

1991 ✓



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON  
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FOUR  
FLEET POST OFFICE  
NEW YORK 09507-6410

5757  
Ser 16/049  
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From: Commanding Officer, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron  
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FOUR

To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY OPNAV 5750-1

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

- Encl: (1) Command Organization
- (2) Chronological Order of Events
- (3) Narrative History
- (4) Statistics

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (4) are submitted.

*J. J. George*  
J. J. George

*Logged*  
MAR 12 1992

VAW-124 COMMAND HISTORY  
FOR 1991

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Command Organization

- a. Commanding Officer  
Commander J. R. Neff - Commander J. J. George  
22 Sep 89 - 15 Feb 91 15 Feb 91 - Present
  
- b. Executive Officer  
Commander J. J. George - Commander T. A. Parker  
22 Sep 89 - 15 Feb 91 15 Feb 91 - Present
  
- c. Squadron Mission

To function as an airborne tactical command and control center for offensive and defensive operations by providing Airborne Early Warning and aircraft control through data link and voice communications.

d. Command Composition

Aircraft: Five Grumman E-2C Hawkeyes

- AJ 600, Buno # 161780
- AJ 601, Buno # 161552
- AJ 602, Buno # 161781
- AJ 603, Buno # 161782
- AJ 604, Buno # 161783 (Transferred to VAW-122  
July 1991)
- AJ 605, Buno # 160007 (Received October 1991)

Personnel:

Officers: 32

- Flying Status: 28
- Maint/Intel: 4

Enlisted: 137

- Enlisted on Board: 135
- Flight Status: 2

e. Squadron Nickname: "Bear Aces"

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF EVENTS

01 JAN - 04 JAN 1991	ORANGE AIR/CV-66
05 JAN 1991	MISSILEX - AZORES
06 JAN - 07 JAN 1991	TRANSLANT
08 JAN - 14 JAN 1991	MED TRANSIT/SICILY & EGYPT
15 JAN 1991	SUEZ TRANSIT
15 JAN - 16 JAN 1991	RED SEA OPS/TRANSIT
17 JAN - 19 JAN 1991	NORTH ARABIAN GULF/STRAIGHTS OF HORMUZ TRANSIT
20 JAN - 11 MAR 1991	DESERT STORM, ARABIAN GULF
12 MAR - 15 MAR 1991	INPORT - DUBAI U.A.E.
16 MAR - 26 MAR 1991	DESERT STORM, ARABIAN GULF
27 MAR 1991	ARABIAN GULF/STRAIGHTS OF HORMUZ TRANSIT
27 MAR - 31 MAR 1991	NORTH ARABIAN SEA OPS/TRANSIT
01 APR - 19 APR 1991	DESERT STORM, RED SEA
20 APR 1991	SUEZ TRANSIT
21 APR - 22 MAY 1991	OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT, EAST MED
23 MAY - 27 MAY 1991	INPORT - HAIFA, ISRAEL
28 MAY - 01 JUN 1991	EAST MED OPS
02 JUN - 07 JUN 1991	INPORT - RHODES, GREECE
08 JUN - 13 JUN 1991	EAST MED OPS
14 JUN 1991	TURNOVER/USS FORRESTAL (CV-59)
14 JUN - 16 JUN 1991	MED TRANSIT
16 JUN - 25 JUN 1991	TRANSLANT
26 JUN 1991	FLYOFF
27 JUN - 28 JUN 1991	NORVA

Encl (2)

28 JUN 1991	CVN-71 ARRIVES CONUS
31 JUL - 01 AUG 1991	U. S. MARINE HAWK MISSILEX
05 SEP - 06 SEP 1991	FITWING ONE MISSILEX
11 SEP 1991	CVN-71 MISSILEX
24 SEP - 26 SEP 1991	FITWING ONE MISSILEX
20 OCT - 21 OCT 1991	USS ARLEIGH BURKE MISSILEX
21 OCT - 23 OCT 1991	SOCEX
14 NOV - 24 NOV 1991	COUNTERNARCOTICS OPS DET - GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA
24 NOV 1991	SPACE SHUTTLE ALERT
16 NOV - 18 DEC 1991	FFARP (W-72)
6 DEC - 13 DEC 1991	ORANGE AIR - ROOSEVELT ROADS, PR

## COMMAND HISTORY UPDATE 1991

The Bear Aces of VAW-124 began 1991 over the stormy seas off of the coast of Bermuda en route to an uncertain deployment, while a small detachment in Bahrain provided AEW and Command and Control in the Northern Arabian Gulf.

