

## SECOND VA-34

### Lineage

Established as Fighter Squadron TWENTY (VF-20) on 15 October 1943.

Redesignated Fighter Squadron NINE A (VF-9A) on 15 November 1946.

Redesignated Fighter Squadron NINETY ONE (VF-91) on 12 August 1948.

Redesignated Fighter Squadron THIRTY FOUR (VF-34) on 15 February 1950.

Redesignated Attack Squadron THIRTY FOUR (VA-34) on 1 July 1955.

Disestablished on 1 June 1969. The second squadron to be assigned the VA-34 designation.

### Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The first insignia used by the squadron was a “Joker” breaking out of a deck of cards carrying a machine gun. This insignia was selected by the squadron because the young and inexperienced pilots in the squadron were referred to as the “Jokers.” It was approved by CNO on 15 March 1944. Colors for the insignia were: the deck of cards was outlined in black with the diamond marking on the back of the card in blue and white; the face



*The squadron's first insignia was approved for use by VF-20 during World War II.*

of the card was white with black outlines and lettering; the Joker's hat and neck garment were blue; his right arm was yellow and the other arm white, outlined in black; a black and white machine gun; facial features of Joker outlined in black; and the ripped portion of the card was in the blue and white diamond design.

The next insignia adopted by the squadron was the outline of a human skull. This insignia was approved by CNO on 1 February 1946. Superimposed on the nose of a skull was a human skeleton with the arms holding paddles that became the eyes of the skull, while the teeth were represented by the word “Fighting 20.” The colors were primarily black and white, with the exception of the paddles (eyes) and the lettering which were red. On 28 February 1947 CNO, approved a modification of this insignia which changed the Fighting 20 to Fighting 9A.

On 10 June 1949, CNO approved another modification to the squadron insignia which embellished the skull design. The background became a blue diamond



*A new insignia was adopted by the squadron and approved in 1946. A modification to this insignia was made in 1947 that changed the “Fighting 20” to “Fighting 9A.”*



*A new insignia was adopted by the squadron and approved in June 1949. This insignia is a well-known design that was in use from 1949 until the squadron's disestablishment in 1969.*

outlined in black. Red stylized wings outlined in blue and white were added, as well as a black and white machine gun in the shape of a cigarette with a yellow ammunition belt and red bullets. The machine gun was held by the skelton's hand which was outlined in black. Fighting 9A was dropped and replaced by regular shaped teeth. The skull remained white outlined in black and the LSO paddles were red and white.

Nickname: Blue Blasters, 1957–1969

### Chronology of Significant Events

**16 Apr 1944:** The squadron departed NAS Alameda aboard *Essex* (CV 9) en route to Hawaii for four months of operational training prior to its first combat tour.

**31 Aug 1944:** Combat strikes were flown against the Bonin Islands. This was the squadron's first combat action.

**24–25 Oct 1944:** The squadron participated in the Battle for Leyte Gulf, sometimes referred to as the Second Battle of the Philippines Sea. VF-20 aircraft struck elements of all three Japanese Task Forces which were converging on Leyte Gulf.

**Aug–Nov 1944:** The squadron flew strikes against targets on the Bonin Islands, Yap and Palau Islands, Peleliu Island, Okinawa, Formosa, Luzon, and Leyte.

**14 Dec 1944:** Lieutenant (jg) Douglas Baker was on a strike mission against Clark Field on Luzon when he encountered Japanese fighter opposition. During this engagement he destroyed four Japanese aircraft before being shot down by anti-aircraft fire and lost in the action. This final action brought his air-to-air kills to 16, making him one of the high ranking aces for the Navy. Only eight other Navy pilots equalled or exceeded this record.

**Dec 1944–Jan 1945:** VF-20 engaged in another series of combat actions, flying missions against targets on and around Luzon, Formosa, French Indochina (Vietnam), Hong Kong, the South China Sea, and

Okinawa. Many of these operations were in support of the landings at Lingayen Gulf.

**22 Jan 1945:** This was the last day of combat action for the squadron during World War II. During the period from 31 August 1944, the squadron compiled a formidable combat record. There were 8 aces (9 counting the Commander of CVG-20 who flew the squadron's aircraft), 12 individuals received the Navy Cross and 22 individuals received the Silver Star. VF-20 credits itself with the destruction of over 15 ships and 407 aircraft, not counting an even greater number that were damaged but not destroyed.

**Feb 1945:** Embarked in *Kwajalein* (CVE 98) at Ulithi and departed for the United States, arriving there in the latter part of the month.

**Jul-Sep 1948:** In cooperation with Commander Operational Development Force, Atlantic Fleet, the squadron participated in the experimental carrier controlled approach program aboard *Philippine Sea* (CV 47).

**Apr 1953:** The squadron embarked on *Antietam* (CVA 36) with its F2H-2s to conduct evaluation tests on the Navy's first angled deck carrier.

**26 May 1954:** The squadron was aboard *Bennington* (CVA 20), en route to the Mediterranean Sea, when an explosion aboard ship resulted in the death of 7 squadron personnel. The ship returned to the States and the squadron disembarked.

**31 Oct 1954:** Ensign Duane L. Varner completed a 1,900 mile nonstop, non-refueling, transcontinental flight from Los Alamitos, California, to NAS Cecil Field, Florida, in a squadron F2H-2 Banshee. His flight took 3 hours and 58 minutes and set a new long distance record for the Banshee.

**4 Mar 1958:** During cross-deck operations the squadron landed its A4D-1 Skyhawks aboard HMS *Ark Royal*.

**Jul 1958:** VA-34 flew support missions during the amphibious landings in Beirut, Lebanon, by U.S. Marines.

**Jun 1959:** Operating from NAAS Mayport, the squadron conducted the first operational firing of the Bull Pup air-to-ground missile in the Atlantic Fleet.

**Apr 1961:** VA-34's A4D-2 Skyhawks operated from *Essex* (CVS 9) in the Caribbean Sea during the Bay of Pigs invasion. This operation involved the first use of jet attack aircraft as part of an ASW Air Group, CVSG-60, operating aboard an ASW designated carrier.

**26 Oct-18 Nov 1962:** During the Cuban missile crisis the entire squadron flew aboard *Enterprise* (CVAN 65) on 26 October to augment the assigned air wing. *Enterprise* had departed for the Caribbean on 19 October. VA-34 flew numerous missions in support of Cuban quarantine.

**18-26 Nov 1962:** On 18 November the squadron transferred from *Enterprise* to *Independence* (CVA 62) during the quarantine operations. VA-34 continued to

fly quarantine missions aboard *Independence* until her return to the States on 26 November.

**3-21 Dec 1962:** The squadron was aboard *Saratoga* (CVA 60) for carrier refresher training in the Caribbean and continued operations relating to the Cuban missile crisis.

**Dec 1963 and Jan-Feb 1964:** The squadron provided detachments of A-4C Skyhawks aboard *Intrepid* (CVS 11) and *Randolph* (CVS 15). The aircraft were used for Combat Air Patrol to provide a fighter capability for the ASW carriers.

**May-Dec 1967:** VA-34 deployed to Vietnam as a component of an Attack Carrier Air Wing (CVW-10) embarked in *Intrepid* (CVS-11). This was the squadron's first combat action since 1945.

### Home Port Assignments

| Location           | Assignment Date |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| NAS San Diego      | 15 Oct 1943*    |
| NAS Atlantic City  | 16 Apr 1945     |
| NAS Edenton        | 26 Jun 1945     |
| NAS Elizabeth City | 02 Nov 1945     |
| NAAS Charlestown   | 11 Mar 1946     |
| NAS Quonset Point  | 01 May 1947     |
| NAAS Charlestown   | 26 Jun 1948     |
| NAS Quonset Point  | 01 Dec 1949     |
| NAAS Sanford       | 01 May 1951     |
| NAS Jacksonville   | 06 Oct 1952     |
| NAS Cecil Field    | 04 Feb 1953     |

\* During the squadron's Pacific tour from April 1944 to February 1945 it operated from numerous air and shore stations.

### Commanding Officers

|                               | Date Assumed Command |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| LCDR Frederick E. Bakutis     | 15 Oct 1943          |
| LCDR Herbert D. Remington     | 17 Apr 1945          |
| LCDR T. W. Ramsay             | 11 Feb 1946          |
| LCDR W. W. Brehm              | 28 Oct 1947          |
| LCDR Thomas C. Provost, III   | 01 Jul 1948          |
| LCDR Donald K. Olson          | 12 Dec 1949          |
| LCDR Robert A. Sweatt         | 21 Feb 1951          |
| LCDR H. B. Gibbs              | 01 May 1952          |
| LCDR F. H. O'Brien            | 10 May 1953          |
| CDR A. L. Detweiller (acting) | 05 Jul 1955          |
| CDR Charles W. Pittman        | 28 Oct 1955          |
| CDR Ernest L. McClintock      | Jan 1957             |
| CDR George C. Talley, Jr.     | 07 Oct 1958          |
| CDR Mitchell C. Griffin       | 11 Mar 1960          |
| CDR William J. Forgy          | 26 May 1961          |
| CDR Hector W. Davis, Jr.      | 29 May 1962          |
| CDR Walter T. Zebrowski       | 05 May 1963          |
| CDR Grant C. Young            | 05 May 1964          |
| CDR Rodney B. Carter          | 05 May 1965          |
| CDR Robert A. Zajichok        | 07 May 1966          |
| CDR Richard A. Wigent         | 11 May 1967          |
| CDR Mark E. Perrault          | 04 May 1968          |



The squadron's CO, Commander H. W. Davis, Jr., stands in front of the squadron's first A4D-2N (A-4C) Skyhawk.

**Aircraft Assignment**

| Type of Aircraft | Date Type First Received |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| F6F-3            | Oct 1943                 |
| F6F-5            | Jul 1944                 |
| F8F-1            | 03 Apr 1946              |
| F8F-2            | 03 Dec 1948              |
| F9F-2            | 27 Nov 1950              |
| F2H-2            | 14 Feb 1952              |
| F7U-3            | 06 Oct 1955              |
| A4D-1            | Jan 1957                 |
| A4D-2            | Nov 1958                 |
| A4D-2N/A-4C*     | 07 Jul 1962              |

\* A4D-2N designation was changed to A-4C in 1962.

A squadron F6F-5 Hellcat in flight, circa 1945 (Courtesy Robert Lawson Collection).



**Major Overseas Deployment**

| Date of Departure | Date of Return | Air Wing | Carrier | Type of Aircraft | Area of Operation          |
|-------------------|----------------|----------|---------|------------------|----------------------------|
| 16 Aug 1944*      | 21 Nov 1944    | CVG-20   | CV 6    | F6F-3            | WestPac                    |
| 11 Dec 1944*      | 26 Jan 1945    | CVG-20   | CV 16   | F6F-3            | WestPac                    |
| 20 Feb 1948       | 26 Jun 1948    | CVAG-9   | CV 47   | F8F-1            | Med                        |
| 03 Sep 1951       | 20 Dec 1951    | CVG-3    | CV 32   | F9F-2            | Med                        |
| 28 Aug 1952       | 04 Feb 1953    | CVG-3    | CVA 32  | F2H-2            | Med                        |
| 30 Nov 1954       | 18 Jun 1955    | ATG-181  | CVA 15  | F2H-2            | Med                        |
| 01 Feb 1958       | 01 Oct 1958    | CVG-3    | CVA 60  | A4D-1            | Med                        |
| 15 Aug 1959       | 16 Feb 1960    | CVG-3    | CVA 60  | A4D-2            | Med                        |
| 22 Aug 1960       | 25 Feb 1961    | CVG-3    | CVA 60  | A4D-2            | Med/NorLant                |
| 28 Nov 1961       | 12 May 1962    | CVG-3    | CVA 60  | A4D-2            | Med                        |
| 29 Mar 1963       | 25 Oct 1963    | CVG-3    | CVA 60  | A-4C             | Med                        |
| 28 Nov 1964       | 12 Jul 1965    | CVW-3    | CVA 60  | A-4C             | Med                        |
| 11 Mar 1966       | 26 Oct 1966    | CVW-3    | CVA 60  | A-4C             | Med                        |
| 11 May 1967       | 30 Dec 1967    | CVW-10   | CVS 11  | A-4C             | Med/IO/WestPac/<br>Vietnam |
| 22 Jul 1968       | 29 Apr 1969    | CVW-17   | CVA 59  | A-4C             | Med                        |

\* These deployment dates only cover the squadron's combat operations while staging out of Ulithi.



