GRUMMAN F6F 'HELLCAT'

NAAS KINGSVILLE 1951-1954

The Hellcat was the first Navy fighter specifically designed with lessons learned from combat with the Japanese Zero. The Hellcat proved to be the most successful aircraft in naval history, destroying 5,271 enemy aircraft while in service with the Navy and U.S. Marine Corps (5,163 in the Pacific, 8 more during the invasion of Southern France, and 52 with the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm during World War II).

The Grumman F6F Hellcat was first operational in August 1943 with World War II in full swing. The Hellcat proved her worth, taking part in some of the greatest confrontations in the Pacific -- from the Caroline Islands to the Battle of the Philippine Sea (June 19-20, 1944) and beyond.

About 75 percent of all enemy aircraft shot down during theses conflicts were at the hands of the Hellcat pilots.

The appearance of the F6F changed the tide of the war in the Pacific in favor of the Americans - and the rest of the free world. The system was noted for toughness and responsiveness, and the kill tally ref elected the benefits of the platform. In the end, the Hellcat lived up to the legacy of other legendary warbirds and the Hellcat became one of the single most important reasons the war in the Pacific turned in favor of the US and its allies.

The Hellcat was used at NAAS Kingsville for fighter pilot training by Advanced Training Unit 100 (ATU-100) from 1951 to 1954. The squadron was based out of South Field. In 1955, ATU-100 was decommissioned as a training squadron.

Specifications

Length: 33 ft., 7 in.
Height: 13 ft., 1 in.
Wingspan: 42 ft., 10 in.
Wing Area: 334 sq. ft.
Weight Empty:9, 238 lbs.
Weight Loaded: 15,413 lbs.
Engine: Pratt & Whitney R-2800-10W
Horsepower: 2000

Performance:

Range:945 miles
Cruising Speed: 168 mph
Max Speed: 380 mph
Climb: 2,980 ft. per min.
Ceiling: 37,300 ft.