

Riding a Heat Wave



PH3 Brian Fleske

Shimmering heat waves mark the launch of an F/A-18 Hornet of VFA-34 from *George Washington* (CVN 73) on 4 March.

New Radar for F/A-18s

Raytheon Co., El Segundo, Calif., received a contract for the AN/APG-73 radar for Navy, Marine Corps and Royal Australian Air Force F/A-18 *Hornets*. The APG-73 features higher throughputs, greater memory capacity and better reliability than its predecessor, the APG-65. It also produces high-resolution radar ground maps and performs precision strike missions with improved weapon designation accuracy.

Super Hornet Passes OPEVAL

The successful conclusion of the F/A-18E/F *Super Hornet* operational evaluation was announced on 15 February. During the six-month test period, Air Test and Evaluation Squadron 9, China Lake, Calif.,

flew 1,233 hours in over 850 sorties and expended more than 400,000 pounds of ordnance. The first low-rate initial production aircraft have been delivered, and the second round is on schedule.

Shipspace

The newest amphibious assault ship, *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7), was christened on 25 March at Litton Ingalls Shipbuilding, Pascagoula, Miss. It is the second ship named for the

What's the Vector, Victor?



A two-year joint U.S./German test program to develop short takeoff and landing capabilities using the X-31 thrust vectoring technology demonstrator, above, began in March aboard NAS Patuxent River, Md.

February 1945 battle, following LPH 2, which was decommissioned in 1993.

The 41st *Arleigh Burke*-class guided missile destroyer will be named ***Pinckney (DDG 91)***. Its namesake, William Pinckney, a third-class Navy cook, rescued the only other survivor from his battle station following an attack on *Enterprise (CV 6)* during the WW II Battle of Santa Cruz.

Combat Action Ribbon Available

Navy and Marine Corps veterans who saw combat in WW II or Korea and were not recognized with a Combat Action Ribbon may now receive the award retroactively. For more information, write: Navy Board of Decorations and Medals, Chief of Naval Operations (N09B33), 2000 Navy Pentagon, Washington DC 20350-2000.

Storekeepers (AK) will transition to the Storekeeper (SK) rating.

As part of the continuing effort to balance sea-shore rotation, the amount of time spent at sea has been decreased for 101 ratings and increased for 43 ratings. Since 1998 the number of ratings with a 48-month or longer tour has been reduced from 53 to 37.

For more information on these and other personnel issues, log on to www.bupers.navy.mil.

Vietnam Remains Identified

The remains of two Naval Aviators unaccounted for from the Vietnam War have been identified. Cdr. James W. Hall, USN, was shot down while flying an A-7C *Corsair* over North Vietnam on 28 October 1972. Maj. Charles E. Finney, USMC, was lost while flying an A-6A *Intruder* over Laos on 17 March 1969.

Personnel Notes

Between spring 2000 and early 2003, Navy personnel rated as Aviation

For the Record

The *John F. Kennedy (CV 67)* battle group and *Bataan (LHD 5)* amphibious ready group returned to their respective Mayport, Fla., and Norfolk, Va., home ports in March at the conclusion of six-month deployments.

Raytheon Aircraft, Wichita, Kans., began deliveries of the **T-6A Texan II** to Randolph AFB, Texas, where multi-service operational test and evaluation for the Air Force and Navy will be conducted.



JSF on a Stick

A model of the Lockheed Martin Joint Strike Fighter concept sits 98 feet in the air at Lockheed facilities in Helendale, Calif., for radar cross-section testing. The model—mounted inverted to hide the pole attachment from sensors while testing the underside of the aircraft—can be rotated in differing angles to facilitate testing.

Raytheon also was awarded a contract to provide total aircraft support, including on-site maintenance, for 81 Navy and 28 Air Force **C-12 Hurons** in the U.S. and abroad, and another contract for continued production of the **AIM-120 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile**.

The Boeing Co., St. Louis, Mo., received a contract to produce the fourth lot of **Joint Direct Attack Munitions** in the low-rate initial production phase.

Mishaps

A CH-46E *Sea Knight* of Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 265 recovered safely aboard *Juneau* (LPD 10) following an in-flight fire on 9 February.

An F-14B *Tomcat* of Fighter Squadron 102, NAS Oceana, Va., was lost during operations from *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67) on 17 March. The aircrew was rescued.

An F-5E *Tiger II* of Fighter Squadron Composite 13 operating in Reno, Nev., on 19 March, was damaged but the aircrew was unharmed when the aircraft flipped over after suffering blown tires on landing.

An MV-22 *Osprey* based at NAS Patuxent River, Md., and temporarily attached to Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron 1, MCAS Yuma, Ariz., crashed near Tucson, Ariz., on 8 April, killing all 19 Marines aboard. The *Osprey* was part of a two-plane flight conducting operational evaluation.

Future of UAV



Northrop Grumman Corp., Ryan Aeronautical Center, San Diego, Calif., received a \$93.7 million contract for the engineering and manufacturing development of a vertical takeoff and landing tactical unmanned aerial vehicle (VTUAV). Vertical launch and recovery will allow VTUAVs to operate from any air-capable ship as well as confined land-based areas, enhancing their ability to provide real-time and near-real-time data for intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance.



Capt. Dana Potts

Slammin' with SLAM/ER

In early 2000, a Stand-Off Land Attack Missile/Expanded Response missile with a live warhead was successfully launched by a Navy F/A-18 *Hornet* against a target more than 40 miles away. With a decommissioned cruiser serving as a target off the coast of Puerto Rico, the test validated the missile's ability to send in-flight target position updates and infrared imagery to the pilot. Left, an F/A-18 *Hornet* launches a SLAM/ER near China Lake, Calif., in December 1999.