*Squadron F8F-1 Bearcats in flight, circa 1948 (Courtesy Robert Lawson Collection).*

### Air Wing Assignments

| <i>Air Wing</i>      | <i>Tail Code</i> | <i>Assignment Date</i> |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| CVG-20/CVAG-9/CVG-9* | PS               | 15 Oct 1943            |
| CVG-3                | K                | 01 Dec 1949            |
| ATG-181              |                  | 01 Nov 1953            |
| CVG-3/CVW-3†         | K/AC‡            | 18 Jun 1955            |
| CVW-10               | AK               | 01 Feb 1967§           |
| CVW-17               | AA               | 16 Jan 1968            |

\* Carrier Air Group 20 (CVG-20) was redesignated CVAG-9 on 15 November 1946 and was assigned the tail code PS on 12 December 1946. CVAG-9 was redesignated CVG-9 on 1 September 1948.

† Carrier Air Groups were redesignated Carrier Air Wings on 20 December 1963, hence, CVG-3 became CVW-3.

‡ CVG-3's tail code was changed from K to AC in the latter part of 1957. The effective date was most likely the beginning of FY 58 (1 July 1957).

§ CVW-3 records for 1967 list VA-46 being transferred from the air wing on 1 February 1967 but does not list VA-34. VA-34, as well as VA-46 and VA-103, were part of CVW-3 for the entire year of 1966, consequently, VA-34 probably was transferred from CVW-3 at the same time as VA-46 and VA-103, although such a transfer was not recorded in the air wing's history report.

### Unit Awards Received

| <i>Unit Award</i> | <i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i> |             |
|-------------------|--|-------------|
| NAVE              | 01 Jul 1948                                | 30 Jun 1949 |
| NUC               | 31 Aug 1944                                | 18 Sep 1944 |
|                   | 10 Oct 1944                                | 22 Nov 1944 |
|                   | 12 Jun 1967                                | 08 Dec 1967 |
| PUC               | 14 Dec 1944                                | 16 Dec 1944 |
|                   | 03 Jan 1945                                | 22 Jan 1945 |
| AFEM              | 17 Jul 1958                                | 25 Jul 1958 |
|                   | 29 Jul 1958                                | 11 Aug 1958 |
| RVNGC             | 19 Aug 1958                                | 07 Sep 1958 |
|                   | 26 Oct 1962                                | 18 Nov 1962 |
|                   | 18 Nov 1962                                | 20 Nov 1962 |
|                   | 03 Dec 1962                                | 20 Dec 1962 |
|                   | 21 Jun 1967                                | 13 Jul 1967 |
|                   | 29 Jul 1967                                | 27 Aug 1967 |
| VNSM              | 14 Sep 1967                                | 12 Oct 1967 |
|                   | 31 Oct 1967                                | 24 Nov 1967 |
|                   | 21 Jun 1967                                | 13 Jul 1967 |
|                   | 29 Jul 1967                                | 27 Aug 1967 |
| NEM               | 14 Sep 1967                                | 12 Oct 1967 |
|                   | 31 Oct 1967                                | 24 Nov 1967 |
|                   | 13 Apr 1961                                | 26 Apr 1961 |



*Squadron F2H-2 Banshees on the deck of Randolph (CVA 15) during her cruise to the Med in 1954–1955.*

## THIRD VA-34

### Lineage

Established as Attack Squadron THIRTY FOUR (VA-34) on 1 January 1970. This is the third squadron to be designated VA-34.



When the third VA-34 squadron was established, it adopted this insignia which had been used by the second VA-34 squadron.

### Squadron Insignia and Nickname

When VA-34 was established, it adopted the insignia and Blue Blasters nickname used by the previous VA-34 squadron (the second VA-34). Colors for the insignia are as follows: blue diamond background outlined in black, red stylized wings outlined in blue and white, black and

white machine gun in the shape of a cigarette, with a yellow ammunition belt and red bullets, white skull and skeleton with black markings and outline, red teeth, and red markings on the paddles (eyes).

Nickname: Blue Blasters, 1970-present

### Chronology of Significant Events

**17 Apr 1970:** VA-34's establishment ceremony was conducted at NAS Oceana.

**18 Sep 1970:** The squadron boarded *Kennedy* (CVA 67) and departed on 14 September for final training and an Operational Readiness Inspection prior to its scheduled November deployment to the Mediterranean Sea. However, while en route to the Caribbean, the ship was ordered to deploy to the Mediterranean after Syria invaded Jordan.

**Sep 1972:** A squadron A-6 Intruder conducted cross-decking operations on HMS *Ark Royal* while operating in the Norwegian Sea.

**Oct-Nov 1973:** Due to the outbreak of war in the Middle East (Yon Kippur War), VA-34 and *Kennedy* departed the Norwegian Sea and reentered the Mediterranean, conducting surveillance operations south of Crete.

**Sep-Oct 1982:** During the deployment to the North Atlantic, *America* (CV 66), with VA-34 embarked, received orders on 22 September to proceed to the Mediterranean due to the continuing crisis in Lebanon.

**Jan and May 1983:** While in the Eastern Mediterranean the squadron conducted air operations from *America* in support of the multinational peace-keeping forces in Beirut, Lebanon.

**Sep 1985:** While deployed aboard *America* to the North Atlantic, the squadron conducted flight operations from the carrier while it operated within Vestfjord, a Norwegian fjord.

**24 Mar 1986:** Libyan missiles were fired at U.S. Navy forces operating in the Gulf of Sidra. As a result of this hostile act retaliatory strikes, known as Operation Prairie Fire, were initiated against Libya by the American naval forces in the area. VA-34's A-6E Intruders, operating from *America*, attacked and damaged a Libyan Combattante II G-class fast attack missile craft with a Harpoon missile. A follow-up attack by VA-85 aircraft with Rockeye bombs resulted in the sinking of the Combattante II. The Harpoon firing was the first use of this missile in combat and the squadron's first combat action since its establishment in 1970.

**14 Apr 1986:** Due to continued Libyan sponsorship of terrorist activity the United States initiated Operation Eldorado Canyon. VA-34 participated in this operation with its A-6Es, conducting a night, low level high speed attack against terrorists targets at the Benina airfield and military barracks in Banghazi, Libya.

**Aug 1990:** The squadron flew missions in support of Operation Desert Shield, the build up of American and Allied forces to counter a threatened invasion of Saudi Arabia by Iraq and as part of an economic blockade of Iraq to force its withdrawal from Kuwait.

### Home Port Assignments

| Location   | Assignment Date |
|------------|-----------------|
| NAS Oceana | 01 Jan 1970     |

### Commanding Officers

|                          | Date Assumed Command |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| CDR Robert W. Miles      | Feb 1970             |
| CDR Samuel L. Sayers     | 25 Jun 1971          |
| CDR Philip M. Shannon    | Jul 1972             |
| CDR Lester T. Jackson    | 28 Jul 1973          |
| CDR William R. Westerman | 19 Jul 1974          |
| CDR Gary F. Wheatley     | 29 Oct 1975          |
| CDR Robert H. Byng       | 03 Jan 1977          |
| CDR John M. McNabb       | 21 Apr 1978          |
| CDR John G. Hawley       | 03 Jul 1979          |
| CDR Brinley K. McDanel   | 20 Oct 1980          |
| CDR Bennice L. Liner     | 25 Nov 1981          |
| CDR Garth A. Van Sickle  | 13 Feb 1983          |
| CDR James B. Dadson      | 07 Aug 1984          |
| CDR Richard G. Coleman   | 27 Jan 1986          |
| CDR Bernis H. Bailey     | 05 Jun 1987          |
| CDR Eugene K. Nielsen    | 04 Nov 1988          |
| CDR Ronald K. Alexander  | 16 May 1990          |

**Aircraft Assignment**

| <i>Total of Aircraft</i> | <i>Date Type First Received</i> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| A-6A                     | 17 Apr 1970                     |
| A-6B                     | May 1970                        |
| KA-6D                    | 1971*                           |
| A-6C                     | 1971†                           |

**Aircraft Assignment—Continued**

| <i>Total of Aircraft</i>   | <i>Date Type First Received</i> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| A-6E   | Dec 1973                        |
| * The squadron received its first KA-6D sometime between April and June 1971.    |                                 |
| † The squadron received its first A-6C sometime between July and September 1971. |                                 |



*A squadron A-6E Intruder conducts operations off the coast of Norway in 1985.*

**Major Overseas Deployment**

| <i>Date of Departure</i> | <i>Date of Return</i> | <i>Air Wing</i> | <i>Carrier</i> | <i>Type of Aircraft</i> | <i>Area of Operation</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 14 Sep 1970              | 01 Mar 1971           | CVW-1           | CVA 67         | A-6A/B                  | Carib/Med/<br>NorLant    |
| 01 Dec 1971              | 06 Oct 1972           | CVW-1           | CVA 67         | A-6A/B/C<br>& KA-6D     | Med/NorLant              |
| 16 Apr 1973              | 01 Dec 1973           | CVW-1           | CVA 67         | A-6A/B/C<br>& KA-6D     | Med/NorLant              |
| 28 Jun 1975              | 27 Jan 1976           | CVW-1           | CV 67          | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med                      |
| 02 Sep 1976              | 09 Nov 1976           | CVW-1           | CV 67          | A-6E & KA-6D            | NorLant                  |
| 15 Jan 1977              | 01 Aug 1977           | CVW-1           | CV 67          | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med                      |
| 29 Jun 1978              | 08 Feb 1979           | CVW-1           | CV 67          | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med                      |
| 04 Aug 1980              | 28 Mar 1981           | CVW-1           | CV 67          | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med                      |
| 23 Aug 1982              | 30 Oct 1982           | CVW-1           | CV 66          | A-6E & KA-6D            | NorLant/Med/<br>Carib    |
| 08 Dec 1982              | 02 Jun 1983           | CVW-1           | CV 66          | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med/IO                   |
| 24 Apr 1984              | 14 Nov 1984           | CVW-1           | CV 66          | A-6E & KA-6D            | Carib/Med/IO             |
| 24 Aug 1985              | 09 Oct 1985           | CVW-1           | CV 66          | A-6E & KA-6D            | NorLant                  |
| 10 Mar 1986              | 10 Sep 1986           | CVW-1           | CV 66          | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med                      |
| 29 Feb 1988              | 29 Aug 1988           | CVW-7           | CVN 69         | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med                      |
| 08 Mar 1990              | 12 Sep 1990           | CVW-7           | CVN 69         | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med/Red Sea              |

**Air Wing Assignments**

| <i>Air Wing</i> | <i>Tail Code</i> | <i>Assignment Date</i> |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|
| CVW-1           | AB               | 02 Mar 1970            |
| CVW-7           | AG               | 01 Oct 1986            |

**Unit Awards Received**

| <i>Unit Award</i> | <i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i> |             |
|-------------------|--|-------------|
| MUC               | 29 Sep 1970                                | 31 Oct 1970 |
|                   | 01 Dec 1977                                | 01 Mar 1979 |
|                   | 29 Aug 1985                                | 20 Sep 1985 |

**Unit Awards Received—Continued**

| <i>Unit Award</i> | <i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i> |             |
|-------------------|--|-------------|
| NAVE              | 01 Jan 1970                                | 30 Jun 1971 |
|                   | 01 Jan 1982                                | 31 Dec 1982 |
| NEM               | 01 Jan 1983                                | 20 Jan 1983 |
|                   | 06 May 1983                                | 08 May 1983 |
|                   | 21 Mar 1986                                | 27 Jun 1986 |
| NUC               | 23 Mar 1986                                | 17 Apr 1986 |
| SLOC              | 04 Aug 1980                                | 28 Mar 1981 |
|                   | 23 Aug 1982                                | 02 Jun 1983 |
| SASM              | 08 Aug 1990                                | 24 Aug 1990 |



*A VA-34 A-6E makes a low-level strike at Vieques Island bombing range in the Caribbean in 1988.*

## VA-35

### Lineage

Established as Torpedo and Bombing Squadron TWO (VT-2) on 6 July 1925.

