part of the British military. He simply decided the people in Syria being terrorised by ISIS needed more support and found a way to get down range to help. During his multiple deployments into Syria fighting with other westerners against ISIS and nearly dying, Aiden had been following events in Ukraine. He again decided, instead of sitting safely in the UK, to step up and fight for people who needed help. Today, Aiden is officially part of the Ukrainian military. We had to record this particular interview quickly before Aiden deployed to the frontlines again, where he is now. His Instagram account (cossackgundi) is worth a look too where's amassed 20K followers and describes himself as a British guy Rocking it out in the Ukrainian marines with what he calls Warzone Photography and Conflict news. I hope you enjoy this humble and understated Combat Story of someone who left everything behind to help others in two vastly different conflicts as much as I did.

CS#60: Marine | Special Operations | MARSOC | Entrepreneur | FORWARD Podcast | Spinal Singularity | Derek Herrera

Episode Number 60

Today we hear the remarkable Combat Story of Derek Herrera, a former Marine Special Operator who led Marines in Iraq, Haiti, the Middle East and Afghanistan. While on a MARSOC operation in Afghanistan, he was shot and paralyzed. [NOTE: We're launching on Patreon soon. Register to get notified at <https://www.combatstory.com/patreon>] Derek is another one of these guys that just makes you feel lazy and that he has more time in a day than you do. Rather than give up after being injured, he medically retired from the Corps and has achieved significant success while continuing to serve others. He's the President of the Board of Directors of the Marine Raider Foundation, Chairman of the Board of MedTechVets, founder of Habit Camera and UroDev Medical (formerly Spinal Singularity), a keynote speaker, and host of the FORWARD podcast. Derek is the real deal who spends all his time putting others ahead of himself and I know you'll enjoy his inspiring Combat Story as much as I did.

CS#58: Delta Force Operator | Ranger | Black Hawk Down | Musician | Silence and Light

Episode Number 58

Today we hear the Combat Story of Brad Thomas, a former Ranger and Delta Force operator who fought in multiple theaters from Somalia to Bosnia to Iraq and Afghanistan, including 12 years at the Unit in the pre- and post-9/11 era. [NOTE: We're launching on Patreon soon. Register to get notified at <https://www.combatstory.com/patreon>] Brad gave up a promising musical career to serve, first with Ranger Battalion and then finding his way into Delta Force. His first combat experience was in Mogadishu in what we know as Black Hawk Down as part of 3rd Ranger Battalion in a true baptism by fire. Since leaving the military, Brad returned to his passion: music. He gathered a group of veterans who now make up the band Silence and Light and saw far more success than they expected on their debut album and are releasing their second album in the near future. Since Brad can't help but go all in on everything he does, he and the band donate their profits to two veteran-focused charities: Marine Raider Foundation and Warriors Heart. It's not often you get to sit down and hear directly from someone who spent years at the Tier 1 level and survived Mogadishu so I hope you enjoy this Combat Story and brief glimpse into that world as much as I did.

CS#57: A-10 Fighter Pilot who Survived a Surface to Air Missile Hit | 100+ Combat Missions | DFC | Killer Chick

Episode Number 57

Today we hear the Combat Story of Kim KC Campbell, a retired Air Force Colonel and A-10 Fighter Pilot. NOTE: Combat Story is launching a Patreon account later this month. Sign-up here: <https://www.combatstory.com/patreon> Kim racked up over 1.8K flight hours in the Warthog; 375 of those in combat across more than 100 combat missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. She also has one of the coolest call signs ever: Killer Chick. For anyone who's been on the ground and seen an A-10 on a gun run, you can understand why so many ground pounders love this platform. For Apache pilots, the A-10 is our fixed wing cousin and we feel a very close affinity with this incredible machine. Outside the cockpit, Kim led the Air Force Academy's Center for Character and Leadership Development and, since retiring, has carried that expertise to the private sector where she provides leadership development training and team engagement. She's also a keynote and motivational speaker. Kim, like many fighter pilots, is driven, dedicated, and successful. She's delivered rounds on target in heated battles and narrowly avoided death, including being hit with a Surface to Air Missile. I hope you enjoy this insightful Combat Story from the cockpit of THE Killer Chick as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 53): David Parke | Ranger | Paramilitary Contractor | ODNI National Intel Medal for Valor

Episode Number 53

Today we hear the Combat Story of David Parke, a former Army Ranger and Sniper Team Leader, Navy diver, and Paramilitary Contractor, who spent almost 10 years in Iraq and Afghanistan post-9/11. [Sponsor: This episode is brought to you by Loansteady LLC. A small-by-design lender, Loansteady believes in bringing a much-needed dose of humanity to the mortgage process. They are waiving all lender fees for Veterans in 2021. Visit <http://www.loansteady.com/combatstory> to request a rate quote or start an application. Loansteady LLC, All rights reserved, NMLS# 1701910, ([www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org/](http://www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org/)), Equal Housing Lender. For more licensing information, please visit <https://www.loansteady.com/licenses-and-legal>.] During his time down range as a contractor, he earned the ODNI's National Intelligence Medal for Valor, which the ODNI describes as being given in connection with an Intel Community mission to national security and awarded on a highly selective and rare basis. David now co-hosts The Team House, which livestreams interviews with special operators, intel professionals, and more. I'm a big fan of the Team House and you can check out our Combat Story interview with David's co-host Jack Murphy (Episode 13 <https://youtu.be/ScqnGbPSfhY>). David has written two books and appeared in several TV shows as an actor. I hope you enjoy this Combat Story with another battle-tested fighter as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 52): Travis Hall | Green Beret (18D) | Ranger | Second Chance K9 | 18 Deployments

Episode Number 52

Today we hear the Combat Story of Travis Hall, an Army Ranger and Special Forces Green Beret who survived 18 combat deployments post-9/11 to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Niger. You heard that correctly: 18 deployments. Sponsor: This episode is brought to you by Loansteady LLC. A small-by-design lender, Loansteady believes in bringing a much-needed dose of humanity to the mortgage process. They are waiving all lender fees for Veterans in 2021. Visit <http://www.loansteady.com/combatsstory> to request a rate quote or start an application. Loansteady LLC, All rights reserved, NMLS# 1701910, ([www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org/](http://www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org/)), Equal Housing Lender. For more licensing information, please visit <https://www.loansteady.com/licenses-and-legal>. Travis was an 18D (Special Forces Medic) and one of the first K-9 handlers deployed with the Green Berets in combat. He's been in day long firefights, run both high and low vis ops, trained thousands of partner forces, and survived some incredibly difficult operations. Travis founded Second Chance K9, which is a rescue organization that pairs working military dogs with special operations veterans suffering from PTSD. He also runs Second Chance Medical Consulting, where he provides private and semi-private training on firearms and medical aid. After 18 deployments over almost two decades, Travis' positive approach to life and his focus on making people's (and dogs') lives better is tangible. I hope you enjoy this Combat Story of someone who spent many years deep in our wars (with and without a dog at his side) as much as I did. And if you do enjoy it, I hope you'll subscribe and leave a positive review (it would mean a lot).

