

T-2Cs Have Their Ups and Downs



Left, T-2C *Buckeyes* are down again after a flight anomaly during a 20 June training mission.

After less than a month in an “up” status, the Navy’s fleet of T-2C *Buckeyes* was grounded again after a NAS Meridian, Miss., based *Buckeye* experienced an uncommanded-flight-control anomaly during a training mission on 20 June. The aircraft landed safely after the incident. The planes had just been cleared to resume flight operations on 27 May after a month-long suspension following a 28 April incident in which another NAS Meridian T-2C experienced a momentary uncommanded pitch-over of about one negative G during a training flight at Andrews AFB, Md.. Although that *Buckeye* also landed safely, the incident prompted an investigation which revealed that hydraulic contamination could affect flight control actuators and lead to uncommanded inputs. Every T-2C’s hydraulic system had been purged and the actuators reworked at Naval Aviation Depot, Jacksonville, Fla., prior to the 27 May return to service.

Faster Ospreys

The Quadrennial Defense Review, released on 19 May, outlined a slimmer stable of MV-22 *Ospreys*, but those aircraft will reach the fleet more quickly. The review reduces the Marine Corps’ order to 360 from 425, but speeds up the production rate to 30 aircraft per year by 2004. The plan will shorten the acquisition period by nine years, and

reduce the program’s overall cost by more than \$3 billion. The Pentagon cited the Marine Corps’ urgent need to replace its aging fleet of CH-46 *Sea Knights* as the reason for the increased production rate.

Super Hornet Passes Muster

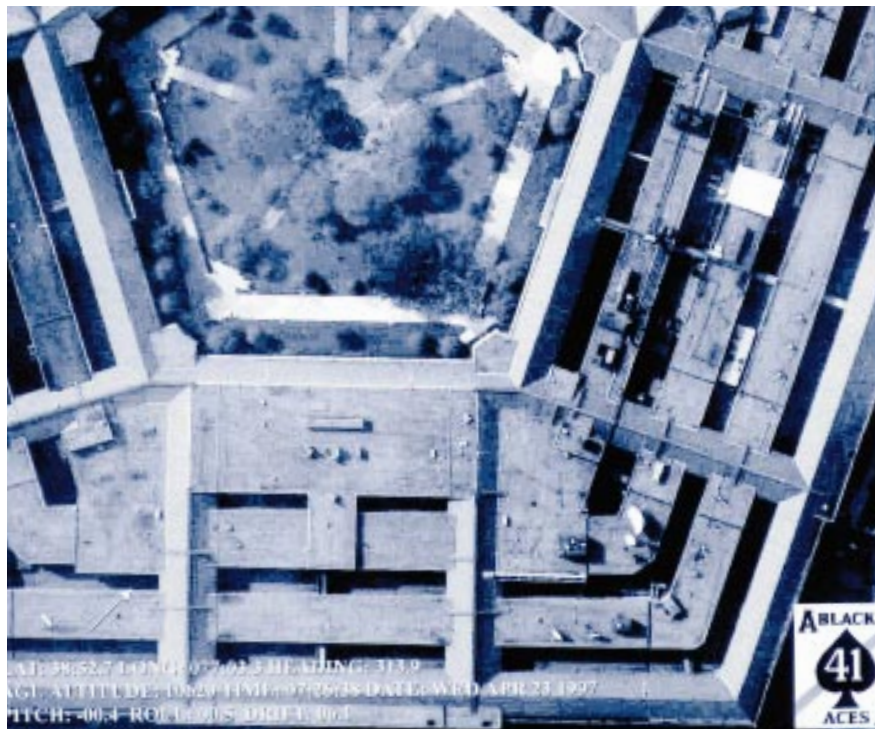
With one year remaining in the *Super Hornet* test program, F/A-18F1 passed the 1,000 flight-hour mark on

9 May at NAS Patuxent River, Md. Another milestone was reached when an AIM-120 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile was fired from F/A-18F2 on 5 May.

TARPS Digital Camera

The Navy’s newest high-tech aircraft camera with Tactical Air Reconnaissance Pod System-Digital Imagery (TARPS-DI) made its debut for Department of Defense officials on 23 April in Washington, D.C. Two F-14 *Tomcats* of Fighter Squadron 41, NAS Oceana, Va., flew over and photographed the Pentagon, and transmitted digital images directly to a computer in a Humvee in the parking lot. This demonstration indicated the digital camera’s potential for providing real-time images to the fleet. The Navy plans to build 24 TARPS-DI systems by 2003 at a cost of \$6 to \$8 million.

