



Hurricane Pioneer: Memoirs of Bob Simpson

Robert H. Simpson, Neal M. Dorst

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In 1951, Robert H. Simpson lifted off in a specially-equipped plane, flying directly into the path of a storm that would send most people running for cover. For more than four hours he observed Typhoon Marge from its eerily calm eye, later describing it in *The Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society* as “a coliseum of clouds whose walls on one side rose vertically and on the other were banked like the galleries in a great opera house.”

For Simpson this was just one of his many pioneering explorations of hurricanes and extreme storms. Over his decades-long career his research led to great leaps in our understanding of tropical meteorology and our approach to hurricane safety. He was the first director of the National Hurricane Research Project and the second director of the National Hurricane Center, though he may be best known as co-creator of the widely used Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale, familiar to anyone who has heard a reporter use the words “category five.”

Simpson’s memoirs take readers from his experience with the Corpus Christi hurricane of 1919 to his travels to study weather across the globe. Along the way he crosses paths with other weather greats, including his trailblazing wife, meteorologist Joanne Simpson. *Hurricane Pioneer* is a riveting first-hand account at a revolutionary time in meteorology.

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