Following a blistering nonstop transit of the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71) transited the Suez Canal on 15 January, and arrived in the Red Sea just prior to the beginning of Operation Desert Storm.

On 21 January, CVW-8 launched it's first major strike with the Bear Aces providing critical AEW, command and control, and SAR coordination as well as initiating several remarkable and lifesaving operations.

In one instance, the Bear Aces, reacting on an emergency verbal message from the Battle Force Zulu Commander, organized strike assets from three Gulf carriers and directed a six hour close air support relief effort for Coalition forces at RAS AL KAFJI, thwarting an Iraqi offensive.

Later in the conflict, VAW-124 aircraft located four Iraqi patrol boats attempting a late night covert transit to Iranian waters. Three boats were sunk by USS RANGER (CV-61) aircraft, all under Bear Ace control.

VAW-124 conducted a successful SAR for an F/A-18 pilot who ejected in the Central Gulf, acting as SAR coordinator and SAR commander while maintaining AEW coverage throughout.

The Bear Aces also organized a quick reaction attack against a newly discovered silkworm surface-to-surface missile site. The aircrew located strike assets, vectored them to the missile site, coordinated clearance through naval gunfire support areas, and conducted reattacks until the site was confirmed destroyed.

When the cease fire went into effect on 28 February, the Bear Aces had flown a total of 331 combat sorties, over 1155 combat hours in support of the more than 1221 strikes against 531 targets in the Kuwait Theater of Operations (KTO), the most combat hours and combat sorties of any E-2C squadron. Remarkably, over 750 of the combat hours were flown in a single 30 day period. Despite the cease fire agreement, VAW-124 and CVW-8 continued to operate in the Arabian Gulf throughout most of March.

After transiting the Suez Canal on 20 April, the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71) assumed station northeast of Cyprus between Turkey and Syria to lead the multi-national Operation Provide Comfort. The Bear Aces provided the critical link and coordi-

nation for this massive effort to aid the Kurdish refugees and support Coalition ground forces in Turkey and Northern Iraq.

In the four weeks of Provide Comfort, the squadron logged 153 sorties and 630 flight hours. A brief port call to Haifa, Israel from 23 to 27 May interrupted nearly ten weeks of continuous operations. The second and final port call of the deployment was to Rhodes, Greece from 2-7 June.

The USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71) transited the Mediterranean from 14-16 June en route to it's homeport of Norfolk, VA. The transit home ended a highly successful and unforgettable combat cruise for the Bear Aces.

On 26 June, the Bear Aces returned home to a hero's welcome. The remainder of June and July was spent standing down, with pilot training sorties common.

VAW-124 took part in a USMC Hawk Missilex on 31 July and 1 August. Five days later, the Bear Aces provided command and control for USAF F-15 fighters during a joint CAPEX.

On 14 August, VAW-124 provided range surveillance and booster rocket tracking for a NASA space shuttle launch. The Bear Aces also participated in three missile exercises in August. Two were in support of the USS ARLEIGH BURKE (DDG-51), and the third was a Tomahawk live firing in Eglin AFB, FL on 31 August.

The Bear Aces flew aboard the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71) on 7 September for a ten day trip to Halifax, Canada. VAW-124 also provided range surveillance and control for three fighter missilexes in September.

On 20 October, VAW-124 participated in another Aegis Missilex, while providing CAP control for Blue Forces during a Special Operations Coordination Exercise from 21-24 October.

November and December were busy months for VAW-124. From 1-6 November, the Bear Aces supported the USCG in a week long SAR effort providing aircraft control and flight separation. On 14 November, the Bear Aces sent a detachment to NAS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for ten days to conduct counter-narcotics operations. Throughout November and December, the Bear Aces flew daily FFARP missions with VF-41 and VF-84, providing outstanding air wing training.

VAW-124 and CVW-8 participated as Orange Forces in the 6-13 December FLEETEX in Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. The Bear Aces returned to a VFA-87 Missilex from 10 to 11 December, and a FITWING ONE Missilex on 17 December.

The year ended quietly with the achievements of VAW-124 during Operation Desert Storm clearly the highlight of the squadron's 24 year history.

## Statistics

### a. Milestones

Flight Hours for CY 1991: 3,179.9

Completed 20.5 years of accident-free flying as of July 1991, over 41,500 hours including 1,150 combat hours during Operation Desert Storm.

