



Back in the Fight: The Explosive Memoir of a Special Operator Who Never Gave Up

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On October 3, 2005, Kapacziewski and his soldiers were coming to the end of their tour in Northern Iraq when their convoy was attacked by enemy fighters. A grenade fell through the gunner's hatch and exploded, shattering Kapacziewski's right leg below the knee, damaging his right hip, and severing a nerve and artery in his right arm.

He endured more than forty surgeries, but his right leg still wasn't healing as he had hoped, so in March 2007, Kapacziewski chose to have it amputated with one goal in mind: to return to the line and serve alongside his fellow Rangers. One year after his surgery, Kapacziewski accomplished his goal: he was put back on the line, as a squad leader of his Army Ranger Regiment.

On April 19, 2010, during his ninth combat deployment (and fifth after losing his leg), Kapacziewski's patrol ran into an ambush outside a village in eastern Afghanistan. After a fellow Ranger fell to withering enemy fire, shot through the belly, Sergeant Kap and another soldier dragged him seventy-five yards to safety and administered first aid that saved his life while heavy machineguns tried to kill them. His actions earned him an Army Commendation Medal with "V" for Valor. He had previously been awarded a Bronze Star for Valor—and a total of three Purple Hearts for combat wounds.

Back in the Fight: The Explosive Memoir of a Special Operator Who Never Gave Up Details

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Holli says

I wanted to read this book since I first saw it and seeing someone who lost a leg actually was able to return to combat. I wanted to find out what happened to him and how he was able to accomplish this. The book is fascinating, though it does take quite a bit of the book to learn how he became so wounded and got back to the war. His attitude regarding women in the military, however, is rather outdated and insulting. I couldn't give this book a 5-star rating because this quite irritated me. Attitude aside, Kap is an amazing man. To face what he did and not let it stop him at all in getting "back in the fight," it's awe inspiring. His story is incredible and well worth reading.

Kim says

This was a good book. The one thing I didn't really like about it was there seemed to be a lot more military jargon than what seemed necessary for the average layperson. Other than that though a great read

Nicholas Robillard says

Awesome non stop page turner, it will raise your heart rate. I had the privilege of meeting and spending a significant amount of time with Joe Kap. This book is great but even though written by him does no justice to the caliber of man/American he is. He beat me in an eating contest. This book saved me from having a rat thrown on me in a porter john, I'll keep it forever.

Erica says

No doubt Joseph Kapacziewski is a hero and a BAMF. That being said, this isn't the most well-written memoir out in the veteran market. Also, I do NOT recommend listening to the audiobook. Woof. The narrators sound elderly and are portraying characters in their 20s. Further, they use accents for certain characters and they sound ridiculous. Regardless, this is a good reminder of the cost of war and the fact that there are real superheroes among us.

Cheryl says

Who doesn't love a good hero story. I know I do. What makes the hero even better is that he is a real person and not a fictional character in a book or movie. Plus, this hero is helping to fight for our country and freedom! This hero's name is Sergeant First Class Joseph Kapacziewski. He not only has dedicated his life to his country but he has lost a leg for it. Anytime that you think you have it bad or are feeling bad, you just need to think of the men and women fighting like Sergeant First Class Joseph Kapacziewski. You will feel

better instantly.

Kap really gives the meat of war. He holds nothing back. Which can translate to some strong language. So if you are offended this is your warning. War is not pretty. I actually wish that more people were educated in what really goes on in war. This way people would feel proud to be an American and be respectful to the flag and service men and women. I know I am and I was not even born in America. I was lucky enough to be adopted by loving parents from South Korea. Anyways back to the book. Kap explains a little history behind the Rangers, which I found interesting. What it was like being on missions. I felt like I was actually at those places and could see, hear, and feel everything. Then there was Kap's story itself. It is inspiring. Although, I got the idea that Kap would just say that he was doing his job and what he loved to do. Back in the Fight is a great military book that is worth your time and money.

Mary Reed says

I really enjoyed this book. My son was/is an Airborne Ranger. He served for 20 years in the Army. I knew some of the things Kap mentions in the book, but a lot of it was new to me. Kap is a brave man and a wonderful Ranger.

