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# One Day In September: The Full Story Of The 1972 Munich Olympics Massacre And The Israeli Revenge Operation "Wrath Of God"



## Synopsis

At 4:30 a.m. on September 5, 1972, a band of Palestinian terrorists took eleven Israeli athletes and coaches hostage at the Summer Olympics in Munich. More than 900 million viewers followed the chilling, twenty-hour event on television, as German authorities desperately negotiated with the terrorists. Finally, late in the evening, two helicopters bore the terrorists and their surviving hostages to Munich's little-used Föfö rstenfeldbruck airfield, where events went tragically awry. Within minutes all of the Israeli athletes, five of the terrorists, and one German policeman were dead. Why did the rescue mission fail so miserably? And why were the reports compiled by the German authorities concealed from the public for more than two decades? Reeves takes on a catastrophe that permanently shifted the political spectrum with a fast-paced narrative that covers the events detail by detail. Based on years of exhaustive research, *One Day in September* is the definitive account of one of the most devastating and politically explosive tragedies of the late twentieth century, one that set the tone for nearly thirty years of renewed conflict in the Middle East.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In the early hours of September 5, 1972, members of the ultraviolent Palestinian terrorist faction Black September scaled the perimeter fence surrounding the Olympic Village in Munich. Their target was the temporary home of the Israeli Olympic team. Within 24 hours, 11 Israelis, five terrorists, and a German policeman were dead. Based largely on exhaustive investigation for the Oscar-winning documentary, *One Day in September* is the definitive account of the tragedy. Simon Reeve has gathered extraordinary information from a number of sources, including recently released Stasi files

and interviews with key figures, including the families of the hostages, politicians, policemen, advisors, fellow athletes, media figures, and even the lone surviving member of the group that carried out the attack. Reeve's control over his material is admirable. He vividly paints images of the individuals involved, humanizing a narrative that cracks and buzzes with the compact tension of those 24 hours. At the same time, he provides the background to the attack, filling in vital historical context from the distant and recent past, such as the Arab-Jewish dispute that produced this and other terrorist actions and their responses. Reeve conveys the public horror of Jews being incarcerated on German soil, which led the German authorities to make crucial judgments, with tragic results. Fatal errors were made that can only be fully understood through the underlying dynamics of not only Middle East history, but also postwar European politics, individual and institutional arrogance, inexperience, and political pressure--including from the International Olympic Committee. Reeve follows up the events of that day by exposing the full extent of the Israeli revenge mission, which over the next 20 years hunted down and killed those responsible for the attack. He has not only written a compelling book, but provided a considerable service in allowing readers to understand the forces of hatred and history that conspired toward inevitable, but no less tragic human consequences. Those who were a part of the huge live media audience that watched helplessly as events unfolded will undoubtedly experience again the sense of dread at recalling those traumatized, shackled figures led out from the Olympic Village to their fate on a German airfield. Those who make the mistake of thinking the dark days of international terrorism are history will read *One Day in September* and remember that the same underlying tensions still cast shadows over our present and our future. --Fiona Buckland, .co.uk --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Adult/High School-A comprehensive and unsettling account of a horrific occurrence that shocked millions in 1972. The Summer Olympics were held in (West) Germany for the first time since 1936, amid hopes for an open, nonmilitaristic competition. Early on the morning of September 5th, eight members of a PLO faction called Black September snuck into the Olympic Village and stormed the men's residence, seizing 11 Israeli athletes and coaches. Two were killed immediately, and the remaining nine (along with five of the terrorists) were slain less than 24 hours later in a badly bungled rescue attempt at F&#x81;rstenfeldbruck airport. Reeve's book originated with research conducted for an Oscar-winning documentary, but the volume goes beyond the film to present many disturbing and previously unknown facts. While the film focuses on the massacre itself, the text covers acts of retaliation and cover-up that continued for years afterward. Indeed, one vital

