

2002

## Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE ONE TWO

The "Golden Hawks" of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron 112 (VAW-112) moved from MCAS Miramar to Naval Base Ventura County, Point Mugu, California in July 1998.

The squadron was established in April 20, 1967 and were assigned to Carrier Air Wing 9 (CVW-9). The squadron three combat deployments operating the E-2A in the western Pacific in support of the Vietnam conflict aboard the USS *Enterprise*, CVAN 65.

In May 1970, the squadron was temporarily disestablished and placed in a "stand down" status until reactivated on July 3, 1973. The Golden Hawks, now flying the E-2Bs, were assigned to CVW-2 and made three Western Pacific/Indian Ocean deployments on board the USS *Ranger*, CV 61, before reassignment to CVW-8 aboard the USS *Nimitz*, CVN 68, for a Mediterranean and Indian Ocean deployment.

In May 1979, the squadron transitioned to the E-2C and again became part of CVW-9 in February 1981. As part of CVW-9, VAW-112 made three Western Pacific/Indian Ocean deployments on board USS *Constellation*, CV 64, USS *Ranger*, and USS *Kitty Hawk*, CV 63. During this period, VAW-112 was awarded Battle Efficiency award for 1979 and 1985.

During 1989, VAW-112 deployed aboard USS *Nimitz* for NORPAC 89, and in August 1989, they became the first West Coast squadron to transition to the E-2C Plus Group aircraft.

In February and March of 1990, VAW-112 deployed aboard the USS *Constellation* "Around the Horn" of South America to Norfolk, Virginia. Then in September 1990, the squadron deployed to Howard Air Force Base, Panama, for a Joint Task Force *Four* project. The squadron finished the year and entered 1991 with the CVW-9 workup schedule on board the USS *Nimitz*.

In March 1991, the squadron departed for the Western Pacific, Indian Ocean, Northern Arabian Gulf cruise in support of Operation *Desert Storm* aboard the USS *Nimitz*.

In December 1991, VAW-112 deployed again to Howard Air Force Base, Panama for a Joint Task Force *Four* counter narcotics operation. The squadron participated in joint and combined exercises in 1992 including *JADO/JEZ* in March and *Roving Sands* in May 1992.

In February 1993, VAW-112 deployed aboard USS *Nimitz* to the Arabian Gulf in support of Operation *Southern Watch*, flying more than 1,000 hours. Upon returning, VAW-112 transitioned to the E-2C Plus Group II. In November 1993, VAW-112 deployed to Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The year of 1994 was a year of numerous detachments for VAW-112, due to the USS *Nimitz*' dry dock period. These included *Red Air* and *Red Flag* exercises during February; *JADO/JEZ* trials in March; *Roving Sands* and *Maple Flag* in Cold Lake, Alberta, Canada in June; and another Joint Task Force *Four* counter narcotics operation detachment in August.

Following a rigorous work-up cycle in 1995, the squadron departed San Diego for the Arabian Gulf aboard the USS *Nimitz* in December.

After remaining on station for three months, VAW-112 departed the Arabian Gulf to support United States foreign policy off the coast of Taiwan. After returning home in May, the squadron then headed for Puerto Rico in July for counter narcotics operations at Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.

During a 1997 work-up cycle for an "Around the World" deployment in late July, the squadron participated in a Pacific Fleet Surge Exercise. The squadron provided unparalleled battle space command and control to the battle group for more than 96 continuous hours. It was during this time that VAW-112 also surpassed a safety milestone - 27 years and more than 57,000 mishaps-free flight hours. They departed San Diego in September 1997 on another "Around the World" deployment. In 1997, the Golden Hawks were presented the Battle "E", the CNO Safety "S" Award, and the coveted Northrop-Grumman Airborne Early Warning Excellence Award.

The Golden Hawks deployed in July 1998 for a short detachment to Hawaii aboard the USS *Kitty Hawk* and later transferred the newest E-2C Plus Group II Navigation Upgrade aircraft to VAW-115 home based at NAF Atsugi, Japan.

Following a work-up period in 1999, the Golden Hawks deployed aboard USS *John C. Stennis* in January 2000 for a Western Pacific/Indian Ocean cruise that included flight operations in support of Operation *Southern Watch* over Iraq. The Squadron wrapped up 2000 with counter narcotics operations in Puerto Rico in September and a carrier qualification detachment to Mazatlan, Mexico in December.

In 2001, the Golden Hawks executed several aircraft control detachments including detachments to NAS Key West, Florida; NS Norfolk, Virginia; and NAS Fallon, Nevada. While still continuing their work-up cycle leading to a 2002 deployment, the Golden Hawks also participated in Fleet Battle Experiment *India*, providing air control services to the battle group participating in the highest profile Navy exercise in many years.

In July of 2001, the Golden Hawks left for Tailored Ships Training Availability (TSTA). This was the first underway period since the previous deployment. The Golden Hawks visited Seattle, Washington for four days and left again for Comprehensive Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX). The squadron was called to defend the country after the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist act on the World Trade Center in New York City and on the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Around the clock, the Golden Hawks stood alerts and flew combat missions for the air defense of the entire West Coast of the U.S. in support of Operation *Noble Eagle*.

Immediately following their actions in Operation *Noble Eagle*, the Golden Hawks left for Air Wing Fallon in Fallon, Nevada. The squadron finished an accelerated training schedule and deployed two months early in mid-November 2001 along with the rest of CVW-9 aboard USS *John C. Stennis*. After an expedited transit across the Pacific, including port calls in Hong Kong and Singapore, the squadron commenced arduous combat operations over Afghanistan in mid-December. The squadron accumulated over 2,095 hours, 500 sorties, and logging 666 arrested landings in support of Operation *Enduring Freedom*. The Golden Hawks returned home to Naval Base Ventura County at Point Mugu at the end of May, 2002, enjoying port calls in Australia during the transit home.

Upon returning home, VAW-112 completed transition training to the Mission Computer Upgrade and Advanced Controller Indicator Set (MCU/ACIS) Navigation Upgrade version of the E-2C Plus aircraft. This new version of the Hawkeye featured improved display scopes and interfaces for aircraft controllers and mission commanders, along with an upgraded, more powerful mission computer. In addition, the aircraft's navigation system is significantly more reliable.

After four short months at home, VAW-112 again was called upon to ready itself for the possibility of an early deployment in support of the Global War on Terrorism. In October of 2002, the Golden Hawks commenced an unannounced, compressed inter-deployment training cycle (IDTC) and left for Fallon, Nevada to complete both Strike Fighter Advance Readiness Program (SFARP) and Air Wing Nine Fallon Det in a record span of three weeks. The Golden Hawks returned home for three weeks and readied themselves for COMPTUEX PLUS on board USS *Carl Vinson*, CVN-70. Following completion of this accelerated IDTC, in January 2003 the Golden Hawks deployed to the Western Pacific on board USS *Carl Vinson*, seven months ahead of schedule. The CARL VINSON strike group is currently serving as a presence force in the Global War on Terrorism in the Western Pacific and as a deterrent force in Northeast Asia as the USS *Kitty Hawk* undergoes an intensive dry dock period. When CVW-9 returns home in November 2003, it would have been deployed, embarked, or detached twenty-one of the previous twenty-seven months making the air wing the most deployed Naval Aviation unit since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001.

The Golden Hawks will remain attached to CVW-9 and are scheduled to move to the USS *Ronald Reagan*, CVN-76. When they are not deployed, embarked, detached, or otherwise protecting the nation, the Golden Hawks can be found at NBVC, Point Mugu,