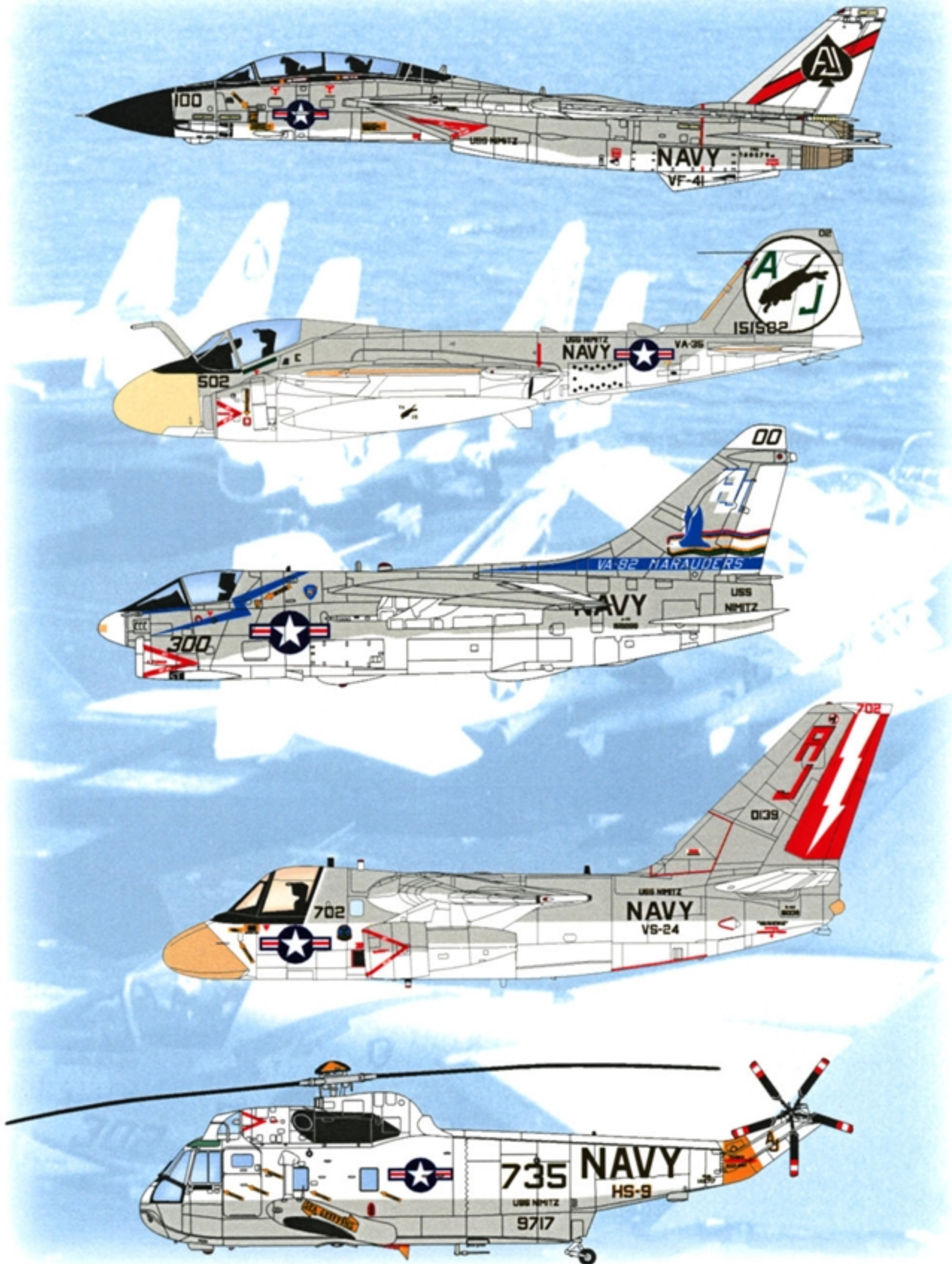


USS NIMITZ CVN-68 CARRIER AIR WING EIGHT 1977/78



USS NIMITZ CVN-68

CARRIER AIR WING EIGHT 1977/78

Hi Gang!

Here is what I remember about Nimitz's 77-78 Mediterranean Cruise.

Most of the Airwing was hoisted aboard at Norfolk with the ship's crane. Ninety percent of the Airwing was from the East coast, the only aircraft from the West coast were EA-6B's from NAS Whidbey Island, 14 NAS Oceana, Virginia; A7 and S3 from Cecil Field, Florida; H-3 from Mayport, Florida; and RA-5C from Key West, Florida. This would be the last time Nimitz would operate the Vigilante...what a graceful aircraft.

Nimitz left Norfolk, Virginia on 12-1-77 for what would be only its second deployment. The Atlantic crossing took about five days. Our first stop (as for all carriers) was Rota, Spain where we would pick up supplies and take on our spy planes, EA-3B's of VQ-2 based at Rota. From there we headed South and East through the Strait of Gibraltar and on into the Mediterranean for months of fun, fun, fun or more like work, work, and more work. We were flying day and night, with a constant Russian presence, either by ship or the Tu-95 Bear. Up to that time we were only the second nuclear carrier in the U. S. Navy, so the Russian interest was more than just passing!

There are a couple of incidents that I remember. We were about ready to have our weekly Bear monitoring overflight, when the Captain came over the I.M.C. (ships intercom) and asked that all hands that were not on watch or working were to come up to the flight deck. At the appointed time, arms were raised in a one finger salute..... can you imagine that? There were hundreds of us up there! The other thing that comes to mind was a Russian cruiser that crossed our bow with less than a quarter mile distance, while we were doing flank speed (30 knots). NOT a smart thing to do! There was some serious fuss over that.

During the cruise we participated in the NATO exercise "Dawn Patrol 78" with the British, French, and Italian Naval forces. It wasn't all just flying and back breaking work. We did have port visits, in Palma and Barcelona, Spain; Naples and Venice, Italy; Monaco; Haifa, Israel; and Lisbon, Portugal. Always before reaching these ports, usually a day before we would drop anchor, the local VIP's from that country would be flown aboard where they would tour the ship and be treated to an impressive display of naval air power in action. A-6's and A-7's would lay down (carpet bomb) Mk. 82's some distance from the ship. The rest of the Airwing would do flybys, the airshow being topped off with an F-14 Mach 1+ flyby, really a sight to see!

After doing our duty the bow was pointed West, and we arrived back at Norfolk, Virginia, July 20, 1978.

