

# The Aero Historian



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April 2022



1/48 Scale Tamiya F-4B  
by Mark L. Rossmann

## VF-51/VF111 USS Coral Sea by Mark L. Rossmann

### History:

By 1972, the first weeks of January, U.S. reprisal raids against North Viet Nam targets commenced – called “protective reactive” strikes and were flown after the North attempted attacks against the “Blue Tree” recon sorties. These were the first missions against the North since “Rolling Thunder” in the fall of 1968

Text from Call Sign ‘Husker’  
Under the ROE (Rules of

Engagement), when the recon aircraft were under attack, they could not radio back to the carriers for an air strike. However, if the strike package was flying with the recon aircraft, they could execute “protective reaction strikes” against the SAM or AAA site.

VF-51 “Screaming Eagles” and VF-111 “Sundowners” sailed on the Midway Class, USS Coral Sea (CV-43). One of 3 such built; USS Midway (CV-41) and USS Franklin D. Roosevelt (CV-42).

The Ship was named after the WWII battle of the Coral Sea, where a U.S. naval victory prevented the Japanese invasion of Australia. Construction of the

Coral Sea began during WWII, and was commissioned in October of 1947 and went to sea trials on December 8, 1947. Passageways had oval compartment openings making the ship structurally stronger. The top of the doorway was known as the “Head Knocker” the bottom the “Knee Knocker”. In 1957, the Coral Sea was overhauled in Bremerton Wa, widening her by 8 feet and adding the angled deck.

On November 12, 1971 the Coral Sea left its home port of Alameda Ca. ‘Husker’ waved good bye to his wife, there were anti-war protesters around the

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### TCAH Officers

**President**, Mark Copeland

**Vice-President**, Steve Hustad

**Secretary**, Bob Maderich

**Treasurer**, Dennis Strand

**Historian**, Merrill Anderson

### Newsletter Info

*Article Submission Deadline: 22nd of each month*

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Dennis Strand

### TCAH This Month

The monthly meeting will be held Saturday April 9, at Fleming Field, South St. Paul, beginning at 1:00 pm. Come early.



### President's Address

*by Mark Copeland*

It sure is nice to see the snow finally melting and the weather beginning to change. It has been a long winter, but certainly a productive season for TCAH!!

We completed a few tasks off of our "to do" list to begin the year. We now have personal name tags for each of our 2022 paid members. The tags will be available prior to the each of our monthly meetings. Please remember to return them back into the name tag box at the end of the afternoon. Secondly, we have updated rosters to hand out to everyone. Our Treasurer, Dennis Strand will have them available at the meeting. Both of these were items were completed at the last meeting.

We also fulfilled a promise to Life Member Jeff Fries in purchasing and erecting a large freestanding bookcase to serve as the repository of the Barry Rosch research collection. Barry Rosch was a member of TCAH for several years, before he moved to North Carolina where he spent the rest of his life. Upon Barry's passing several years ago, Jeff and TCAH were the benefactors of part of his research collection. The research collection was organized by country and aircraft type and was placed into several ring binders. With the permission of the South St. Paul Airport Manager, we purchased a bookshelf to house the collection and placed it at the F.B.O. in their library area.

With the kind help of Randy Koivisto, Denny Strand, Steve Hustad and Dave Gantz, we navigated our way through the vague IKEA instructions, with

minimal swear words, to assemble the bookcase after the last meeting. The collection is now available for everyone's reference and hopefully will be a useful resource for years to come.

Lastly, it is just over 100 days until the IPMS Nationals in Omaha, Nebraska. Being only six hours away, I expect a large contingent of TCAH members will make the trek to this incredible modeling event. As of this writing, there are over 400 registrants and all the vendor tables have been spoken for. The dates are July 20-23, 2022 and the convention will be held at the La Vista Conference Center in Omaha. The convention hotels are sold out, however there are several properties in the area that are close to the event.

