

Gaëtan Marie's Aviation Profiles

F-8 Crusader

Bravo Bravo Aviation



The Crusader is something of a fascinating aircraft. When I drew my first Crusader profile, I merely intended to create a few drawings of the F-8E(FN), the French Navy's version of the Crusader. Having done a set of drawings representative of the aircraft's service with the Aéronavale, I should have stopped there but elected to draw a few "MiG Killers" from the US Navy and US Marine Corps. As time went by, I kept drawing more and more as I found schemes of interest on USN, USMC, Philippine Air Force and civilian Crusaders. Eventually, I ended up with over a hundred F-8 drawings from various units and periods.

These drawings are typical of my early work: If I were to recreate them, I would probably do things a bit differently but they are among the first profiles with which I was satisfied. Some have been

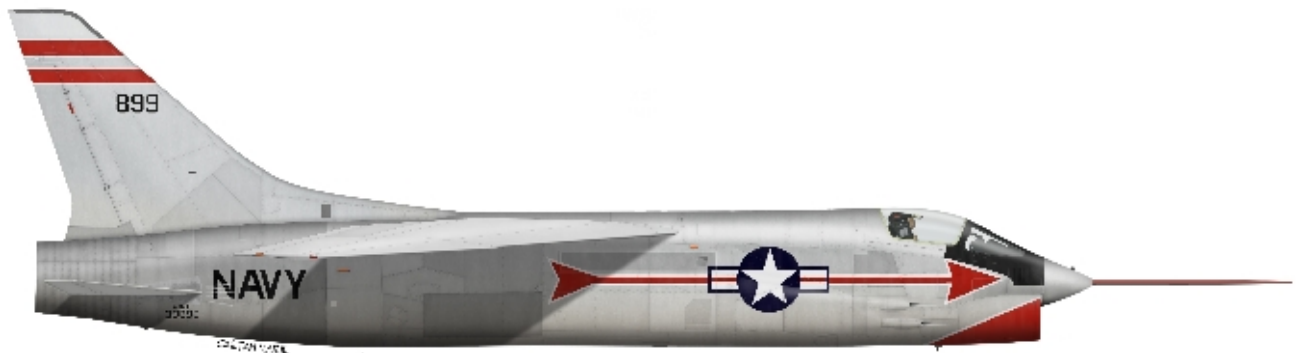
published in a website created specifically to present the drawings but most are yet unpublished:

The Last Gunfighter

www.crusader.gaetanmarie.com

I have deliberately chosen not to write about the Crusader's history in these pages - this has already been done by more able authors and the purpose of this book is simply to show the variety and richness of the Crusader's colours. Along with each illustration is a short explanatory text. For further reference, a list of recommended books can be found at the end of the book.

- Gaëtan Marie



The first of many: the XF8U-1 prototype (BuNo 138899).



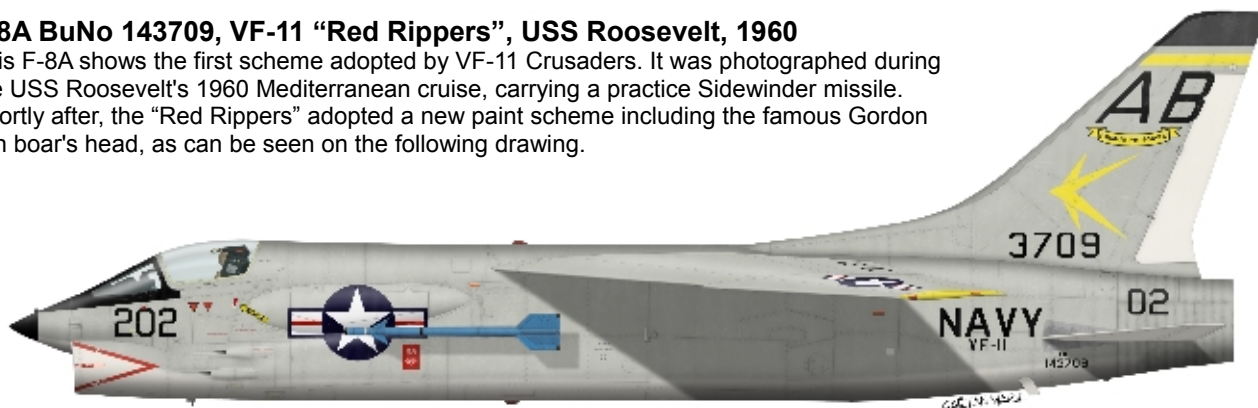
US Navy Crusaders



Two F-8C Crusaders of VF-103 "Sluggers" in flight in the early 1960s.(USN)

