

## COMMAND HISTORY

The SCREWTOPS of VAW-123 have achieved an impressive record throughout their 36-year history. The squadron has accumulated more than 68,000 flight hours and over 15,000 carrier arrested landings, without suffering a Class-A Mishap in over 34 years. Recently, the squadron was presented with the RADM Akers AEW Excellence Award, the Golden Anchor Award for leadership in retention, and the 2001 Battle Efficiency Award, evidence of the genuine team spirit for which the "World Famous" SCREWTOPS have always been known.

The history of VAW-123 begins in 1964 with the commissioning of VAW-12, officially known as Carrier Early Warning Squadron Twelve. During its history, the organization of VAW-12 changed internally many times. The last change resulted in the establishment of Carrier Early Warning Wing Twelve and the commissioning of all E-2A detachments as independent squadrons. As a result of this reorganization, VAW-12 Detachment 59 was commissioned VAW-123 in April 1967, under the command of CDR W. L. Hill.

Initially attached to CVW-17 aboard the USS *Forrestal* (CV 59), the squadron became an integral part of CVW-3 aboard the USS *Saratoga* (CV 60) and remained there throughout the 1970s. In October 1980, the squadron transferred to CVW-11 aboard the USS *America* (CV 66). Following a 1981 Indian Ocean deployment, VAW-123 transferred to CVW-1 on 12 November 1981. Since that time, the SCREWTOPS have made several extended Indian Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, and North Atlantic deployments as an integral part of the CVW-1/CV-66 team, until the decommissioning of the USS *America* in the Spring of 1997.

Throughout the years, VAW-123 has consistently been at the forefront of the Airborne Early Warning community. In addition to being recipients of many awards, including twelve Battle "E's" and nine Safety "S's," highlights of the command's history include the successful employment of the E-2C in 1972 and the first operational deployment of the E-2C ARPS (Advanced Radar Processing System) in 1978. In March of 1996, the SCREWTOPS became the first E-2 squadron on the East Coast to transition to the E-2C Group II aircraft, with its significantly upgraded avionics and engines. In November 1998, the Screwtops again led the way by becoming the first operational squadron on the East Coast to accept delivery of E-2C Group II's with the Navigation Upgrade.

The SCREWTOPS have successfully met many challenging assignments and maintained a watchful eye on world events, ever ready to support national policy. The SCREWTOPS were key participants in the 1986 Gulf of Sidra operations off the coast of Libya, and were directly involved in the first combat use of the HARM (High speed Anti-Radiation Missile) and Harpoon weapon systems. The SCREWTOPS supported Operation *Desert Shield/Desert Storm* and were the only E-2 squadron to operate in both the Red Sea and Arabian Gulf. The SCREWTOPS have also flown in support of Operations *Deny Flight* and *Deliberate Force* over Bosnia-Herzegovina and Operation *Southern Watch* over Iraq. Most recently, the SCREWTOPS flew in support of the War on Terror as part of Operation *Enduring Freedom* in the skies over Pakistan and Afghanistan, returning home aboard the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* in March of 2002.

Today, the SCREWTOPS are in the early stages of their Inter-Deployment Training Cycle preparing for their Deployment aboard the USS *Enterprise* (CVN-65).

The Commanding Officer, Commander Miller, has a very clear vision for the SCREWTOPS. "Our squadron plays a critical role in our nations

defense. As such, we will focus our efforts on attaining and maintaining the highest levels of combat readiness. We will do this through personal and team excellence in everything we do. We will always remember that we have been entrusted with our nations faith and expectations, and we will hold true to our responsibilities."