Redesignated Torpedo and Bombing Squadron TWO B (VT-2B) on 1 July 1927.\*

Redesignated Torpedo Squadron THREE (VT-3) on 1 July 1937.

Redesignated Attack Squadron FOUR A (VA-4A) on 15 November 1946.

Redesignated Attack Squadron THIRTY FIVE (VA-35) on 7 August 1948.

Disestablished on 7 November 1949. The first squadron to be assigned the VA-35 designation.

### Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The squadron's first insignia was a winged dragon holding the sun in its webbed foot. Several years later a bomb replaced the sun in the dragon's foot to symbolize the squadron's mission. The dragon's color was red, and was spitting fire from its mouth. There are no records indicating an approval date, however, there are references to the insignia in a newspaper published by *Saratoga* (CV 3).

A modification to the original insignia was approved sometime in 1928 or 1929. The new insignia depicted a dragon astride a bomb. Colors for the dragon were red with a green spine, yellow claws and the tip of the tail in yellow. The bomb was black. When the squadron was redesignated in 1937 it continued to use this insignia.

During World War II the dragon took on a fatter, more stylized shape, however, the colors remained the same. There are no records indicating the squadron changed its insignia following its designation changes in the 1940s.

Nickname: unknown

\* The squadron designation system was changed on 1 July 1930 by General Order 202 and Bombing was dropped from the designation Torpedo and Bombing Squadron. However, there was no change to the abbreviated squadron designation, it still remained VT.



*The final version of the dragon insignia was used by the squadron during World War II and into the postwar period.*

### Chronology of Significant Events

6 Jul 1925: VT-2 was established on board *Aroostook* (CM 3) at Pearl Harbor. *Aroostook* had been a minelayer that was refitted as an aircraft tender but continued to carry the CM minelayer designation.

Aug 1926: The squadron was engaged in experimental work relating to the use of signal lights as a means of communicating between aircraft and ships.

1928: With the arrival of the T3M-2 aircraft, the squadron began the transition from water based aircraft to land planes. The squadron continued its aircraft transition from T3M-2s, which were difficult to land on the carrier, to T4M-1s. Primary mission with the T4M-1s was bombing, although they could be used for torpedo work and laying smoke screens.

Jan-Feb 1929: Fleet Problem IX was the first time the Navy's two large carriers, *Saratoga* (with VT-2B embarked) and *Lexington* (CV 2), participated in a major fleet exercise.

Mar-Apr 1930: In March the squadron participated in Fleet Problem X which was conducted in the Caribbean Sea, followed by the Fleet Problem XI in April.

May 1930: VT-2B's aircraft joined with the planes from 9 other squadrons, which included the *Saratoga*, *Lexington*, and *Langley* Air Groups, for a three-day tour of east coast cities from Norfolk, Virginia to Boston. The flight was commanded by Captain Kenneth Whiting and consisted of 36 torpedo and bombing planes, 57 fighting planes, 24 scouting planes, 3 amphibian utility planes, 3 Ford trimotored transports



*This was the first version of the dragon insignia used by the squadron. It dates from the mid-1920s.*



*A more detailed version of the dragon insignia was adopted by the squadron in the late 1920s.*



*A VT-2B T3M-2 with parachutists jumping from the wing, circa 1935.*



and 2 staff planes. It was the largest air parade that had ever been assembled on the east coast.

**1931–1934:** The squadron participated in Fleet Problems XII through XV.

**31 May 1934:** A Fleet Review for President Franklin D. Roosevelt was held in New York Harbor.

**1935–1938:** The squadron participated in Fleet Problems XVI through XIX.

**May 1937:** VT-2B participated in the celebration marking the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge.

**Apr–May 1940:** The squadron participated in Fleet Problem XXI. This was the last major Fleet Problem conducted before America's involvement in World War II.

**May–Jun 1942:** VT-3, consisting primarily of its pilots, flight crews and a limited number of ground crewmen, operated from *Yorktown* (CV 5) during the Battle of Midway. The other officers and ground crews remained ashore at NAS Kaneohe. Shortly after noon on the 4th, Lieutenant Commander Massey led a flight of 12 TBD-1 Devastors into the attack against the Japanese carriers. They were the last of the three torpedo squadrons to engage the enemy. Only two aircraft survived, both flown by enlisted pilots. The two surviving TBDs returned to the task force while *Yorktown* was under attack from Japanese carrier aircraft. These two TBDs were ditched and their crews picked up by ships in the task force. VT-3's survivors from *Yorktown* returned to the squadron at NAS Kaneohe.

**4 Jun 1942:** Lieutenant Commander Massey was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross for his action during the battle. Eleven other squadron TBD pilots also were awarded the Navy Cross, they were Ensign Wesley F. Osmus, Ensign Carl A. Osberg, Lieutenant Patrick H. Hart, Enlisted Pilot Harry L. Corl, Enlisted Pilot Wilhelm G. Esders, Lieutenant (jg) Curtiss W. Howard, Ensign Leonard L. Smith, Enlisted Pilot John W. Haas, Ensign David J. Roche, Ensign Oswald A. Powers, and Lieutenant (jg) Richard W. Suesens.

**Aug 1942:** Operating from *Enterprise* (CV 6), VT-3 participated in the Battle of the Eastern Solomons.

**Nov 1942–Jul 1943:** VT-3 operated from *Saratoga*, flying combat missions against various Japanese held islands in the South Pacific and providing air cover for American forces operating in the Eastern Solomons. When the squadron was not operating from *Saratoga* it was based ashore at various places, including Fiji; Efate and Espiritu Santo, New Hebrides; Tontouta, New Caledonia, and Guadalcanal, Solomons.

**May 1943:** The British carrier HMS *Victorious* joined the *Saratoga* task force and operated with it until the latter part of July.

**31 Jul 1943:** VT-3's TBFs were transferred to Tontouta on 30 July and the following day squadron personnel embarked on HMS *Victorious* for transfer to CONUS to reform. This ended the air group and squadron's association with *Saratoga*.

**25 Sep 1943:** VT-3 and *Saratoga* Air Group were reformed at NAS Seattle. The *Saratoga* Air Group was reformed as Carrier Air Group THREE (CVG-3) with VT-3 as one of the three squadrons.

**Nov 1944:** VT-3 conducted combat operations from *Yorktown* (CV 10) against targets in the Philippines in support of the Leyte invasion.

**Dec 1944:** The squadron flew combat operations from *Yorktown* against targets on Luzon in preparation for the invasion of the island. While retiring from the combat area Task Force 38, which included *Yorktown* and CVG-3, sailed through a typhoon which sank three destroyers and extensively damaged other ships in the task force.

**Jan 1945:** Combat operations were conducted against targets in Formosa and the Philippines in support of the Lingayen Gulf landings on Luzon in early January. With *Yorktown* leading the way, Task Force 38 entered the South China Sea on 10 January. VT-3 struck targets near Saigon and along the Vietnamese coast, Hong Kong and Canton areas, Formosa and Okinawa.

**9 Jan 1945:** For actions against enemy targets on Formosa Lieutenant Frank F. Frazier was awarded the Silver Star.

**Feb 1945:** VT-3 participated in the first carrier strikes against the Tokyo area, bombing the Tachikawa Engine Factory, 16 miles from the Imperial Palace. Following these strikes the squadron concentrated its attention on Chichi Jima and air support for the invasion of Iwo Jima. This operation was the last combat action for the squadron during World War II. In early March VT-3 transferred to *Lexington* (CV 16) for transit to the States.

**Jun–Oct 1948:** During the squadron's tour of duty in the Mediterranean the Sixth Fleet was placed on alert due to the out break of war between Israel and the Arab countries following the establishment of the state of Israel.

**Nov 1948:** The squadron participated in cold weather operations in the Northern Atlantic.



This is a well-known photo of the squadron's T4M-1 making an approach on *Saratoga* (CV 3). Notice the squadron's dragon insignia on the fuselage just aft of the lower wing.

**Home Port Assignments**

| <i>Location</i>                | <i>Assignment Date</i> |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Aroostook (CM 2)*</i>       | 06 Jul 1925            |
| NAS San Diego                  | Sep 1925               |
| Ford Island (NAS Pearl Harbor) | Jan 1942†              |
| NAS Kaneohe                    | 03 Feb 1942‡           |
| Efate                          | Aug 1942‡              |
| Hawaii                         | Sep 1942†              |
| NAS Seattle                    | Sep 1943               |
| NAS Whidbey Island             | 11 Oct 1943            |
| NAS Pasco                      | 02 Feb 1944            |
| NAS Alameda                    | 05 Apr 1944†           |
| NAS Puunene                    | 22 Apr 1944†           |
| NAS Hilo                       | 07 Jun 1944†           |
| NAS Kahului                    | 22 Jul 1944†           |
| NAS Seattle                    | Mar 1945               |
| NAAF Lewiston                  | 07 May 1945            |
| NAS Key West                   | 15 Jun 1945            |
| NAAS Oceana                    | 15 Jul 1945            |
| NAS Quonset Point              | 11 Aug 1947            |
| NAAS Charlestown               | 13 Oct 1947            |
| NAS Quonset Point              | 21 Mar 1949            |

\* The ship was at NAS Pearl Harbor.

† Temporarily based ashore during World War II.

‡ When *Enterprise* (CV 6) was damaged by air attacks on 24 August, during the Battle of the Eastern Solomons, VT-3's surviving aircraft were flown to Efate. These aircraft remained at Efate while the majority of the squadron personnel went aboard *Saratoga* (CV 3) and returned to Hawaii in September 1942.