Ken Austin

USS NIMITZ CVN-68 CARRIER AIR WING EIGHT 1977/78



TOMCATS

1

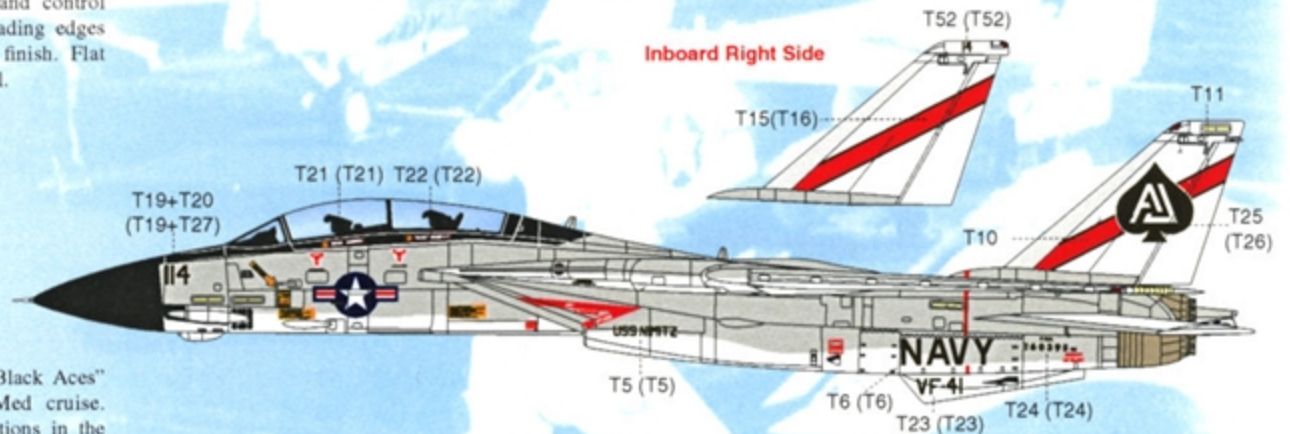
F-14A Tomcat BuNo. 160379. From VF-41 as flown by CDR Jud Springer, Commander Carrier Air Wing Eight aboard USS Nimitz (CVN-68) January-July 1978. Standard USN scheme of Non-Specular Gull Gray FS36440 upper surfaces with Gloss White FS17875 undersurfaces, landing gear, and control surfaces. F-14 wing and tail surface leading edges were painted in aluminum corrugard finish. Flat Black FS37038 radome and antiglare panel.



NOTE: Paint vertical tail Gloss White FS17875 and then apply Decals T9/10/11 and T15/16/17 in numerical order before applying Decals T12 or T25.

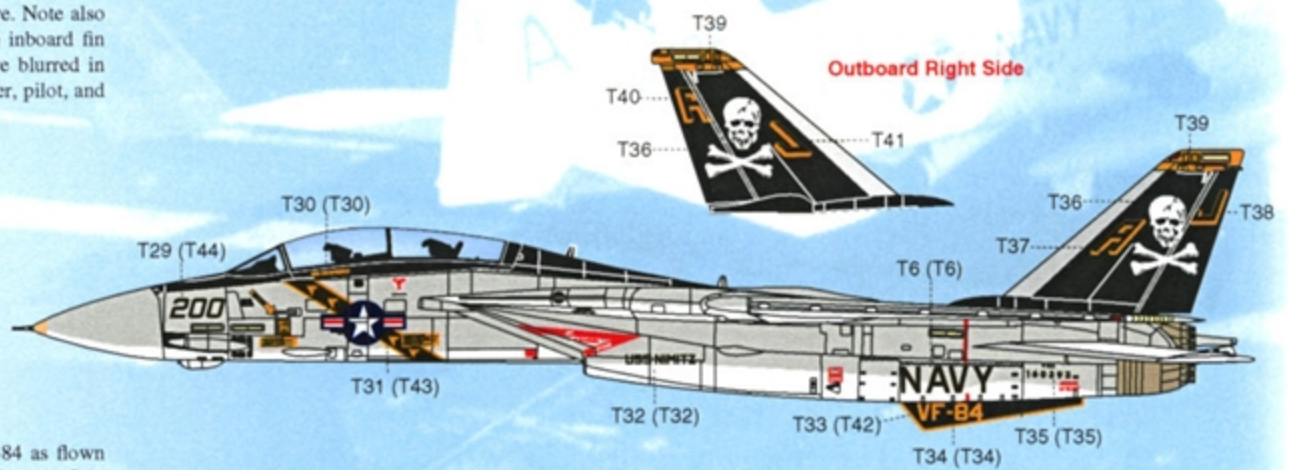
2

F-14A Tomcat BuNo. 160395. VF-41 "Black Aces" aboard the Nimitz for the 1977/78 Med cruise. Standard USN scheme. Note the variations in the lettering styles on the tail marking and the number styles between this and the CAG bird above. Note also the last two of the modex carried on the inboard fin faces. The aircrew names for AJ114 were blurred in our photos but looked like LT Buck Absner, pilot, and LT "Zeke" Bradley, RIO.



3

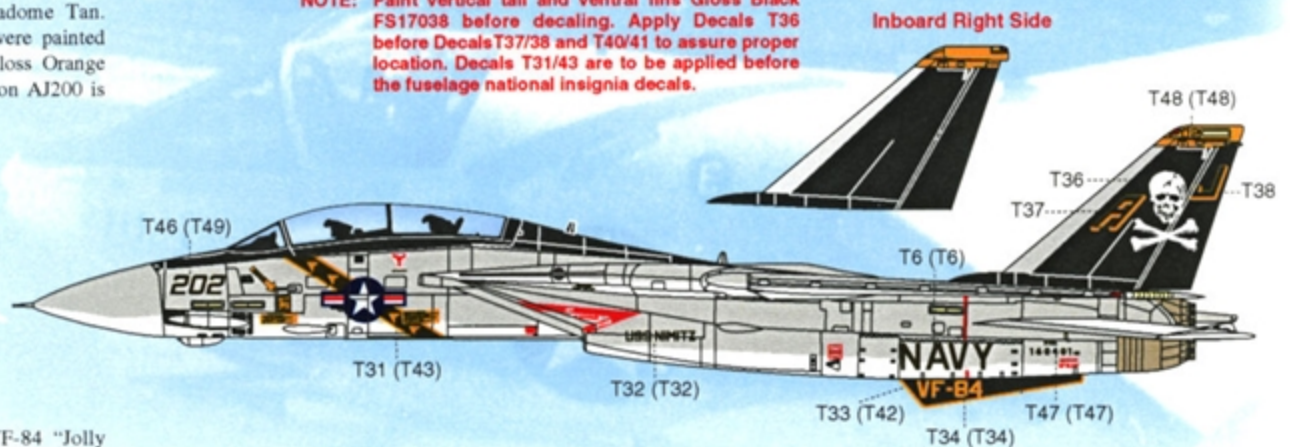
F-14A Tomcat BuNo. 160393. From VF-84 as flown by CDR Jud Springer, CAG CVW-8, January-July 1978. Standard USN scheme. Flat Black FS37138 antiglare panel. Tip of radome was Radome Tan. Canopy, vertical fins, and ventral fins were painted Gloss Black FS17038. Fin caps were Gloss Orange Yellow FS13538. The name of the RIO on AJ200 is not known.