### b. Performance Statistics

1. Mission Capable Rate (MC): 80.2%
2. Full Mission Capable Rate (FMC): 69.5%
3. A799 Rate: 2.2%
4. FOD Incidents: 0
5. Sortie Completion Rate: Combat - 100%  
Peacetime - 99%



CVW-8 aircraft USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT cruise  
Desert Storm

<u>VF-41</u>	<u>F-14A</u>		
100	162703	101	162689
102	160918	103	160407
104	160387	105	161852
106	160394	107	160903
111	160898		

notes: 100, 101 in overall gray scheme, others in TPS.

<u>VF-84</u>	<u>F-14A</u>		
200	162688	201	162692
202	160391	204	160908
207	160902	210	160405
211	161164	212	160926
214	161137		

notes: 200,201 started cruise in gloss gray scheme with black tails, were repainted in one-tone dull gray in hangar bay enroute.

-several acft (numbers?) had black tails applied post war and prior to fly off.

-211,212,214 TARPS equipped.

<u>VFA-15</u>	<u>F/A-18A</u>		
300	163113	301	163119
302	163124	303	163126
304	163121	305	163120
306	163122	307	163125
310	163101	311	163143

notes: 304/163121 lost 25 Jan 91, non-combat. pilot recovered.

-163135/AJ 304 replacement acft from VFA-132 during war.

<u>VFA-87</u>	<u>F/A-18A</u>		
400	163117	401	163096
402	163095	403	163094
404	163100	405	163105
406	163099	407	163102
410	163106	411	163107

notes: 401/163096 lost 5 Feb 91 (non-combat) with Lt BJ Dwyer. (CVW-8 LSO).

-163103/AJ 412 replacement aircraft near end of war.

<u>VA-65</u>	<u>A-6E</u>		
500	161675	501	155718
502	157001	503	155620
504	149957	506	161231
510	161682	511	159314
512	159175		

notes: 503 had desert camo applied. Removed by 9 Feb.  
 -511 transferred to VA-35 for return to CONUS 3/91. 161659/AJ 505 received in exchange.

<u>VA-36</u>	<u>A-6E</u>		
530	161660	531	155632
532	155716	533	161667
534	159176	535	155703
540	158538	541	158538
542	159574		

notes: 533 had desert camo applied. Removed by 9 Feb.  
 -155632/531 lost 2 Feb 91 near Falayka Is to enemy fire. crew lost.  
 -158538 transferred to VA-35 for return to CONUS following end of war. 158051/AJ 530 acquired from VA-35 in exchange. 161660 renumbered to "second" 540, 155600/AJ536 acquired from VA-95/Whidbey Is during war as replacement for 531.

<u>VAW-124</u>	<u>E-2C</u>		
600	161780	601	161552
602	161781	603	161782
604	161783		

<u>HS-9</u>	<u>SH-3H</u>		
610	149725	611	149735
612	149899	614	151541
615	148991	616	148983

<u>VAQ-141</u>	<u>EA-6B</u>		
620	163405	621	163527
622	163528	623	163529
624	163530		

<u>VS-24</u>	<u>S-3B</u>		
700	160125	701	159743
702	159729	705	159761
707	159753		

notes: 701 in gloss gray/white scheme, others in TPS. 701 had red rudder painted out prior to war.

VRC-40 det D C-2B  
AJ 46 162168

THE GREAT NOSE ART CONTEST:

Near the end of the war VF-41 painted up 101 with noseart. CAG liked it enough to authorize the other squadrons to paint one apiece on a not-to-interfere with ops basis. By the end of the March port call in Dubai, about everybody had complied. (except the two F-18 squadrons, which never did it.). VA-65 had applied the same Garfield markings to two aircraft before CAG's edict.... they removed it from 501 by the end of March. The nose art lasted officially until the first port call in the Med, (Haifa) when it was to have been removed (late May). It appears as if VAW-124 was able to hide theirs, as it reappeared for fly off to Norfolk!

VF-41 101 Queen of Spades  
VF-84 201 Cat Snatch Fever  
VA-65 500/501 The Big Stick  
VA-36 536 Heart Less  
VAW-124 601 Miss B.Havin ← won nose art contest.  
VAQ-141 621 Eve of Destruction/Deception Lass  
VS-24 701 Eye of the Storm

SHIP CO/XO/CAG/AOM FROST  
were judges.

-Final note: 536 recieved red road runner tail markings when it had its nose art painted. By fly off, all VA-36 aircraft were so painted. It also appears as if VF-84 applied black tails to all of their aircraft for fly off. ( I wasn't on the ship that late)