**Commanding Officers**

|                            | <i>Date Assumed Command</i> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| LT A. O. Rule, Jr.         | 06 July 1925                |
| LT J. B. Kniep             | Sep 1925                    |
| LCDR M. Griffin            | Oct 1925                    |
| LCDR J. G. Strong          | 18 Jan 1926                 |
| LCDR J. B. Kniep           | Jun 1926                    |
| CDR Read                   | Jul 1926                    |
| LCDR J. B. Kniep           | Sep 1926                    |
| LT A. P. Schneider         | Aug 1927                    |
| LCDR Harry R. Bogusch      | Feb 1928                    |
| LCDR A. E. Montgomery      | Jul 1929                    |
| LCDR William Masek         | Jul 1930                    |
| LCDR J. L. Cotton          | Mar 1931                    |
| LT T. C. Lonquest (acting) | Jun 1931                    |
| LCDR J. J. Ballentine      | Jul 1931                    |
| LCDR Theodore C. Lonquest  | Dec 1932                    |
| LCDR Harold J. Brow        | May 1933                    |
| LCDR Herman E. Halland     | Jun 1934                    |
| LCDR William H. Buracker   | Jun 1936                    |
| LCDR Marion E. Crist       | Jun 1937                    |
| LCDR Frank C. Sutton       | 27 Jun 1938                 |
| LT Austin V. Magly         | 28 May 1940                 |
| LT J. C. Clark             | 27 Jun 1941                 |

**Commanding Officers—Continued**

|                                     | <i>Date Assumed Command</i> |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| LCDR John A. Collett                | Jan 1942                    |
| LT John N. Myers (acting)           | Jan 1942                    |
| LCDR Lance E. Massey                | 17 Apr 1942                 |
| LT John N. Myers (acting)           | Jun 1942                    |
| LCDR Charles M. Jett                | 20 Jun 1942                 |
| LT John N. Myers (acting)           | 29 Dec 1942                 |
| LT Charles H. Turner (later LCDR)   | Apr 1943                    |
| LT Roy S. Belcher, Jr. (later LCDR) | 24 May 1945                 |
| LCDR Norman D. Johnson              | Jan 1948                    |
| LCDR Roy P. Gee                     | 24 Aug 1949                 |



*A squadron TG-2 with its dragon insignia on the fuselage, circa mid 1930s.*

**Aircraft Assignment**

| <i>Type of Aircraft</i> | <i>Date Type First Received</i> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| DT-2*                   | Jul 1925                        |
| SC-2                    | Nov 1925                        |
| SC-1                    | Mar 1926                        |
| CS-1                    | Nov 1926                        |
| T2D-1                   | Jun 1927                        |
| T3M-2                   | Aug 1927                        |
| TB-1                    | Sep 1927                        |
| T4M-1                   | Jul 1928                        |
| TG-1                    | Jun 1930                        |
| TG-2                    | Apr 1932                        |
| TBD-1                   | 05 Oct 1937                     |
| TBF-1                   | Jul 1942†                       |
| TBM-1C                  | 15 Mar 1944                     |
| TBM-3E                  | Jun 1945                        |
| TBM-3Q                  | Jun 1946                        |
| TBM-3J                  | May 1947                        |
| TBM-3W                  | Sep 1947                        |
| AD-1                    | Apr 1949                        |
| AD-2                    | May 1949                        |

\* The aircraft were on loan to the squadron from NAS Pearl Harbor.

† VT-3's shore detachment received its first TBF-1 in early May 1942. However, the squadron continued to operate the TBD-1s aboard the carrier until the latter part of July 1942 when it became an all TBF unit.



*A TBD-1 with VT-3 markings and the ever-present dragon insignia on the fuselage (Courtesy Harry Gann and the Douglas Collection).*

**Major Overseas Deployment**

| <i>Date of Departure</i> | <i>Date of Return</i> | <i>Air Wing</i>              | <i>Carrier</i> | <i>Type of Aircraft</i> | <i>Area of Operation</i>                     |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|--|
| 15 Jan 1929              | Mar 1929              | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 3           | T4M-1                   | Canal Zone<br>(Pac side)                     |
| 15 Feb 1930              | 21 Jun 1930           | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 3           | T4M-1                   | Canal Zone/<br>Carib                         |
| 05 Feb 1931              | 15 Apr 1931           | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 3           | TG-1                    | Canal Zone/<br>Carib                         |
| Feb 1932                 | 19 Mar 1932           | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 2/3*        | TG-1                    | Hawaii                                       |
| 23 Jan 1933              | 17 Feb 1933           | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 3           | TG-2                    | Hawaii                                       |
| 09 Apr 1934              | 09 Nov 1934           | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 3/<br>CV 2† | TG-2                    | Canal Zone/<br>Carib & East<br>Coast of U.S. |
| May 1935                 | Jun 1935              | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 3           | TG-2                    | Hawaii/<br>NorPac                            |
| Apr 1936                 | Jun 1936              | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 3           | TG-2                    | Canal Zone/<br>Pac                           |
| Apr 1937                 | May 1937              | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 3           | TG-2                    | Hawaii/Pac                                   |
| 15 Mar 1938              | Apr 1938              | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 3           | TBD-1                   | Hawaii/Pac                                   |
| 02 Apr 1940              | 21 Jun 1940           | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 3           | TBD-1                   | Hawaii/Pac                                   |
| 08 Dec 1941              | Jan 1942              | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 3‡          | TBD-1                   | Hawaii/Pac                                   |

**Major Overseas Deployment—Continued**

| <i>Date of Departure</i> | <i>Date of Return</i> | <i>Air Wing</i>              | <i>Carrier</i>    | <i>Type of Aircraft</i> | <i>Area of Operation</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| May 1942                 | Jun 1942              | <i>Yorktown</i><br>Air Group | CV 5              | TBD-1                   | Midway Island            |
| 15 Jul 1942              | Aug 1942              | <i>Enterprise</i> Air Group  | CV 6              | TBF-1                   | Pacific ops              |
| 10 Nov 1942              | Jul 1943              | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group | CV 3§             | TBF-1                   | Pacific ops              |
| 24 Oct 1944              | 27 Mar 1945           | CVG-3                        | CV 10/<br>CV 16** | TBM-1C                  | Pacific ops              |
| 07 Jun 1947              | 11 Aug 1947           | CVAG-3                       | CV 33             | TBM-3E/Q<br>& TBM-3J    | NorLant/<br>Carib        |
| 01 Jun 1948              | 02 Oct 48             | CVG-3                        | CV 33             | TBM-3E/J<br>& TBM-3W    | Med                      |

\* The squadron's cruise to Hawaii began aboard *Lexington* (CV 2) and prior to the beginning of Fleet Problem XXIII in late February it was transferred to *Saratoga*.

† During the squadron's 7 month deployment in 1934 VT-2B was divided into two divisions, with division 1 aboard *Saratoga* and division 2 aboard *Lexington*. VT-2B's division 2 operated with *Lexington's* Air Group.

‡ The squadron was operating from *Saratoga* in the Hawaiian area when the ship was hit by a torpedo from a Japanese submarine on 11 January 1942. *Saratoga* departed Hawaii and returned to Bremerton, Washington for repairs and VT-3 remained in Hawaii.

§ The squadron and air group transferred from *Saratoga* to HMS *Victorious* in July 1943 and returned to Hawaii aboard the British carrier. *Saratoga* remained in the South Pacific and continued her combat operations with a different air group embarked.

\*\* On 5 March 1945 VT-3 and CVG-3 were transferred from *Yorktown* to *Lexington* for its return to the States via Hawaii. *Lexington* departed Ulithi on 6 March, arriving in Hawaii on 17 March, departing on the 20th and arriving at Bremerton, Washington on 27 March.



*Squadron TBM-3 Avenger at NAAS Oceana in 1946 (Courtesy Robert Lawson Collection).*

**Air Wing Assignments**

| <i>Air Wing</i>   | <i>Tail Code</i> | <i>Assignment Date</i> |
|---|------------------|------------------------|
| Aircraft Squadrons,<br>Battle Fleet,<br><i>Aroostook</i> (CM 2) |                  | 06 Jul 1925            |
| <i>Saratoga</i> Air Group*                                      |                  | 09 Apr 1927            |
| <i>Yorktown</i> Air Group†                                      |                  | May 1942               |
| <i>Enterprise</i> Air Group                                     |                  | Jul 1942               |
| <i>Saratoga</i> Air Group/<br>CVG-3/CVAG-3/CVG-3‡               | K‡               | Sep 1942               |

\* CNO's Assignment of Naval Aircraft (Naval Aeronautic Organization) for FY 27 (July 1927–June 1928) assigned VT-2B to *Saratoga* (CV 3) prior to the carrier's commissioning. Evolution of the *Saratoga* Air Group was as follows: *Saratoga* (CV 3) was commissioned 16 November 1927 with squadrons previously assigned; the squadrons assigned to the carrier were known as the *Saratoga* Air Group. However, it was not until 1 July 1938 when the Air Group Commander billets were established that the air group became an official organization.

† Temporarily assigned to *Yorktown* Air Group during the Battle of Midway.

‡ The tail code K was assigned to *Kearsarge* (CV 33) on 7 November 1946. Since CVG-3 was assigned to *Kearsarge* its

squadrons used the K tail code. On 12 December 1946 the tail code K was removed from *Kearsarge* and assigned to CVG-3.

§ *Saratoga* Air Group redesignated Carrier Air Group THREE (CVG-3) on 25 September 1943. The CVG-3 designation was changed to CVAG-3 on 15 November 1946 to show the air wing's association with an attack carrier. CVAG-3 was changed back CVG-3 on 1 September 1948 regardless of the air groups' assignment to an attack or battle carrier.

**Unit Awards**

| <i>Unit Award</i>                   | <i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i> |             |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------|
| PUC                                 | 11 Nov 1944                                | 19 Nov 1944 |
|                                     | 14 Dec 1944                                | 16 Dec 1944 |
|                                     | 03 Jan 1945                                | 22 Jan 1945 |
|                                     | 16 Feb 1945                                | 25 Feb 1945 |
|                                     | 23 Aug 1942                                | 25 Aug 1942 |
| Campaign Medal<br>(Asiatic-Pacific) | Nov 1942                                   | 08 Feb 1943 |
|                                     | 11 Nov 1944                                | 19 Nov 1944 |
|                                     | 14 Dec 1944                                | 16 Dec 1944 |
|                                     | 03 Jan 1945                                | 22 Jan 1945 |
|                                     | 16 Feb 1945                                | 25 Feb 1945 |



*A squadron AD-1 trapping aboard Leyte (CV 32), November 1950 (Courtesy Duane Kasulka Collection).*

## SECOND VA-35

### Lineage

Established as Bombing Squadron THREE B (VB-3B) on 1 July 1934.

Redesignated Bombing Squadron FOUR (VB-4) on 1 July 1937.

Redesignated Bombing Squadron THREE (VB-3) on 1 July 1939.

Redesignated Attack Squadron THREE A (VA-3A) on 15 November 1946.

Redesignated Attack Squadron THIRTY FOUR (VA-34) on 7 August 1948.

Redesignated Attack Squadron THIRTY FIVE (VA-35) on 15 February 1950. The second squadron to be assigned the VA-35 designation.

### Squadron Insignia and Nickname



The original squadron diving panther insignia is one of the oldest squadron insignias in continuous use by a naval aviation command.

There is no record of official approval for the diving black panther insignia used by VB-3B. However, by mid-1935, the design appeared in Navy documents as Bombing THREE's insignia. The diving black panther design has been carried on through the various redesignations of the squadron and is the present insignia for VA-35. It was officially approved for VA-35 by CNO on 1 October 1957.

Nickname: Black Panthers.



The squadron's insignia with the scroll and designation added to the original design.

### Chronology of Significant Events

May 1935: *Ranger* (CV 4) and her embarked air group, including VB-3B, participated in Fleet Exercise XVI. This was the first time VB-3B and *Ranger* participated in a Fleet Exercise.

25 Nov 1935–25 Feb 1936: A detachment from VB-3B, including six BG-1s, was assigned to *Ranger's* Cold Weather Test Detachment and operated aboard *Ranger* in Alaskan waters.

Apr–Jun 1936: The squadron participated in Fleet Problem XVII.

Apr–May 1937: The squadron participated in Fleet Problem XVIII.

28 May 1937: VB-3B participated in an aerial review celebrating the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge.

Jul 1937: The squadron, embarked in *Lexington* (CV 2), participated in the search for Amelia Earhart Putnam and Fred Noonan.

Sep 1937: VB-4, embarked in *Ranger*, visited Lima, Peru, in conjunction with the International Aviation Conference being held there.

Mar–Apr 1938: The squadron participated in Fleet Problem XIX.

Apr–May 1940: The squadron participated in Fleet Problem XXI. This was the last major fleet problem conducted before America's involvement in World War II.

Apr 1942: VB-3, embarked in *Enterprise* (CV 6), provided escort patrols for the task force which launched Colonel Doolittle's B-25 raid against Tokyo.

4 Jun 1942: At the Battle of Midway, VB-3, embarked in *Yorktown* (CV 5), engaged in its first combat operations. *Yorktown's* first strike included 17 SBD-3's from VB-3 led by Lieutenant Commander Leslie. Approximately an hour after launch, VB-3's aircraft sighted the Japanese Fleet and commenced their dive-bombing attack; the primary target was the carrier *Soryu*. Lieutenant (jg) Paul A. Holmberg was the first to drop his 1,000 pounder on the *Soryu*. His hit was followed by two more from VB-3's SBDs. *Soryu* erupted into flames and eventually sank.

