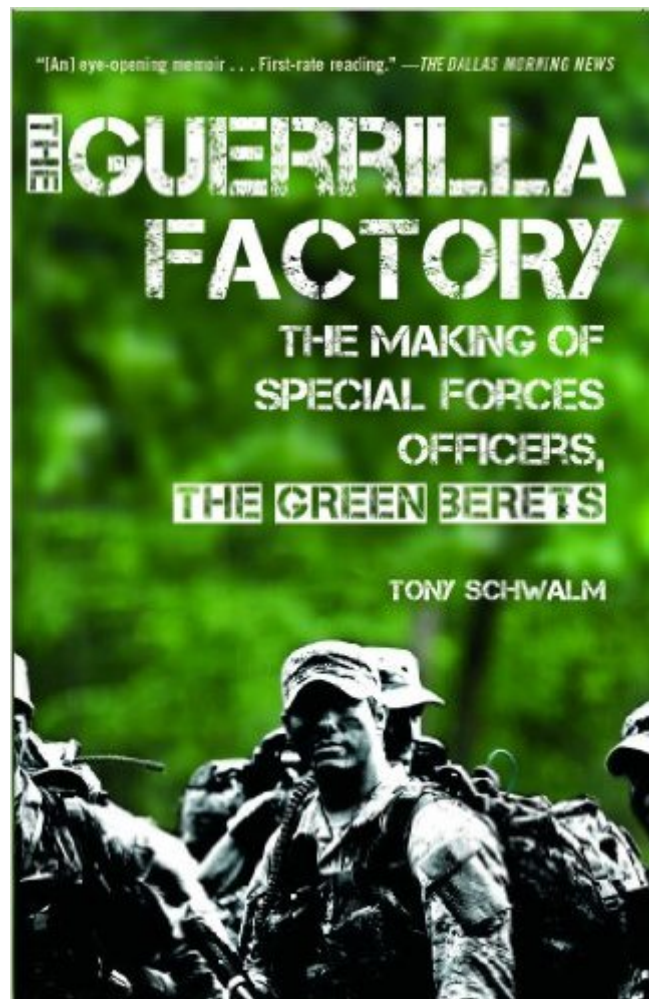


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# The Guerrilla Factory: The Making Of Special Forces Officers, The Green Berets



## Synopsis

With a veteran Green Beret as your guide, go deep inside the grueling training that every Special Forces soldier must endure to become an elite fighting machine. With a fresh, authentic voice (Publishers Weekly), former Special Forces commander and current instructor Tony Schwalm takes readers deep inside the grueling training on the notorious Q course, required for all Special Forces soldiers before they can join the elite Green Berets that defends our country in nontraditional operations.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Inside Robin Sage!"The Guerrilla Factory: The Making of Special Forces Officers, The Green Berets" by Tony Schwalm recounts his Special Forces career with a focus primarily on his training regime in memoir format. The book provides excellent insight into the process, theory, philosophy and concepts behind these elite US Army unconventional warriors. Although the author went through this training close to 20-years ago and many things have changed in the Special Forces training pipeline. However, all the salient points of the training remained the same. This book highlights the unconventional warfare exercise "Robin Sage" in excellent detail. This exercise is over 40-years old and is the culmination of the Special Forces Qualification Course (Q-Course), all wears of the Green Beret have completed this exercise no matter if he is an officer or enlisted/NCO. "Robin Sage" is a 4 week long large-scale unconventional warfare exercise conducted by the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina and over 50,000 square miles of North Carolina. For more than half a century, around a third of North Carolina has served as the

fictional "People's Republic of Pineland" for the exercise. During this exercise, the Special Forces students are required to apply and exercise the skills taught in the Special Forces Qualification Course. The students make an airborne infiltration into the country of Pineland. They then make contact with the guerrilla forces and begin "Robin Sage." Students will then begin their task of training, advising, and assisting the guerrillas. The training will educate the guerrillas in various specialties, including weapons, communications, medical, and demolitions. The training is designed to enable the guerrillas to begin liberating their country from oppression. It is the last portion of the Q-Course before they receive their Green Berets. Overall anyone interested in special warfare and unconventional warfare will find the book very interesting. This book will shed light on one of the most elaborate training regime provided to any American special operations unit with details on the Special Forces operators skills used in the shadow world they will operate in. As a career Special Forces operator I highly recommend this book!

I heartily recommend this book to SOF students. Tony writes a very good memoir full of lessons. He frames it within the two SOF schools of thought: Daniel Boone and Superman, accurately showing their costs and benefits. Frankly it amazes me how well he writes. I find it hard to believe a first-time published writer can write so well, but the book is proof. It's a keeper.

The Guerilla Factory takes you through the ordeals and trials -- emotional, logistical, and mental -- of training to be a Green Beret. Tony Schwalm does this in a way that captures the grit and purpose of the rigorous training, without romanticizing it. For example, he tells us right away that the "superman most Americans believe the SOF (Special Operations Forces) to be" are a small minority of even these elite units. And yes, you have to be mighty tough to survive the training. Even if you don't usually read books about the military, the Guerilla Factory still makes for interesting reading. I was curious to learn more about the details of the training, because like most reasonably fit guys, I wondered if I could make it (answer: probably not; to survive, you have to really want it badly). But I was also interested in how the army builds an elite esprit de corps and devoted "employees." These tactics are valuable for any organization to know, even if you will never approach the extremes the Army does (the Army understands that their elite forces training will inevitably results in some deaths of trainees--something they let aspiring officers know about it up front.) I was impressed with how well written The Guerilla Factory is. After all, Schwalm is a professional soldier, not a professional writer. Yet, he still had plenty of engaging turns of phrase (for example, referring to terrorists as "those who park airplanes in office towers") and tells a good story. And due to the

nature of the training, there are lots of good stories.

As a retired SF Warrant Officer, I found the author's book well written and interesting. Things at the Special Warfare Center have changed a lot since the 70's, however, the "Guerrilla Factory" is still cranking out America's "...diplomat warrior's...", let the Navy Seals have all the glory, the quiet professionals, doing their work in the shadows may not garner many headlines, get as many medals, but there is nothing like mission accomplishment to give you job satisfaction.

This is a well written and candid look at the author's journey through Special Forces Selection, the Qualification Course, SERE School (best account I've read of this), and his eventual leadership position within 3rd Group of U.S. Army Special Forces. While much of the information is Officer specific, I'd highly recommend this to anyone contemplating a career in Special Forces or anyone interested in Special Forces in general.

A fascinating look not just at the process of becoming a Green Beret, but a walk alongside someone as they go through it. Great insight into the whole SF world. Anyone who ever wanted to know what is like or is thinking about going Special Forces should read this book!

A great book if you've ever wondered what it's really like inside the Army Special Warfare Center. For me, it was good to find that SFOC had not softened in the decades since I graduated from the course back in the 'Nam era. This is my second copy, the first mysteriously disappeared from my lending library...

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