

U.S. Navy West Coast Super Hornet Demonstration Team



2013 Media Guide





Image courtesy of Navy Legacy Flight

VFA-122 Flying Eagles



From the Commanding Officer

On behalf of the “Flying Eagles” of VFA-122, thank you for your interest in the FA-18 Hornet Demonstration and Legacy Flight. We are proud to serve as the Navy’s ambassadors, showcasing America’s premier strike-fighter and the rich history of Naval Aviation . The men and women of VFA-122 are proud to carry on America’s tradition of excellence in the skies. We truly stand on the shoulders of giants: the victors of Midway and the Coral Sea, the pioneers of the jet age, the brave astronauts who won the race to the moon and flew the Space Shuttle, and the countless men and women who have designed, built and maintained any aircraft flown by Naval Aviators. Without their bravery, dedication and sacrifice, the Flying Eagles’ Demonstration Team and our mission of training the future of Naval Aviation would be impossible. Thank you for supporting the Flying Eagles team and for keeping the spirit of Naval Aviation alive into its second century.

Commander Markus J. Gudmundsson
Commanding Officer





VFA-122 Flying Eagles

Squadron History

The Flying Eagles of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 122 trace their lineage back to Composite Squadron (VC) 35, flying various models of the A-1 Skyraider, nicknamed the "Spad." Commissioned in 1950 at NAS San Diego, VC-35's mission was to supply all-weather attack and anti-submarine warfare aircraft detachments to Pacific Fleet aircraft carriers. The squadron's first combat deployment was to Korea in 1950-51. It proved the first of many for VC-35, and the squadron saw multiple tours of duty in the skies over the Korean Peninsula.

The squadron began its life as a training squadron in 1959 when it was re-designated as Attack Squadron (VA) 122. Known as the "Spad School", the squadron trained pilots and maintenance technicians to fly and fix the A-1. In 1963, the squadron moved to NAS Lemoore, then the Navy's newest air station. When the A-7 Corsair entered service in 1966, the "Spad School" became the "Corsair College." VA-122 graduates quickly found themselves in combat in a new theater of operations over Vietnam.

For over 28 years VA-122 trained A-1 and A-7 pilots and maintainers who excelled in conflicts from Vietnam through the First Gulf War. In 1991 the Corsair College closed its doors with the retirement of the A-7 from active duty. During its time as a Fleet Replacement Squadron, VA-122 trained over 5,000 attack aviators and 55,000 aircraft maintainers.



Image courtesy of VC-35/VA(AW)-35 Association



Image © Henk Schuitemaker



VFA-122 Flying Eagles



“We Train the Experts”

The Flying Eagles saw new life in January 1999 when VFA-122 was established to train aviators for the FA-18E/F Super Hornet. In October 2010 the “Rough Raiders” of VFA-125 merged with VFA-122 to create a single FA-18 Fleet Replacement Squadron in Lemoore. The combination of the two squadrons resulted in VFA-122 becoming the largest squadron in the Navy with over 100 aircraft. Today the Flying Eagles are responsible for training the elite strike-fighter pilots of the US Navy, Marine Corps and foreign nations around the world.

Students in VFA-122 are trained in every FA-18 mission area including aerial combat, air-to-ground strike, and carrier operations. During a nine month course of instruction, student aircrew are prepared for the rigors of combat aviation and taught to fly multi-million dollar aircraft.

Over 150 new aviators are trained at VFA-122 each year by combat-experienced instructors who have completed one or multiple tours of duty in the US Fleet. The “Experts” of VFA-122 train on all models of the FA-18 Hornet, from the venerable FA-18A-D to the Navy’s newest strike-fighter, the improved FA-18E/F Super Hornet. Aircrew trained at VFA-122 have flown combat missions around the world and in both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.



The FA-18A-D Hornet

The “Charlie”

First flown in 1978, the FA-18 Hornet was the Navy’s first effort to combine the air-to-ground and air-to-air roles in one aircraft. The Hornet debuted in combat over Libya in 1986 and came into its own during Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Hornets successfully engaged other aircraft, scoring two victories, and bombing enemy targets on the same mission, demonstrating true multi-role capability. Since the days of Desert Storm, the Hornet has become an icon of American air power.

Now entering its third decade of service, the original FA-18C, nicknamed the “Charlie” or the “Legacy Hornet,” remains one of the world’s most capable, survivable, and popular fighter aircraft.

Thanks to upgrades that keep it on the cutting edge, the Hornet will remain in service for the next decade. Flown by air forces around the globe, including the Royal Canadian and Australian Air Forces, the Charlie is a mainstay of American aircraft carriers and U.S. Marine Corps fighter squadrons.