If you never have experienced an IPMS National Contest before, I would highly encourage you to attend. You won't regret it!! More information can be found at:

[www.ipmsusa2022.com](http://www.ipmsusa2022.com)

This month's theme is "What If's" and the observance of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Doolittle Raid (April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1942). It should be a great meeting!!

We will also try and nail down a date for a trip out west to the Fagen Fighter WWII Museum in Granite Falls, MN at the April meeting.

Till then, stay well and keep modeling!!!



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base with "Stop Our Ship" signs.

The Coral Sea was 25 years old on this voyage to S.E. Asia, its call sign was "Mustang" and the Air Wing "Nut Cake". 'Husker' notes the second air wing commander went through bureaucratic red tape to get the AW name changed to "Wolf Pack".

The Air Wing attached to the Coral Sea (CVW-15), consisted of 2 Phantom Squadrons, a Marine A-6 squadron, 2 A-7 squadrons, a detachment of F-8 recon aircraft, 2 A-3 Tankers, 3 helo's and 3 Hawkeye radar aircraft.

Barrier Combat Air Patrol (BARCAP), bombing and participation in Alpha strikes were the three scheduled duties for the Phantom squadrons. BARCAP was to prevent MiG's from attacking the

Ships, a 24/7 mission all Phantom units were to do from the three to four carriers assigned in the area.

VF-51's worn-out condition of the Marine hand me down Phantoms, made it difficult fulfilling the requirements for BARCAP at times, which required two of thirteen aircraft having working radars. One occasion the CO had to ask sister squadron VF-111 to provide a plane to fill the BARCAP requirement. Even though on the same team there was a lot of competition between the squadrons, the CO was not happy about that.

Because Phantoms burned a lot of fuel, they were the last to take off, after which they met up with a tanker to take on about 2000 lbs. of fuel. If afterburners were used during the mission another refueling took place on return to the carrier.

When encountering a SAM, it was important to see it, track it coming to your flight then "waiting till it was to close". Typical call would be: "Eagle Flight, I have a SAM launching at our 7 o'clock. Will maintain sight to see if it is tracking us. Yes, it is tracking us. Wait until I give the signal then break left and hard down. Okay BREAK NOW!". (This was a high degree turn, hard down and toward it)

Visual Flight Rules was a disadvantage to us when up against MiGs. A visual ID of the MiG had to be made before firing on it, which was about two to three miles. At that distance radar guided missiles would not arm, thus relying on the sidewinder. On the other hand, the Phantom was big and a smoker (seen about twenty miles away). Visual ID assured we did not fire on friendlies, which happened earlier in the war.

Each pilot had their own call sign, for personal traits or previous activities, like 'Cobra', or 'Happy' or 'Husker'. "Husker" grew up on a farm in Nebraska, being the author of "A Reluctant Hero".

#### Dixie Station

Coral Sea left Subic Bay and commenced operations on Dixie Station, near South Vietnam, on December 15, 1971. This allowed missions to be flown where little to no AAA or SAM activity would be present. This was bombing the Ho Chi Minh trail from North Viet Nam south. It was basically the pre-season games prior to the regular season. After several weeks we were finally on our way north to "Yankee Station". The ship always had destroyer escorts and the proverbial Soviet Fishing Trawler, retrieving any mail bags

and trash that fell from the ship.

Combat Aircraft 30 – US Navy Phantoms II MiG Killers 1972-73

Combat Aircraft 94 – US Marine Corps Phantoms II Units of the Vietnam War

#### VF-111 Kill

VF-111 was the first CVW-15 squadron to bag a MiG. After launching a FORCAP (Force Cap) section to support a Recon mission to Quan Lang airfield. Quang Lang had been extensively reinforced after *Rolling Thunder*. The base had grown to house 260 fighters, MiG-21's, MiG-17's and Mig-19's. These jets were sortied to engage the B-52's.