Below, the TARPS-DI demonstrated its capability by capturing images of the Pentagon on 23 April.





Greg Senff

Above, a Naval Weapons Test Squadron, Point Mugu, Calif., NP-3D *Orion* operating near Kwajalein Atoll provides telemetry data for a Delta rocket in December 1996.



Test fires such as this one at NAS Keflavik, Iceland, helped researchers determine new fire protection criteria for aircraft hangars.

Hangar Fire Research

The Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology have released the findings of a two-year study that examined fire protection systems in high-bay aircraft hangars. Thirty-three full-scale fire tests using JP-5 and

JP-8 fuels were conducted in hangars at NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii, and NAS Keflavik, Iceland. NAVFAC plans to use the results of this study to implement new fire protection design criteria, such as closed-head sprinklers and low-level foam systems, to protect not only the hangar but also the aircraft. To

obtain a CD-ROM containing all the test data, the report and an informational video, contact Joseph Gott at NAVFAC: 703-325-0036, e-mail <jegott@hq.navfac.navy.mil>; or the National Institute of Building Sciences: 202-289-7800.

Contact Lens Policy

To clarify the contact lens policy reported in the Mar-Apr issue, contact lenses are authorized for Navy and Marine Corps aviation personnel when operational requirements dictate wearing night vision devices, protective eye equipment and other devices which preclude the wearing of spectacles. The member's unit will determine eligibility for contact lenses as mission-essential equipment, and the member's commanding officer must approve this in writ-

ing before submission to the supporting medical treatment facility.

GulfLink E-mail

GulfLink, the on-line source for Gulf War Illness information, now provides e-mail access; log on to <www.dtic.mil/gulflink>. Three telephone hot lines offer another avenue for information. To report wartime incidents that may be linked to health problems, call 800-472-6719. Current service members can call 800-796-9699, and those who are separated from service can call 800-749-8387, if they have health concerns they believe are related to the war.

AMELIA Fits the Bill

The Aircrew Modified Equipment Leading to Increased Accommodation (AMELIA) program at Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division, Patuxent River, Md., has designed a prototype anti-exposure coverall and liner to accommodate a wider range of body types than those currently in use in the fleet. Made of knit fabric for reduced bulk, the suit can provide a sleek fit, yet expand when needed. Wear tests will determine whether a one-piece or a two-piece design will be introduced to the fleet.



Project engineer Holli Galletti shows the proposed anti-exposure coverall designed to fit a wider range of body types.



Photos by Vance Vasquez

Above, two Improved Tactical Air-Launched Decoys (ITALD) are mounted next to their predecessor on the wing of a Naval Weapons Test Squadron, China Lake, Calif., F/A-18C Hornet. Right, the ITALD underwent a series of six test flights at Naval Air Warfare Center, Weapons Division, Point Mugu, Calif., in January.



Mishaps

An HH-60H *Seahawk* of Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron 3, based at NAS Cecil Field, Fla., crashed off North Carolina on 13 March while operating from *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67). LCdr. Joseph F. King, Lt. Christopher D. Buckley, AWC Andrew K. Baker and AW2 Edward J. Kos were killed.

On 15 April, a T-45 *Goshawk* crashed in a wooded area near NAS Kingsville, Texas. The pilot, Ens. Jessica Gardner of Training Squadron 21, ejected safely.

Airman Nadia T. Alten was reported missing from *John F. Kennedy* off the Florida coast on 30 April. The search for the airman, presumed lost overboard, was called

off after 28 hours.

A float-equipped OH-58A *Kiowa* from the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School, NAS Patuxent River, Md., rolled inverted during a planned water takeoff in the Patuxent on 5 May. The test pilot instructor and flight test engineer were unhurt and were rescued by the air station's search and rescue boat.

Four members of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 164, based at MCAS El Toro, Calif., were presumed dead after their CH-46E *Sea Knight* crashed following takeoff from *Juneau* (LPD 10) off California on 10 May. Pilot Maj. Dennis A. Dogs, copilot Capt. Paul D. Barnes, aerial observer LCpl. Rodolfo Guajardo and crew chief Cpl. Michael J. Tisoris were killed.