source of information is an investigative report, the existence of which was denied by German officials for 20 years, and came to light only through the persistent actions of family members of the murdered athletes. Despite the regrettable omission of an index, Reeve's book is an important one since it deals with many issues-terrorism, anti-Semitism and other forms of racism, and Middle East unrest.-Dori DeSpain, Fairfax County Public Library, VACopyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I stumbled across the Documentary "One Day in September" a few months ago and was quickly drawn into it. It won an academy award in 1999 for best documentary and for good reason. It does an exceptional job of retelling and exploring the 1972 Black September attack on the Israeli Olympic team in Munich. The terrorist attack ended in aching tragedy with all eleven of the Israeli hostages dying in the rescue attempt by German police. Impressively, the documentary also digs into the aftermath of the event and how the family members of the victims fought the German government for years to gain access to the investigation of the event and unearth the true story of how the tragedy unfolded (Not much of a spoiler alert but German incompetence was a key factor throughout the event). I was a young boy when the terrorist attack occurred and distinctly remember how it saddened and shocked the world. The documentary brought back many memories of the event but also helped explain how it impacted so many. After seeing the documentary I sought out a book on the event. I ended up selecting the companion book by Simon Reeve of the same title. Reeve's book is very well done. He is a solid writer and does a very good job of unpacking the terrorist attack and the failed rescue attempt. Impressively, Reeve spends a chapter summarizing the history of Israeli and Palestine relations and does a very good job with the overview. Interestingly, the terrorist attack itself is only about half the book. Reeve spends the rest of the book describing the "Wrath of God" campaign where Israelis hunted down and assassinated PLO leaders while the PLO/Black September continued to undertake additional attacks. Throughout the book Reeve's perspective is slanted more toward the Israeli point of view and he invests a lot of ink on the perspectives of the family of the Israeli victims although he makes an honest effort of putting forth a relatively balanced look at the entire event and response. The book, in addition, includes a post 9/11 epilogue that gives a wider discussion of governments conducting assassination campaigns. It is a thoughtful critique of this difficult issue and alone makes the book worth reading. The documentary is exceptional and you will find it moving. The book is solid as well and is worth picking up.

Very good coverage of the massacre of the Israeli athletes as well as events prior to the act and post the massacre.....some good history of the reasons for the growth of Palestinian frustration leading to the pursuit of international terrorism to resolve injustices being perpetrated on them ...the incompetence of the German and Bavarian response is well visited and borders on the criminally incompetent ,and makes a strong case for charges to have made against the German police and security services....sadly this was never going to happen as the politics were to convoluted .....Brundage as head of the IOC showed huge insensitivity and arrogance and it was appropriate that his farewell message on the Stadium score board spelt his name wrong ...the courage of the athletes and their families and friends is amply canvassed and the dedication they showed in preventing a German Government led cover-up is truly heroic ..it was the Germans shame at their incompetent response and weak-kneed dealings with the Palestinians as well of their fright at being criminally liable for huge compensation led them to duck their clear responsibilities ..the aftermath and the Israeli response perpetrates an urban myth about the hunt for the people responsible for the murders ..true the Israelis did mount a war on terrorists and terrorism but it was not Munich massacre specific ...a good historical record of one of the most talked about and viewed international acts of terrorism the world had witnessed to that time ...a great deal of rage is directed against the various German agencies . but the naivety of the thinking that someone will put their hand up and take responsibility for this heinous act detracts a little ..the internal and external politics were always going to prevent this ..however it was great courage and persistence that drove those seeking justice and this was the true legacy they made for those who were slaughtered ....

This book, and the documentary film, made me relive the day that I learned, in my then 12-year-old innocence, that nothing is sacred to terrorists, not even the Olympics. To hear the words (and, in the movie, see the face) of the unrepentant, smug, self-righteous Jamal Al-Gashey sears me to my soul. It also strengthens my prayers that some Mossad agent will be fortunate enough to find him and send him to the same level of Hell occupied by his 7 compatriots in the massacre.To find out that the German authorities squandered numerous opportunities to rescue the hostages and, worse, inexplicably failed to provide enough troops and snipers to pick off the terrorists at the airport, twists my guts. To discover the depths to which the German government covered up their ineptitude borders on the criminal. Why weren't any of the members of the strike team which abandoned the airplane prosecuted for a clear dereliction of duty? Why weren't the Israeli authorities allowed to be more involved? Why haven't the families of the dead Israelis been compensated by the Germans for

this incompetence? I pray fervently that the lessons this book teaches will not be lost on anyone, Jew, Arab or whoever. This CANNOT be allowed to happen again. Am Yisroel Chai!

Reeve's story is taken almost word for word from the seminal Munich documentary ( 2002 ). Great book. Would suggest the reader watch the 2002 documentary and follow along in the book as the story unfolds.

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