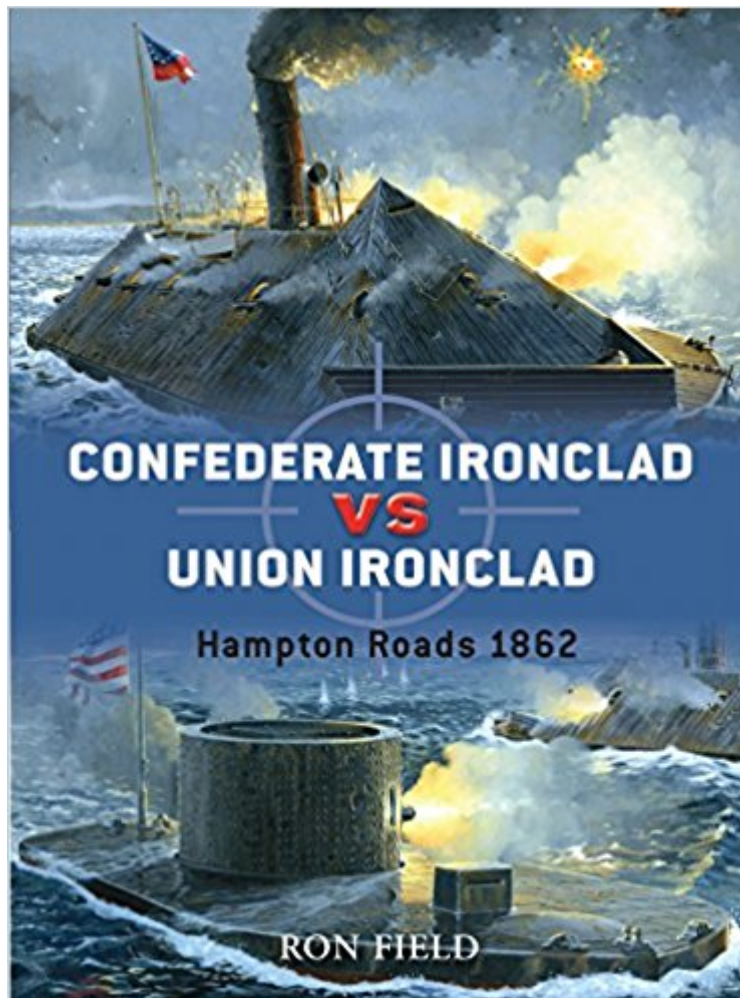




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Confederate Ironclad Vs Union Ironclad: Hampton Roads 1862 (Duel)



Synopsis

The Ironclad was a revolutionary weapon of war. Although iron was used for protection in the Far East during the 16th century, it was the 19th century and the American Civil War that heralded the first modern armored self-propelled warships. With the parallel pressures of civil war and the industrial revolution, technology advanced at a breakneck speed. It was the South who first utilized ironclads as they attempted to protect their ports from the Northern blockade. Impressed with their superior resistance to fire and their ability to ram vulnerable wooden ships, the North began to develop its own rival fleet of ironclads. Eventually these two products of this first modern arms race dueled at the battle of Hampton Roads in a clash that would change the face of naval warfare. Fully illustrated with cutting-edge digital artwork, rare photographs and first-person perspective gun sight views, this book allows the reader to discover the revolutionary and radically different designs of the two rival Ironclads - the CSS Virginia and USS Monitor - through an analysis of each ship's weaponry, ammunition and steerage. Compare the contrasting training of the crews and re-live the horrors of the battle at sea in a war which split a nation, communities and even families.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“The strength of any Osprey book is the illustrations. This volume is no exception. The artwork and photographs are superbly reproduced... If you are looking for a concise, well illustrated history of the Battle at Hampton Roads and the history of the development of the ironclad warship, this is the book for you.”
—Mike Cavanaugh, Blue & Gray Magazine—“The

Duel series follows a well planned and somewhat set design. There is a section on the design and development of the weapons, technical specifications, a look at the combatants involved and the strategic situation at the time of the event. Then the book gets into the combat itself and once that has been described goes into a statistical analysis of the event. This is followed by how the event may have altered future design and development. In this case, it covers some of the other ironclad vs ironclad battles, few though these actually were. Finally, there is a section on how the type was further developed, including post war use... an excellent read and one that I am confident you will enjoy as well. Highly recommended. Æ• Æ Æ Scott Van Aken, modelingmadness.com (December 2008)

Ron Field is Head of History at the Cotswold School in Bourton-on-the-Water. He was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship in 1982 and taught history at Piedmont High School in California from 1982 to 1983. He was associate editor of the Confederate Historical Society of Great Britain, from 1983 to 1992. He is an internationally acknowledged expert on US Civil War military history, and was elected a Fellow of the Company of Military Historians, based in Washington, DC, in 2005. The author lives in Cheltenham, UK.

