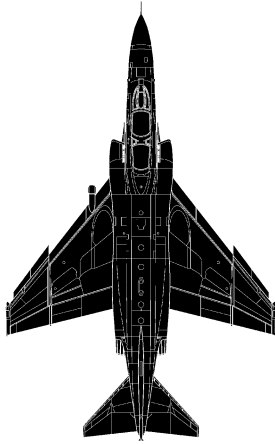


F-4 Phantom II



The F-4 Phantom II, a highly successful and versatile military design, served concurrently as the front-line tactical aircraft of the US Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps. The Mach 2 McDonnell fighter-bomber turned in a distinguished combat career, achieving success in US action ranging from the Vietnam War to the Gulf War of the 1990s. It also performed well for Israel in major wars and for Iran in the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s.

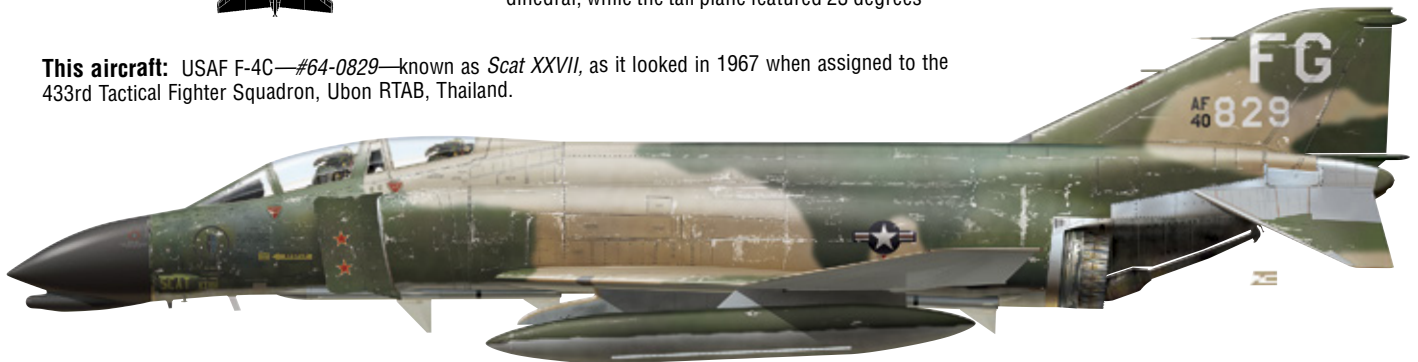
Early design efforts began speculatively in 1953, with the Phantom II's original purpose being a fleet air-defense fighter. Its distinctive twin-engine, two-seat outline conveyed an image of power more than beauty. The outer portion of its 45-degree-swept wings turned up in 12 degrees of dihedral, while the tail plane featured 23 degrees

of anhedral to clear it of wing downwash at high angles of attack. GE J79 engines had automatically controlled variable-geometry air intakes.

The Phantom II evolved through more than 40 variants to achieve excellence in air superiority, close air support, interception, reconnaissance, suppression of enemy air defenses, and more. USAF acquired 2,840, the Navy-Marine Corps team 1,264, and foreign nations 1,091. Foreign customers included Australia, Britain, Egypt, Greece, Iran, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Spain, Turkey, and West Germany. Phantoms remain in front-line service with several nations.

—Walter J. Boyne

This aircraft: USAF F-4C—#64-0829—known as *Scat XXVII*, as it looked in 1967 when assigned to the 433rd Tactical Fighter Squadron, Ubon RTAB, Thailand.



In Brief

Designed, built by McDonnell Aircraft ★ first flight May 27, 1958 ★ number built 5,195 ★ crew of two (pilot, weapon systems officer or radar-intercept officer). **Specific to F-4C:** two General Electric J79-GE-15 engines ★ armament (offensive) up to 16,000 lb of stores—nuclear bombs, conventional bombs and rockets, and Bullpup, Shrike, and Maverick air-to-ground missiles (defensive), four AIM-7 and four AIM-9 air-to-air missiles, 20 mm cannon ★ max speed 1,485 mph ★ cruise speed 575 mph ★ max range 1,615 mi ★ weight (loaded) 54,600 lb ★ span 38 ft 5 in ★ length 58 ft 3 in ★ height 16 ft 3 in.

Famous Fliers

Aces: Charles de Bellevue, Jeffrey Feinstein, and Steve Ritchie (USAF); Randall Cunningham, William Driscoll (Navy). **Notables:** Robin Olds (triple ace), Michael Dugan, Ronald Fogleman, John Jumper, Merrill McPeak, Michael Ryan (future CSAFs); Gordon Graham, Daniel James Jr., Robert Russ, John Shaud (future general officers). **Other Notables:** R. C. Anderson, A. C. Clark, K. E. Holcombe, Roger Locher, Robert Lodge, T. S. Roberts, John Stone. **Test Pilot:** Robert Little.

Interesting Facts

Became last US fighter whose airman achieved ace status ★ set 16 speed, altitude, and time-to-climb records ★ nicknamed “Snoopy,” “The Spook,” “Flying Brick,” “Old Smokey” ★ given original USAF designation of F-110A Spectre ★ spewed identifying black smoke trails ★ acquired by Royal Navy, which installed Rolls Royce engines ★ built by Mitsubishi for Japan Air Self-Defense Force ★ showed poor performance at high angles of attack ★ used for Wild Weasel radar-killing mission ★ ended long US service as QF-4 drone ★ flown concurrently by USAF Thunderbirds and Navy Blue Angels ★ took name from earlier FH-1 Phantom of 1945.



A four-ship formation of F-4 fighters. The early Phantoms were painted gray (see top three), but by the mid-1960s they were painted in a camouflage scheme (see bottom airplane).