F-14s Consolidated at Oceana

The 10 April 1997 arrival of Fighter Squadron (VF) 213 at NAS Oceana, Va., marked the completion of the year-long move of West Coast fighter squadrons from NAS Miramar, Calif.

The consolidation occurred as a result of the congressionally approved Base Realignment and Closure Commission decision to turn over NAS Miramar to the Marine Corps on 1 October 1997. All of the Navy's active fighter squadrons are now under the administrative command of Fighter Wing, U.S. Atlantic Fleet at Oceana, including VFs 2, 11, 31, 211 and 213, as well as a detachment of VF-101, the F-14 fleet readiness squadron at Oceana. One F-14

Naval Aviation Depot, Cherry Point, N.C., rolled out an Air Force MH-53J *Pavelow* helicopter on 9 May after completing On Conditional Maintenance (OCM) in a record-setting 100-day turnaround time.

This aircraft was the prototype for a 90-day plan for the basic OCM rework—disassembly, inspection and any needed repairs—with addi-



Larry Conley

tional days allowed for more involved maintenance or repair. Twelve more *Pavelows* are scheduled for overhaul by the year 2000.

Tomcat squadron, VF-154, remains permanently forward deployed to Carrier Air Wing 5 at NAF Atsugi, Japan, for duty on board *Independence* (CV 62).

The consolidation also precipitated a number of aircraft transi-

tions among Oceana-based squadrons. VFs 102 and 143 switched from the F-14B to the F-14B Upgrade, and VF-11 transitioned from the F-14D to the F-14B Upgrade. VF-11 has joined VF-143 as part of Carrier Air Wing 7.

Established

VAQ-142 Gray Wolves

A 3 April 1997 ceremony at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., marked the establishment (officially 1 April) of Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron (VAQ) 142. Cdr. Patrick D. Keller is the first CO of the *Gray Wolves*.

VAQ-142 will operate the EA-6B *Prowler* electronic warfare aircraft in support of Air Force composite wings as the Air Force phases out its EF-111As. The *Gray Wolves* will include a number of Air Force personnel in its ranks. VAQ-142 is the fourth carrier-capable EA-6B squadron marked for use as an expeditionary squadron in support of Air Force wings, joining VAQs 133, 134 and 137. A fifth squadron, VAQ-128, is slated to stand up in October.

VAQ-142 carries on some of the traditions of an earlier VAQ-142, the *Grim Watchdogs*, which served from 1988 until 1991, and of its successor, the VAQ-35 *Greywolves*, an electronic aggressor squadron that was disestablished in 1993.



The VAQ-142 *Gray Wolves* expeditionary squadron will fly the EA-6B *Prowler* in support of Air Force composite wings, with joint Air Force and Navy crews.

Disestablished

VA-128 Golden Intruders

A 29 September 1995 ceremony at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., marked the disestablishment (officially 30 September) of Attack Squadron (VA) 128 after 28 years of service. Capt. Randy S. Dearth was the last CO of the *Golden Intruders*, the West Coast fleet readiness squadron (FRS) for the A-6 *Intruder* all-weather attack aircraft.

VA-128 began as a maintenance detachment of Heavy Attack Squadron (VAH) 123, the FRS for the A-3 *Skywarrior*. In June 1965,

the detachment moved to NAS Oceana, Va., to receive training in maintenance of the new A-6A *Intruder* from the East Coast FRS, VA-42. Six VAH-123 flight crews followed in January 1966, forming the core of the A-6 training effort upon return to Whidbey Island in August 1966, when the first A-6As arrived there. VAH-123 then commenced training A-6 crews.

On 1 September 1967, VA-128 was established as a separate squadron and trained many of the A-6 crews that flew missions during the Vietnam War. During the war, the *Golden Intruders* conducted the



transition of VAs 52, 115, 145 and 196, as well as the standup of VA-95. In 1968, the squadron received the TC-4C *Academe* twin-engine turbo-prop trainer with the distinctive A-6 radome; this aircraft was used to train bombardier navigators on the A-6's sophisticated attack and navigation systems.

Over the years, VA-128 trained A-6 crews as each version of the A-6 entered fleet service, including the Target Recognition Attack Multisensor and Systems Weapon Improvement Program versions of the A-6E. In October 1986, VA-128 grew substantially as it assumed the training of Marine Corps A-6 crews when the Marine Corps replacement training squadron, Marine Attack Training Squadron 202, was deactivated at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C. By 1988, VA-128 was the Navy's largest FRS.

