



# **Dictionary of American Naval Aviation Squadrons, Volume 1 and 2 - Illustrated Comprehensive Reference History of Every Navy Fixed-Wing Attack (VA), Strike Fighter (VFA), Patrol Squadrons, Precursors**

*U.S. Government, U.S. Military, Department of Defense, U.S. Navy*

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This is a print replica reproduction of The Dictionary of American Naval Aviation Squadrons - both Volume 1 and Volume 2 - providing a brief history, by community, of every squadron the Navy has established since the evolution of the squadron concept in the post-World War I era. The information and format selected to tell the story of each squadron was developed from a pattern of common reference questions. The nature of the squadron data lends itself to a variety of formats for most entries in the squadron histories instead of a straight narrative style. The dictionary, written primarily for use as a reference work, states concise facts about each squadron that provide a better understanding of the contributions made by naval aviation squadrons in service to their country. Naval aviation is primarily a twentieth century development and has become an important element of U.S. sea power. It is part of the technological revolution that has been the hallmark of the twentieth century. The aircraft, weapons systems and associated technical equipment, combined with the men and women assigned to the squadrons, are instrumental to its success. Each squadron history begins with a lineage section that starts with the date of establishment. It also includes any redesignations and disestablishment date if applicable. The squadron's establishment date may be equated to a ship's commissioning and the history for a squadron or ship begins on that date. When a squadron is redesignated, there is no break in the history of that squadron. The history of a squadron covers the period from its establishment to its disestablishment, regardless of how many redesignations it undergoes. A short description and photograph for all officially approved insignia used by a squadron follows the lineage section. The chronology narrates the squadron's important operational events and developments. The remaining six sections pertain to the evolutionary history of the squadron and includes listings of home port assignments, commanding officers, aircraft assignments, overseas deployments, air wing assignments and major unit awards.

This first volume covers the attack and strike fighter communities and includes VA (attack squadron), VAH (heavy attack squadron), VAK (tactical aerial refueling squadron), VAL (light attack squadron), VAP (heavy photographic squadron) and VFA (strike fighter squadron).

This second volume covers the patrol community and includes the history for VP (patrol squadron), VB (bombing squadron, non-carrier based), VPB (patrol bombing squadron), VP-HL (patrol, heavy landplane squadron), VP-ML (patrol, medium landplane squadron), VP-MS (patrol, medium seaplane squadron) and VP-AM (patrol, amphibian squadron).

There were over 154 separate patrol squadrons in existence between 1922 and the present. Their combined years of existence as operational units total over 1,300 years of naval aviation history. Patrol squadrons have never received the publicity of the more glamorous carrier aviation community, for their jobs usually entail the endless tedium of antisubmarine searches and long-range patrols, serving as the "eyes of the fleet." It is a historical fact, however, that the Curtiss A-1 seaplane was the first type of aircraft ordered by the Navy in

May 1911. Carrier aviation did not come into its own until the first takeoff from the deck of an aircraft carrier on 17 October 1922. Patrol aviation technology progressed on a separate track from carrier-based aviation. Instead of speed and striking power, patrol aircraft were epitomized by endurance, long-range and reliability. It was not until the global nature of the conflict in WWII that patrol aviation transformed its mounts from slow seaplanes to fast, heavily armored and armed, long-range, multi-engine strike aircraft. The proven effectiveness of that transition is embodied in the present series of multi-role P-3 Orion patrol aircraft.

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