

# Tactical Aerial Refueling Squadron Histories (VAK)

## VAK-208 to VAK-308

### VAK-208

#### Lineage

Established as Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron TWO HUNDRED EIGHT (VAQ-208) on 31 July 1970.

Redesignated Aerial Refueling Squadron TWO HUNDRED EIGHT (VAK-208) on 1 October 1979.

Disestablished 30 September 1989. The first and only squadron to be assigned the VAK-208 designation.

#### Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The squadron's first insignia was approved by CNO on 6 May 1971. Colors for the insignia were: a yellow background outlined in red with a red scroll and black lettering; blue stylized tail code letters; brown eagle with white markings, orange beak and claws outlined in black, and a red eye; and red lightning bolts.



The squadron's first insignia used the eagle and a stylized AF tail code in its design.



The second insignia used by the squadron depicted the whale, reflecting the nickname of the aircraft flown by the squadron, the A-3.

Following the squadron's redesignation a new insignia was approved by CNO on 10 October 1980. Colors for this insignia were: a yellow background outlined in black; red scroll with white lettering; black latitude and longitudinal lines; alternating white and red compass star outlined in black; red directional letters; and a blue whale with black markings and a white eye and teeth.

Nickname: Jockeys, 1970–1989.

#### Chronology of Significant Events

**31 Jul 1970:** The squadron was established as part of a reorganization intended to increase the combat readiness of the Naval Air Reserve Force. It was to provide tanking, pathfinding and COD service to the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets and other units around the world.

**Mar 1971:** The squadron's first operational mission was conducted when it provided tanker support for CVWR-20 aircraft embarked in *Independence* (CVA 62) for a training exercise.

**Aug 1971:** The squadron conducted its two weeks of active duty training embarked in *John F. Kennedy* (CVA 67) as part of CVWR-20. This was the first complete Reserve Carrier Air Wing deployment aboard a carrier.

**Oct 1971:** The squadron conducted its first overseas operational assignment by providing tanker service across the Atlantic for RA-5C Vigilantes returning from a Mediterranean cruise.

**Jan 1972:** Squadron aircraft provided COD services for *Constellation* (CVA 64) on Yankee Station and *Enterprise* (CVAN 65) in the Indian Ocean.

**Sep 1972:** Squadron aircraft provided COD services for *Kennedy* while she was operating in the North Sea. The squadron aircraft operated out of NAF Mildenhall, England, during this evolution.

**Apr 1973:** Squadron aircraft provided support for Yellow Aspirin, a CNO mission to Kuwait to review the defense capabilities of that country.

**Oct 1973:** Squadron aircraft provide COD and refueling support during NATO Operation Swift Move for the air wing embarked in *Kennedy*, operating in the North Atlantic.

**16–30 Oct 1973:** During the Yon Kippur War in the Middle East, squadron aircraft provided support for Operation Nickle Grass, the transatlantic flight of A-4 Skyhawks to Israel.

**Jul–Aug 1974:** During civil unrest and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, squadron aircraft provided tanker and logistic support for *Forrestal* (CVA 59) and *Independence* (CV 62) operating in the area of Cyprus during the crisis.

**Sep 1976:** Squadron aircraft provided support for the NATO Exercise Teamwork conducted in the North Atlantic.

**Sep 1978:** Squadron aircraft provided support for the NATO Exercise Northern Wedding conducted in the North Atlantic. Squadron aircraft operated out of NAF Mildenhall during this exercise.

**1 Oct 1979:** The squadron was redesignated Aerial Refueling Squadron 208 (VAK-208) and the mission of the squadron changed to primarily tanker service. The electronic warfare capability was removed from its mission.

**May–Jun 1980:** Squadron aircraft provided support for the French naval Exercise Suroit-80 in Landivisiau, France.

**Sep 1980:** Squadron aircraft provided support for the NATO Exercise Teamwork 80 held in the North Atlantic.

**Sep 1982:** Squadron aircraft provided support for Exercise Agile Falcon held in the North Atlantic.

**Sep–Oct 1984:** Squadron aircraft provided tanker/pathfinding support for NATO Exercise Display Determination-84.

**Home Port Assignments**

<i>Location</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
NAS Alameda	31 Jul 1970

**Commanding Officers**

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
AMSC L.V. Lambert (Petty Officer in Charge)	31 Jul 1970
LCDR J. F. Jefferson (Officer in Charge)	20 Nov 1970
CDR Thomas E. Frey	02 Jul 1971
CDR Tad H. Bingham	08 Jul 1973

**Commanding Officers—Continued**

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Earl B. Wynn, Jr.	06 Dec 1975
LCDR Phillip L. Middleton	14 Oct 1978
CDR B. A. Dempsey	04 Oct 1980
CDR Howard W. Goodroe	07 Nov 1981
CDR David O. Mason	13 Nov 1982
CDR Donald L. Dostal	06 May 1984
CDR David E. Boyd	03 May 1986
CDR Alden F. Mullins, Jr.	07 Nov 1987
CDR Andrew J. Kisela, Jr.	1989

