



VS-32 Maulers Retired

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On 25 September 2008, *Sea Control Squadron 32* (VS-32) *Maulers* held their deactivation ceremony at NAS Jacksonville after providing 59 years of honored service as an Atlantic Fleet carrier-based anti-submarine warfare (ASW) squadron. The official deactivation date is scheduled for 30 October 2008.

The squadron was established on 31 May 1949 as *Composite (Anti-submarine) Squadron 32* (VC-32) at NAS Norfolk, Va., flying the Grumman TBM-3E/S *Avenger*. Less than a year later the squadron was redesignated *Air Anti-submarine Squadron 32* (VS-32). In 1951 VS-32 moved to NAS Quonset Point, R.I., its home for the next 23 years and transitioned to the two-plane hunter-killer version of the TBM-3W and -3S models. In June 1954 the *Avengers* were replaced by the multi-engine “single ASW package” carrier-based Grumman S2F-1/-2 *Tracker*.

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A VS-32 Grumman TBM-3S lines up for launch on the flight deck of Salerno Bay (CVE-110) during ASW exercise Convex III in the Caribbean Sea, 2 Mar '52. Behind SR10 is a TBM-3W followed by another TBM-3S.

VS-32's S-3B Viking CAG bird grabs a wire on USS Enterprise (CVN-65) while operating in the Indian Ocean, 21 Aug '06.

During the *Avenger* era the *Maulers* operated their TBMs in the Atlantic, Mediterranean (Med), Caribbean and South America from USS *Palau* (CVE-122), *Mindoro* (CVE-120), *Siboney* (CVE-112), *Wright* (CVL-49), *Salerno Bay* (CVE-110), *Saipan* (CVL-48), *Oriskany* (CV-34), *Gilbert Island* (CVE-107) and *Cabot* (CVL-28).

In September 1954, VS-32 made its first S-2 cruise on *Leyte* (CVS-32) followed by deployments on *Tarawa* (CVS-40), as part of *Task Group Bravo* in *Wasp* (CVS-18) and *Lake Champlain* (CVS-39). In October 1959, the *Maulers* began a six-year partnership with CVS-39, the last Navy straight-deck carrier. While other Atlantic Fleet VS pilots enjoyed their angle deck, mirror-equipped CVSs, VS-32 pilots met the challenges of paddle passes on dark and stormy nights in the Atlantic until the squadron made its last deployment on board “Champ” in August–September 1965.

On 8 May 1960, VS-32's large 30-plane “Stoof” squadron was divided to form VS-22. Both VS squadrons joined HS-5 and a VAW-12 detachment to form CVSG-54.

VS-32 traded in their tired S-2A (S2F-1) aircraft in 1966 for the more capable S-2Es and deployed in *Essex* (CVS-9), with a short cruise in *Randolph* (CVS-15) later in the year.



VS-32 Grumman TBM-3W lifts off from Salerno Bay during Convex III in the Caribbean, 9 Mar '52.



In February 1969, CVSG-54 moved from *Essex* to *Wasp* and continued to participate in Atlantic ASW exercises. In October 1971, VS-32 spent 11 days as part of CVW-3 on board *Saratoga* (CVA-60) during Phase II of the CV carrier testing and a month later made its last deployment on CVS-18. Squadron control was transferred to Commander Fleet Air Quonset Point when CVSG-54 was disestablished on 1 July 1972. A year later in

October the squadron moved to its new home at NAS Cecil Field, Fla. The *Maulers* maintained carrier proficiency in their S-2s from 1972 through 1976 on board *Intrepid* (CVS-11), *Forrestal* (CVA-59), *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVA-42), *Saratoga* (CV-60) and *Lexington* (CVT-16).

During the 21 years the squadron flew the Stoof, it conducted operations and deployments in the Atlantic, Caribbean, Norwegian Sea and Mediterranean keeping tabs on Allied and Soviet submarines, surface combatants and merchant shipping. VS-32 also provided support during the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Six-Day War and during several space vehicle recoveries.

In August 1975, VS-32 began its yearlong transition to the turbofan-powered Lockheed S-3A *Viking* and in 1976 joined *Carrier Air Wing One*, a partnership that lasted 32 years.

USN, PH2 V.V. Frazier, USN



VS-32's first *Viking* deployment was to the North Atlantic in *John F. Kennedy* (CV-67) in January 1977. The *Maulers* followed this up with four more deployments on board CV-67, shakedown Caribbean operations with *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN-69) and *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN-71) and 12 deployments in *America* (CV-66). VS-32 made good use of its S-3As during ASW and surveillance operations in the Med, Atlantic, Caribbean, Indian Ocean and North Arabian Sea participating in numerous NATO and allied exercises. It participated also in the 1980 Iran/Afghanistan crisis, 1982-'83 and 1989 Lebanon crisis. In November 1989, upon their return from deployment, the *Maulers* began their transition to the S-3B.

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VS-32 S-2F in storage at NAF Litchfield Park after faithful service, March 1965.

VS-32 returned in fall 1990 with their updated S-3B *Vikings* and were involved in air group work up when the CVW-1/*America* team left on short notice to deploy to the Med and Persian Gulf for *Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm*. *Desert Storm* served as a proving ground for the S-3B system with the *Maulers* exploiting the aircraft's capabilities to the fullest. In addition to tasks such as electronic surveillance missions over northern Kuwait and Saudi Arabia providing surveillance support and inflight refueling for carrier strike assets, one of the squadron aircraft sank a high-speed Iraqi gunboat with a 500-lb. bomb. LCDR Bruce "Baja" Bole and his crew LTs Curt "Zippo" Lyter, Geof "EF" Hutton and AW1(AC) Raymond McCracken earned this honor and historic combat milestone.

