



At the Helm of Uss America: The Aircraft Carrier and Its 23 Commanders, 1965-1996

James E. Wise Jr., Scott Baron

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Only the best officers are given command of U.S. Navy ships, and only the elite of these are selected for aircraft carriers. The USS America was the third of four Kitty Hawk-class super-carriers. Commissioned in 1965, decommissioned in 1996, she served three times in Vietnam, and once each in Libya, the Persian Gulf and Bosnia. This book profiles the 23 men who commanded the America and her crew of 5,000 during 31 years. Most of them were combat veterans--World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Mayaguez Rescue Operations, Lebanon, Haiti, Libya, Bosnia, and Desert Storm. Four were Naval Academy graduates; seven were test pilots; one became Inspector General of the Navy; one wore both Navy wings and submariner dolphins; and one was a prisoner of war in Vietnam for nearly six years. Two retired as admirals--one was Chief of Naval Operations--five as vice admirals, and 11 as rear admirals. Each profile gives a career account based on official biographies, published memoirs, and interviews with the commanders or their families.

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