

Vought A-7 Corsair II - Intrepid Museum

The Vought A-7 Corsair II at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum

The Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York City hosts a Vought A-7 Corsair II, a subsonic light attack aircraft that played a significant role in the Vietnam War and beyond. This particular aircraft, Bureau Number 154405, served with Attack Squadron VA-82 "Marauders" aboard the USS Nimitz (CVN-68).

1. Historical Background and Significance:

- * The A-7 Corsair II was developed in the early 1960s as a replacement for the Douglas A-4 Skyhawk. Vought won the Navy's contract with a design based on its successful F-8 Crusader fighter, adopting a smaller, simpler, and carrier-suitable attack platform.
- * Its primary mission was close air support and ground attack, though it also performed reconnaissance and anti-ship missions.
- * The A-7 was a pivotal aircraft in the Vietnam War, known for its accuracy, reliability, and heavy payload capacity. Its advanced navigation and weapons delivery system allowed for precise bombing even in adverse weather conditions, earning it the nickname "SLUF" (Short Little Ugly Fella) among pilots.
- * The Corsair II also saw service with the US Air Force, Air National Guard, and several other countries, including Greece, Portugal, and Thailand.

2. Technical Specifications:

* **Crew:** 1

* **Length:** 46 ft 1.5 in (14.06 m)

* **Wingspan:** 38 ft 9 in (11.81 m)

* **Height:** 16 ft 0.75 in (4.90 m)

* **Empty Weight:** 19,490 lb (8,840 kg)

* **Max Takeoff Weight:** 42,000 lb (19,050 kg)

* **Engine:** 1 × Pratt & Whitney TF30-P-408 turbofan, 15,000 lbf (67 kN) thrust

* **Maximum Speed:** 600 knots (690 mph, 1,110 km/h) at sea level

* **Combat Radius:** 620 nmi (710 mi, 1,150 km)

* **Ferry Range:** 2,871 nmi (3,304 mi, 5,317 km)

* **Service Ceiling:** 42,000 ft (13,000 m)

3. Interesting Facts and Stories:

* The A-7 was the first US tactical aircraft with a head-up display (HUD), an inertial navigation system (INS), and a turbofan engine.

* It featured a distinctive "light bulb" canopy, providing excellent visibility for the pilot.

* The aircraft on the Intrepid participated in Operation Eagle Claw, the failed attempt to rescue American hostages in Iran in 1980.

* The A-7 played a role in Operation Frequent Wind, the evacuation of Saigon in 1975, providing air support for helicopters extracting personnel.

4. Its Role in History:

* **Vietnam War:** The A-7 proved essential for close air support, striking enemy targets with precision while minimizing civilian casualties. It carried a wide variety of ordnance, including bombs, rockets, and napalm.

* **Cold War:** As a carrier-based attack aircraft, the A-7 was a key component of US naval power projection during the Cold War. It was regularly deployed on aircraft carriers around the world.

* **Post-Vietnam Conflicts:** The Corsair II also saw action in Grenada, Lebanon, and the Persian Gulf.

****5. Current Condition and Display Information:****

The A-7 Corsair II on the Intrepid is displayed on the flight deck, marked with the insignia of VA-82 "Marauders". Visitors can walk around the aircraft and observe it closely. It's generally in good condition, showcasing its powerful form and the wear and tear of its service history. Information panels near the aircraft provide details about its specifications, history, and role in various conflicts. Check the Intrepid Museum's website for specific exhibit information and accessibility.