In September 1988, a permanent Medium Attack Weapons Detachment was set up at NAF El Centro, Calif., for use by both VAs 128 and 42 to train A-6 crews in tactics and weapons delivery. By 1990, VA-128 had grown to nearly 1,000 staff and student personnel. In September 1994, the *Golden Intruders* became the sole A-6 FRS when VA-42 was disestablished.

With the phaseout of the A-6 from fleet service, VA-128's training load steadily diminished, finally ending in the summer of 1995. The squadron flew away its last two A-6Es on 2 October 1995.

In its 28 years, VA-128 trained over 1,300 A-6 pilots, 1,160 bombardier navigators and 17,000 maintenance personnel, and flew over

200,000 hours. At the ceremony, Capt. Dearth presented the squadron's flag to Capt. Roger Pierce, Commander Electronic Combat Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet. The flag and logo will be passed on to a new squadron, Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron 128, an EA-6B expeditionary unit which will be established in October 1997.

VA-95 Green Lizards

An 18 November 1995 ceremony at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., marked the disestablishment (officially 31 October) of Attack Squadron (VA) 95 after over 23 years of service. Cdr. Pieter VandenBergh was the last CO of the *Green Lizards*.

VA-95 was established at Whidbey Island on 1 April 1972, the third squadron to bear that designation, carrying on the *Green Lizard*



traditions of the second VA-95, which was disestablished in 1970. Equipped with the A-6A/B *Intruder* and KA-6D tankers, the new squadron joined Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 15 and deployed to the western Pacific (WESTPAC) on board *Coral Sea* (CVA 43) in March 1973, providing support to Operation End Sweep, the clearing of mine fields off North Vietnam.

The *Green Lizards* saw combat on their second deployment aboard *Coral Sea*. The squadron covered Operation Frequent Wind, the April 1975 evacuation of Americans from South Vietnam as that nation fell to the North Vietnamese invasion.

When the Khmer Rouge forces seized the U.S. merchant ship *Mayaguez* in the Gulf of Thailand, VA-95 crews flew strikes on 15 May 1975 against the airfield and naval facility at Ream, Cambodia, to neutralize Khmer Rouge air and naval forces. The squadron also flew missions in support of the Marine landing at Koh Tang Island.

In 1976, VA-95 upgraded to the A-6E version, and in 1977 made its third and last deployment on board *Coral Sea* with CVW-15, operating in WESTPAC. Upon its return, the squadron joined CVW-11. In 1979, VA-95 embarked on board *America* (CV 66) for a Mediterranean deployment. After transition to the Target Recognition Attack Multisensor version of the A-6E, the squadron returned to the Mediterranean in 1981, operating in the Indian Ocean as well.

Beginning in 1982, VA-95 made five deployments on board *Enterprise* (CVN 65) to WESTPAC and the Indian Ocean. The third of these also took the squadron into the Mediterranean following the retaliatory carrier strikes against Libya. The fourth deployment, in 1988, brought VA-95 into combat during Operation Praying Mantis (18–19 April 1988), after *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG 58) struck a mine in the Persian Gulf. The squadron's A-6Es attacked Iranian *Boghammar* speedboats with Rockeye cluster bombs, destroying one boat and damaging another. Later, after evading surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) fired by the Iranian frigate *Sahand*, two VA-95 crews severely damaged *Sahand* with Harpoon missiles and Skipper laser-guided bombs. After taking another Harpoon hit from a U.S. destroyer, *Sahand* sank when fires reached her magazines. Later, *Sahand's* sister ship, *Sabalan*, drew fire from VA-95 after the ship fired a SAM at the A-6s. One A-6 hit *Sabalan* with laser-guided bombs, leaving the ship dead in the water; the ship was taken under tow with its stern submerged.

VA-95's fifth deployment on board *Enterprise* (1989–1990) took

the squadron through WESTPAC, the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean, and to the U.S. East Coast. After transition to the Systems Weapon Improvement Program (SWIP) version of the A-6E, the squadron rode *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) around Cape Horn as that carrier changed home port to Alameda, Calif.

