

GRUMMAN F9F-8 'COUGAR'

NAAS KINGSVILLE 1958-1970



General characteristics

- Crew: 1
 - Length: 42 ft. 2 in.
 - Wingspan: 34 ft, 6 in,
 - Height: 12 ft, 3 in,
 - Wing area: 337 ft²
 - Empty weight: 11,866 lbs.
 - Loaded weight: 20,098 lbs.
 - Max takeoff weight: 24,763 lb
- (Powerplant: 1 Pratt & Whitney J48-P-8A turbojet, 8,500 lbf (38 kN) with water injection)

Performance

Maximum speed: 647 mph
Range: 1,312 miles
Service ceiling: 42,000 ft.
Rate of climb: 5,750 ft/min

The Grumman F9F/F-9 Cougar was an aircraft carrier-based fighter aircraft for the Navy. Based on the earlier F9F Panther, the Cougar replaced the Panther's straight wing with a more modern swept wing. The Navy considered the Cougar an updated version of the Panther, despite having a different official name, and thus Cougars started off from F9F-6 upwards. The training version was designated F9F-8T.

The Cougar was too late for Korean War service, however, so combat effectiveness estimates of the Cougar against potential foes such as the (likewise subsonic, but not carrier-rated) Soviet Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-15 necessarily remain in the sphere of conjecture.

Initial production (646 airframes) of the F9F-6 was delivered from mid 1952 through July 1954. Armament was four 20 mm (.79 in) M2 cannons in the nose and provision for two 1,000 lb (454 kg) bombs or 150 US gal (570 l) drop tanks under the wings.

Most were fitted with a UHF homing antenna under the nose, and some were fitted with probes for inflight refuelling. Later redesignated F-9F in 1962. Sixty were built as F9F-6P reconnaissance aircraft with cameras instead of the nose cannon.

The Navy acquired 377 two-seat F9F-8T trainers between 1956 and 1960. They were used for advanced training, weapons training and carrier training, and served until 1974. They were armed with twin 20 mm (.79 in) cannon and could carry a full bombs or missiles load. In the 1962 redesignation, these were called TF-9J.[3]

Operational history

F9F-8s were withdrawn from front-line service in 1958-59, replaced by Grumman F11F Tigers and Vought F8U Crusaders. However, the F9F-8T trainer was used by the Navy until 1970.

The F9F-8T was the only version of the Cougar to see combat. Four Cougars of H&MS-13 were used in the airborne command role, directing air-strikes against enemy positions in South Vietnam during 1966 and 1967.

The Cougar had a long service with the Navy and NAAS Kingsville (1958-1970), but the Cougar era (with J52 engine) ended when the Navy transitioned to the TA-4F Skyhawk in 1970.