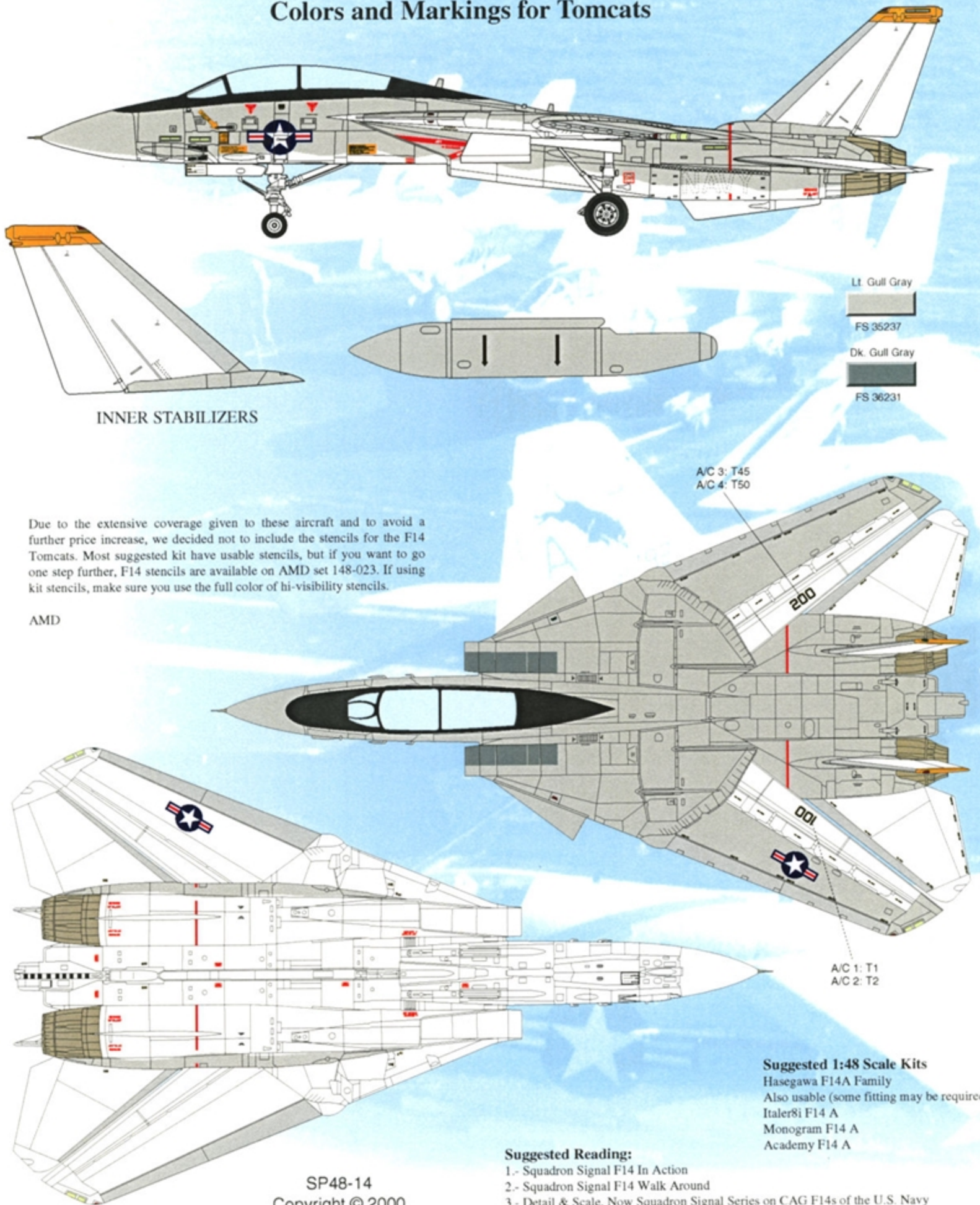
NOTE: Paint vertical tail and ventral fins Gloss Black FS17038 before decaling. Apply Decals T36 before Decals T37/38 and T40/41 to assure proper location. Decals T31/43 are to be applied before the fuselage national insignia decals.

4

F-14A Tomcat BuNo. 160401. From VF-84 "Jolly Rogers" aboard USS Nimitz, 1977/78 cruise. Finished as AJ200 in standard USN scheme. Note the Tomcats in CVW-8 were all from Production Block 95. AJ202 was flown by VF-84's Executive Officer. Unfortunately we couldn't read his or his RIO's name.



Colors and Markings for Tomcats



INNER STABILIZERS

- Lt. Gull Gray
FS 36237
- Dk. Gull Gray
FS 36231

Due to the extensive coverage given to these aircraft and to avoid a further price increase, we decided not to include the stencils for the F14 Tomcats. Most suggested kit have usable stencils, but if you want to go one step further, F14 stencils are available on AMD set 148-023. If using kit stencils, make sure you use the full color of hi-visibility stencils.

AMD

A/C 3: T45
A/C 4: T50

A/C 1: T1
A/C 2: T2

- Suggested 1:48 Scale Kits**
Hasegawa F14A Family
Also usable (some fitting may be required)
Italeri F14 A
Monogram F14 A
Academy F14 A

Suggested Reading:

- 1.- Squadron Signal F14 In Action
- 2.- Squadron Signal F14 Walk Around
- 3.- Detail & Scale, Now Squadron Signal Series on CAG F14s of the U.S. Navy