The *Green Lizards'* last three deployments were made on board *Abraham Lincoln* to WESTPAC, the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, supporting Operation Southern Watch enforcing the no-fly zones over Iraq. During the first of these, the Navy's first deployment of the A-6E SWIP, VA-95 also supported Operation Fiery Vigil, the evacuation of American personnel and their dependents from Subic Bay, Philippines after the eruption of Mount Pinatubo. By this time, the squadron had retired its KA-6D tankers. The second of these deployments included operations in support of UN relief efforts in Somalia.

VF-84 Jolly Rogers

A 29 September 1995 ceremony at NAS Oceana, Va., marked the disestablishment (officially 1 October) of Fighter Squadron (VF) 84 after over 40 years of service. Cdr. Dan Cloyd was the last CO of the *Jolly Rogers*.

Established on 1 July 1955 as Attack Squadron 84, the squadron was redesignated the same day as VF-84. Initially known as the *Vagabonds*, the new squadron was equipped with the FJ-3M *Fury* jet fighter. The squadron operated from *Lake Champlain* (CVA 39) in 1956, and deployed with Carrier Air Group (CVG) 1 on board *Forrestal* (CVA 59) to the Mediterranean; this cruise was followed shortly by NATO's Strikeback exercise in the North Atlantic. In 1958, the squadron shifted to CVG-7 and deployed on board *Randolph* (CVA 15) to the Med during the Lebanon crisis.

In June 1959, VF-84 upgraded to the supersonic F8U-2 (F-8C) *Crusader* fighter and adopted the

Jolly Roger traditions of VF-61, which was disestablished that year. The squadron made four more Mediterranean deployments with *Crusaders* on board *Independence* (CVA 62), and operated in the Caribbean during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. In 1964, the squadron upgraded to the F-4B *Phantom II* interceptor.

In 1965, the *Jolly Rogers* made their only Vietnam War cruise, operating over Southeast Asia from *Independence*. The squadron flew 700 strikes against targets in



Vietnam, at the cost of three F-4Bs lost, one crewman killed and three captured.

VF-84 made two more Mediterranean deployments aboard *Independence*, the second after upgrading to the F-4J version in 1968. In 1969, the squadron joined Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 6 and made four Mediterranean deployments on board *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVA 42), the last in 1975 after switching to the F-4N version.

In March 1976, VF-84 began transition to the F-14A *Tomcat* and joined CVW-8 for the next 17 years. With the new aircraft came the additional role of photoreconnaissance with the Tactical Air Reconnaissance Pod System. The squadron completed six extended deployments to the Mediterranean aboard *Nimitz* (CVN 68) through 1987. The second (1979–1980)

included operations in the Arabian Sea in support of Operation Evening Light, the attempt to rescue U.S. hostages in Iran. The third (1981–1982) included tense operations in the Gulf of Sidra, during which sister squadron VF-41 shot down two hostile Libyan SU-22 fighters. Before the last *Nimitz* deployment, the squadron operated in the North Atlantic in 1986 as part of Exercise Northern Wedding. On the last *Nimitz* cruise, the squadron returned home via Cape Horn as the carrier changed home port to the West Coast in 1987.

VF-84 shifted with CVW-8 to *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) in 1988, completing a North Atlantic exercise that year and deploying to the Mediterranean during 1989. In December 1990, VF-84 sailed on board *Theodore Roosevelt* for Operation Desert Storm. Launching combat patrols from the Red Sea and later the Persian Gulf, the *Jolly Rogers* flew counter-air and reconnaissance missions in support of the coalition offensive to eject Iraqi forces from Kuwait. In March 1991, after the cease-fire, VF-84 supported Operation Provide Comfort over northern Iraq to protect the Kurdish population.

In 1993, VF-84's last deployment took the squadron to the Adriatic Sea in support of Operation Deny Flight over war-torn Bosnia, and through the Suez Canal once again to fly missions in support of Operation Southern Watch in the no-fly zone over Iraq. During this cruise, as CVW-8's only F-14 squadron, VF-84 exercised its new air-to-ground bombing capability, and was tasked heavily in its aerial reconnaissance role.

Upon return to Oceana, VF-84 detached from CVW-8 and spent the remainder of its existence performing in exercises in support of fleet workups. At the disestablishment ceremony, VF-84 turned over the *Jolly Roger* name and traditions to VF-103.

Special thanks to Rick Burgess for his contributions to "Airscoop."