Combat Story (Ep 51): Erick Miyares | Tier 1 Sergeant Major | Special Missions Unit | Marine | Echo9

Episode Number 51

Today we hear the Combat Story of Erick Miyares, a retired Sergeant Major who spent nearly 30 years in the military in the pre- and post-9/11 era. Erick was a Marine, Marine sniper, part of 7th Special Forces Group, and then spent over 20 years in Tier 1 Special Mission Units. [Sponsor: This episode is brought to you by Loansteady LLC. A small-by-design lender, Loansteady believes in bringing a much-needed dose of humanity to the mortgage process. They are waiving all lender fees for Veterans in 2021. Visit <http://www.loansteady.com/combatsstory> to request a rate quote or start an application. Loansteady LLC, All rights reserved, NMLS# 1701910, ([www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org/](http://www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org/)), Equal Housing Lender. For more licensing information, please visit <https://www.loansteady.com/licenses-and-legal>.] Erick has been shot (with small arms and rockets), run singleton and low vis missions, operated in multiple theaters and countries, and cheated death (and capture and compromise) on numerous occasions. He's only recently separated from the service and stepped out of the shadows to where he can discuss some of the aspects of these clandestine and secretive roles and the toll it takes on a person. Erick uses his experience and the hard lessons he learned to drive Echo9.axiom and Echo9.hopes with a specific mission to prevent the suicide of Veterans after having lost two close friends in 2019. This is a fantastic interview that dives into what's involved in the shadowy

world of intel and reconnaissance at the elite level. I hope you enjoy this vulnerable and introspective Combat Story with Erick as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 50): Vincent Speranza | WWII Veteran | Battle of the Bulge | Airborne Beer | Author

#### Episode Number 50

Today we hear a special Veterans Day 50th Episode of Combat Story from Vincent Speranza, who was a paratrooper in the storied 101st Airborne Division in World War II. Vince was a machine gunner at the Battle of the Bulge where he and his fellow paratroopers held Bastogne after being encircled by the Germans. [Sponsor: This episode is brought to you by Loansteady LLC. A small-by-design lender, Loansteady believes in bringing a much-needed dose of humanity to the mortgage process. With their experience, agility, and creativity at Loansteady, they offer better rates, a simpler process and a much stronger personal connection. They're here to find a mortgage that works for you, not the other way around. They are waiving all lender fees for Veterans in 2021. Visit <http://www.loansteady.com/combatstory> to request a rate quote or start an application. Loansteady LLC, All rights reserved, NMLS# 1701910, ([www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org/](http://www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org/)), Equal Housing Lender. For more licensing information, please visit <https://www.loansteady.com/licenses-and-legal>.] While fighting, Vince earned a Bronze Star and Purple Heart, but he's gone down in history for being the GI who miraculously found and transported draft beer in his helmet from the last standing bar in Bastogne during the attack. This story later became the basis for Airborne beer, which can be purchased throughout Belgium and is designed to be enjoyed from a small ceramic cup shaped like a WWII helmet. Vince, in the last 10 years, has written a book, aptly titled Nuts!: A 101st Airborne Division Machine Gunner at Bastogne, has jumped out of airplanes again, and speaks to soldiers and organizations about his experiences. His story is nothing short of legendary and reminds us all why we refer to his as the Greatest Generation. I hope you enjoy this amazing combat story as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 49): Ray McPadden [Part 2] | Ranger Ground Force Commander | JSOC | Purple Heart | We March at Midnight

#### Episode Number 49

Today we hear the second part of Ray McPadden's Combat Story. Ray is a former Army Infantry Officer who survived four brutal deployments. In Part 1, we covered his time with 10th Mountain in the Korengal Valley, a notoriously violent part of Afghanistan. [You can find Part 1 at <https://youtu.be/uebr9kPuPLM> or <https://tinyurl.com/wfcat859>] In Part 2, we pick up just after Ray returns from 16 months as a Platoon Leader in Afghanistan. He immediately goes to ROP (the Ranger Officer Program) to be assessed for the Ranger Regiment. In this interview, Ray provides some incredible detail about the types of missions and decisions soldiers have to make

within the JSOC community and the stark differences between the special ops and conventional military in terms of resources, equipment, aviation, personnel, and more. For those who want to know what it was like to roll out on a multiple hit night in Iraq with JSOC, this interview will make you feel like you're inside the Stryker and on the objective. If you want more, check out Ray's great book - We March at Midnight. I hope you enjoy this second round of Ray's combat story as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 48): Ray McPadden [Part 1] | Ranger | Purple Heart | Valley of Death | We March at Midnight

Episode Number 48

Today we hear Part I of the Combat Story of Ray McPadden, a former Army Infantry Officer who survived four deployments that included leading troops in one of the most dangerous valleys of Afghanistan with the 10th Mountain Division and as a Ground Force Commander in the Ranger Battalion. Listeners really appreciate our interviews with Special Operators and it's easy to see why. Many listeners have asked to hear a few more stories from the conventional side of the house. Today's episode focuses entirely on the conventional side of Ray's career and fighting that his Battalion Commander at the time promised would be harder than anything he would go on to do in the Rangers. Ray's experience in the Pech and Korangal Valleys will be eye opening to many who had no idea forces were fighting in this unforgiving terrain and in these isolated conditions. Many have seen Restrepo and the Hornet's Nest and can appreciate just how difficult that fighting was. Ray and his men fought to build the positions and fortifications that would later become the backdrop of those movies and books. We use Ray's own fantastic book - We March at Midnight - as a guide to walk through the first half of his career and will pick up in part two with his time in the Special Ops community. I hope you enjoy this first of two Combat Stories and his fight in what was known as the Valley of Death as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 47): Wes 'H' Hennessey | Australian Special Forces Commando | Fought w/ DEVGRU | Seven Horses Co | Brand Ambassador

Episode Number 47

Today we hear the Combat Story of Wes 'H' Hennessey, a retired Australian Special Forces Commando and 20 year veteran who deployed on numerous occasions to Afghanistan, Iraq, East Timor, Somalia, to name just a few. He fought for years at the upper echelons of the Australian special operations community and was on joint operations with US-equivalents like DEVGRU in critical missions. He was later recognized with two US Bronze Star Medals, one with Valor, for his efforts, in addition to the coveted Australian Conspicuous Service Medal. Since leaving the military, Wes has gone on to become a sought after brand ambassador, public speaker, and, most importantly, Veteran advocate. He stands out from the crowd with a down to

earth, honest, and truth-to-power personality and I hope you enjoy his combat story as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 46): Tony Brooks | 2nd Ranger Battalion | Operation Red Wings Recovery | Author Leave No Man Behind

Episode Number 46

Today we hear the Combat Story of Tony Brooks, a former Army Ranger with 2nd Ranger Battalion who fought in Afghanistan early in the war and in Ramadi, Iraq. Tony's first mission was significant, being tasked with the recovery of downed chinook helicopter, Turbine 33 and The Lone Survivor, Marcus Luttrell in the mountains of Afghanistan. His book, Leave No Man Behind, is all about this experience as the primary search and rescue element that catalogues the mission from hitting the ground, recovering bodies, and hunting for every last man to bring them home. In this episode, we also touch on the impact of a legendary man, soldier, Ranger, and American - Pat Tillman - who had a tremendous influence on Tony (and myself for that matter). After the military, Tony went on to become a licensed chiropractor. He married the woman he refers to in the book as 'the Unicorn' who he met as a private while stationed at Fort Lewis. I hope you enjoy his Combat Story, and the mission to bring everyone home, as much as I did. #rangers #specialoperations #operationredwings #veteran #veterans #combatstory #tonybrooks #2ndrangerbattalion #rangerbatt #rltw

Combat Story (Ep 45): Dan Pronk Part 2 | Australian SASR | Doctor | Resilience Shield | Entrepreneur

Episode Number 45

Today we hear the second round of our Combat Story with Dan Pronk, a former Australian SAS officer and medical doctor who completed four tours to Afghanistan. In round one we covered Dan's first calling as a triathlete until he found himself in medical school, and, eventually, SAS selection. We covered some of his initial deployments. In round two we move into the more difficult deployments Dan faced when things started getting darker, as they so often do. We also discuss Dan's newly released book - Resilience Shield - which takes SAS resilience lessons and applies them to everyday life to thrive, much as Dan has. Dan went on to found a multi-million dollar company - TACMED - and has written two other books: Arterial Tourniquets and Average 70kg D\*\*khead. Dan is the most unassuming doctor you'll ever find and I hope you enjoy this second round interview Down Under as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 44): Dan Pronk | Australian SASR | Medical Doctor | Author | Entrepreneur | Resilience Shield