AeroMaster PRODUCTS

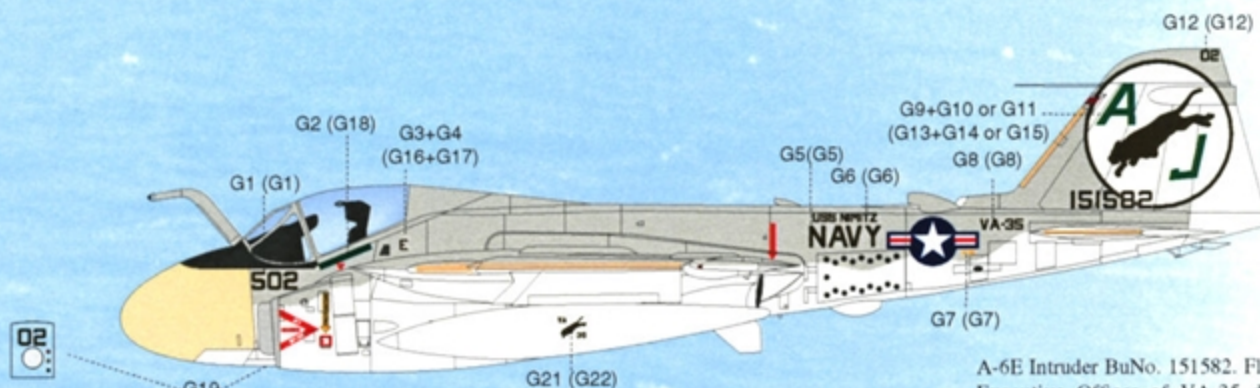
3615 NW 20th Ave • Miami, Florida 33142 • USA
Tel. (305) 633-7398 • Fax (305) 638-4197

USS NIMITZ CVN-68 CARRIER AIR WING EIGHT 1977/78



INTRUDER/PROWLER

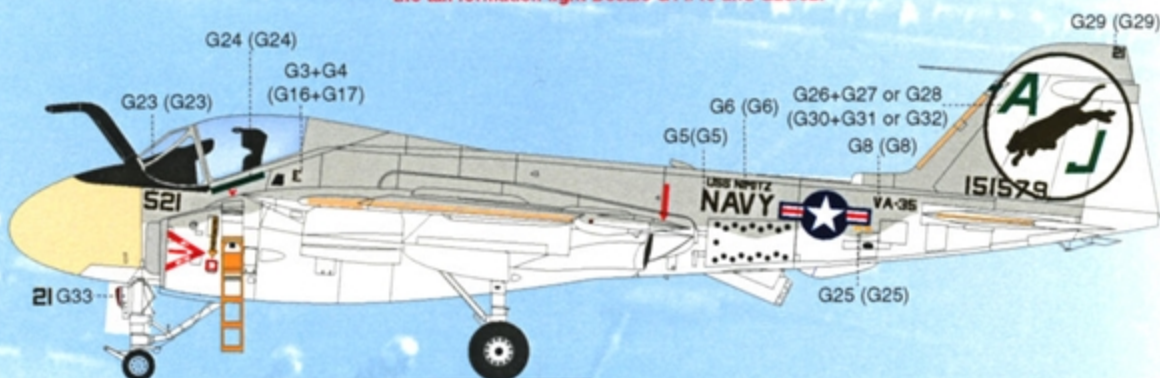
5



A-6E Intruder BuNo. 151582. Flown by CDR Jim Joyner, Executive Officer of VA-35 during the 1977/78 Med cruise of USS Nimitz (CVN-68). Non-Specular Gull Gray FS36440 upper surfaces with Gloss White FS17875 undersurfaces, landing gear, and control surfaces. Flat Black FS37038 antiglare panel with the nose radome in Radome Tan, and the wing, tail, and fin leading edges in a putty-like color. Note perforated style of speed brake on fuselage and the squadron stencil on the drop tank.

NOTE: For the tail markings, apply Decals G9/13 and G26/30 before applying the tail radar fairing Decals G10/14 and G27/31 and the tail formation light Decals G11/15 and G28/32.

6



KA-6D Intruder BuNo. 151578. Assigned to VA-35 "Black Panthers" aboard CVN-68 during her 1977/78 Med cruise. Color scheme similar to AJ502. Note the black IFR probe. KA-6D tankers had green fin leading edge formation lights to distinguish them from the attack models which had red lights there. We've provided a small nose number (Decal G33) although our references don't show us how it was placed. Any information on aircrew names would be appreciated as well.

NOTE: The fuselage stripe decals are in three parts per side. Apply by starting at the nose and working towards the rear of the aircraft. Apply rudder markings, Decals G44/48 before the serial number Decals G45.