With the *Soryu* in flames, the other VB-3 SBDs directed their attack against other targets. They attacked a destroyer, the *Isokaze*, making one hit on her fantail and "what appeared to be a battleship," claiming a hit on her stern. All 17 SBDs from VB-3 escaped the attack without a hit and returned to *Yorktown*. Prior to landing on the carrier, they were directed to leave the area due to incoming enemy aircraft. All VB-3's SBDs landed on *Enterprise* except for Lieutenant Commander Leslie and his wingman, Lieutenant (jg) Holmberg. These two men, low on fuel, ditched their aircraft along side the cruiser *Astoria* and were picked up by the ship's motor whaleboat.

The battle was still not over for VB-3. In late afternoon, 14 of VB-3's SBDs were launched from *Enterprise* as part of a strike group ordered to attack the fourth Japanese carrier, *Hiryu*. Lieutenant Shumway was in charge of VB-3's formation. The strike force located *Hiryu* and again caught a Japanese carrier in the vulnerable position of having armed and fueled planes on deck. Direct hits from Shumway's SBD's resulted in a torched *Hiryu* and her eventual sinking. Several of VB-3's aircraft suffered heavy damage from attacking Japanese aircraft. However, all but

two of VB-3's aircraft returned to *Enterprise*. Seventeen of VB-3's pilots received the Navy Cross for their action during the Battle of Midway, they were Ensigns Benson, Butler, Campbell, Cobb, Cooner, Elder, Hanson, Isaman, Lane, Merrill and Schoegel; Lieutenant (jg)s Holmberg, Sherwood and Wiseman; Lieutenants Bottomley and Shumway; and Lieutenant Commander Leslie.

**Aug 1942:** While operating from *Saratoga* in the South Pacific, the squadron participated in strikes against Guadalcanal and other enemy installations in the Solomon Islands in support of the occupation of Guadalcanal.

**24 Aug 1942:** VB-3 participated in the Battle of the Eastern Solomons, attacking *Ryujo*, a Japanese light carrier, and helping to sink her.

**Jan–Jul 1943:** VB-3 operated in the South Pacific flying combat sorties against various Japanese-held islands and providing air cover for American forces.

**July 1943:** VB-3 and the *Saratoga* Air Group were relieved by Air Group 12 and boarded HMS *Victorious* for transfer to CONUS to reform, arriving at San Diego on 18 August. This ended the air group and VB-3's association with *Saratoga* (CV 3).

**Nov 1944:** VB-3 conducted combat operations from *Yorktown* (CV 10) against various targets, including shipping, in support of the Leyte invasion.

**Jan 1945:** Combat operations were conducted against targets in Formosa and the Philippines in support of the Lingayen Gulf landings on Luzon in early January. With *Yorktown* leading the way, Task Force 38 entered the South China Sea on 10 January. VB-3 struck targets near Saigon and along the Vietnamese coast, Canton and Hong Kong areas, Formosa and Okinawa.

**Feb 1945:** VB-3 participated in the first carrier strikes against the Tokyo area, bombing the Kasumiga-ura Airfield, an air depot 25 miles north of Tokyo, and the Tachikawa Aircraft Engine Plant, located 16 miles west of the Imperial Palace. Following these strikes, the squadron concentrated its attention on air support for the invasion of Iwo Jima. This operation was the last combat action for the squadron during World War II. On 6 March, the squadron transferred from *Yorktown* to *Lexington* (CV 16) for transfer to CONUS.

**11 Oct 1950:** While deployed to the Korean Theater aboard *Leyte* (CV 32), the squadron launched its first combat mission since February 1945, striking North Korean targets.

**12 Dec 1950:** The squadron's commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander Bagwell, crash-landed in North Korea and was taken prisoner.

**Jul–Aug 1958:** VA-35, along with other squadrons from CVG-3, provided support for U.S. Marines landing in Lebanon.

**Oct–Nov 1962:** VA-35 deployed to McCalla Field, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, during the Cuban Missile

Crisis. During December, the squadron was embarked in *Saratoga* (CVA 60).

**4 Feb 1965:** The squadron's commanding officer, Commander Richard G. Laysler, was killed in an accident.

**15 Aug 1965:** VA-35 transferred from CVW-3 in preparation for its transition to the A-6A Intruder. This brought to a close an illustrious career with CVW-3 that began in 1939.

**26 Feb 1967:** The squadron participated in the first combat aerial mining operations since World War II, when its A-6A Intruders dropped mines in the Song Ca and Song Giang Rivers of North Vietnam.

**1 Oct 1967:** During a weapons training deployment to NAS Yuma, Arizona, VA-35 became the first A-6A squadron to fire the AIM-9 Sidewinder missile.

**Jan–Feb 1968:** While embarked in *Enterprise* (CVAN 65) and en route to Yankee Station, the carrier was ordered to the Sea of Japan for operations following the seizure of the *Pueblo* (AGER 2) by the North Koreans.

**12 Mar 1968:** The squadron's commanding officer, Commander Kollmann, was lost in an operational accident.

**17 Sep 1972:** While on a mission over North Vietnam the squadron's commanding officer, Commander Donnelly, was lost and is still listed as missing in action.

**3 Jan 1980:** VA-35 departed Naples, Italy, embarked in *Nimitz* (CVN 68), en route to the Indian Ocean via the Cape of Good Hope after the U.S. Embassy staff was taken hostage in Tehran, Iran. This was the beginning of 144 consecutive days at sea for the squadron.

**26 May 1981:** While on a training exercise aboard *Nimitz* off the coast of Charleston, S.C., an EA-6B from VMAQ-2 crashed into parked aircraft while attempting to land. VA-35 personnel provided firefighting support and assistance to the injured. There were no injuries to VA-35 personnel. Over 130 members of the squadron received awards for fighting fires and assisting the injured.

**Jun 1985:** *Nimitz* and VA-35 were ordered to operate off the coast of Lebanon due to the hijacking of TWA flight 847 by Arab radicals. The carrier and squadron remained on station until the release of the hostages in the latter part of June.

**Feb 1987:** VA-35, embarked in *Nimitz*, operated off the coast of Lebanon after three U.S. citizens were taken hostage from the American University in Beirut.

**Jul 1988:** VA-35 participated in a firepower demonstration for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and his guest, the Marshal of the Soviet Union.

**Sep 1988:** While deployed to the North Atlantic aboard *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71), the squadron conducted flight operations from the carrier while in the Vestfjord of Norway.

**Aug–Dec 1990:** The squadron flew missions in sup-

port of Operation Desert Shield, the build-up of American and Allied forces to counter a threatened invasion of Saudi Arabia by Iraq and part of an economic blockade of Iraq to force its withdrawal from Kuwait.



*The BM-1 was the first type of aircraft operated by the squadron. The vertical fin of the aircraft was most likely painted willow green, indicating it was assigned to the Ranger air group.*

### Home Port Assignments

| <i>Location</i>                   | <i>Assignment Date</i> |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| NAS Norfolk                       | 01 Jul 1934            |
| NAS San Diego                     | 14 Apr 1935            |
| Ford Island (NAS Pearl Harbor)*   | Jan 1942               |
| NAS Kaneohe*                      | Feb 1942               |
| NAS Ewa*                          | Jun 1942               |
| NAS Kaneohe*                      | Sep 1942               |
| Nandi Field, Fiji Islands*        | Nov 1942               |
| Tontouta Airfield, New Caledonia* | Dec 1942               |
| NAS Sand Point                    | Sep 1943               |
| NAS Whidbey Island                | Oct 1943               |
| NAS Pasco                         | 02 Feb 1944            |
| NAS Alameda*                      | 05 Apr 1944            |
| NAS Puunene*                      | 22 Apr 1944            |
| NAS Hilo*                         | 07 Jun 1944            |
| NAS Kahului*                      | 22 Jul 1944            |
| NAS Seattle                       | 28 Mar 1945            |
| NAS Wildwood                      | 07 May 1945            |
| NAAS Oceana                       | 19 Jul 1945            |
| NAAS Charlestown                  | 15 Apr 1947            |
| NAS Quonset Point                 | 14 Aug 1947            |
| NAAS Charlestown                  | 01 Oct 1947            |
| NAS Quonset Point                 | 01 Feb 1949            |
| NAAS Oceana*                      | 24 Aug 1950            |
| NAS Quonset Point                 | 03 Feb 1951            |
| NAAS Sanford                      | 30 Apr 1951            |
| NAS Cecil Field                   | Feb 1953               |
| NAS Jacksonville                  | 01 Oct 1958            |
| NAS Oceana                        | Aug 1965               |

\* Temporary shore base assignment during World War II.

### Commanding Officers

|                                   | <i>Date Assumed Command</i> |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| LCDR George C. Fairlamb, Jr.      | 01 Jul 1934                 |
| LCDR Robert H. Harrell            | 10 Jun 1935                 |
| LCDR Paul E. Roswall              | 05 Jun 1937                 |
| LCDR Edgar A. Cruise              | Jul 1938                    |
| LCDR Robert E. Blick, Jr.         | 01 Jul 1939                 |
| LCDR Maxwell F. Leslie            | 1942                        |
| LCDR Dewitt W. Shumway            | 15 Jun 1942                 |
| LT Harold S. Bottomley, Jr        | 16 Apr 1943                 |
| LCDR John T. Lowe, Jr.            | 29 Sep 1943                 |
| LT Raymond S. Osterhoudt (acting) | 22 Dec 1944                 |
| LT Raymond S. Osterhoudt          | 23 Feb 1945                 |
| LT. H. N. Murphy                  | 07 May 1945                 |
| LCDR Heber J. Badger              | 04 Oct 1946                 |
| LCDR Ralph M. Bagwell             | 30 Nov 1948                 |
| LCDR John G. Osborn               | 19 Dec 1950                 |
| LCDR James W. Conger              | 31 Mar 1952                 |
| LCDR David G. Adams, Jr.          | 10 Aug 1953                 |
| CDR C. W. Johnson                 | Nov 1954                    |
| CDR Alfred E. Brown               | Sep 1956                    |
| CDR Harlan W. Foote               | 07 Oct 1958                 |
| CDR William F. Bailey             | 21 Mar 1960                 |
| CDR E. C. Hastings II             | 28 Apr 1961                 |
| CDR W. F. Walker                  | 29 May 1962                 |
| CDR J. R. Constantine             | 07 Mar 1963                 |
| CDR J. B. Allred                  | 13 Mar 1964                 |
| CDR Richard G. Layser             | 22 Jan 1965                 |
| LCDR Joseph F. Frick (acting)     | 04 Feb 1965                 |
| CDR John W. Shute                 | 22 Mar 1965                 |
| CDR Donald S. Ross                | 13 Aug 1965                 |
| CDR Arthur H. Barie               | 29 Jul 1966                 |
| CDR Glenn E. Kollmann             | 14 Jul 1967                 |
| CDR Herman L. Turk                | 15 Mar 1968                 |
| CDR Joseph F. Frick               | 29 May 1969                 |
| CDR Hugh J. Campbell              | 02 Jun 1970                 |
| CDR Kenneth B. Russell            | 12 Apr 1971                 |
| CDR Verne G. Donnelly             | 24 May 1972                 |
| CDR Milton D. Beach (acting)      | 17 Sep 1972                 |
| CDR Milton D. Beach               | 26 Sep 1972                 |
| CDR Gerald H. Hesse               | 21 Sep 1973                 |
| CDR Ronald P. Hyde                | 15 Aug 1974                 |
| CDR Brian K. Bryans               | 10 Dec 1975                 |
| CDR George D. O'Brien             | 31 Mar 1977                 |
| CDR James D. Joyner               | 23 Jun 1978                 |
| CDR John A. Pieno, Jr.            | 19 Jul 1979                 |
| CDR J. M. Luecke                  | 05 Feb 1981                 |
| CDR A. H. White                   | 24 Jun 1982                 |
| CDR Stephen A. Richmond           | 15 Dec 1983                 |
| CDR Ronald S. Pearson             | 24 Jun 1985                 |
| CDR Louis P. Lalli                | 24 Oct 1986                 |
| CDR James A. Bolcar               | 08 Apr 1988                 |
| CDR James B. Andersen             | 06 Sep 1989                 |





One of the squadron's early aircraft, a BG-1, at Floyd Bennett Field, New York. Note the diving panther insignia on the fuselage. The squadron was assigned to the Ranger air group when this photo was taken.