Episode Number 44

Today we hear the Combat Story of Dr. Dan Pronk, a former Australian SAS doctor who completed four tours to Afghanistan. Do not be fooled by the doctor title, Dan was on the front lines conducting hundreds of operations with the elite SAS. This is the first of two interviews with Dan. Before the military, Dan was a triathlete and lived what he described as an average Australian upbringing. The military put him through medical school, but he wanted to be part of the elite SAS and fought for years for a chance to just get to selection, which he eventually did. Since leaving the military, Dan has gone on to an executive role in medical management, as well as co-owning the multimillion dollar company TacMed Australia and founding several other entrepreneurial startups. He's written several books, including Average 70kg Dickhead: Motivational Lessons from an Ex-Army Special Forces Doctor, and Arterial Tourniquets: For Police Officers, Law Enforcement and other First-Responders. He just released a third book with two fellow former SAS operators called Resilience Shield. Dan's also a motorhead with a love of high performance cars, leading him to own a classic Ferrari and Lamborghini. He also created Delta Automotive that builds these limited edition classic sports cars. Dan was referred to me by another SAS leader as legend in the community and I hope you enjoy this first of two Combat Story rounds with Dan as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 43): Mike Hayes | Navy SEAL | TF Commander | WH | NSC | Author | Never Enough

#### Episode Number 43

Today we hear the Combat Story of Mike Hayes, a retired Navy SEAL Team and Special Operations Task Force Commander who fought in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, and Bosnia over a 20 year career. His time in uniform brought to key points in U.S. military and diplomatic history, including intersections with Operation Red Wings, the Mersk Somali pirate kidnapping, and an international treaty negotiation with Russia. While in the Navy, Mike was one of the very few selected as a White House fellow, where he served under both Republican and Democrat administrations and as the Director for Defense Policy and Strategy at the National Security Council. Since leaving the military, Mike has gone on to senior roles at Bridgewater Associates, Cognizant, and VM Ware. He's written a fantastic book, Never Enough, that we'll discuss during this interview and for which all proceeds go to Gold Star families. Mike is a model leader and giver and I hope you enjoy his Combat Story as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 42): Barry Strauss on Brasidas | Spartan Legend | Commander | Special Ops Pioneer

#### Episode Number 42

Today we hear a unique History Edition of Combat Story focused on Sparta. As you know, I'm fascinated by the experiences of warriors in combat and I've always wanted to better

understand what the combat experience would have been like for veterans from history like the Spartans, Romans, or Mongols. On this episode, we'll interview Professor Barry Strauss, an accomplished scholar, historian, and expert on ancient military history. Barry brings to life a very famous Spartan warrior named Brasidas as we dive into his combat story. Brasidas led warriors into remarkable battles employing conventional tactics but also leveraging special operations and psychological or hybrid warfare with great success. Barry gives us a front row seat of what it was like to grow up and live in this austere, militaristic, and aggressive society we know as Sparta. We could not have done this without Barry, who is a Professor of History and Classics at Cornell University, Series Editor of Princeton's Turning Points in Ancient History, author of eight books, and a military and naval historian and consultant. Professor Strauss is a recognized authority on the subject of leadership and the lessons that can be learned from the experiences of the greatest political and military leaders of the ancient world (Caesar, Hannibal, Alexander among many others). He has a new book coming out in March 2022 titled The War that Made the Roman Empire: Antony, Cleopatra, and Octavian at Actium. I hope you enjoy this unique Combat Story and the dive into the world of Sparta as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 41): Chris VanSant [Part 2] Delta Force | Ranger | All Secure | TYR Tactical

#### Episode Number 41

Today we hear the second segment of our Combat Story with Chris VanSant, a retired Army infantryman, Ranger, Green Beret, and Operator in 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment - Delta (1st SFOD-D). You can hear the first round with Chris at [https://youtu.be/tdSA8O\\_T6mE](https://youtu.be/tdSA8O_T6mE). We left our first interview with Chris at the height of his career: in the Unit, combat rotations, and close friends. We pick up in round two where things start to get more difficult and the optempo, intensity, and constant fighting begin to take a toll. Chris describes how he overcame some very dark days that many can relate to and found new opportunities he never would have imagined. He's gone on to become the Chief Operating Officer of TYR Tactical and is a board member for Tom and Jenn Satterly's All Secure Foundation, both of which continue to protect those in need. I hope you enjoy this deep dive into combat and recovery from a very humble Tier 1 operator as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 40): Ryan Hendrickson [Part 2] Green Beret | SF 18C | Silver Star | Author

#### Episode Number 40

Today we hear Part 2 of the Combat Story of Ryan Hendrickson, the former Green Beret and Special Forces Engineer (18C) who served multiple combat deployments to Afghanistan and training deployments around the world, particularly in South America, as part of 7th Special Forces Group. For those who listened to Part 1, you'll recall that we followed Ryan's unique upbringing in the Northwest that included moving frequently and, at one point, living in a tent for an entire year being raised by a single father who had a tremendous impact on Ryan's life. Ryan

first joined the Navy, where he was onboard the first ship to respond to the USS Cole attack, then served in the Air Force loading aircraft with munitions, and finally achieved his dream of earning the coveted Green Beret. On his first deployment to Afghanistan with 7th Group, Ryan was leading a patrol clearing the path of IEDs and inadvertently stepped on an IED that changed his life. At the end of Part 1, we left off as Ryan was coming to after the dust settled from the blast and he looked down to see two pearl white bones (his Tibia and Fibula) sticking out of his leg. What happens next is nothing short of remarkable. If you ever felt sorry for yourself, this next session will help give perspective and an example of someone else who overcame tremendous odds to follow his dream, saving lives and inspiring others along the way.

Combat Story (Ep 39. Special Edition Afghanistan): John Shrek McPhee | Delta Force | SOB Tactical

Episode Number 39

Today we hear a special and off-cycle edition of Combat Story. With the recent attacks and chaos in Afghanistan, I wanted to sit down with someone who spent years on the front lines in that theater and who better than John Shrek McPhee. Regular listeners know him well but for those who have not yet heard of him, John is also known as the Sheriff of Baghdad and spent 20 years in the Army's Special Operations community, from Ranger Battalion to Group to Delta Force. He retired as a Sergeant Major from the most elite unit in the US Military and now owns SOB Tactical. As usual, Shrek holds nothing back and gives an operator's perspective of what is happening and why this outcome was always going to be the case. Most importantly, however, is John's message to the thousands of veterans processing these scenes, emotions, and memories. While I had Shrek, I took the opportunity to ask some questions we've received from listeners, we talk whiskey, and find out what Shrek watches on Netflix. I hope you enjoy this third round Combat Story with Shrek as much as I did. #shrek #combatstory #deltaforce #specialoperations

Combat Story (Ep 38): Chris VanSant [Part 1] Delta Force Operator | Ranger | All Secure Foundation | TYR Tactical