This summary of the engagement occurred on March 6, 1972. Lt. Garry 'Greyhound' Wiegand and RIO Lt. (jg) William 'Farkle' Freckleton, flying F-4B BuNo 153019 call sign "Old Nick 201", were wing to Lt. James 'Yosemite' Stillinger, a former F-8 pilot on a previous tour, and RIO

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#### **Treasurer's Report** *by Dennis Strand*

Last month there were several expenses, but quite a lot was accomplished. Club roster paper and printing - \$47.29, name tags - 71.58, gift certificate - \$100.00, officers IPMS membership - \$30.00, and bookshelf - \$215.04. These expenditures amounted to \$463.91. We had one member who paid the \$15.00 dues. This was our only income this month. Total bank account at this time is \$4440.72







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Lt. (jg) Rick Olin. They successfully engaged a MiG-17 into a 'sandwich'. "Old Nick 201", becoming the only VF-111 crew to get a kill for the cruise. After a long chase an AIM-9 was launched as the MiG turned maximum, the AIM-9 made a small twist and then went ballistic. Finally, after getting within 500 ft, at 600 knots and at "dead six" an AIM-9D was shot, going directly up the tail pipe. The MiG's tail came off and it headed straight down, crashing into a fireball, the pilot didn't eject. Both Freckleton and Wiegand received a Silver Star for this mission.

#### Phantom Loss

The first Navy air-to-air loss was on April 27, 1972, when a silver MiG-21PFM of the 921<sup>st</sup> 'Sao Dao' fighter regiment brought down a VF-51 F-4B, BuNo 153025, using an R-3S (K-13 Atoll) missile. Lt. Al Molinar and RIO Lt. Cdr. J B Souder safely ejected. "Husker" notes; that both crewmen deplaned at Clark AFB, after a POW flight from Hanoi. He and the other VF-51 crews were present and overjoyed, but they were not able to speak with them.

#### VF-51 First Kill

This summary of the engagement occurred on May 7, 1972. Two F-4Bs were assigned TARCAP (Target Combat Air Patrol), from VF-51, for a 19 plane Alpha strike on the Bai Thong airfield. Lead Phantom, F-4B BuNo 150456, was crewed by Lt. Cmdr. Jerry 'Devil' Houston and RIO Lt. Kevin Moore, with Chuck Schroeder and RIO Rick Webb as their wing. Plan for attacking the Bai Thuong airfield was for the strike force to approach from the south, with TARCAP flying with

the second group of slower higher A-6 bombers. The strike force went 'feet dry', and *Red Crown* called "Screaming Eagles Heads Up" a prearranged signal that Migs were on "strip alert". A dark camouflaged MiG-17 was on the hunt of three A-6's from the first strike right in front of Houston's flight. Moore called "Talley Ho", Houston spotted it too at his 2 o'clock, painted black, grey and white. Using a 6G, descending, 180-degree turn, he jettisoned his centerline tank, he wasn't concerned that the tank would come back and hit the jet. Upon return though the 'clean pickle' turned out to have bent one sparrow.

Schroeder, holding combat speed formation ended up 3000ft at Houston's 5 o'clock after a forced rollout. Moore spotted a second MiG-17 behind Schroeder and twice called for him to break, but no response. Moore called the MiG, but this Phantom was old, a hand me down from the Marines and had a history of radio problems. The sidewinder tone was transmitted but blocked the rest of the transmission. The Marines had modified their radios to transmit the sidewinder growl over the UHF radio. When the transmit button was pressed it overrode all other UHF transmission, basically putting you out of communications at a difficult time.

Having minimum sidewinder launch range, Houston squeezed the trigger from "dead six o'clock" at about 3000 ft behind the MiG. The AIM-9G launched and headed for the MiG, Sheets saw the missile come off the rail and broke ending the role of decoy. The missile flew up the tail pipe and blew the tail off. Being so low, the MiG immediately slammed into the Karsk Ridge.