**Aircraft Assignment**

| Type of Aircraft | Date Type First Received |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| BM-1 and BM-2    | Jul 1934                 |
| BG-1*            | Nov 1934                 |
| SB2U-2           | Jan 1938                 |
| SB2U-1           | Jul 1940                 |
| BT-1             | Mar 1941                 |
| SBC-4            | Mar 1941                 |
| SBD-3            | Aug 1941                 |
| SBD-4            | Apr 1943                 |
| SBD-3P           | Apr 1943                 |
| SBD-5            | Aug 1943                 |
| SB2C-1C          | Dec 1943                 |
| SBW-3            | Jul 1944                 |
| SB2C-4           | Sep 1944                 |
| SB2C-5           | Jan 1946                 |
| AD-2             | 24 Nov 1948              |
| AD-2Q            | Feb 1949                 |
| AD-1             | Feb 1949                 |

**Aircraft Assignment—Continued**

| Type of Aircraft | Date Type First Received |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| AD-4             | Oct 1950                 |
| AD-3             | May 1950                 |
| AD-4L            | Feb 1951                 |
| AD-4B            | Mar 1953                 |
| AD-4N            | Aug 1953                 |
| AD-6/A-1H†       | Sep 1953                 |
| AD-5             | Oct 1954                 |
| A-6A             | 15 Dec 1965              |
| A-6B             | Jan 1968                 |
| KA-6D            | Dec 1970                 |
| A-6C             | Feb 1971                 |
| A-6E             | 19 Apr 1973              |

\* The XBG-1 was received by the squadron in October 1934, followed by the BG-1 production versions in November 1934.

† AD-6 designation changed to A-1H in 1962.



*A formation of the squadron's SB2U Vindicators. The squadron's diving panther insignia is barely visible on the fuselage of the aircraft.*

### **Major Overseas Deployment**

| <i>Date of Departure</i> | <i>Date of Return</i> | <i>Air Wing</i>               | <i>Carrier</i> | <i>Type of Aircraft</i> | <i>Area of Operation</i>            |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 28 Mar 1935              | 15 Apr 1935           | <i>Ranger</i><br>Air Group    | CV 4           | BG-1                    | Carib/Panama<br>Canal/West<br>Coast |
| May 1935                 | May 1935              | <i>Ranger</i><br>Air Group    | CV 4           | BG-1                    | Hawaii                              |
| *                        | *                     | *                             | CV 4           | BG-1                    | Alaska                              |
| 27 Apr 1936              | Jun 1936              | <i>Lexington</i><br>Air Group | CV 2           | BG-1                    | Central<br>America/West<br>Coast    |
| Apr 1937                 | May 1937              | <i>Lexington</i><br>Air Group | CV 2           | BG-1                    | Hawaii                              |
| Mar 1938                 | Apr 1938              | <i>Ranger</i><br>Air Group    | CV 4           | BG-2                    | Hawaii                              |
| 02 Apr 1940              | 21 Jun 1940           | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group  | CV 3           | SB2U-2                  | Hawaii                              |
| 08 Dec 1941              | †Jan 1942             | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group  | CV 3           | SBD-3                   | Hawaii                              |

**Major Overseas Deployment—Continued**

| <i>Date of Departure</i> | <i>Date of Return</i> | <i>Air Wing</i>                | <i>Carrier</i>    | <i>Type of Aircraft</i> | <i>Area of Operation</i>      |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Apr 1942                 | Apr 1942              | <i>Enterprise</i><br>Air Group | CV 6              | SBD-3                   | Pacific Ops                   |
| 30 May 1942              | Jun 1942              | <i>Yorktown</i><br>Air Group   | CV 5‡             | SBD-3                   | Battle of Midway              |
| 07 Jul 1942              | 21 Sep 1942           | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group   | CV 3              | SBD-3                   | SoPac                         |
| 12 Nov 1942              | 26 Jul 1943           | <i>Saratoga</i><br>Air Group   | CV 3§             | SBD-3                   | SoPac                         |
| 24 Oct 1944              | 27 Mar 1945           | CVG-3                          | CV 10/<br>CV 16** | SB2C-4                  | Pacific Ops                   |
| 07 Jun 1947              | 11 Aug 1947           | CVAG-3                         | CV 33             | SB2C-5                  | NorLant/Carib                 |
| 01 Jun 1948              | 02 Oct 1948           | CVG-3                          | CV 33             | SB2C-5                  | Med                           |
| 02 May 1950              | 24 Aug 1950           | CVG-3                          | CV 32             | AD-3                    | Med                           |
| 06 Sep 1950              | 18 Sep 1950           | CVG-3                          | CV 32             | AD-3                    | Carib/Panama Canal/West Coast |
| 19 Sep 1950              | 03 Feb 1951           | CVG-3                          | CV 32             | AD-3/4                  | WestPac/<br>Korea             |
| 03 Sep 1951              | 21 Dec 1951           | CVG-3                          | CV 32             | AD-4/L                  | Med                           |
| 29 Aug 1952              | Feb 1953              | CVG-3                          | CVA 32            | AD-4                    | Med                           |
| 12 Nov 1953              | Sep 1954              | CVG-3                          | CVA 40            | AD-6                    | World Cruise                  |
| 04 Nov 1955              | 02 Aug 1956           | CVG-3                          | CVA 14            | AD-6                    | Med                           |
| 01 Feb 1958              | 01 Oct 1958           | CVG-3                          | CVA 60            | AD-6                    | Med                           |
| 16 Aug 1959              | 26 Feb 1960           | CVG-3                          | CVA 60            | AD-6                    | Med                           |
| 22 Aug 1960              | 26 Feb 1961           | CVG-3                          | CVA 60            | AD-6                    | NorLant/Med                   |
| 28 Nov 1961              | 11 May 1962           | CVG-3                          | CVA 60            | AD-6                    | Med                           |
| 29 Mar 1963              | 25 Oct 1963           | CVG-3                          | CVA 60            | AD-6                    | Med                           |
| 28 Nov 1964              | 12 Jul 1965           | CVW-3                          | CVA 60            | A-1H                    | Med                           |
| 19 Nov 1966              | 06 Jul 1967           | CVW-9                          | CVAN 65           | A-6A                    | WestPac/Vietnam               |
| 03 Jan 1968              | 18 Jul 1968           | CVW-9                          | CVAN 65           | A-6A/B                  | WestPac/Vietnam               |
| 23 Sep 1969              | 01 Jul 1970           | CVW-15                         | CVA 43            | A-6A                    | WestPac/Vietnam               |
| 06 Jul 1971              | 16 Dec 1971           | CVW-8                          | CVA 66            | A-6A/B/C<br>& KA-6D     | Med                           |
| 05 Jun 1972              | 24 Mar 1973           | CVW-8                          | CVA 66            | A-6A/C & KA-6D          | WestPac/Vietnam               |
| 03 Jan 1974              | 03 Aug 1974           | CVW-8                          | CVA 66            | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med                           |
| 06 Sep 1974              | 12 Oct 1974           | CVW-8                          | CVA 66            | A-6E & KA-6D            | NorLant                       |
| 16 Jul 1975              | 24 Sep 1975           | CVW-8                          | CVN 68            | A-6E & KA-6D            | Carib/NorLant                 |
| 07 Jul 1976              | 07 Feb 1977           | CVW-8                          | CVN 68            | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med                           |
| 01 Dec 1977              | 20 Jul 1978           | CVW-8                          | CVN 68            | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med/<br>NorLant               |
| 10 Sep 1979              | 26 May 1980           | CVW-8                          | CVN 68            | A-6E &<br>KA-6D         | Med/SoLant/<br>IO             |
| 29 Aug 1980              | 17 Oct 1980           | CVW-8                          | CVN 68            | A-6E & KA-6D            | NorLant                       |
| 03 Aug 1981              | 12 Feb 1982           | CVW-8                          | CVN 68            | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med                           |
| 10 Nov 1982              | 20 May 1983           | CVW-8                          | CVN 68            | A-6E & KA-6D            | Carib/Med                     |

**Major Overseas Deployment—Continued**

| <i>Date of Departure</i> | <i>Date of Return</i> | <i>Air Wing</i> | <i>Carrier</i> | <i>Type of Aircraft</i> | <i>Area of Operation</i>  |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 08 Mar 1985              | 04 Oct 1985           | CVW-8           | CVN 68         | A-6E & KA-6D            | Carib/Med                 |
| 15 Aug 1986              | 16 Oct 1986           | CVW-8           | CVN 68         | A-6E & KA-6D            | NorLant                   |
| 30 Dec 1986              | 26 Jul 1987           | CVW-8           | CVN 68         | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med/SoLant/<br>West Coast |
| 25 Aug 1988              | 11 Oct 1988           | CVW-8           | CVN 71         | A-6E                    | NorLant                   |
| 30 Dec 1988              | 30 Jun 1989           | CVW-8           | CVN 71         | A-6E                    | Med                       |
| 07 Aug 1990              | 28 Mar 1991           | CVW-17          | CV 60          | A-6E & KA-6D            | Med/Red Sea               |

\* Detachments from Aircraft Squadrons, Battle Fleet, including a detachment from VB-3B, were organized as *Ranger's* Cold Weather Test Detachment and operated on a northern cruise to Alaska sometime between late November 1935 and 25 February 1936.

† The squadron was operating from *Saratoga* in the Hawaiian area when the ship was hit by a torpedo from a Japanese submarine on 11 January 1942. *Saratoga* departed Hawaii for repairs at Bremerton, Washington, and VB-3 remained in Hawaii.

‡ After the squadron's first strike against the Japanese carriers, it operated from *Enterprise* (CV 6) for the remainder of the Midway battle.

§ While deployed to the South Pacific, as part of the *Saratoga* Air Group, the squadron operated from *Saratoga* and various shore stations in New Caledonia, Fiji Islands, and Solomon Islands.

\*\* On 5 March 1945, VB-3 and CVG-3 were transferred from *Yorktown* (CV 10) to *Lexington* (CV 16) for its return to CONUS via Hawaii. *Lexington* departed Ulithi on 6 March, arriving in Hawaii on 17 March, departing on the 20th and arriving at Bremerton, Washington, on 27 March.



The squadron's SBD Dauntlesses are in the foreground on the deck of *Saratoga* (CV 3), circa late 1941. In the background are F4F Wildcats and TBD Devastators from *Saratoga's* air group.



*SB2C-4 Helldivers from VB-3 fly over the invasion fleet at Iwo Jima en route to bomb targets on the island, 22 February 1945.*

**Air Wing Assignments**

| <i>Air Wing</i>                                      | <i>Tail Code</i> | <i>Assignment Date</i> |
|--|------------------|------------------------|
| Ranger Air Group*                                    |                  | 01 Jul 1934            |
| Lexington Air Group*                                 |                  | Nov 1935               |
| Ranger Air Group                                     |                  | 01 Jul 1937            |
| Saratoga Air Group                                   |                  | 01 Jan 1939            |
| Yorktown Air Group                                   |                  | May 1942               |
| Saratoga Air Group/<br>CVG-3/CVAG-3/<br>CVG-3/CVW-3† | K/AC‡            | Jun 1942               |
| CVW-4  |                  | 15 Aug 1965            |
| COMFAIRNORFOLK                                       |                  | 16 Dec 1965            |
| CVW-9  | NG               | 22 Sep 1966            |
| COMFAIRNORFOLK                                       |                  | Jul 1968               |
| CVW-15   | NL               | 31 Jul 1969            |
| COMFAIRNORFOLK                                       |                  | 01 Jul 1970            |
| CVW-8  | AJ               | 01 Jan 1971            |
| CVW-17   | AA               | 07 Sep 1989            |

\* *Ranger* (CV 4) was commissioned on 4 June 1934 and VB-3B was assigned to *Ranger* on 1 July 1934. Squadrons assigned to the carri-



*A squadron AD-6 (A-1H) Skyraider, circa late 1950s or early 1960s.*

ers prior to 1 July 1938 were part of that carrier's air group. However, it was not until after 1 July 1938, when Air Group Commander billets were established, that the air group became an official organization.