Episode Number 38

Today we hear the Combat Story of Chris VanSant, a retired Army infantryman and NCO who spent time as a Ranger, Green Beret, and Operator in 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment - Delta (1st SFOD-D), aka Delta Force aka The Unit or the Army's Special Mission Unit (SMU), and survived 11 combat deployments and hundreds of combat operations. As you can imagine after so many years at the tip of the spear, Chris ended up confronting and overcoming (with tremendous difficulty) traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress (PTS); he remains a committed Veteran and advocate helping others through these tough times. Chris is now the Chief Operating Officer of TYR Tactical, which manufactures body armor and

tactical equipment for the military and law enforcement. He's also a board member for Tom and Jenn Satterly's All Secure Foundation, which assists special operations active-duty and combat Veterans and their families in recovery of posttraumatic stress. Listeners will recall our interview with Tom and the similar success he had and corresponding struggles he overcame. Chris is certainly humble for all his achievements and I hope you enjoy his Combat Story as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 37): Ryan Hendrickson | Green Beret | SF 18C | Silver Star | Author [Part 1 of 2]

Episode Number 37

Today we hear the Combat Story (Part 1 of 2) of Ryan Hendrickson, a former Green Beret and Special Forces Engineer (18C) who served multiple combat deployments to Afghanistan as part of 7th Special Forces Group. Before joining the Army, Ryan served in the Air Force and Navy, where he was one of the first ships on scene to support the USS Cole after it was attacked. As a Green Beret, Ryan has a remarkable story in which he survived stepping on an IED that changed his life, but was unable to keep him out of the fight. After months of reconstructive surgery, he went back to the teams and Afghanistan, where he saved multiple lives and earned the Silver Star. He is the author of Tip of the Spear and an adventure seeker who's travelled most of the world. He still supports the war fighter as a contractor where he continues to save lives. This is the first in a two part interview, covering Ryan's life and combat up until stepping on the IED. In the second interview, we'll touch on his recovery and several future combat operations, including the one in which he received the Silver Star.

Combat Story (Ep 36): Mark Wales | Australian SAS | Troop Commander | TV Personality | Author | Entrepreneur | Kill Kapture

Episode Number 36

Today we hear the Combat Story of Mark Wales, a former Australian SAS (Special Air Service) officer who spent 16 years in the Australian Military, including six years in the elite SAS. He led special operators as a Troop Commander and completed 10 deployments to Afghanistan, Iraq, East Timor, Lebanon, and the Solomon Islands. After separating from the military, Mark battled depression and stress disorders but found a way to power through and turn his life around. Mark would go on to earn an MBA from the prestigious Wharton School of Business and then worked at McKinsey & Company. He has since written the book Survivor: Life in the SAS, was on Australian Survivor (where he met his wife) and competed in the Bear Grylls' World's Toughest Race: Eco Challenge Fiji 2019, which I highly recommend watching on Amazon with your family. And since all this isn't enough, Mark also founded Kill Kapture, a tough-luxury ecommerce brand and is now a sought after keynote and motivational speaker. I hope you enjoy Mark's honest, self deprecating, and relatable Combat Story as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 35): Jason Van Camp | Green Beret | Special Forces | Mission Six Zero | Author

Episode Number 35

Today we hear the Combat Story of Jason Van Camp, a former Special Forces officer (Green Beret) and Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) Commander in 10th Special Forces Group who served multiple combat deployments. Jason played linebacker at West Point and served a two-year LDS-Mormon mission to Russia, and upon graduation won the prestigious General Loeffke Award for Excellence in Foreign Languages, before starting active duty. As a Green Beret, Jason brought the fight to AQ and led soldiers through dangerous Special Forces missions that honed his leadership and team building skills. Since leaving the military, Jason founded and is Chairman of Mission Six Zero, a leadership development firm, and is also Executive Director and Co-Founder at Warrior Rising, which empowers veterans in business. Jason is a Wall Street Journal and 2 x #1 Amazon Best Selling Author for his book *Deliberate Discomfort: How U.S. Special Operations Forces Overcome Fear and Dare to Win by Getting Comfortable Being Uncomfortable* and was recognized as a Top Military Entrepreneur of the Year in 2020. I hope you enjoy his humble yet impactful Combat Story as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 34): Kevin Flike | Special Forces | Green Beret Foundation | Wounded By War | Purple Heart

Episode Number 34

Today we hear the Combat Story of Kevin Flike, a former Green Beret and Purple Heart recipient who served multiple deployments, including two to Afghanistan. Kevin was shot in the abdomen during his second deployment and took years recovering from the associated physical and emotional scars and has shown that it is possible to not only fully recover from such an injury, but to thrive. He is a graduate of the MIT Sloan School of Management and Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, sits on the Board of Directors at the Green Beret Foundation, is a sought out motivational speaker, and shares his story of perseverance through a blog and outreach series called *Wounded by War*, which includes a documentary on his recovery. Kevin was recommended to me by Beau Wise, a former guest on the show who lost two of his brothers to the war in Afghanistan, one of whom knew Kevin. Kevin and Beau have become like brothers. I hope you enjoy this inspiring insight from the brink of death to tremendous success as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 33): Jon Macaskill | Navy SEAL | Commander | Men Talking Mindfulness | Entrepreneur

Episode Number 33

Today we hear the Combat Story of Jon Macaskill, a retired Navy SEAL Commander turned mindfulness and meditation teacher. He spent a career in the Navy's Special Warfare and military Joint Special Operations communities and served in Iraq, Afghanistan, off the coast of Somalia, and in Panama. One story that Jon shares in this episode and which shows the burdens and gut wrenching aspects of combat, was his association with Operation Red Wings, which many will recall from the book and movie Lone Survivor. Jon is a Naval Academy graduate, holds a Master's degree from the Naval Postgraduate School, and, since retiring, runs a consulting business that brings mindfulness and meditation to high performing teams to aid in dealing with stress, anxiety, and depression, all while increasing focus, creativity, and productivity. He shares the benefits and opportunities both on the show and on his own podcast, called Men Talking Mindfulness, which, as Jon described it, is what happens when you combine a Navy SEAL and modern day Hippie! I hope you enjoy Jon's honest, humble, and challenging Combat Story as much as I did. #combatstory #SEAL #NavySEAL #specialoperations #specialwarfare

Combat Story (Ep 32): Yonel Yogi Dorelis | CSAR Pilot | DFC (V) | 370+ Lives Saved | 5.5K Hours

Episode Number 32

Today we hear the combat story of Yonel Yogi Dorelis, a retired and long-time helicopter pilot who served in the Marine Corps, Navy, Army, and Air Force. While in uniform, Yogi flew a variety of aircraft and mission profiles, but spent a considerable amount of time flying Combat Search and Rescue for the Air Force in the HH-60, including early in the war in Afghanistan. In fact, during this time, Yogi earned a Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) with V Device for his life saving efforts in Operation Anaconda, a mission that's near and dear to my heart because I later went on to serve with several of the Apache pilots who were there at the time. Beyond earning the coveted DFC, Yogi also accumulated 5,500 hours of flight time, approximately 500 of that in combat. He's credited with saving 70+ military lives and approximately 300 more in his civilian flight career as part of an EMS crew, which he does to this day. It was a blast to sit down with another aviator and a CSAR one at that, where it remains clear that no matter what airframe you flew, all pilots experience similar mishaps, near death experiences, laughs, and red tape along the way. I hope you enjoy this Combat Story as much as I did. Connect with Ryan Fugit: Follow on Instagram @combat\_stories ([https://www.instagram.com/combat\\_stories/](https://www.instagram.com/combat_stories/)) Email [ryan@combatstory.com](mailto:ryan@combatstory.com) Learn more about Ryan [www.combatstory.com/aboutus](http://www.combatstory.com/aboutus) If you'd like Ryan to interview you for the show or to have him interview a family member or friend in private (not for the show) just to have their story on the record for future generations, email him at [ryan@combatstory.com](mailto:ryan@combatstory.com).

