

AIRSCOOP

Edited by Wendy Leland

SUPER HORNET BEGINS COMBAT OPERATIONS





The F/A-18E Super Hornet participated in its first-ever combat action on 6 November 2002 when aircraft from *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) fired on Iraqi targets in response to hostile acts against coalition aircraft monitoring the southern no-fly zone. Operation Southern Watch aircraft, including the *Lincoln* Super Hornets, used precision-guided weapons to target two surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems near Al Kut, approximately 100 miles southeast of Baghdad, and a command and control facility near Tallil, about 160 miles southeast of Baghdad.

Coalition strikes in the no-fly zone are executed as a self-defense measure in response to Iraqi hostile threats and acts against coalition forces and their aircraft. This strike came after Iraqi forces fired antiaircraft artillery at coalition aircraft in the no-fly zone and moved the SAM systems into the no-fly zone in violation of United Nations resolutions.

The last coalition strikes in the southern no-fly zone were on 22 October 2002 against a command and control communications facility near Al Jarrah and an air defense operations center near Tallil. Coalition aircraft never target civilian populations or infrastructure, and go to painstaking lengths to avoid injury to civilians and damage to civilian facilities.

Left, an F/A-18E Super Hornet from Strike Fighter Squadron 115 prepares to be catapulted from one of four steam-driven cats on the flight deck of *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72). Above, another VFA-115 Super Hornet launches on a combat mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Photos by PHAN Philip A. McDaniel.

Herc Helps with Hawkeye Testing

An NC-130H Hercules test bed, right, has been flight qualified for the Radar Modernization Program (RMP) of the E-2C Hawkeye. Lockheed Martin will produce five radar systems to be used for qualification, reliability and flight testing, followed by a full-scale production program that will outfit 75 fleet E-2Cs by 2020. In addition to the new radar, the RMP/Advanced Hawkeyes will also have theater missile defense capabilities, multisensor integration, a tactical cockpit, new communications suite and generators, improved identification-friend-or-foe system, and an updated mission computer and software. The first prototype aircraft is scheduled for delivery in 2007.



Winston Churchill (DDG 81) accomplished the first hoist rescue at sea for the Knighthawk helicopter on 24 September 2002.

The last of five **H-1 upgrade** program test aircraft flew on 4 October at Patuxent River, Md., with a 1.5-hour shakedown flight.

Bataan (LHD 5) concluded

planned maintenance availability on 10 October 2002 at Norfolk Naval Shipyard in Virginia.

For the Record

An **MH-60S** of Helicopter Support Squadron 6 operating from

Mishaps

The aircrew of an F-14 Tomcat of Fighter Squadron 101 was rescued following a crash in the Gulf of Mexico on 3 October 2002.

Four Strike Fighter Squadron 41 aircrew members were killed when two F/A-18F Super Hornets suffered a mid-air collision in the southern California operating area on 18 October 2002.

A T-44 King Air suffered Class A damage during a severe storm at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas, on 23 October 2002.

An F/A-18D Hornet of Strike Fighter Squadron 125 suffered Class A damage when the landing gear collapsed on arrested landing following a ramp strike at NAS North Island, Calif., on 31 October 2002.

An F/A-18C Hornet of Strike Fighter Squadron 34 operating from *George Washington* (CVN 73) was lost in the Adriatic Sea



Lt. Col. Kevin Gross

Low-rate initial production aircraft No. 21 is the first Osprey to join the V-22 flight test program since resumption of flight evaluations in May 2002.

Sidewinder Turns 50

Fifty years ago, a small innovative team, headed by Dr. Bill McLean, decided an air-to-air missile could be guided accurately using infrared radiation from the target. That was the birth of the Sidewinder missile at China Lake, Calif. Ceremonies celebrating the anniversary took place there in November 2002 at the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) Weapons Division facility.



Above, Ltjg. T. G. Stumfall from VF-124 stands next to the Sidewinder 1A missile which, combined with the high performance F8U Crusader, proved to be a formidable defense for the fleet operating forces. Left, flying an F-8 Crusader, Lt. Richard E. Wyman of VF-162 assigned to *Oriskany* (CVA 34) destroyed a MiG-17 with a Sidewinder in December 1967.



Tim Tyson



Mike Johnson



PH3 Aren Alseth

Above, scientist Dr. Bill McLean's wife, Lav, joined Wally Schirra, right, and others at the Sidewinder 50th anniversary reception. Above left, l-r, former astronaut and original Sidewinder test pilot Wally Schirra, western artist Larry Zabel and NAVAIR China Lake commander RAdm. Michael Bachmann discuss the missile's capabilities. Left, an aviation ordnanceman disarms an AIM-9 Sidewinder on a VFA-131 F/A-18 Hornet upon its return to *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67).