I am an Ohioan by birth, live in Middle Tennessee and am married to a true "Southern belle.". There is a lot of Civil War history to be found in this area of the country and quite a lot related to naval operations on the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers. Being a Civil War nut and ex Navy (NFO), I found this book to be well written and very informative. I especially liked the author's telling of the action the various vessels saw. While the battle between the Monitor and the Virginia was the main story, the author also included the identifying of many other ironclads that were built by the Union and Confederacy and told about their exploits. While the development of ironclad ships was a major turning point in naval armor and armament, and their use and prestige skyrocketed, their longevity as the primo ships-of-the-line was rather short once the aircraft carrier arrived on the scene less than 100 years later. I have often wondered how much of a difference could have been made in that Civil War if either the North or the South (or both, for that matter) had launched a few manned balloons from a barge and had the men in the balloons float over an enemy ironclad and drop a few fused cannonballs onto the tops of the enemy ironclads or even down the stack of the ironclad. But, that's another story.....

This is one of several slim volumes devoted to the history of the earliest American iron-clad

warships, the Monitor and the Merrimack/Virginia. The book is full of interesting information on all aspects of the development of both the Northern & Confederate vessels as well as the famous sea battle at Hampton Roads. The illustrations are particularly nice featuring rare archival photos, period engravings, cut-a-way drawings of the iron clads, and specially commissioned paintings that re-create the excitement of the pivotal sea battle. Highly recommended for those interested in these unusual fighting ships.

Osprey has added another useful book to its series.

Good

I have a male friend who is a history fanatic. this was a surprise for him, and he loved it.

Up front, readers should be aware that the title of this new volume in Osprey's Duel series, *Confederate Ironclad vs Union Ironclad: Hampton Roads 1862*, is misleading. While the bulk of the volume does focus on the battle between the USS Monitor and the CSS Virginia on March 9, 1862, the author does cover other ironclad vs. ironclad actions, albeit in much less detail. Since Osprey has previously covered the battle in a campaign series volume, some readers might be wary about purchasing what may appear to be redundant coverage. In fact, this volume takes a more in-depth look at the technology and the crews than the campaign volume on Hampton Roads, offering an altogether different take on the famous battle. Overall, it is a good volume in the series and well worth adding to any Civil War library. Easily the best part of this volume is the 18-page section on design and development of the Virginia and the Monitor. The author has a knack for teasing out new facts even about these two well-known warships and offers a very solid overview of both their strengths and weaknesses. The full-page cutaway diagrams of each ship, detailing interior features, are superb. The author follows up with a section on technical specifications that provide additional information and color plates on the cannons on each warship and their ammunition. The section on combatants does not include any profiles as in other Duel-series volumes, but it does provide an insightful look into the composition of the crews on each ship. In the section on the strategic situation, the author lays out the North's need to mount a blockade to starve the South into submission and the Confederacy's solution of building ironclads to break the blockade. Although the author alludes to the fact that virtually all Confederate ironclads (except for the CSS Stonewall, which is not mentioned in this book) were too deep-draft to operate effectively in shallow river

channels but too unseaworthy to operate at sea, he doesn't quite connect the dots here that the Confederacy was investing enormous effort into ships which really couldn't accomplish the mission. While the Virginia was capable of sinking some wooden Union warships in a river, the Confederate ironclads would have had much more difficult engaging Union blockaders off Charleston or other ports, since the Union ships could withdraw out to sea where the ironclads could not follow. At best, the Confederate ironclads might have forced the Union to maintain a looser, offshore blockade but they simply could not hunt down and destroy large parts of the Union fleet. The section on combat is only 14-pages long (only 7 pages of text) and focuses squarely on the Monitor vs. Virginia action. Two color battle scenes also complement this section. The author does make good points about the Virginia's lack of maneuverability and the Monitor's poor visibility, but much of this has appeared in other books as well. After a brief analysis of the battle, the author switches to look at the development of other ironclads by both navies and subsequent battles in 1863-64. Brief descriptions are provided on the battle on June 17, 1863 between the USS Weehawken and the CSS Atlanta and the August 5, 1864 action in Mobile Bay between the USS Chickasaw and the CSS Tennessee, along with one more color plate. The author should have provided greater detail on these other ironclad battles, in order to round out an overall assessment of the duel between these opposing weapon systems. Towards the end, the author begins to digress a bit, covering the U.S. Navy's post-war neglect of its monitor fleet but essentially failing to offer any conclusions about the outcome of the ironclad vs ironclad duel. It is fairly clear however, that the Confederacy got far less from its investment in building ironclad warships than the Union did. It is also clear that monitor type vessels armed with 15-in guns had superior firepower and operational mobility compared to the Confederate deep-draft casemated ironclads. Indeed, the Confederate ironclads were little more than an evolved form of floating battery, while the monitors were the basis for a completely new type of warship. Overall, a good volume, but it could have used a bit sharper assessment of the duel's outcome.

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