Combat Story (Ep 31): Robert Keller | Delta Force | Green Beret | Ranger | Gamut Resolutions

## Episode Number 31

Today we hear the combat story of Bob Keller, a retired Special Missions Unit (Delta Force) operator who spent his entire military career in the Special Operations community. Bob began his career as a U.S. Army Ranger and Special Forces Green Beret before transitioning to the Unit. Bob spent several years as a professional golfer before finding his calling as a soldier. As an operator, he was in more than 400 engagements and 1,000 missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other undisclosed locations. After retiring, Bob founded Gamut Resolutions, a tactical and practical shooting program that uses the Ready-Up training methodology to help students survive any situation. He also oversees a charity that provides elite shooting courses to police, for free. In this episode, Bob provides fascinating insight into the confidence, training, and experiences of a Tier 1 operator. I hope you enjoy this Combat Story as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 29): Jeff Morris - Infantry Company Commander | Author | Legion 8 | OIF x 2 | BSM V

## Episode Number 29

Today we hear the combat story of Jeff Morris, a former Army Infantry Officer who commanded soldiers in Iraq over two brutal deployments fighting on some of the most well-known and infamous streets of Baghdad. NOTE: Stay tuned after Jeff's Combat Story to hear a Combat Story from one of our listeners! Jeff was an Infantry Platoon Leader on Haifa Street in downtown Baghdad from 2004 to 2005 with 1st CAV where his Platoon of 34 men were awarded 27 Purple Hearts. He describes a significant battle that he was a part of on September 12th, 2004, in which two Silver Stars were awarded and he received a Bronze Star w/ V Device. He was then a junior but highly respected Infantry Company Commander in east Baghdad during the Surge from late 2006 to summer 2007, again with 1st CAV, where he lost eight men during fighting that saw almost every Bradley and M1 tank assigned to his unit destroyed by EFPs. Jeff went on to document these experiences in his book, Legion Rising: Surviving Combat and the Scars it Left Behind and established the Legion 8 Foundation to honor the lives of the eight men lost under his command. The Legion 8 workout is also a Hero Workout of the Day (WOD) done at hundreds of CrossFit gyms around the country. He has previously been featured on other podcasts, including Mike Drop with Mike Ritland. I hope you enjoy this inside look at the burden of command in Iraq and Jeff's combat story as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 28): Elliot Ackerman - Marine | MARSOC | CIA Paramilitary | Best Selling Author | Silver Star

## Episode Number 28

Today we hear another Combat Story from Elliot Ackerman, a decorated Marine infantry officer, Special Operations operator, CIA Paramilitary Officer, Silver Star and Purple Heart recipient,

and best-selling author. As many will recall, Elliot was our first guest on Combat Story long before we ever did video interviews. That first interview remains one of my favorites and covers an incredible inside look at his role as a Platoon Leader in Fallujah II in 2004 and the true grit and determination it required. It was that battle that earned him the Silver Star. In this second interview, we pick up where we left off from Round 1 as Elliot describes being one of the first members of Marine Special Operations Command (MARSOC) and his subsequent deployments with this unit. We also dive into his National Bestselling book, *Places and Names: On War, Revolution, and Returning*, where Elliot describes revisiting, both in mind and body, his combat experiences. It's a fantastic read and in the interview he shares moments from the book that include returning to the very buildings he occupied in Fallujah years earlier and another experience having an unthinkable meal with a former Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) leader as they shared their memories on the frontlines fighting against each other. Elliot is a special Marine who survived five deployments and fought at the highest levels. I hope you enjoy this next set of combat stories with Elliot as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 27): Eric Hollen - Ranger | Green Beret| Olympian | Inspiration

Episode Number 27

Today we hear the inspirational combat story of Eric Hollen, a former Ranger in 2/75 Ranger Regiment and Green Beret with 2nd Bn, 10th Special Forces Group. This is a unique episode where we filmed in person for a change while Eric and I were in Graham, Texas, courtesy of Greg Coker, who many will recognize from the podcast, for an aviation hog hunt to benefit veterans and gold star families. In this episode, Eric shares what was going through his head when he sustained a life-altering injury on his horse farm in Tennessee and how he persevered through dark times to reach a level of excellence very few will ever see. Eric was awarded USA Shooting's Paralympic Athlete of the Year two years in a row and competed in the Olympics as a shooter for the U.S. Hollen strives to help newly injured veterans through a program called the Care Coalition which supports injured Special Operations soldiers. I hope you enjoy his inspirational story as much as I did. Stay tuned at the end of the episode for a short clarification from Eric.

Combat Story (Ep 26): Patrick Moltrup - SWCC | Special Ops | Marine | CIA | Savage Actual

Episode Number 26

Today we hear the combat story of Patrick Moltrup, a former Marine, Soldier, CIA, and Special Operator who served as a Navy Special Warfare Combatant-Craft Crewmen (or SWCC). Patrick served 25 years in the military, much of it in the Special Operations community. Patrick is one of the very few who has been a part of the Marines, the Army National Guard, Navy, and CIA. He spent most of his time with the Marines and SWCC where he worked on all kinds of boats from RHIBs to Mark Vs. As a side note, I was once picked up on these boats and, to this day, these

rides remain some of the most fun I ever had, particularly the times at night (it actually reminded me of flying a Kiowa low level with the doors off)! Patrick was also a Navy Corpsman (medic) and attached to various units, including Gold Squadron, one of the assault forces SEAL Team Six, which we hear about in this episode. After leaving the military, Patrick collaborated with Jason Lilley, another former special ops warrior, to create Savage Actual, a YouTube channel and brand where Patrick and Jason discuss games, gear, and the military. They're now working on a video game themselves, have been sponsored by a craft brewing company, and more. I hope you enjoy Patrick's combat story as much as I did.

Combat Story (Ep 25): John Shrek McPhee | Delta Force | Green Beret | Ranger | SOB Tactical

#### Episode Number 25

Today we hear the combat story of Sergeant Major (ret) John Shrek McPhee AKA The Sheriff of Baghdad, who spent 20 years in the Army's Special Operations community, from Ranger Battalion to Group to Delta Force. He is one of the handful of operators to have served in multiple theaters from Bosnia and South America to Iraq and Afghanistan. John's one of a smaller group of operators to successfully execute raids in combat by himself during hundreds of solo operations. After leaving the military, John created SOB Tactical that helps people, law enforcement, and special operators improve shooting skills and security. He also hosts a channel called Booze N Views that talks about current events and new whiskey! John brings me to tears with laughter in this episode, which is just a byproduct of John's sense of humor and way of life. I hope that like me, your jaw hurts from laughing by the end of this interview. Enjoy. From the website: SOB Tactical is a word of mouth based business. As such we stand ready, willing, and passionately able to serve anybody important to you. Giving them exceptional service, products, training and treating them in a very special way.

Combat Story (Ep 24): Terry Buckler | Green Beret | The Story of the Son Tay POW Raid | Silver Star

#### Episode Number 24

Today we hear the combat story of Terry Buckler, the youngest of 56 Green Berets on one of the most dangerous and daring missions in U.S. military history, when they went 300 miles behind enemy lines into North Vietnam to rescue American POWs at the Son Tay POW camp. Terry is part of a rare group known today as the Son Tay Raiders. The mission does not have the intended outcome (as you'll hear in this interview), but changes the lives and morale for hundreds of American POWs for years to come. This is a story of true sacrifice, amazing bravery and selflessness, and some of the most impressive planning and execution you'll ever hear. I know this sounds like hyperbole but I promise you, it is not. The stories you're about to hear from Terry are detailed beautifully in the book *Who Will Go: Into the Son Tay POW Camp*. Terry wrote this book with Cliff Westbrook, who is also part of this interview and whose father

was the Air Mission Commander for one of the aircraft involved in this incredible story. I sincerely hope you enjoy this front row seat to one of the most impressive, selfless, and expertly planned and executed operations in our military's storied history.