**Aircraft Assignment**

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
KA-3B	20 Nov 1970

**Air Wing Assignments**

<i>Air Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
CVWR-20	AF	31 Jul 1970

**Unit Awards Received**

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i>	
MUC	21 Dec 1971	30 Sep 1974
	01 Oct 1986	30 Sep 1989
SLOC	28 Mar 1983	18 Apr 1983
NAVE	01 Jul 1974	30 Sep 1976
	01 Oct 1976	30 Sep 1978



*A squadron KA-3B aboard Eisenhower (CVN 69) in September 1985.*

## VAK-308

### Lineage

Established as Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron THREE HUNDRED EIGHT (VAQ-308) on 2 May 1970.

Redesignated Aerial Refueling Squadron THREE HUNDRED EIGHT (VAK-308) on 1 October 1979.

Disestablished on 30 September 1988. The first squadron to be assigned the VAK-308 designation.

### Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The squadron's insignia was approved by CNO on 28 December 1971. Colors for the Griffin insignia were:



*The squadron's Griffin insignia.*

a blue background outlined in gold, blue scroll outlined in gold with gold lettering; gold lightning bolt; the griffin had markings of different shades of brown, its head was white with shades of gray and its left wing had different shades of gray, the beak and eye were yellow with black markings, the tongue

and claws were red outlined in black; red diamond designs outlined in white.

On 6 October 1981 CNO approved a modification to the squadron's insignia that changed the designation on the scroll from VAQ-308 to VAK-308.

Nickname: Griffins, 1971–1988.

### Chronology of Significant Events

**2 May 1970:** The squadron was established as part of a reorganization intended to increase the combat readiness of the Naval Air Reserve Force. It was to provide tanking, pathfinding and logistic support services to the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets and other units around the world.

**23 Sep 1971:** The squadron conducted its first tanker/pathfinder service across the Atlantic.

**29 Nov–4 Dec 1971:** The squadron conducted its first tanker/pathfinder service across the Pacific.

**Dec 1971–Jan 1972:** Squadron aircraft provided COD service to the *Enterprise* (CVAN 65) while operating in the Bay of Bengal during the Indo-Pakistani War.

**Sep 1972:** Squadron aircraft provided COD services for *Kennedy* (CVA 67) while she was operating in the North Sea.

**Apr–May 1973:** Squadron aircraft provided tanker/pathfinder services for two Reserve F-8 squadrons enroute to operations in the Middle East.

**Sep–Oct 1973:** Squadron aircraft provided COD and tanker service to *Kennedy* operating in the North Atlantic during NATO exercise Operation Magic Sword/Swift Move.

**October 1973:** During the Yon Kippur War in the Middle East squadron aircraft provided tanker/pathfinder service for Operation Nickle Grass, the transatlantic flight of A-4 Skyhawks enroute to Israel.

**Jul–Aug 1974:** During civil unrest and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus squadron aircraft provided tanker and logistic support for *Forrestal* (CVA 59) and *Independence* (CV 62) operating in the area of Cyprus during the crisis.

**Sep 1974:** Squadron aircraft provided COD and tanker service to *Kennedy* operating in the North Atlantic during NATO exercise Operation Northern Merger.

**Sep–Oct 1984:** Squadron aircraft provided tanker/pathfinder service to squadrons involved in exercise Display Determination held in the Mediterranean.

**Apr–May 1987:** Squadron aircraft provided tanker service to units involved in exercise Dragon Hammer. The squadron's aircraft operated out of NAS Sigonella during this evolution.

**Apr 1988:** Squadron aircraft provided tanker service to units involved in exercise Dragon Hammer. The squadron's aircraft operated out of NAS Sigonella during this evolution.



*A squadron KA-3B Skywarrior at NAS Alameda, California, in 1973. Notice the squadron designation VAQ-308 on the extended speed brake.*

**Home Port Assignments**

<i>Location</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
NAS Alameda	02 May 1970

**Commanding Officers**

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Gregory B. Bambo, Jr.	02 May 1970
CDR Charles Jacob	16 Jul 1972
CDR Gregory L. Davison	16 Jun 1974
CDR Tad H. Bingham	06 Dec 1975
CDR Gerald F. Hicks	17 Dec 1977
CDR George L. Green	Jan 1980
CDR James T. Edwards	16 Jan 1982
CDR Dennis J. Kowalzyk	24 Jul 1983
CDR William C. Burgess	19 Jan 1985
CDR Daniel Kalashian	20 Jul 1986
CDR David D. Abelson	28 Jan 1988

**Aircraft Assignment**

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
KA-3B	Sep 1970

**Air Wing Assignments**

<i>Air Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
CVWR-30	ND	02 May 1970

**Unit Awards Received**

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i>	
MUC	21 Dec 1971	30 Sep 1974



*A squadron KA-3B in flight, 1984.*