



## Pacific War In Color, The

8 x 60'

EPISODIC BREAKDOWN

### 1. An Ocean apart

1937 to Spring 1942

In episode 1 of this riveting series we visit some of the places war will soon come to, including Japan. We see the calm before the storm, including rare color footage from travellers. All of it looks so peaceful, the people look unbothered. All of it takes on an ominous tone as we know what's coming, and those smiling faces on camera do not.

Then the surprise attack on Pearl Harbour is just one part of a stunningly coordinated blitz over thousands of miles of the Pacific. For 7 months, the Japanese appear unstoppable, and the U.S. scrambles to respond.

### 2. Shockwaves

Spring 1942 to Spring 1943

The Allies struggle to push the Japanese back on land, and break the Tokyo Express supply line. In New Guinea and the Solomons, what begins as rearguard actions gradually becomes Allied advances. Progress is painfully slow and diseases like dysentery and malaria takes a heavy toll. But in the summer of 1942, at the battles of the Coral Sea and Midway, the US Navy finally defeats the enemy - decisive victories that will later prove to have turned the tide of war.

### 3. Island Hopping

Summer 1943 to early 1944

The US launches Operation Cartwheel, making its first turn towards Japan and advances into the central Pacific. After a disastrous start to the Gilbert and Marshalls campaign, they develop the fast-carrier based tactics that will prove decisive in the war. The Japanese learn this lesson as well - and begin to prepare their inner defensive ring and the home islands.

## 4. The Enemy Underground

Spring and Summer 1944

The US drives at the heart of Japan's inner defense ring - starting with Saipan in the Marianas. Even as they do, Japan desperate to level the playing field, attempts to draw the Allies in to a full-scale naval engagement in the Philippine Sea. By the end of June 1944 the path forward in the war will finally become clear, and American sights will be set firmly on mainland Japan.

## 5. Striking Distance

July to October 1944

As the Allies start building out Saipan into a forward base and B-29 anchor point, the rest of the Marianas might seem easy enough to take from there. Indeed there are advantages to finally invading islands (Guam and Tinian) so close by, rather than thousands of miles away. But just as the Americans are putting past battle lessons to good use, so are the Japanese. Guam and Tinian will not be easy. Meanwhile, B-29 raids begin from bases in China, and the learning curve is steep. They are far from effective, and many planes are lost. It all makes the Marianas even more critical to capture. The Allies then move onto Peleliu, which one official expects will be 'a quickie'. As the episode concludes, the Americans find out it will be another long slog.

## 6. Fire from the Sky

October 1944 - March 1945

The battle of Peleliu concludes - long after expected. Meanwhile, at the battle of Leyte Gulf, the Americans win the largest naval battle of World War II, opening the way for MacArthur's triumphant return to the Philippines. But the Japanese will not give way easily - fighting in Manila, Bataan and Corregidor is unrelentingly intense. B-29 raids begin from the Marianas, and war on a grand scale comes to the Japanese mainland in the form of massive firebombing raids - more successful than the ones launched from China. Finally, on Iwo Jima, island hopping reaches its bloody apex as 50,000 men fight over 8 square miles.

## 7. No Surrender

April - July 1945

Knowing that they can't win the Japanese make a desperate stand at Okinawa, determined to keep the Allies from invading the home islands. At 82 days the Battle of Okinawa is the longest

battle of the Pacific War, and costs the lives of both Commanding officers. Halfway through, President Roosevelt dies and Truman takes over.

## 8. From the Ashes

July 1945 into 1946

Stunned by the carnage at Iwo and Okinawa casualty estimates for an invasion of the Japanese home islands skyrocket. Troops are training and preparing all over the Pacific, resigned that they will soon be fighting for their lives on the mainland. Then president Harry Truman makes a momentous decision - and drops the bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Finally the Japanese surrender. In a complicated peace, Emperor Hirohito is still on the throne - but General Douglas MacArthur is sent to oversee the country's postwar development. America becomes the occupiers, and soldiers and marines tell gripping stories of walking amid the nation and people they've been demonizing and fighting for almost four years. Troops and POW's on all sides come home - some to celebration, some to shame.