#### In the End

The Navy claimed the last of

its 57 kills on January 12, 1973 when F-4B's of VF-161 shot down a Mig-17 over the Gulf of Tonkin. Air operations over Vietnam officially came to an end with the signing of the peace treaty on January 27, 1973. Linebacker II saw the Navy re-establish themselves as MiG Masters. Downing 25 VPAF MiG's, one of the kills went to Marine unit VMFA-333 flying off the USS America, to the loss of two ship-based Phantom II's, a 12.5 to 1 ratio.

Navy and Marine's eliminated 26 MiG's in all; 15 MiG 17's, 2 MiG 19's and 8 MiG 21's. Used were 24 AIM-9 and 2 AIM-7 missiles.

The 26<sup>th</sup> came from Capt. Lawrence G Richard USMC Lt Cmdr. Michael J Ettel USN, and were on exchange with the Air Forces 58<sup>th</sup> TFS / 432 TRW out of Udorn. Flying an F-4E, they bagged a MiG-21 on August 12th, 1972.

High score goes to VF-96 with 8, followed with 5 by VF-161 and 4 by VF-51.

#### Aircraft

**1. Aircraft:** 100 - "Commander Attack Carrier Air Wing Fifteen", F-4B, BuNo 153009, Disposition unknown

**Unit:** **VF-51:** Screaming Eagles, USS Coral Sea CVW-15, Code 'NL'; 1972.

**Pilot:** Cmdr. Tom Dunlap of CVW-15; Killed over Viet Nam flying A-7E on April 6, 1972.

**RIO:** Lt. Doc Brown

· **Model:** Tamiya 1/48<sup>t h</sup>, Kit P5 1988. (This was built in the late 1990's)

· MicroScale Decals – 48-300 (F-4's F-4B VF-51, F-4J VF-96.)

· Used Testers Dull Gull Grey and Gloss White Rattle

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## On The Table—March 2022

Modeler	Subject	Manufacturer	Scale	Modeler	Subject	Manufacturer	Scale
				Noel Allard	Curtis MF boat	Scratchbuilt	1/72
Sean Brzozowski	Spitfire Vb on Floats	Gartex	1/48		Sikorsky S-39	Scratchbuilt	1/72
Don Stauffer	Dornier float plane	Revell	1/72		Benoist I3	Scratch built	1/72
	Curtiss R2	Testors	1/48	Dave Perzel	JA-37 Viggen	Esci	1/48
	Macchi CM	Testors	1/48	Peter Martin	Supermarine S6B	Novo	1/72
Josh Barney	1966 Caddy Hearse	Johan	1/25	David Gatts	F2Y-1	Collect Air	1/48
	1955 Chevy Nomad	Revell	1/25		Cessna 180	Monogram	1/48
	U.S.S. Constitution	In a bottle			Sopwith Baby	Special Hobby	1/48
	PBY Catalina	Atlantis	1/48		Saunders-Roe A/1	Vac-form	1/72
	Goshawk	?	1/72		Savoia S.55x	Ringo	1/90
Paul Dial	1963 Chevy Nova	AMT	1/25		Martin XP6M-1	Revell	1/136
Tom Norrbohm	Spitfire MK. I	Tamiya	1/48	Bob Ferreira	TI-67	Esci	1/35
John Dunphy	FW 190	Tamiya	1/48	Dennis Strand	Dornier Do 335	Tamiya	1/48
	P-51 Mustang	Airfix	1/48		Piper NE-1	Hobbycraft	1/48
	Sherman in Korea	Tamiya	1/35		Nakajima A6M2-N	Hasegawa	1/48
	Matilda tank	Tamiya	1/35	Erik Zabel	Hansa-Brandenberg W.12	Wingnuts	1/32
Dave Heffernan	Javelin	Airfix	1/48		PBY Catalina	Academy	1/72
	Pucara FMA IA 58	Kinetic	1/48	Bob Maderich II	Toyota Rally car	Tamiya	1/24
Steve Hustad	Friedrichshafen FF.60	Scratchbuilt	1/72		Heinkel HE-51	Hasegawa	1/72
Steve Jantscher	T-90A	Soyata	1/48		Macchi MC72	SBS models	1/72
Steve Erickson	Polikarpov I-16	ICM	1/48				
	Sea Hurricane	Airfix	1/48				
	Panzer I	Tamiya	1/35				
	Panzer III	Tamiya	1/35				
	King Tiger	Dragon	1/35				