VT-35 Stingrays Established

Training Squadron (VT) 35 was established in a 29 October 1999 ceremony at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas. The *Stingrays* were formed from a part of VT-31 to train pilots in the multiengine turboprop TC-12B *Huron* (Beech *Super King Air*) aircraft.

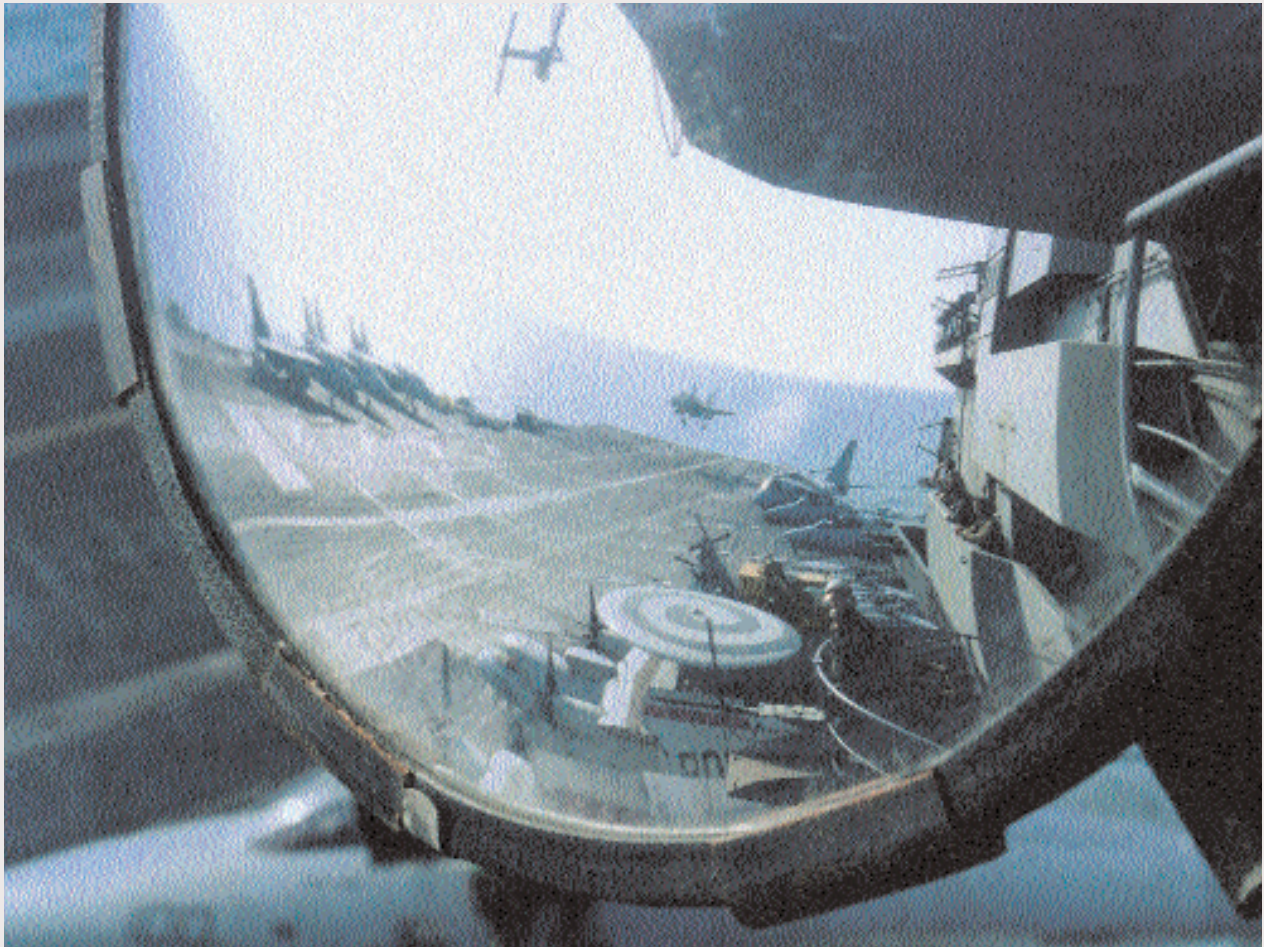
With VT-35's establishment, the Navy once again has two squadrons to train multiengine pilots. VT-31 instructs students in the T-44A *Pegasus*, taking over from VT-28, which in the early 1990s became a primary syllabus training squadron operating the T-34C *Turbo-Mentor*.

The increased need for multiengine training arose when the Navy took on responsibility for providing joint training of Air Force pilots destined to fly the

many C-130 *Hercules* aircraft in service. In 1998 VT-31 began receiving TC-12Bs (former UC-12B utility transports retired from duty) to augment its T-44As, and in 1999 the Navy decided to form a separate squadron to operate the aircraft. Navy pilots who receive their wings in VT-35 will go on to fly the P-3 *Orion* and EP-3 *Aries II*.

VT-35 is unique because it is the first Navy squadron to have an Air Force officer as its *first* commanding officer. (Since joint training was instituted in 1993, other Navy training squadrons have had Air Force COs). Lt. Col. John Gomez is the first CO of the *Stingrays*, which comprise Navy and Air Force instructor pilots and students.

In the Eye of the Beholder



The commanding officer's mirror attached to the superstructure of *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67) produces a fisheye view of an F/A-18 *Hornet* on final approach.

PH3 Chris Moore