

The Samurai Capture a King: Okinawa 1609 (Raid)

Stephen Turnbull

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A brilliant but little-known operation, the Shimazu clan raid on the independent kingdom of Ryukyu (modern Okinawa) in 1609 is one of the most extraordinary episodes in samurai history and the culmination of centuries of rivalry between the two powers. The defeat of the Shimazu at Sekigahara in 1600, and their need to win favour with the new Shogun, led them to hatch an audacious plot to attack the islands on the Shogun's behalf and bring back the king of Ryukyu as a hostage. Stephen Turnbull gives a blow-by-blow account of the operation, from the daring Shimazu amphibious landing, to their rapid advance overland, and the tactical feigned retreat that saw the Shimazu defeat the Okinawan army and kidnap their king in spectacular fashion. With a detailed background and specially commissioned artwork, the scene is set for a dramatic retelling of this fascinating raid.



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