Five more cruises in *America* followed *Desert Storm* leading the *Maulers* and their *Vikings* to perform operations in the Med, North Atlantic, Persian Gulf and Adriatic Sea. During these deployments VS-32 became the first S-3B squadron to participate in Adriatic overland missions in support of United Nations *Operations Deny Flight* and *Sharp Guard* in Bosnia-Herzegovina, *Restore Hope* in Somalia, *Support Democracy* and *Able Manner* off the coast of Haiti and *Decisive Edge* and *Enchantment* over the former republic of



VS-32 Grumman S2F-1 Tracker flying near NAS Quonset Point, R.I., 6 Sep '62.



VADM Daniel J. Murphy Jr., Com6thFlt, arrives on board John F. Kennedy (CV-67) on 7 Oct '99 in a VF-32 S-3B Viking.

Yugoslavia. During this period, on 1 April 1993, the *Maulers* were redesignated a Sea Control Squadron, which better reflected its multi-mission role.

At the beginning of 1997, preparations were concluded for VS-32's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 93-directed home port change to NAS Jacksonville. Following the decommissioning of *America* on 30 September 1996, CVW-1 was reassigned to *George Washington* (CVN-73), making four deployments through April 1998 to the Atlantic, Med and Persian Gulf with aircraft equipped with the AGM-65F *Maverick* missile system. In November 1998, VS-32 deployed with CVW-1 in *Harry S. Truman* (CVN-75) for its shakedown cruise. This was followed in 1999 by two deployments in CV-67, again to the Atlantic, Med and Persian Gulf. During these cruises the squadron participated in *Operations Bright Star* and *Black Shark* with the Egyptians and Saudis, and *Operation Southern Watch* in the Persian Gulf.

In mid-2000, CVW-1 shifted operations to *Theodore Roosevelt*. The *Maulers* spent the rest of the year working on upgrading their S-3Bs, conducting a successful SinkEx with a *Maverick* missile and participating in exercises near Puerto Rico.

Eight days after the 11 September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the *Maulers* deployed in TR spending the majority of the time in the North Arabian Sea providing overland tanking and surface surveillance over Pakistan in support of *Operation Enduring Freedom* (OEF) in Afghanistan. The squadron flew more than 1,900 sorties and 4,000 hours, and the TR/CVW-1 team broke a record for the most consecutive days at sea without a port visit — 159.

CVW-1, upon returning from deployment in March 2002, moved to *Enterprise* (CVN-65). That same year the squadron's S-3s were upgraded with a *Maverick Plus* system, the communication improvement program and digital flight data computers. In 2003, a VS-32 S-3B

successfully launched a Standoff Land Attack Missile-Expanded Response Target of Opportunity (SLAM-ER TOO) at the Pacific Missile Point Mugu test range. Later that year the squadron deployed from October to February 2004 in CVN-65 for the familiar waters of the Mediterranean, Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf in support of *Operations Iraqi Freedom* and OEF in Afghanistan. The squadron made a quick turn-around and deployed in June and July in *Enterprise* for *Summer Pulse* in support of numerous multi-national exercises with other NATO

USN, PHAN Marcel A. Barbeau, USN, via CHINFO



CVW-1 F/A-18 Hornets from John F. Kennedy receive fuel from a VS-32 Viking during a 10 Feb '00 Operation Southern Watch mission.

forces. Following *Summer Pulse*, VS-32 participated in successful counterdrug operations in the southern Caribbean, based in Curaçao, and successfully fired another SLAM-ER TOO at Point Mugu.

In 2006, the CVW-1/CVN-65 team completed an around-the-world cruise to the Med, Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf, Western Pacific and back providing support for Iraqi and Afghanistan operations. During cruise, the now *World-Famous Maulers* were the first S-3Bs to test the capabilities of the Low-Altitude Navigational and Targeting-Infrared for Night (LANTIRN) pod. Faced with the *Viking Sundown* plan, impending

USN, MCSN Brandon Morris, USN, via CHINFO



Awaiting the signal to spread its wings, a VS-32 S-3B prepares for a 17 Aug '07 flight from Enterprise in the Persian Gulf.



A VS-32 S-3B launches from Enterprise on 21 Jun '04 during Summer Pulse '04, the simultaneous deployment of seven aircraft carrier strike groups.

deactivation and squadron personnel being assigned out of the squadron, the *Maulers* went on their last deployment from July to December 2007 in *Enterprise* to the Med and Persian Gulf. VS-32's last operational hurrah was to provide fuel for CVW-1 jets and be the primary source of nontraditional intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance for *Operation Sea Dragon*.

The *Maulers* of VS-32 have been recognized throughout the years for their accomplishments in the VS community. VS-32 received eight Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic Battle "E" Awards, six Captain Arnold J. Isbell trophies for excellence in ASW, six Admiral Jimmy Thach Awards for meritorious achievement by an ASW squadron and 15 CNO Safety "S" Awards. In addition the squadron received two Lockheed Martin Golden Wrench Awards for maintenance excellence in 1986 and 1994, the 1997 Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic Silver Anchor Award for retention and the Arleigh Burke Award in 1999 for the most improved squadron.