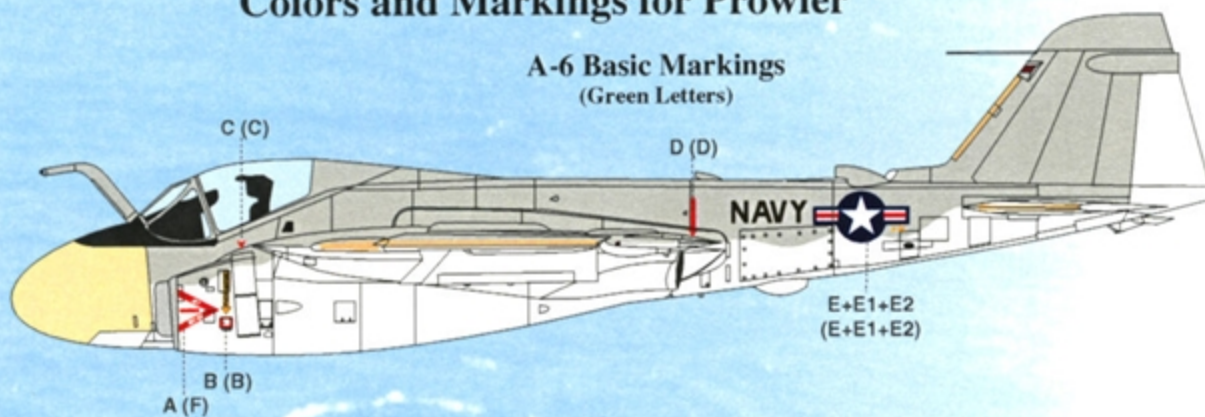
7



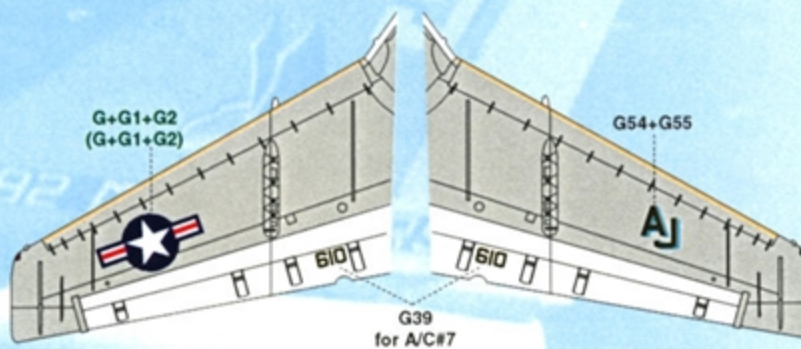
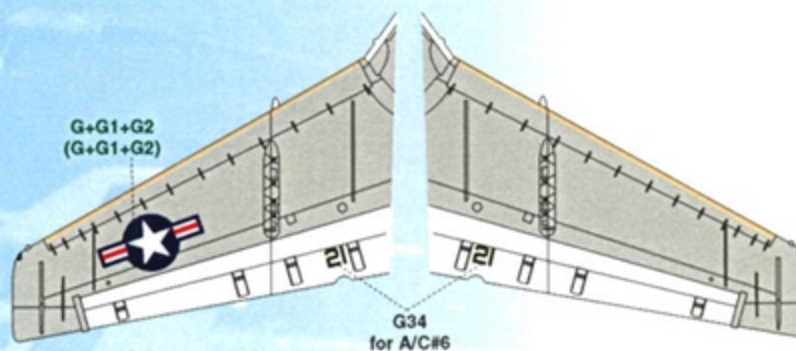
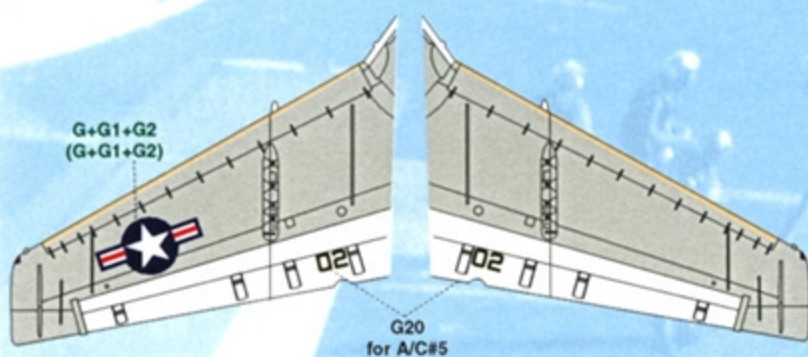
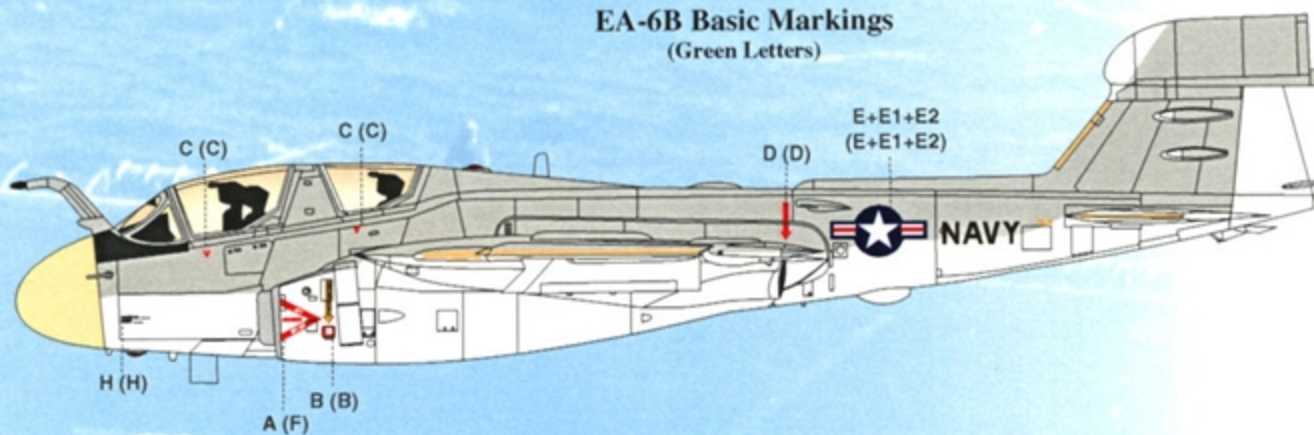
EA-6B Prowler BuNo. 159908. With the VAQ-135 detachment aboard Nimitz in 1977/78. Standard A-6 scheme. Flat Black FS37138 antiglare panel with Radome Tan nose radome and fin leadind edge. Squadron emblems carried on the fuel tanks. Forward part of tail radome was white. EA-6B "four-holers" carried distinctive markings on their nose radomes so the Landing Signals Officer could visually distinguish them from the "two-holers".

Colors and Markings for Prowler

A-6 Basic Markings
(Green Letters)



EA-6B Basic Markings
(Green Letters)



Suggested Reading:

1. EA-6B Prowler, Detail & Scale Vol. 46, 1994
2. US Navy CAG Aircraft: Attack Aircraft, Colors & Markings #16, 1990
3. Grumman EA-6A Intruder/EA-6B Prowler, Aerofax Minigraph #7, 1989
4. A-6 Intruder Pt.1, Colors & Markings #5, 1987
5. A-6 Intruder Pt.1, Detail & Scale Vol. 24, 1987

Suggested 1:48 Scale Kits:

- Revell-Monogram A-6E Intruder
- Revell-Monogram EA-6B Prowler

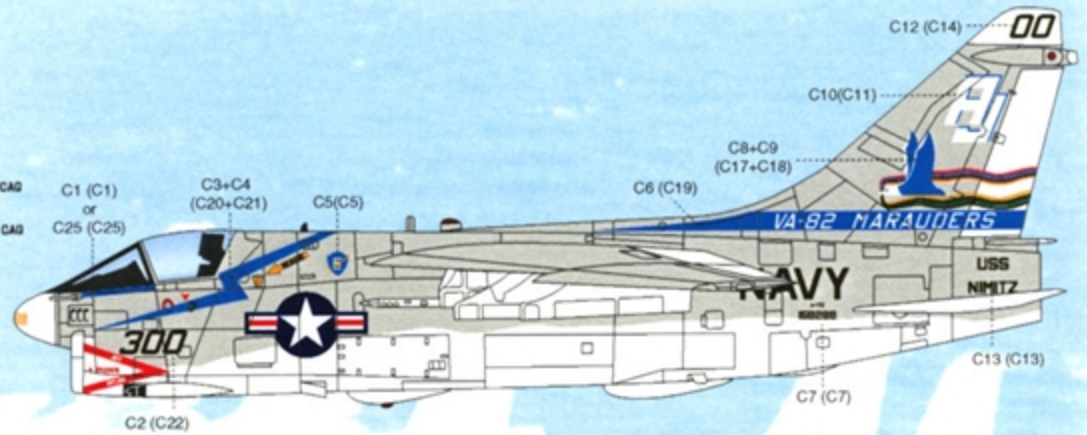


USS NIMITZ CVN-68 CARRIER AIR WING EIGHT 1977/78

CORSAIRS

8

A-7E Corsair II BuNo. 159289. With VA-82 during the 1977/78 Med cruise of USS Nimitz (CVN-68). Non-Specular Gull Gray FS36440 upper surfaces with Gloss White FS17875 undersurfaces, landing gear, fin cap, and control surfaces. Wing leading edge slats were painted aluminum. Flat Black FS37038 antiglare panel. CDR Jud Springer replaced CDR "Moon" Moreau as CAG CVW-8 in January of 1978. AJ300 carried both names at different times during the cruise.