## Directions to the Club Meeting Location

**Where: South St. Paul Municipal Airport, a.k.a. Fleming Field**, located on the southern extremity of South St. Paul, south of 1-494, west of Concord Street and East of Highway 52.

### If coming from the western Twin Cities going east on 494:

- Exit at the 7th and 5th Avenue exit (Exit No.65)
- Turn right (South) on 7th Ave and go approximately .6 miles to a 4-way Stop sign. This is South Street W. To your left there will be a McDonald's; to your right front there will be a Walgreen's.
- Turn left (East) at the 4-way Stop onto
- South Street W and go approximately .6 miles. Along the way you will encounter three more Stop signs—the third Stop sign (Henry Avenue) will be a "T" intersection. At the "T" intersection on your left will be homes and on your right softball fields.
- Turn right (south) onto Henry Ave. and go approximately .2

- miles toward the Fleming Field airport terminal building.

### If coming from east Twin Cities on westbound 494:

- Exit at the 7th and 5th Avenue exit (Exit No.65)
- Turn left (South) on 7th Ave and go approximately .6 miles to a 4-way Stop sign. This is South Street W. To your left front there will be a small strip mall; to your right there will be an Amoco station.
- Turn left (East) at the 4-way Stop onto
- South Street W and go approximately .4 miles. Along the way you will encounter two more Stop signs—the third Stop sign (Henry Avenue) will be a "T" intersection. At the "T" intersection on your left will be homes and on your right softball fields.
- Turn right (south) onto Henry Ave. and go approximately .2 miles toward the Fleming Field airport terminal building

The terminal is on the right with parking available.



The Aero Historian is published monthly by the Twin City Aero Historians, Inc., a joint chapter of the American Aviation Historical Society and International Plastic Modelers Society/USA, for members and readers as part of their annual dues or fees.

The group is open to aviation enthusiasts from teenagers on up who are interested in aviation modeling, photography, collecting, art and writing.

The Twin Cities Aero Historians (TCAH) meet the second Saturday of every month at 1:00pm.

See above for the new meeting locations and directions.

Mail Newsletter material to the editor and address changes to the treasurer.

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cans.

• This jet has survived 3 moves, One from Minnesota to Arizona.

**2. Aircraft: 200 – "CAG",** F-4B, BuNo 15100, Disposition unknown

**Unit: VF-111:** Sundowners, USS Coral Sea CVW-15, Code 'NL'; 1975.

**Model:** Academy 1/48<sup>th</sup>, Kit 12232, This was built by son Michael used with his permission.

- Kit Decals
- Used Testers Dull Gull Grey and Gloss White Rattle cans.

To get a personal view of a Phantom pilot please read "A Reluctant Hero". To find out more about the Vietnam Navy

Phantom operations 1971 – 1973 read the Osprey publications.

### References:

1. Hasegawa Instruction sheet.
2. A Reluctant Warrior – By Kenneth L. Volker Captain, U S N R Retired . ISBN:9798632026161
3. Combat Aircraft 30 – US Navy Phantoms II MiG Killers 1972-73 – By Brad Elward and Peter E Davies – Osprey Publishing ISBN: 1841762644
4. Combat Aircraft 94 – US Marine Corps Phantoms II Units of the Vietnam War – By Peter E Davies – Osprey Publishing ISBN: 1841762644
5. Pictures from; Ken Volker, Mike Rossmann, Mark Rossmann