† The *Saratoga* Air Group was redesignated Carrier Air Group THREE (CVG-3) on 25 September 1943. The CVG-3 designation was changed to CVAG-3 on 15 November 1946 to show the air wing's association with an attack carrier. It was changed back to CVG-3 on 1 September 1948 and no longer indicated the air group's association to a particular carrier designation, such as attack or battle carrier. On 20 December 1963, all Carrier Air Groups (CVG) were redesignated Carrier Air Wings (CVW).

‡ The tail code K was assigned to *Kearsarge* (CV 33) on 7 November 1946. Since CVG-3 was assigned to *Kearsarge*, its squadrons used the K tail code. On 12 December 1946, the tail code K was removed from *Kearsarge* and assigned to CVG-3. Carrier Air Group 3's tail code was changed from K to AC in the latter part of 1957. The effective date was most likely the beginning of FY 58 (1 July 1957).

**Unit Awards Received**

| <i>Unit Award</i> | <i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i> |             |             |
|-------------------|--|-------------|-------------|
| PUC               | 11 Nov 1944                                | 19 Nov 1944 |             |
|                   | 14 Dec 1944                                | 16 Dec 1944 |             |
|                   | 03 Jan 1945                                | 22 Jan 1945 |             |
|                   | 01 Jul 1971                                | 31 Dec 1972 |             |
| NAVE              | 01 Jul 1971                                | 31 Dec 1972 |             |
|                   | 01 Oct 1976                                | 30 Sep 1977 |             |
|                   | 01 Oct 1978                                | 30 Sep 1979 |             |
|                   | 01 Oct 1980                                | 31 Dec 1981 |             |
|                   | 01 Jan 1983                                | 31 Dec 1983 |             |
| PUC               | 01 Jan 1987                                | 31 Dec 1987 |             |
|                   | 11 Nov 1944                                | 19 Nov 1944 |             |
|                   | 14 Dec 1944                                | 16 Dec 1944 |             |
|                   | 03 Jan 1945                                | 22 Jan 1945 |             |
|                   | 16 Feb 1945                                | 25 Feb 1945 |             |
|                   | KPUC                                       | 05 Oct 1950 | 19 Jan 1951 |
|                   |  | NUC         | 09 Oct 1950 |
|                   | 18 Dec 1966                                |             | 20 Jun 1967 |
|                   | MUC  | 22 Feb 1968 | 26 Jun 1968 |
|                   |  | 23 Jan 1980 | 01 May 1980 |
| 17 Jan 1991       |  | 28 Feb 1991 |             |
| 27 Oct 1969       |  | 01 Jun 1970 |             |
| 14 Jul 1972       |  | 20 Feb 1973 |             |
| 01 Dec 1977       |  | 21 Dec 1979 |             |
| 01 Jan 1981       |  | 12 Feb 1982 |             |
| AFEM              |  | 23 Jan 1968 | 22 Mar 1968 |
|                   |  | 10 Dec 1969 | 11 Dec 1969 |
| NEM               |  | 18 Oct 1962 | 23 Oct 1962 |
|                   | 14 Jan 1980                                | 14 May 1980 |             |
|                   | 05 Dec 1982                                | 31 Dec 1982 |             |
|                   | 21 Jan 1983                                | 13 Feb 1983 |             |
|                   | 18 Feb 1983                                | 24 Feb 1983 |             |
|                   | 19 Mar 1983                                | 21 Mar 1983 |             |
|                   | 18 Apr 1983                                | 22 Apr 1983 |             |
|                   | RVNGC                                      | 22 Feb 1968 | 24 Feb 1968 |
|                   |  | 26 Feb 1968 | 03 Mar 1968 |
|                   |  | 05 Mar 1968 | 08 Mar 1968 |
| 12 Mar 1968       |  |             |             |
| 13 Mar 1968       |  |             |             |

**Unit Awards Received—Continued**

| <i>Unit Award</i> | <i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i> |             |
|-------------------|--|-------------|
|                   | 14 Mar 1968                                |             |
|                   | 16 Mar 1968                                |             |
|                   | 29 Mar 1968                                | 30 Mar 1968 |
|                   | 01 Apr 1968                                | 05 Apr 1968 |
|                   | 07 Apr 1968                                | 10 Apr 1968 |
|                   | 12 Apr 1968                                |             |
|                   | 14 Apr 1968                                |             |
|                   | 16 Apr 1968                                | 20 Apr 1968 |
|                   | 22 Apr 1968                                | 23 Apr 1968 |
|                   | 02 May 1968                                |             |
|                   | 01 Jun 1968                                | 02 Jun 1968 |
|                   | 04 Jun 1968                                |             |
|                   | 15 Jun 1968                                |             |
|                   | 16 Aug 1968                                | 10 Sep 1968 |
| VNSM              | 19 Dec 1966                                | 17 Jan 1967 |
|                   | 31 Jan 1967                                | 03 Mar 1967 |
|                   | 20 Mar 1967                                | 18 Apr 1967 |
| 28 Apr 1967       | 28 May 1967                                |             |
|                   | 04 Jun 1967                                | 21 Jun 1967 |
|                   | 21 Feb 1968                                | 17 Mar 1968 |
|                   | 26 Mar 1968                                | 24 Apr 1968 |
|                   | 30 Apr 1968                                | 21 May 1968 |
|                   | 30 May 1968                                | 27 Jun 1968 |

**Unit Awards Received—Continued**

| <i>Unit Award</i> | <i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i>                  |             |
|-------------------|---|-------------|
|                   | 26 Oct 1969   | 18 Nov 1969 |
|                   | 22 Dec 1969   | 19 Jan 1970 |
|                   | 17 Feb 1970   | 09 Mar 1970 |
|                   | 19 Mar 1970   | 11 Apr 1970 |
|                   | 28 Apr 1970   | 01 Jun 1970 |
|                   | 02 Jul 1972   | 04 Jul 1972 |
|                   | 11 Jul 1972   | 24 Jul 1972 |
|                   | 10 Aug 1972   | 28 Aug 1972 |
|                   | 06 Sep 1972   | 07 Oct 1972 |
|                   | 11 Oct 1972   | 12 Oct 1972 |
|                   | 20 Oct 1972   | 01 Dec 1972 |
|                   | 09 Dec 1972   | 27 Dec 1972 |
|                   | 09 Jan 1973   | 02 Feb 1973 |
|                   | 12 Feb 1973   | 16 Feb 1973 |
|                   | 21 Feb 1973   | 25 Feb 1973 |
| KLM               | 17 Jan 1991   | 07 Feb 1991 |
| SASM              | 22 Aug 1990   | 21 Sep 1990 |
|                   | 23 Oct 1990   | 09 Dec 1990 |
|                   | 06 Jan 1991   | 11 Mar 1991 |
| Campaign Medal    | (Asiatic-Pacific) For numerous periods during World War II. |             |



*A squadron A-6 Intruder with its famous diving panther insignia on the tail.*

## VA-36

### Lineage

Established as Fighter Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWO (VF-102) on 1 May 1952.

Redesignated Attack Squadron THIRTY SIX (VA-36) on 1 July 1955.

Disestablished on 1 August 1970. The first squadron to be designated VA-36.

### Squadron Insignia and Nickname

VF-102's first insignia was approved by CNO in October 1952. Unfortunately, the squadron's insignia file does not contain a drawing or photograph of the design. The insignia included: a blue circular design with a black winged wolf leaping diagonally from left to right in front of a yellow moon and over a red lightning bolt; and a blue sea depicted in the lower part of the circle. The wolf, lightning bolt, blue sea and circular insignia were outlined in yellow.



*It is believed the squadron adopted the roadrunner insignia sometime after receiving its first A-4 Skyhawks. One of the nicknames for the A-4 was "Heinemann's Hot Rod" and the logo on the insignia may be indicative of that nickname.*

The squadron also used an insignia design with a roadrunner.

However, there is no indication when it was approved or used by the squadron. Colors for the roadrunner insignia were: a green background outlined in yellow; and a gray roadrunner with blue wings and head feathers, a yellow beak, red tongue and white legs holding white rockets with red tips. The insignia's upper and lower scrolls had a blue background with Attack Squadron 36 in white on the upper and Hotrodus Supersonic in white on the lower. Both scrolls were outlined in yellow.

Nickname: Roadrunners, timeframe unknown.

### Chronology of Significant Events

Nov 1953-Sep 1954: During the squadron's world cruise aboard *Tarawa* (CVA 40), it visited 14 different ports in 10 foreign countries and transited the Suez and Panama Canals.

Jul-Aug 1961: While deployed on a training cruise aboard *Saratoga* in the Caribbean, the squadron was on an alert status due to the Bay of Pigs invasion.

2 Dec 1965: The squadron conducted its first combat operations, flying from *Enterprise* (CVAN 65) on

Dixie Station in the South China Sea off the coast of Vietnam. This marked the first time a nuclear powered ship had engaged in combat.

Dec 1965-Jun 1966: During this period of combat operations squadron personnel were awarded over 170 Air Medals.

May-Jun 1967: VA-36, embarked on *America*, was on station in the eastern Mediterranean during the Middle East War between Israel and Egypt and Syria. Units of *America's* air wing were launched to provide air cover for *Liberty* (AGTR 5) when it came under attack by Israeli forces.

### Home Port Assignments

| Location         | Assignment Date |
|------------------|-----------------|
| NAAS Cecil Field | 01 May 1952     |
| NAS Jacksonville | Jul 1955        |
| NAS Cecil Field  | Apr 1956        |

### Commanding Officers

|                          | Date Assumed Command |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| LCDR R. B. Dalton        | 01 May 1952          |
| CDR R. A. Clarke         | 1953                 |
| CDR L. A. Menard, Jr.    | 10 Sep 1954          |
| CDR Thad T. Coleman, Jr. | 31 May 1956          |
| CDR Hugh M. Garvey       | 26 Jul 1957          |
| CDR A. L. Detweiler      | 22 Jul 1958          |
| LCDR P. D. Davidson      | 30 Jan 1960          |
| CDR G. L. Ayers, Jr.     | 28 Apr 1961          |
| CDR E. J. Carroll        | 29 May 1962          |
| CDR H. K. Matthes        | 18 May 1963          |
| CDR R. W. Somers         | 01 May 1964          |
| CDR J. E. Marshall       | 22 Apr 1965          |
| CDR T. F. Rush           | 02 Apr 1966          |
| CDR A. R. Cunningham     | 19 May 1967          |
| CDR E. H. Brooks         | 24 May 1968          |
| CDR N. H. Rose           | 29 May 1969          |
| CDR W. C. Nix            | 30 Mar 1970          |

### Aircraft Assignment

| Type of Aircraft | Date Type First Received |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| FG-1D            | May 1952                 |
| F9F-5            | Oct 1952                 |
| F9F-8 & F9F-8B   | 02 Nov 1956              |
| F9F-8T           | 14 Apr 1957              |
| A4D-2            | 11 Sep 1958              |
| A4D-2N/A-4C*     | 21 Mar 1961              |
| A-4E†            | Oct 1967                 |

\* The A4D-2N designation changed to A-4C in 1962.