NOTE: Apply Decals C6/C19 before applying the VA-82 Eagle markings. For proper alignment on AJ300, apply Decals C8/C17 before Decals C9/C18.

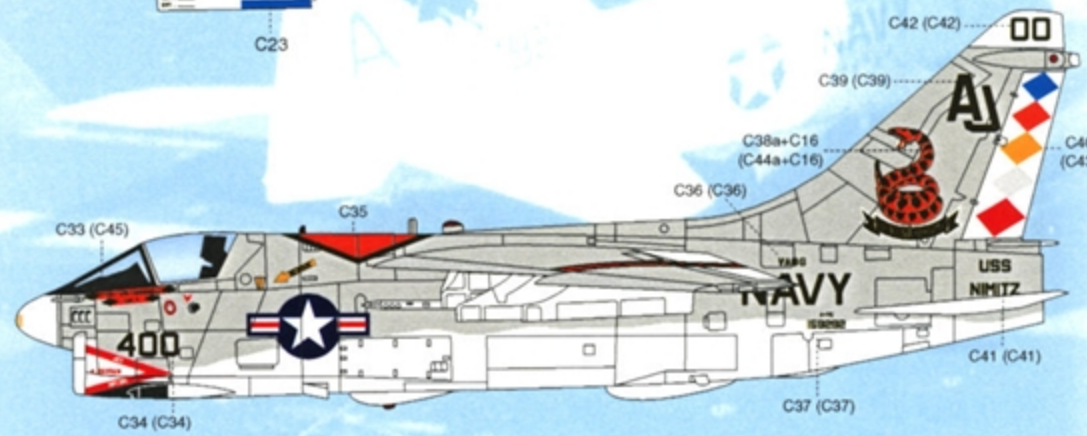
9

A-7E Corsair II BuNo. 157571. Flown by LT Frank Power of VA-82 "Marauders" aboard CVN-68 during her 1977/78 Med cruise. Standard USN scheme. Note the Radome Tan horizontal strip at the extreme forward edge of the white radome, a feature appearing on almost every Corsair in CVW-8. No "E" award was carried by AJ311.



10

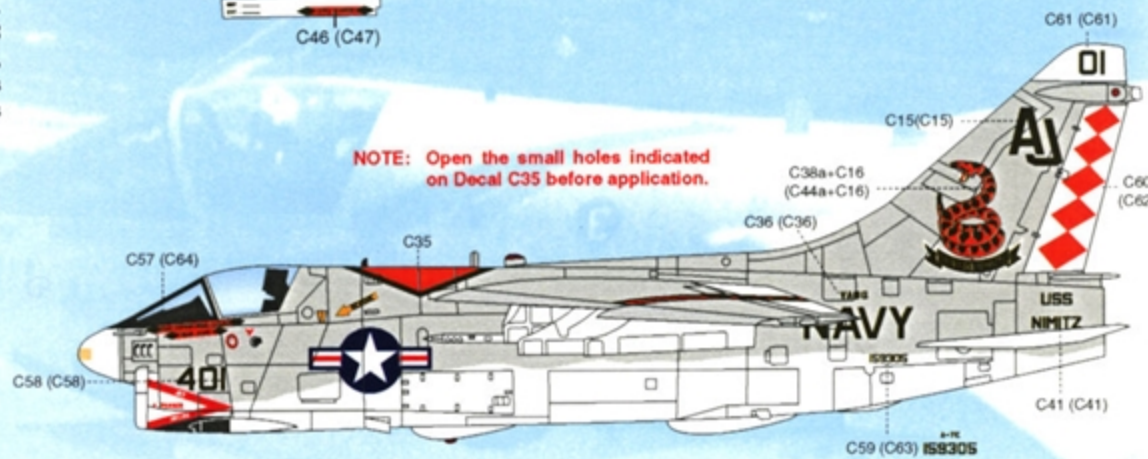
A-7E Corsair II BuNo. 159292. CAG bird from VA-86 aboard Nimitz from January to July 1978. Standard USN scheme. Flat Black FS37138 antiglare panel. Tip of radome was Radome Tan, approximately FS12345. Multicolored diamonds on the rudder. VA-86 jets carried orange bands inboard of the wing fold line top and bottom.



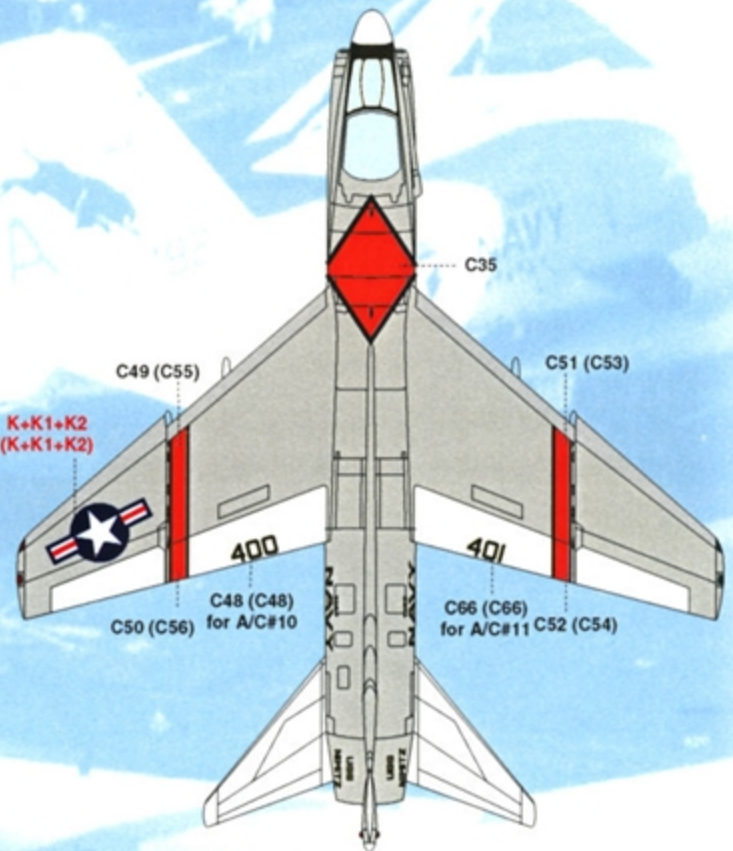
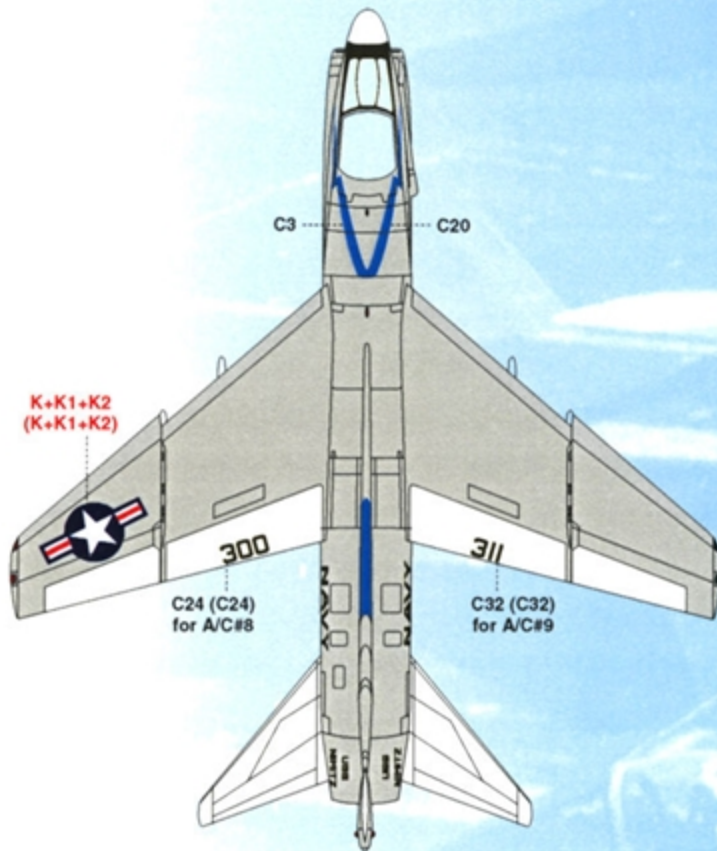
NOTE: Open the small holes indicated on Decal C35 before application.