Combat Story (Ep 23): Robin Horsfall UK Special Air Service (SAS) | Paratrooper | Mercenary | Author

### Episode Number 23

Today we hear the Combat Story of Robin Horsfall, a former British Special Air Service (SAS) Tier 1 operator, paratrooper in 2Paras, mercenary, entrepreneur, and author. During his time in service, he deployed five times to Northern Ireland in brutal Peace Keeping operations, was part of one of the most storied and successful hostage rescue operations in the heart of London, and was part of a one way or suicide mission during the Falklands War. His combat is well documented in his first book, *Fighting Scared*, in which he describes his evolution from victim to Tier 1 operator to Warrior Poet (the title of his most recent book). Robin's lessons can be applied to soldiers, leaders, parents, and children, including how to overcome a difficult childhood of abuse and a lack of male role models to become a role model to others. His stories are brutally honest (being bullied for years) and lighthearted (such as SAS training with Delta Force or how he and the SAS helped Princess Diana with her hair) in a way that only Brits can manage.

Combat Story (Ep 22): Beau Wise (Marine) | Jeremy (SEAL & CIA) | Ben (Green Beret) | Three Wise Men

### Episode Number 22

Today we hear a heartbreaking yet inspiring set of combat stories of three brothers, told by the only one to survive the post-9/11 battlefield: former Marine Beau Wise. While serving in Afghanistan, SEAL veteran and CIA contractor Jeremy Wise was killed in an al Qaeda suicide bombing that devastated the US intelligence community (as you'll hear in this interview and as depicted in this scene from *Zero Dark Thirty* and also in the book *Triple Agent*). Less than three years later, Green Beret Ben Wise was fatally wounded after volunteering for a dangerous assignment during a firefight with the Taliban. Ben was posthumously awarded the Silver Star, while Jeremy received the Intelligence Star AND a star on the CIA's Memorial Wall, which I can attest to. Our guest, Beau, is the only known American service member to be pulled from the battlefield after losing two brothers in Afghanistan. This was a challenging interview but one that I'm eternally grateful that I was allowed to do. The account you're about to hear is detailed in the incredible book, *Three Wise Men: A Navy SEAL, a Green Beret, and How Their Marine Brother Became a War's Sole Survivor*, written by Beau Wise and Tom Sileo.

Combat Story (Ep 21): Eddie Penney - Naval Special Warfare Development Group (DEVGRU) | SEAL Team 2 | Marine | Entrepreneur

Episode Number 21

Today we hear the Combat Story of Eddie Penney is an elite Tier 1 operator and entrepreneur. Eddie was a Marine, Navy SEAL (in SEAL Team 2), and member of the storied Naval Special Warfare Development Group (DEVGRU). This is an incredible inside look at the mind, perseverance, experience, and journey of those who serve at the very tip of the spear, including the moments that seemingly broke Eddie and made him who is today. Eddie shares insights that many would not, including the loss and courage that those of us who were never part of the Tier 1 community can only imagine. Since retiring from the military, Eddie founded and runs The Contingent Group, which provides risk mitigation services and executive protection to clients. He also created the UNAFRAID mindset and has an app called The Den where people can gather to share inspirational stories and seek motivation from others. You'll be excited to learn that Eddie is releasing a book with Keith Wood about Eddie's experiences that's sure to be an incredible read.

Combat Story (Ep 20): Jeff Depatie Tier 1 | Canadian JTF2 | Sniper | Special Forces Experience

Episode Number 20

Today we hear the Combat Story of Jeff Depatie, a retired Canadian Special Operations Forces JTF2 sniper and assaulter. For those who aren't familiar, JTF2 is Canada's Tier 1 military force. Jeff deployed multiple times, both as an infantryman in the regular Canadian forces and again as a member of the elite JTF2. After leaving the military, Jeff created a company called The Special Forces Experience, which is a highly tailored process designed for men who have achieved their own version of excellence but want to know how far they can really push their limits. Jeff shared that this is such a demanding course that one of the recent courses didn't successfully graduate any of the candidates! In this episode, we dive into some of Jeff's combat experiences and also spend time hearing Jeff draw on his lessons learned from the Tier 1 military community and all the research that's gone into creating the Special Forces Experience surrounding human performance.

Combat Story (Ep 19): John Stryker Meyer | SOG Operator & Team Leader | Green Beret | Author

Episode Number 19

Today we hear the Combat Story of John Tilt Stryker Meyer, who was a pioneer in the special operations community who served two tours as a MACV-SOG operator (what many might call the original Tier 1 unit) and team leader in Vietnam. John led small covert Spike Teams across

the fence on clandestine operations into Laos and Cambodia in what many now refer to as the secret war in the Vietnam conflict. John shares what it was like joining this covert world, signing a 20 year secrecy agreement, and how the aircraft that brought him to his first FOB then loaded a small special ops team that was never heard from again. It was an ominous start, to say the least. In one unbelievable battle, John describes the enemy stacking dead bodies in an effort to get an elevated firing position on John's team. In another, the enemy uses a tactic where they get so close to the U.S. positions that aircrews won't be able to drop napalm rounds. John has three books that chronicle both his stories and those of his fellow SOG operators (listed below) and he's been featured in various interviews, including several with Jocko Willink, and is currently building his own podcast with Jocko to tell the stories of other members of the SOG community (can't wait!). John and Jocko are also collaborating on a video game based on SOG missions. It's amazing John lived through the experiences he shares with us and he's a living testament to the courage so many showed in Vietnam.

Combat Story (Ep 18): Dale Comstock Delta Operator | Green Beret | Mercenary | Author | Entrepreneur

Episode Number 18

Today we hear the Combat Story of Dale Comstock, a former Delta Force Operator, Green Beret, Paramilitary Operative, entrepreneur, mercenary, and author who has also appeared on prime time television. Dale has fought in almost all major US combat operations since Grenada through to Afghanistan, to include being one of the youngest members of 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment - Delta. Dale has been involved in some of America's highest visibility operations like the hostage rescue of Ambassador Kurt Muse (in Operation Acid Gambit) and dozens of missions in multiple combat theaters that will likely remain in the shadows for years to come.

Combat Story (Ep 17): Greg Gravy Coker | Special Ops 160th Aviator | AH-6 Gun Pilot | Author

Episode Number 17

Today we hear the Combat Story of Greg Gravy Coker, a legend from the elite 160th Night Stalkers, the Army's Special Operations Aviation Regiment (aka SOAR). He's a long-time Tier 1 Gun Pilot who flew AH-6 Little Birds, AH-64 Apaches, and AH-1 Cobras in multiple combat theaters, providing direct support for 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta aka Delta Force, 75th Ranger Regiment, and other Special Operators. Greg logged 7,400 hours in his career, including 1,500 hours of combat time across 11 deployments, and was in the first strike packages that went into Afghanistan and Iraq. Greg reached the pinnacle of the military aviation profession by serving as both a Flight Lead and Instructor Pilot in the most coveted and lethal rotary wing unit in the US military. He survived a combat shutdown while laying down cover for Special Operators in Iraq during the first daylight operation for 160th since Operation

Gothic Serpent in 1993 (aka Blackhawk Down). Since leaving the military, Greg has written a memoir about these experiences and more titled *Death Waits in the Dark* and has a children's book coming out with his daughter called *V is for Veterans*.

