

# 'Lone Survivor' authenticates Afghan war battle



By Jeremy Miller

Based on the incredible true story of Operation Red Wings, "Lone Survivor" is a true to life, super charged thrill ride depicting the battle between four soldiers and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan.

Mark Wahlberg, Taylor Kitsch, Emile Hirsch and Ben Foster star. Behind the camera and screenplay was director Peter Berg.

Let me just say that it's extremely fulfilling to see Berg finally do something worthwhile with his talent. I feel like the past 10 years he's been so up and down ("Hancock" and "Battleship" to name a couple), it's nice to see him finally nail down something worth watching.

The four soldiers are deployed to Afghanistan to pursue a tier 1 target by the name of Ahmad Shahd. One thing I absolutely loved about this film was how Berg set the scenes in Afghanistan. He opened almost every scene with a beautiful wide aerial shots to show you just how massive the mountains of the area really are, which in turn boosts your reality on just how impossible it would be to escape such a place. They hike up a mountainside just outside a little village, where days prior the villains assassinated several innocent villagers.



Early on you get the picture that communication is near impossible, just like finding cell service in a mountainous area, they too struggle with secured and unsecured satellite phones. They decide to post up and rest before they execute their mission and take out their targets. Danny Dietz (Hirsch) is on watch and suddenly a heard of goats starts flocking toward him, followed by three men and a boy. The soldiers wake up and start frantically trying to decide on

their next move ... kill the compromise and sacrifice integrity and break rules of engagement? Or let them go and risk the entire operation, not to mention they are tremendously outnumbered. After a pretty deep pros and cons list and some debate, cursing and yelling they make a decision and let them go, and within a very short time they're completely surrounded by Taliban.

They enter into one of the most intense gunfights I've seen in years. They're completely outnumbered and their odds seem impossible. Here is where each of them shows off a little acting talent. From this point forward there's an equal amount of badass action shoot 'em up war scenes, along with immensely powerful emotion highlighting camaraderie between them that is incomparable.

These four Navy Seals prove their reputation as the toughest men on Earth, and certainly earn the title through the beating they take not only through firefight but the terrain as well. Brutal.

I loved this film because unlike a lot of the war films I have seen in the last five or 10 years this wasn't solely based on character. "The Hurt Locker" was a great flick, but there was no plot, it was simply character-based drama with occasional explosions and action. "Lone Survivor" hit me much like

Spielberg's "Saving Private Ryan" or "Black Hawk Down" but with an extremely stimulating modern look and feel. The costume design and special effects were also commendable as I truly felt like I was watching real soldiers.

The performances were all tiptop, especially Ben Foster. I've always been a huge fan of all four of the lead actors, but Foster just really impresses me and he held true to that in this flick. The one and only thing I didn't dig in this flick was the overuse of dramatic music. The beginning almost had a Michael Bay feel to me, which forces me to cringe like nothing else. Overall, I absolutely loved the film and I recommend it for anyone wanting an epic, masterfully told story of courage, brotherhood and bravery.

*South Lake Tahoe resident Jeremy Miller has more movie reviews online.*