11

A-7E Corsair II BuNo. 159305. Flown by CDR "Superb" Herb Taylor, the "Head Snake" of VA-86 "Sidewinders" for the Nimitz 1977/78 Med cruise. Finished as AJ400 but with orange diamonds on the rudder. Note the lack of aircraft type designation in the port side BuNo presentation



Colors and Markings for Corsairs



Many thanks to **Ken Austin** and also to **Mike France** for their excellent photos which made the production of these decals possible.

Suggested Reading:

1. SLUF A-7 Corsair, Concord, 1997
2. A-7 Corsair II In Action, In Action #120, 1991
3. US Navy CAG Aircraft: Attack Aircraft, Colors & Markings #16, 1990
4. A-7E Corsair II: USN Atlantic Coast, Colors & Markings #9, 1988
5. A-7 Corsair II, Detail & Scale Vol. 22, 1986

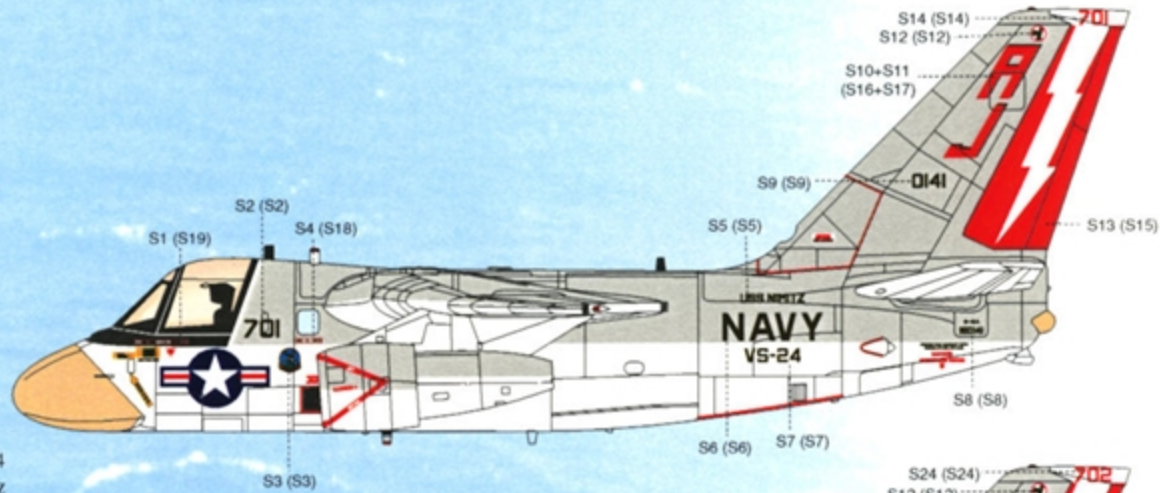
Suggested 1:48 Scale Kits:

- Hasegawa A-7E Corsair II
- AMT/ERTL A-7E Corsair II

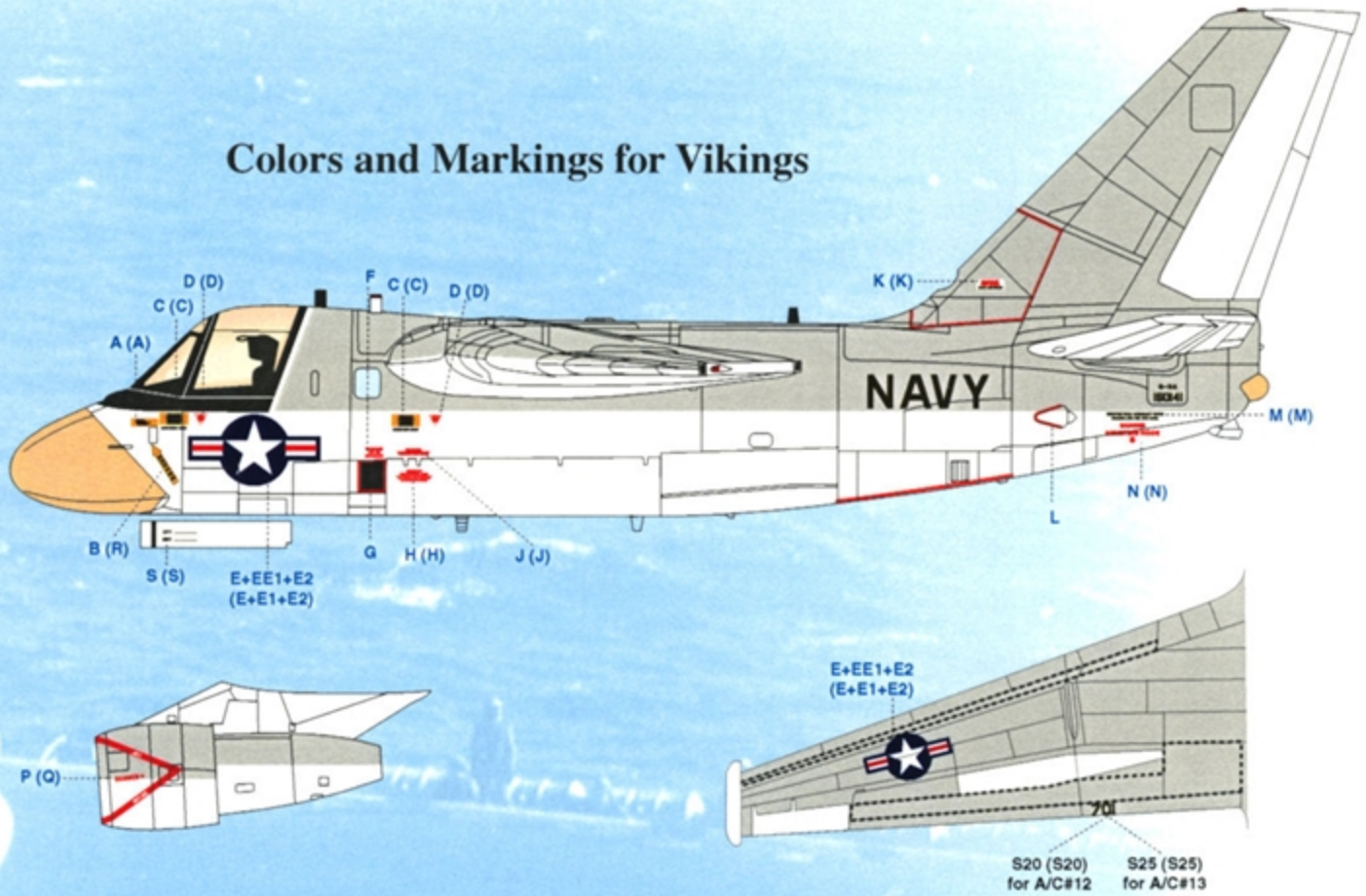


12

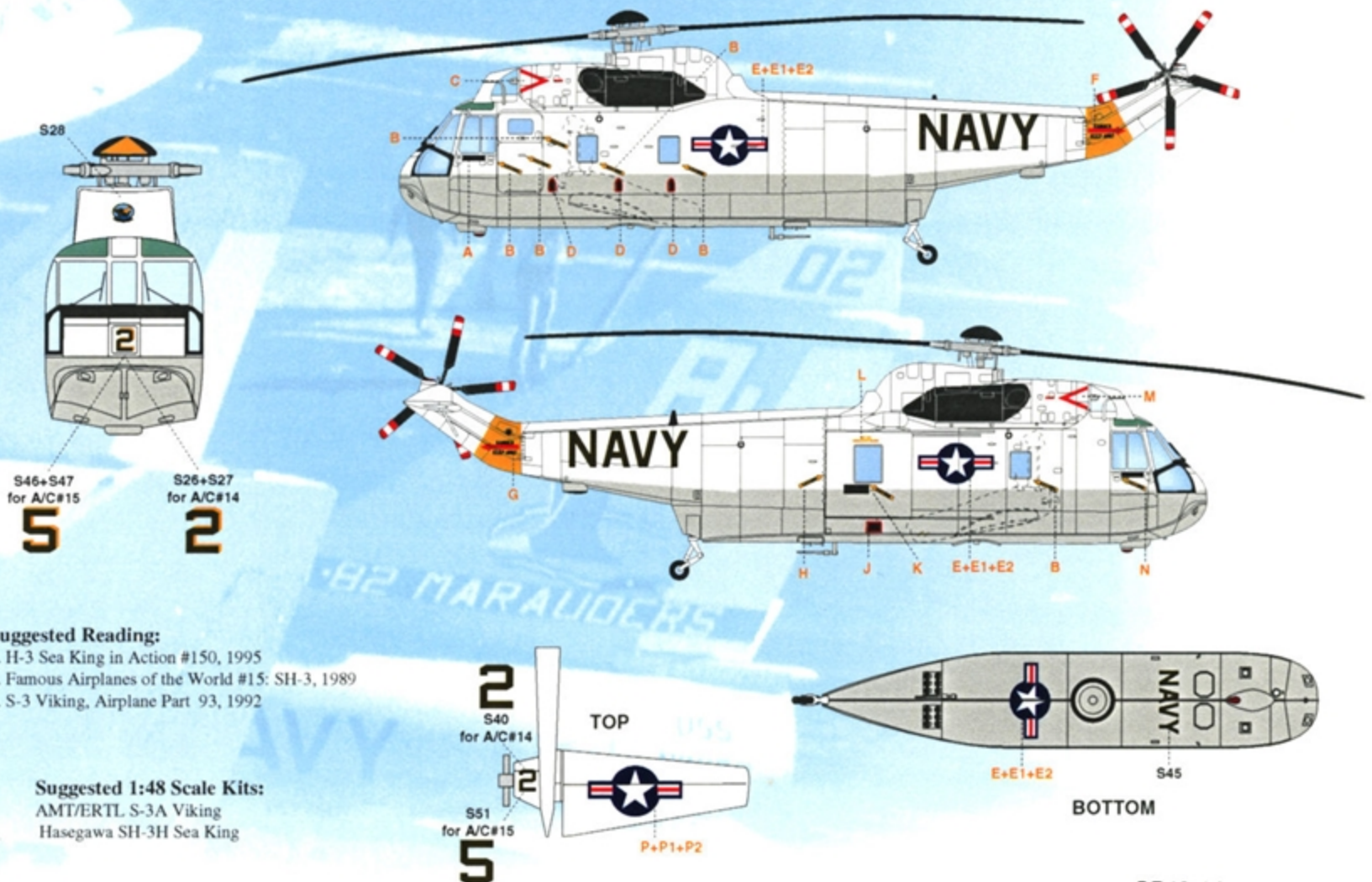
S-3A Viking BuNo. 160141. Flown by the VS-24 squadron commander, CDR L. Wardlow, USS Nimitz (CVN-68), 1977/8. Non-Specular Gull Gray FS36440 upper surfaces with Gloss White FS17875 undersurfaces, landing gear, and control surfaces. Wing leading edge slats were painted aluminum. Flat Black FS37038 ant glare panel and canopy area with Radome Tan nose and MAD radomes. Note the inverted Rescue Arrow on the left nose.



Colors and Markings for Vikings



Colors and Markings for Sea Kings



Suggested Reading:

1. H-3 Sea King in Action #150, 1995
2. Famous Airplanes of the World #15: SH-3, 1989
3. S-3 Viking, Airplane Part 93, 1992

Suggested 1:48 Scale Kits:

- AMT/ERTL S-3A Viking
- Hasegawa SH-3H Sea King