† The squadron began its transition to A-4Es in October 1967 and in November 1967 transitioned back to A-4Cs.



In the background is a squadron F9F-5 Panther and the pilots who night carrier qualified aboard Bennington (CVA 20) in September 1955 prior to the squadron's WestPac deployment on the carrier. VA-36 pilots are: Bottom row, left to right: Lt. K. T. Weaver; Lt. P. M. McGucken, Cdr. L. A. Mendar, Jr., CO; Cdr. T. T. Coleman, Jr., XO; and LCdr. R. G. Altman. Top row, left to right: Lt. (jg) D. R. Fall, Lt. P. E. Johnson, Lt. (jg) D. A. Brown, Lt. (jg) A. J. Cooper, Lt. R. C. Doan, Lt. (jg) B. J. Gordon, Lt. T. W. Lockett, Ens. G. V. Smith, Lt. (jg) H. L. Brooks, Lt. H. A. Lackey II, Lt. A. J. Kermes, Lt. (jg) H. W. Newbard, Lt. (jg) W. D. Baker, Lt. (jg) M. N. Guess, Ens. L. Ames (AIO), Lt. (jg) R. C. Scott, Lt. J. D. Blackwood, Lt. (jg) J. B. Busey and Lt. (jg) M. E. Hill.

### Major Overseas Deployment

| <i>Date of Departure</i> | <i>Date of Return</i> | <i>Air Wing</i> | <i>Carrier</i> | <i>Type of Aircraft</i> | <i>Area of Operation</i>          |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Nov 1953                 | Sep 1954              | CVG-3           | CVA 40         | F9F-5                   | World Cruise                      |
| 31 Oct 1955              | 16 Apr 1956           | ATG-201         | CVA 20         | F9F-5                   | WestPac                           |
| 15 Aug 1959              | 26 Feb 1960           | CVG-3           | CVA 60         | A4D-2                   | Med                               |
| 22 Aug 1960              | 26 Feb 1961           | CVG-3           | CVA 60         | A4D-2                   | NorLant/Med                       |
| 05 Jul 1961              | 22 Aug 1961           | CVG-3           | CVA 60         | A4D-2N                  | Carib                             |
| 28 Nov 1961              | 11 May 1962           | CVG-3           | CVA 60         | A4D-2N                  | Med                               |
| 03 Dec 1962              | 21 Dec 1962           | CVG-3           | CVA 60         | A4D-2N                  | Carib                             |
| 29 Mar 1963              | 25 Oct 1963           | CVG-3           | CVA 60         | A-4C                    | Med                               |
| 28 Nov 1964              | 12 Jul 1965           | CVW-3           | CVA 60         | A-4C                    | Med                               |
| 26 Oct 1965              | 21 Jun 1966           | CVW-9           | CVAN 65        | A-4C                    | SoLant/IO/<br>WestPac/<br>Vietnam |
| 10 Jan 1967              | 20 Sep 1967           | CVW-6           | CVA 66         | A-4C                    | Med                               |
| 04 Jun 1968              | 08 Feb 1969           | CVW-10          | CVS 11         | A-4C                    | SoLant/IO/<br>Pacific/Vietnam     |
| 02 Dec 1969              | 08 Jul 1970           | CVW-17          | CVA 59         | A-4C                    | Med                               |



**Air Wing Assignments**

| <i>Air Wing</i> | <i>Tail Code</i> | <i>Assignment Date</i> |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|
| CVG-10          | P                | 01 May 1952            |
| CVG-3           | K                | Nov 1953               |
| CVG-10          | P                | Sep 1954               |
| ATG-201         | J/AP*            | May 1955†              |
| ATG-202         | AQ               | 15 Jan 1958            |
| CVG-17          | AL               | 14 Mar 1958            |
| CVG-3/CVW-3‡    | AC               | 11 Oct 1958            |
| CVW-9           | NG               | 22 Sep 1965            |
| CVW-8           | AJ               | 15 Jul 1966            |
| CVW-6           | AE               | 01 Sep 1966            |
| CVW-10          | AK               | 16 Oct 1967            |
| CVW-17          | AA               | 01 Aug 1969            |

\* The tail code J was assigned to ATG-201 on 24 July 1956 and changed to AP in the latter part of 1957. The effective date for the change was most likely the beginning of FY 58 (1 July 1957).

† The specific date the squadron was assigned to Air Task Group 201 (ATG-201) has not been verified. However, it probably was in May 1955, the date the squadron deployed aboard *Bennington* (CVA 20) for a shakedown cruise to Guantanamo Bay.

‡ Carrier Air Groups were redesignated Carrier Air Wings on 20 December 1963, hence, CVG-3 became CVW-3.

**Unit Awards Received—Continued**

| <i>Unit Award</i> | <i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i> |             |
|-------------------|--|-------------|
| NEM               | 07 Jul 1961                                | 19 Aug 1961 |
| RVNGC             | 02 Dec 1965                                |             |
|                   | 11 Dec 1965                                |             |
|                   | 21 Dec 1965                                |             |
|                   | 24 Dec 1965                                |             |
|                   | 26 Dec 1965                                | 30 Dec 1965 |
|                   | 01 Jan 1966                                | 02 Jan 1966 |
|                   | 04 Jan 1966                                | 14 Jan 1966 |
|                   | 04 Feb 1966                                |             |
|                   | 19 Feb 1966                                |             |
|                   | 23 Feb 1966                                |             |
|                   | 27 Mar 1966                                | 28 Mar 1966 |
|                   | 30 Mar 1966                                | 31 Mar 1966 |
|                   | 02 Apr 1966                                |             |
|                   | 11 Apr 1966                                |             |
|                   | 29 Apr 1966                                |             |
|                   | 01 Oct 1968                                | 01 Nov 1968 |
| VNSM              | 02 Dec 1965                                | 14 Jan 1966 |
|                   | 04 Feb 1966                                | 23 Feb 1966 |
|                   | 16 Mar 1966                                | 12 Apr 1966 |
|                   | 22 Apr 1966                                | 14 May 1966 |
|                   | 23 May 1966                                | 06 Jun 1966 |
|                   | 11 Jul 1968                                | 12 Jul 1968 |
|                   | 14 Jul 1968                                | 15 Jul 1968 |
|                   | 23 Jul 1968                                | 22 Aug 1968 |
|                   | 14 Oct 1968                                | 14 Nov 1968 |
|                   | 03 Dec 1968                                | 27 Dec 1968 |
| NUC               | 06 Jul 1968                                | 16 Jan 1969 |

**Unit Awards Received**

| <i>Unit Award</i> | <i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i> |             |
|-------------------|--|-------------|
| NAVE              | Jul 1958                                   | Jun 1959    |
|                   | 01 Jan 1967                                | 30 Jun 1968 |
| AFEM              | 03 Dec 1962                                | 20 Dec 1962 |



*Squadron A-4C Skyhawks assigned to CVW-9 deployed aboard Enterprise (CVAN 65).*

## SECOND VA-36

### Lineage

Established as Attack Squadron THIRTY SIX (VA-36) on 6 March 1987.

Disestablished on 1 April 1994. The second Navy squadron to be assigned the VA-36 designation.

### Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The insignia adopted by VA-36 is a modification of the Roadrunner insignia used by the first VA-36 squadron. The old insignia had been a Roadrunner cartoon character, but the modification depicted a real bird with its primary enemy clutched in its talons. Colors for the insignia are: blue background and scrolls; silver and black bird with a red eye and tongue; yellow snake with black markings; and red lettering in the scrolls.



*The squadron adopted a roadrunner insignia similar to the first VA-36 squadron.*

VA-36's insignia was tentatively approved by CNO on 6 April 1987.

Nickname: Roadrunners, 1987–1994.

### Chronology of Significant Events

**30 Dec 1988:** VA-36 deployed aboard *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) for the carrier's maiden cruise to the Mediterranean Sea.

**20 Jan–28 Feb 1991:** The squadron participated in Operation Desert Storm, combat operations against Iraq.

**Apr–Jun 1991:** The squadron participated in Operation Provide Comfort, a multi-national operation providing relief and aid for Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq.

**Mar–Sep 1993:** The squadron, along with other units of CVW-8, deployed aboard *Roosevelt* (CVN 71) in a new approach to joint operations to test the Navy's ability to project a wide range of power and mobility from the sea. The composition on the carrier during the deployment included the regular air wing, minus an F-14 and S-3 squadron, and a Special Marine Air-Ground Task Force consisting of a Marine Corps fixed-wing and helo squadron and a company of Marines. The mix of units provided the carrier with the ability to project air and ground striking power ashore from a single deck.

**Jun 1993:** The squadron, along with other units embarked on *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71), operated in the Red Sea in support of a strike on the Iraqi Intelligence Service headquarters building in Baghdad in response to Iraq's attempt on the life of former President Bush while on a visit to Kuwait in April. During this time, the squadron also participated in Operation Southern Watch missions, enforcing the U. N. no-fly zone within southern Iraq.

### Home Port Assignments

|            | <i>Location Assignment Date</i> |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| NAS Oceana | 06 Mar 1987                     |

### Commanding Officers

|                         | <i>Date Assumed Command</i> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| CDR T. Lamar Willis     | 06 Mar 1987                 |
| CDR Daniel J. Franken   | 01 Dec 1988                 |
| CDR T. Ladson Webb, Jr. | 04 May 1990                 |
| CDR Thomas M. Deyke     | 27 Aug 1991                 |
| CDR Mark T. McNally     | 03 Sep 1992                 |
| CDR Mark J. Himler      | 23 Sep 1993                 |

### Aircraft Assignment

| <i>Type of Aircraft</i> | <i>Date Type First Received</i> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| A-6E                    | May 1987                        |

### Major Overseas Deployment

| <i>Date of Departure</i> | <i>Date of Return</i> | <i>Air Wing</i> | <i>Carrier</i> | <i>Type of Aircraft</i> | <i>Area of Operation</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 25 Aug 1988              | 11 Oct 1988           | CVW-8           | CVN 71         | A-6E                    | NorLant                  |
| 30 Dec 1988              | 30 Jun 1989           | CVW-8           | CVN 71         | A-6E                    | Med                      |
| 28 Dec 1990              | 28 Jun 1991           | CVW-8           | CVN 71         | A-6E                    | Med/IO                   |
| 11 Mar 1993              | 08 Sep 1993           | CVW-8           | CVN 71         | A-6E                    | Med/IO                   |

**Air Wing Assignments**

| <i>Air Wing</i> | <i>Tail Code</i> | <i>Assignment Date</i> |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|
| CVW-8           | AJ               | Sep 1987               |

**Unit Awards Received**

| <i>Unit Award</i> | <i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i> |             |
|-------------------|--|-------------|
| NUC               | 17 Jan 1991                                | 07 Feb 1991 |
| SASM              | 14 Jan 1991                                | 20 Apr 1991 |
| JMUA              | 05 Apr 1991                                | 16 Jul 1991 |
| MUC               | 01 Mar 1993                                | 01 Aug 1993 |



*A squadron A-6E Intruder on a mission over the northern Arabian Gulf during Operation Desert Storm. Note the cluster bombs on the wing pylons.*

## **VA-38**

### ***Lineage***

Established as Attack Squadron THIRTY EIGHT (VA-38) on 1 March 1967.

Disestablished on 1 October 1968. The first and only squadron to be assigned the VA-38 designation.

### ***Chronology of Significant Events***

The establishment of VA-38 was directed by CNO.

The squadron's administrative assignment was to Commander Fleet Air, Jacksonville. However, it appears VA-38 existed only on paper. The squadron was established while the A-7A Corsair II was being introduced to the fleet and may have been programed to be a new A-7A attack squadron. However, according to the CNO publication, *Allowances and Location of Navy Aircraft*, the squadron was not assigned aircraft. The only records on the squadron are the CNO messages establishing and disestablishing the unit.