Combat Story (Ep 16): Thom Shea Navy SEAL | SEAL Sniper | Silver Star | Author | Entrepreneur

#### Episode Number 16

Today we hear the Combat Story of Thom Shea, a retired Navy SEAL, sniper, and Senior Chief who served with and led SEALs in multiple combat tours from Kosovo to Iraq to Afghanistan, including brutal fighting in Helmand Province for which he was awarded the Silver Star. During this fighting, not only was he leading other SEALs through some of the most challenging combat engagements of our time, but he also had a fascinating sniper on sniper engagement in which he went up against a very accurate and capable foreign fighter sniper. After Afghanistan, Thom oversaw the famed SEAL Sniper course. Since leaving the SEALs, Thom and his wife Stacy conduct intensive leadership events for fortune 500 companies. He has written two books, including an incredible memoir (*Unbreakable*) that gives a firsthand account of the life of a SEAL in combat. His books and this interview are chocked full of lessons for leaders and soldiers alike. If you enjoyed Todd Opalski's interview, you're going to love Thom's story and way of life.

Combat Story (Ep 15): Dan Two Dogs Hampton - F-16 Fighter Pilot | DFC x 4 | Author

#### Episode Number 15

Today we hear the Combat Story of LTC (Ret.) Dan Two Dogs Hampton, a career fighter pilot who flew F-16s in multiple wars from the first Gulf War to Kosovo to Operation Iraqi Freedom over a 20 year career. He's a fighter pilot to the core who earned four DFCs and eight Air Medals with Valor across 151 combat missions and is a graduate of the USAF Fighter Weapons School and Navy's Top Gun. Dan's experience hunting SAMs and flying 500 knots below 300' give a surreal perspective of life inside the cockpit. He describes his experience from a young, unafraid 25 year old LT flying in Iraq in 1991 when he first saw the elephant to the mature flight lead putting his own life on the line decades later, again in Iraq but against a more advanced enemy. He easily balances the near death adrenaline rushes that come at Mach speed with the light-hearted post-flight activities we all expect in the elite fighter pilot community. Since retiring from service, Dan has written a bestselling memoir (*Viper Pilot*) and multiple novels and other non-fiction books, including national bestsellers *Lords of the Sky* and *The Mercenary*. His most recent book, *Operation Vengeance*, came out in late 2020. A frequent guest analyst on CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC discussing foreign affairs, military, aviation, and intelligence issues, he has published in *Aviation History*, the *Journal of Electronic Defense*, *Air Force Magazine*, *Vietnam magazine*, and *Airpower magazine*, and written several classified tactical works for the USAF Weapons Review.

Combat Story (Ep 14): Todd Opalski Marine Force Recon | Delta Force | Scout Sniper | Zen Commando

Episode Number 14

Today we hear the Combat Story of Todd Opalski, a retired Marine (NCO and Officer), Scout Sniper, Force Recon Operator, Delta Operator, Special Operations Commander, and entrepreneur. After 26 years in the military, he lived the startup experience in Silicon Valley before standing up Camp Zen Commando, a Costa Rican retreat to help people optimize their lives and be prepared for the uncertainties of tomorrow. If you love the Marine Corps or The Citadel, you will LOVE this episode. In fact, the Marine Corps might just play this on a loop for potential recruits because Todd makes it hard not to want to sign-up. Todd shares lessons that can be applied to young and seasoned officers, new recruits enlisting today, and civilian leaders trying to break through. He has an infectious positivity that makes you envious of his outlook on life. He truly was part of the elite Tier 1 units, successfully completed Marine Force Recon selection TWICE, loved Ranger School so much he said he would do it again, crossed the berm into Iraq, fought in Fallujah II, and then lived in the special ops community for years in the post-9/11 era. Todd is a true professional, leader, and inspiration.

Combat Story (Ep 13): Jack Murphy Ranger Sniper | Green Beret | Author | Journalist | Podcast Host

Episode Number 13

Today we hear the Combat Story of Jack Murphy, an Army Special Operations veteran who served as a Sniper and Team Leader in 3rd Ranger Battalion and as a Senior Weapons Sergeant in 5th Special Forces Group, fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. Since leaving the military, he's broken stories on defense and special operations topics around the world as an investigative journalist, co-founded the website SOFREP, wrote four military fiction novels (Deckard Novels) and a memoir (Murphy's Law), and now writes for Connecting Vets and hosts the podcast The Team House. He nearly died in uniform, has been smuggled across international borders, was detained by a foreign intelligence service, met Bashar al-Asad in Syria, and more.

Cesar Rico Rodriguez: F-15 Eagle Fighter Pilot | Three Air-to-Air Victories

Episode Number 12

Today we hear the Combat Story of Cesar Rico Rodriguez, an Air Force Colonel (ret.) and former fighter pilot in an elite group among veterans: he is one of three pilots with three air-to-air shootdowns since Vietnam. His dog fights and experiences from the cockpit of an F-15C Eagle

taking down MiGs in both Desert Storm and Kosovo provide a first-hand account of just how challenging aerial combat can be. In this Combat Story, Rico describes his journey from a kid in Puerto Rico to the Citadel to the Air Force and, finally, to his current life at Raytheon continuing to help the Air Force win the next air war.

Tom Satterly: Delta Force Operator | Command Sergeant Major (retired) | Entrepreneur | Author

#### Episode Number 11

Today we hear the Combat Story of Tom Satterly, a Command Sergeant Major (retired) who spent 20 years in the Army's elite Delta Force (aka The Unit). His 25 year Army career took him from the storied Battle of Mogadishu (Operation Gothic Serpent aka Black Hawk Down) and the capture of Saddam Hussein in Operation Red Dawn. He rose up through the ranks in Delta to leading troops through multiple OIF deployments executing multiple hits per night for months at a time. The brutal fighting and optempo took a toll on Tom as he lived and survived with Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) for years. After retiring, Tom and his wife Jen created the All Secure Foundation ([allsecurefoundation.org](http://allsecurefoundation.org)), which assists special operations active duty and combat veterans, and their families, in recovery of PTS through education, awareness, resources for healing, workshop retreats, and PTS resiliency training. His book *All Secure: A Special Operations Soldier's Fight to Survive on the Battlefield and the Homefront* chronicles his trials and experiences from combat to treatment and provides some insight into the secretive world of Delta Force.

Wes Bryant: Air Force Special Warfare | SOF TACP-JTAC | Author

#### Episode Number 10

Today we hear the Combat Story of Wes Bryant, a U.S. Air Force Master Sergeant (retired) who served eight combat deployments in the post 9/11 era as a Special Operations Forces Tactical Air Control Party (TAC-P) and Joint Tactical Air Controller (JTAC). He co-authored the book *Hunting the Caliphate: America's War on ISIS and the Dawn of the Strike Cell*, a first-person account of the war on ISIS written alongside the former commanding general of Iraq, Major General (retired) Dana Pittard. Embedded with Special Forces teams under a Navy SEAL task force, Wes was the tactical lead for a contingent of special operations JTACs to first set foot in Iraq to stop ISIS. He's been a lifelong writer, amateur philosopher, and avid student of the martial arts. Today, he pursues writing and editing, and teaches Chinese Kung Fu and Tai Chi in his community in North Carolina, where he lives with his wife and their two daughters.

Eric Brethen: OH-6 Loach & AH-1 Cobra Pilot | Vietnam Veteran | 3 x Distinguished Flying Cross

#### Episode Number 9

Today we hear the Combat Story of Eric Brethen, a former US Army Chief Warrant Officer and OH-6 Cayuse aka Loach reconnaissance and AH-1 Cobra attack helicopter pilot. At just 19 years old, Eric found himself flying missions out of Cu Chi, just northwest of Saigon, in hunter killer teams in scenes reminiscent of Apocalypse Now. During his 19 months in Vietnam from 1969-1970, Eric flew 3,600 hours and was awarded three Distinguished Flying Crosses, three Bronze Stars, Air Medals with Valor, Army Commendation Medals with Valor, and the South Vietnamese Gallantry Cross.

