



All Star Comics Archives, Vol. 5

Gardner Francis Fox , Sheldon Mayer (co-plotter) , Joe Gallagher (Illustrator) , Stan Aschmeier (Illustrator) , Joe Simon (Illustrator) , Jack Kirby (Illustrator) , Bernard Baily (Illustrator) , Sheldon Moldoff (Illustrator) , more... Joe Kubert (Illustrator) , R.C. Harvey (Introduction) ...less

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From the World War II era comes the Justice Society of America -- Green Lantern, Hawkman, Wonder Woman, and other heroes -- to stand against menaces on the homefront and around the globe.

All Star Comics Archives, Vol. 5 Details

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From Reader Review All Star Comics Archives, Vol. 5 for online ebook

Rich Meyer says

This volume of the All Star Comics Archives was the last to feature the characters from the All American Comics line, as the company that was DC Comics split into two different and competing entities. So these issues are the last to feature Dr. Fate, the Spectre, Starman, and Sandman. The stories are all on a par with the era, with Stan Aschmeier and Joe Gallagher handling the majority of the art chores. Sheldon Moldoff, Joe Kubert, and Simon and Kirby provide some excellent chapters as well. If you like the JSA, you'll want to read this one.

The other John says

There was a war on in late '43 and throughout 1944, but you might not guess it reading the Justice Society adventures from that period. While war raged in Europe and the Pacific, the JSA was tackling criminals like the Monster and the original Psycho-Pirate and travelling through time to help a man reform his life. The stories in this volume aren't as good as those in times past, but there are still some pleasant moments.

Adam Graham says

This book collects Issues 19-23 of All Star Comics and features five issues with the Justice Society of America. Issues 19 and 20 are fairly standard but well-done fare as the JSA goes after a series of crimes to music and another where a sinister villain seems to be to blame and he's haunted the man who asks for their help.

After the JSA got better by getting shorter. War Time shortages required that the roster be trimmed from eight to six and the result seems to be better more focused stories, starting with Issue 21's, "The Man Who Relived His Life," it's a touching fantasy about the JSA going back in time to help fix the mistakes of an old man who is dying as a result of his help to finding a cure for a disease after a life of selfishness. It's a beautiful and thoughtful tale.

Issue 22 finds them going further through time and place to fight prejudice with a story that features the sort of positive message of tolerance and understanding that was often proclaimed during the war. The story is a noble attempt to build understanding. Issue 23 features the introduction of Psycho-Pirate, a villain who preys on the team's emotion. He would become a long-standing character in the DC universe. This is a chance to see him in his first story, though he's clearly not at his best.

The text stories included in the book are all Hop Harragan tales featuring that great flying ace and like the rest of the book the quality shows a marked improvement y bad about the book over previous volumes. Of course, the one thing that's really bad about is that Wonder Woman is kept out of action as the Secretary while Johnny Thunder at the Golden Age are key operatives.

Still beyond that, this is an enjoyable fifth volume.

Joseph says

This volume of All Star Comics Archives sees the series take a pretty steep decline in quality. The art is particular goes way south, and maybe this had something to do with many artists fighting WW2 (these take place in 1944). Story wise, the JSA travels in the past twice, one to help convince a man to change his ways so he becomes a better person before he dies, and the other time in order to convince the personified Conscience of Man that the JSAers are innately good and can teach others the valuable lessons of understanding and tolerance. Then there is the first appearance of The Psycho Pirate, who is not that scary here (he basically uses events to challenge the emotional spectrum instead of the later mask - this may not even be the same villain, tbh). I've already forgotten the fifth issue.

Dr Fate and Sandman just disappear without any mention as the book loses a few pages, and Wonder Woman continues to sit around while "the boys" take off on the adventures. What a waste of character. Additionally, reading these all back to back is a bit tiresome, as the JSA gets their mission, then split up into individual exploits, then meet up again for 1-2 pages of team action, in EVERY ISSUE. The original comic was a quarterly, so maybe the readers were ok with this, but after a while it's too redundant. Writer Gardner Fox followed a similar format when he co-created and wrote the Justice League of America comic in the early 60s, but there, at least, you'd get team-ups of 2-3 members.

Taking a break from the GA adventures of the JSA for a while, as these stories are sometimes too formulaic and simplistic and weary to read.

Scott says

The stories are getting tighter and more integrated and the art, in general, is improving, even if Doctor Fate and the Sandman bow out two issues before the end and Stan Aschmeier makes Ted Knight look like L'il Abner. The Spectre's final appearance for twenty years is at the end of this volume. DC should send all Trump supporters a reprint of "A Cure for the World," heavy handed as it may be. It also includes the first appearance of tube Psycho-Pirate, who doesn't have a costume and looks like a character from a humor cartoon.