Dawn says

A fascinating read. Sgt. Kap is in the same Ranger batallion (75th) that my brother was in. Learned some interesting facts about the Army, Airborne Rangers, The War on Terror & Iraq. Kap's dedication to the Army and his perseverance to overcome his amputation & return to his Ranger batallion, was very inspiring.

William says

A good book for the subject matter. Although my service in the regular army was in the sixties, most of the slang and esoteric words reminded me of the experience.

This book shows the unique qualities of the individuals that are needed in the military of today and why the military wants only committed volunteers. Ironically, because there is no draft our population has little skin in the game. Therefore, no general pressure to end the wars.

Branden says

SFC Kap isn't the greatest author to pen a modern memoir of war (off the top of my head, David Bellavia and Sean Parnell are better "writers") but his story is damn inspiring. It's an absolutely incredible tale of one man's struggle through adversity.

As a former Batt Boy myself, a lot of the stuff in this book hit home. I used to know several people he mentions in this book, one of which I discovered (in this book) passed away in 2010.

As an aside, as of Spring 2013 SFC Kap is stil doing his thing as a RASP instructor. One of my best friends

graduated April 30th this year and assured me that all of the stories of Kap running new wannabe Rangers into the dirt are absolutely true.

I will definitely read this one again. Thumbs up.

Homer says

It was a good book, but I wish it focused more on his recovery. The first half to two-thirds was like any other Ranger or Special Forces bio. The story is still a good one, but it just took a while to get to the real meat of the book. I'd love to meet him! Sounds like an amazing person!

Christy says

A childhood friend of mine recommended that I read a book about her nephew. I am part of a Veteran's Writing Group at the library where I work, and she thought the guys might want to read "Back in the Fight." I am very glad she recommended Joe Kap's story. (although I do know how to say Kapacziewsk properly!) His determination to become an Army Ranger never wavered and after suffering terrible injuries, he continued his determination to heal and to return to combat. "Almost a year and half after his amputation he was back on the line as squad leader in Alpha company, 3rd Battalion." I enjoyed being able to read his wife's point of view too. Kim was faced with the phone call to tell her that her husband had been injured a mere three months after they married. She also has a gutsy determination and a sense of humor. Nothing prettied up here, just the plain raw facts and the real people who endured the path they were placed on. A fantastic read.

George says

I finished reading this incredible story, of not only one, but of many American Heroes! I am thankful for not only the opportunity but the honor of reading this Hero's story. I had to put the book down several times, due to the emotional state it put me in.

I feel every American should read this book! Certainly every soldier, that comes back wounded.

I hope I will have the honor to meet & shake the hand of this man, the soldier, this true American Hero, who had what it took, to get Back in the Fight for our Nation's Freedom!

This is an Absolute Must Read!

Maria says

Kapacziewski joined the Army at the age of 18 with the determination to become a ranger. After signing but before he started his training, 9/11 crashed the twin towers. Kapacziewski redoubled his efforts to be a ranger. In 2005, while in Iraq, a grenade shattered his right leg and damaged his right arm. Instead of taking a medical discharge, Kap endured surgery after surgery to regain the use of his limbs. After close to a year, he

had his leg amputated so that he could return to his ranger battalion. He requalified for all necessary skills to prove once again that he had what it takes to be a ranger.

Why I started this book: The cover. I was browsing thru my library's audio on Overdrive and this jumped out at me.

Why I finished it: Kapacziewski describes himself as a doer, not a talker. This book reflected that. He was more concerned with being a ranger and doing the job both before and after his amputation than with telling a good story.

Forrest Wenzel says

A truly inspiring story of an American badass who shows you can achieve anything that you set your mind to and work hard to achieve! Kap can and has done more with one man made leg then most mortal men achieve with the two god gave them. Good on you Kap you are a true American!

Chris Green says

If ever I think I'm having a bad day, or I'm up against life's many hurdles. I think about the trials and tribulations by this warrior and the hard work and determination he's had to return to the battlefield as a special operations warrior. After loosing a leg, he fought to prove himself and has since deployed multiple times and trained special operators. Amazing book about his journey and the perspective from those around him as well.