USAF Photo



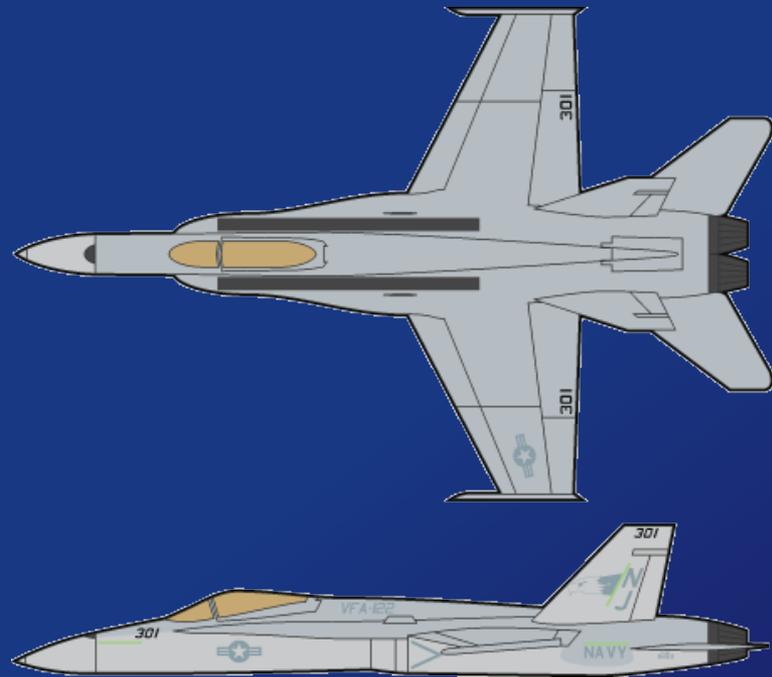
US Navy Photo

The FA-18A-D Hornet



Specifications:

- Crew: 1 (FA-18C, pilot)
2 (FA-18D, pilot and weapons systems officer)
- Height: 15.3 ft (4.7 m)
- Length: 56 ft (17.1 m)
- Wingspan: 40 ft (12.3 m)
- Powerplant: 2 x F404-GE-402 engines with 18,000 lbs thrust each
- Top Speed: Mach 1.8
- Armament:
 - 1 x M61A1 20 mm cannon
 - 9 weapons stations for combinations of:
 - AIM-9 Sidewinder, AIM-7 Sparrow, AIM-120 AMRAAM air-to-air missiles
 - Laser- and GPS-guided bombs
 - AGM-65 Maverick, AGM-88 HARM, AGM-84K SLAM-ER air-to-ground missiles
 - Unguided bombs
 - ANQ-228 ATFLIR targeting pod





The FA-18A-D Hornet

Missions:

- Close Air Support
- Interdiction Strike
- Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses
- Anti-ship Mining
- Maritime Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
- Fighter Escort
- Fleet Air Defense



The FA-18E/F Super Hornet



Image © Rick Llinares www.dash2.com



US Navy Photo

The “Rhino”

In 1999 the Super Hornet entered service in the US Navy. Larger than the Legacy Hornet, the FA-18E/F represents the 21st Century’s first truly multi-role fighter. Using the lessons learned from the original Hornet, the “Rhino” brings advances in avionics, weapons capabilities, radar and sensors, and stealth technology. Having stepped up to fill the roles of the F-14 Tomcat, S-3 Viking and older FA-18As, the Rhino not only carries combat ordnance but can provide valuable reconnaissance and air-to-air refueling support to the US Fleet.

After entering service with the Fleet, the Rhino quickly found itself in combat in the skies over Afghanistan and Iraq. Its increased fuel and ordnance capability make the Rhino an asset to American combat operations around the world. With the capability for future growth in weapons and onboard systems the Rhino will remain a credible strike-fighter for years to come.



The FA-18E/F Super Hornet

Specifications:

- Crew: 1 (FA-18E, pilot)
2 (FA-18F, pilot and weapons systems officer)
- Height: 16 ft (4.8 m)
- Length: 60.3 ft (18.5 m)
- Wingspan: 44.9 ft (13.7 m)
- Powerplant: 2 x F414-GE-402 engines with 22,000 lbs thrust each
- Top Speed: Mach 1.8
- Armament:
 - 1 x M61A1 20 mm cannon
 - 11 weapons stations for combinations of:
 - AIM-9 Sidewinder, AIM-7 Sparrow, AIM-120 AMRAAM air-to-air missiles
 - Laser- and GPS-guided bombs
 - AGM-65 Maverick, AGM-88 HARM, AGM-84K SLAM-ER, AGM-154 JSOW air-to-ground missiles
 - Unguided bombs
 - ANQ-228 ATFLIR targeting pod



The FA-18E/F Super Hornet



Missions:

- Close Air Support
- Forward Air Control (Airborne)
- Interdiction Strike
- Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses
- Anti-ship Mining
- Maritime Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
- Fighter Escort
- Fleet Air Defense
- Aerial Refueling and Tanker
- Photo Reconnaissance





Flight Demonstration Team

Super Hornet Demo



Flight Demonstration Team



Super Hornet Demo

The Flying Eagles are proud to showcase the FA-18 to audiences around the world. The “Demo” is designed to highlight the mobility, versatility, and power of the FA-18 for the citizens who look to the Navy for the defense of freedom.

From the high “G” minimum radius turn to the slow speed “high-alpha” pass, the Demo flight puts the Rhino through its paces. A full description of each maneuver is provided by the show’s narrator and can be made available to event coordinators by request.