Hubert Yoshida: Marine Corps Platoon Commander | Vietnam Veteran | Operation Utah

Episode Number 8

Today we hear the Combat Story of Hubert Yoshida, a Vietnam Veteran who served as a U.S. Marine Corps Platoon Commander from 1965-1966 near Chu Lai in the central part of Vietnam with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines. He and his platoon fought in the bloody Operation Utah, a significant battle from March 4-7, 1966, which saw over 700 KIA between the North and South Vietnamese forces and Marines. Hubert has a fascinating story that begins as a child in a Japanese prison camp in the U.S., to leading Marines on the front lines, and then transitioning to an exceptionally successful career in senior executive roles in the private sector. Today, he's writing a book about Operation Utah to tell the story of the hundreds of Marines who fought there and is looking for anyone who may have served in that battle.

Dr. Clyde Horn: Purple Heart Recipient | Vietnam Infantryman | Author | Psychotherapist

Episode Number 7

Today we hear the Combat Story of Dr. Clyde Horn, a former Army infantryman, Purple Heart recipient, and Vietnam Veteran. He served in the 199th Light Infantry Brigade near Saigon fighting in the Iron Triangle from 1967-1968 and supported US forces during the Tet Offensive. After the military, he helped children suffering from trauma as a psychotherapist. Despite this work and his attention to other people's trauma, he didn't recognize his own PTSD until 2009. His compelling story of combat, helping others, getting help himself, and eventually returning to the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC, will ring true for many veterans. He has since written two books PTSD in Pictures and Words and Veteran Guilt in Pictures and Words and uses art as part of his own treatment (ArtLifting).

Jimmy Settle: Pararescueman (PJ) | Special Operator | Purple Heart & Air Medal (V) Recipient | Author

Episode Number 6

Today we hear the Combat Story of Jimmy Settle, a retired Air Force Pararescueman (PJ) credited with saving 38 lives and assisting in saving 28 others in combat, in addition to saves in the Alaskan wilderness. He racked up over 270 combat search and rescue hours in Afghanistan, where he earned an Air Medal with Valor for his life saving heroics and a Purple Heart after being shot in the head (and returning to combat 24 hours later). Jimmy catalogues these and other near death experiences in his book, *Never Quit: From Alaska Wilderness Rescues to Afghanistan Firefights as an Elite Special Ops PJ*, where he shares the friendships, hardships, pranks, and events that changed his life, from being an elite athlete competing at the Naval Academy to completing the daunting PJ pipeline to live saving ops in the most austere environments.

Vince Snapper Sherer: Retired U.S. Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt II Warthog Fighter Pilot | CAS SME | Instructor Pilot

Episode Number 5

Today we hear the Combat Story of Vince Snapper Sherer, a retired Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt Warthog fighter pilot. Over a 20 year career, he flew 300 combat missions and logged 1,300 combat flight hours in the A-10 and MC-12 across four deployments to Afghanistan. Vince supported troops in contact at danger close range, at times without a wingman, over a decade of evolving combat and technological change. He's the personification of the A-10 pilot and gives an inside look at what combat felt like from the cockpit. Another great set of stories from Vince can be found here on [Task and Purpose](#).

Jordan Becker: Army Special Forces (10th Group) | Foreign Area Officer

Episode Number 4

Today we hear the Combat Story of of Jordan Becker, US Army Lieutenant Colonel serving as a Foreign Area Officer (FAO) in Paris, France, as a liaison officer to the French Joint Staff. Jordan began his career in the 173rd Airborne Brigade where he led an infantry platoon in a parachute assault that opened the Northern Front in the Iraq war in March of 2003, followed by an 11-month deployment in and around Kirkuk. While in the 173rd, Jordan led a rifle platoon, a support platoon, and served as an executive officer. Jordan completed the Special Forces Assessment and Selection and the Special Forces Qualification Course, after which he was assigned to 10th Special Forces Group. He served in and around Baghdad as the targeting and current operations officer for Special Operations Task Force – Center, and then commanded a detachment assigned to advise Iraq's national-level Special Operations Force's Reconnaissance Troop. In 2008, Jordan's team operated in Mali in support of Operation Enduring Freedom Trans-Sahel. As a FAO, Jordan served as a military assistant and

speechwriter to NATO's Chairman of the Military Committee, General Petr Pavel, and a Defense Policy Advisor to the US Permanent Representative to NATO, Ambassador Douglas Lute. Jordan has written extensively on NATO and transatlantic cooperation and his works can be found on Google Scholar. Jordan's next assignment will take him back to West Point to teach the next generation of Army officers.

Chris Baity: Marine K-9 Handler | Non-Profit Founder | Washingtonian of the Year

### Episode Number 3

Today we hear the Combat Story of Chris Baity, a former Marine K-9 handler who served tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. During his career in the Marine Corps, he helped pioneer and shape dog handling tactics and training, not just for the Marines, but also joint efforts across the military. As a military working dog handler, he supported ground units throughout combat theaters, including trojan horse operations with sniper teams and door-to-door house clearings. In one instance, Chris and his dog uncovered a weapons cache in a scene eerily similar to one depicted in the book and movie, American Sniper. Chris and his wife Amanda went on to found the hugely successful Semper K-9, a non-profit that rescues dogs from shelters and trains them to be service dogs at no cost for disabled service members. This special initiative has been featured in multiple outlets like People Magazine and the Washington Post. For his work, Chris was named one of the Washingtonians of the Year.

JT Snow: AH-64 Apache Pilot | Standardization Instructor Pilot | Air Medal (Valor)

### Episode Number 2

Today we hear the Combat Story of JT Snow, a long time and quintessential AH-64 Apache gun pilot. JT is a Chief Warrant Officer 4 (Retired) who flew over 5,000 flight hours, including 2,000 hours in combat across four deployments: two to Iraq and two to Afghanistan. From the cockpit, he supported conventional and U.S. and coalition special operations forces during intense engagements, often pioneering new tactics and technologies to lethal effect. He finished his career as a Task Force (Battalion) Standardizations Pilot (SP) during two year-long combat deployments, where he was the Task Force's senior Pilot responsible for the standardization and execution of combat operations for all assigned to the Task Force, which included OH58D, CH47F, UH60L and AH64D aircraft. JT's children followed in his footsteps, including fighting from inside the cockpit as the next generation of aviator.

Combat Story (Ep 1): Elliot Ackerman | Marine Platoon Leader in Fallujah | Special Operator | Author | Silver Star

### Episode Number 1

Today we hear the Combat Story of Elliot Ackerman, a former Marine who served five tours in Iraq and Afghanistan as an infantry and special operations officer, for which he received the Silver Star, the Bronze Star for Valor, and the Purple Heart. As a Marine, he led a platoon in Fallujah II during some of the most brutal fighting in the post-9/11 era. His story will resonate to anyone who fought in urban combat and, in particular, the leadership challenges small unit leaders face, especially newly minted officers. His platoon's experience in Fallujah II is exactly what you think about when you hear stories of this operation and included losing half his Marines in less than 24 hours. After his time in the Marine Corps, Elliot also served as a paramilitary officer in the CIA. After his time in uniform, Elliot became a novelist and journalist. He has published five books and his fiction and essays have appeared in The New Yorker, The Atlantic, The New Republic, The New York Times Magazine, Esquire, Ecotone and others. He is also a contributor to The Daily Beast. His books include: Green on Blue: A Novel, Dark at the Crossing, Waiting for Eden, Places and Names: On War, Revolution, and Returning, Red Dress in Black & White.