Each maneuver is meticulously rehearsed by Demo Team aircrew, first in the simulator, then in a series of qualification and practice flights. Demo aircrew are Fleet veterans, chosen for their abilities, knowledge, and experience. Throughout the show, safety, adherence to procedure and the safety of observers are paramount and although the maneuvers look dangerous, Demo team members adhere to guidelines established by VFA-122, the Navy and the FAA to ensure the safety and of the local community.





Flight Demonstration Team

Static Display

In addition to the aerial demonstration, the Expert team provides parked “static” displays of the FA-18 and team members are always happy and proud to answer questions about their aircraft. The team prides itself on accessibility to the American public who make Naval Aviation possible and are available for comment, interview or questions through the team’s points of contact.

The team’s support manual, available through the team’s coordinator, outlines the full range of requirements for hosting the Demo Team for either aerial or static displays.



Flight Demonstration Team



Navy Legacy Flight





Flight Demonstration Team

Legacy Flight

The Experts of VFA-122 work together with some of the nation's finest air show pilots to bring the Navy Legacy Flight program to air shows around the country. The Legacy Flight pairs the Navy's frontline fighter, the FA-18, with its predecessors in a tribute to the past, present and future of US Naval Aviation.

Several models of legacy aircraft are maintained and flown by talented aviators around the country, including propeller-driven World War II-era warbirds, early model jet fighters, and various prop and jet trainers.

These pilots come to Lemoore each year to train alongside the VFA-122 Demo Team to create a demonstration showcasing America's rich aviation history.



Flight Demonstration Team



Legacy Flight

Numerous aircraft and pilots serve as Legacy Flight participants. Aircraft flown in the Legacy Flight include:

F4F Wildcat – Early WWII Fighter

F6F Hellcat – WWII Fighter

F8F Bearcat – Late WWII Fighter

F4U/FG-1D Corsair – WWII Fighter

AD-1 Skyraider – Korean War/Vietnam Attack

FJ-4 Fury – Korean War Fighter

A-4B Skyhawk – Vietnam-era Attack

T-2 Buckeye – Jet Trainer

Please visit the Legacy Flight website for details on scheduling and hosting legacy aircraft and aviators.

www.navylegacyflight.org





Flight Demonstration Team

Aviators

The Officers who fly in the Super Hornet Demonstration and Legacy Flight are veteran Naval Aviators, each with years of flight experience. Hailing from around the United States, these Pilots and Naval Flight Officers have each spent up to two years earning their Wings of Gold. After their flight training, they reported to various front-line squadrons on aircraft carriers around the globe. Many have flown combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and each has spent long months away from home during their time in the Fleet.

Upon completion of Fleet duties, these aviators were selected for their skill, experience and teaching ability to serve as flight instructors at VFA-122. They rely on their training to introduce the next generation of Naval Aviators to the FA-18.

From amongst the cadre of VFA-122 instructors, demonstration pilots are chosen for their abilities in the aircraft in order to showcase the Navy's premier strike-fighter to the American people.



Flight Demonstration Team



Aviators



LT Matt Diederich, Pilot

Hometown: Shawnee Mission, KS
College: Kansas State University, 2003
Flight Hours: 2150 (1350 in FA-18)
Carrier Arrested Landings: 350



LT Carl Picken, Pilot

Hometown: Dallas, TX
College: Vanderbilt University, 2005
Flight Hours: 1450 (1200 in FA-18)
Carrier Arrested Landings: 200



LT Lance Kelly, Pilot

Hometown: Naples, FL
College: University of Florida, 2004
Flight Hours: 1850 (1300 in FA-18)
Carrier Arrested Landings: 350



LT Mark Sheggeby, WSO

Hometown: Granite Falls, MN
College: U.S. Naval Academy, 2006
Flight Hours: 1300 (1100 in FA-18)
Carrier Arrested Landings: 250



LT Phil Veski, WSO

Hometown: Palm City, FL
College: University of Florida, 2002
Flight Hours: 1350 (1100 in FA-18)
Carrier Arrested Landings: 200



LT Dan Gauvin, WSO

Hometown: Coos Bay, OR
College: U.S. Naval Academy, 2005
Flight Hours: 1200 (1000 in FA-18)
Carrier Arrested Landings: 300





Flight Demonstration Team

Maintenance Team

In addition to the Officers who fly the Demo, the team prizes its ground maintenance personnel who make the show possible. These enlisted Sailors hail from around the United States and repair and maintain the aircraft in peak flying condition. Without their hard work, long hours on the job, and time away from home and family, the Demo would never happen.

The personnel who accompany the team are specialists in maintaining the Hornet and Super Hornet. Aviation structural mechanics, electricians, machinists, electronics technicians, and ordnance specialists travel with the team. Supporting the team from its home in Lemoore are countless administrative, records, survival equipment, legal, security, and logistics specialists.

These young men and women have each volunteered to serve their country and do their jobs year round in any weather, ashore or at sea, night or day.



Points of Contact



VFA-122

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FLYING



EAGLES