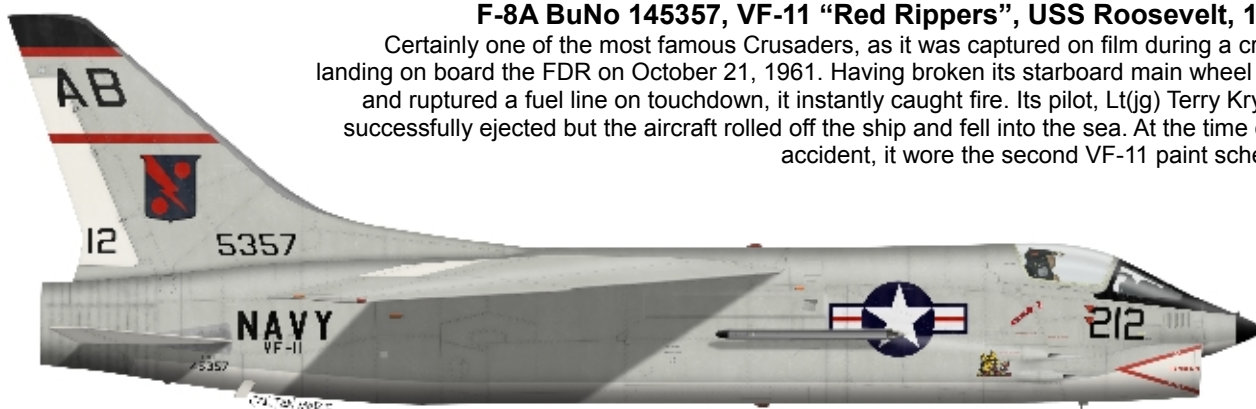
F-8A BuNo 143709, VF-11 “Red Rippers”, USS Roosevelt, 1960

This F-8A shows the first scheme adopted by VF-11 Crusaders. It was photographed during the USS Roosevelt's 1960 Mediterranean cruise, carrying a practice Sidewinder missile. Shortly after, the “Red Rippers” adopted a new paint scheme including the famous Gordon Gin boar's head, as can be seen on the following drawing.



F-8A BuNo 145357, VF-11 “Red Rippers”, USS Roosevelt, 1960

Certainly one of the most famous Crusaders, as it was captured on film during a crash-landing on board the FDR on October 21, 1961. Having broken its starboard main wheel strut and ruptured a fuel line on touchdown, it instantly caught fire. Its pilot, Lt(jg) Terry Kryway successfully ejected but the aircraft rolled off the ship and fell into the sea. At the time of its accident, it wore the second VF-11 paint scheme.



F-8A BuNo 143742, VF-32 “Swordsmen”, USS Saratoga, 1958

The Commander Air Group's aircraft was generally known as the “CAG bird” and often sported very bright markings reflecting its pilot's position. This VF-32 aircraft was assigned to the Saratoga CAG in early January 1958.





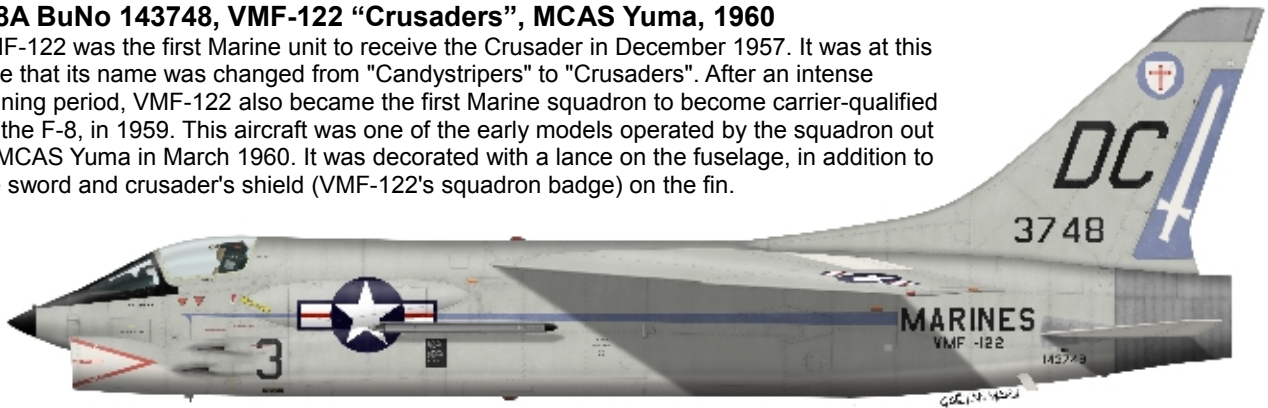
US Marine Corps Crusaders



A VMF-334 "Falcons" F-8C at MCAS El Toro, March 1966. (USN/Cpl. J. Corpello)

F-8A BuNo 143748, VMF-122 "Crusaders", MCAS Yuma, 1960

VMF-122 was the first Marine unit to receive the Crusader in December 1957. It was at this time that its name was changed from "Candystripers" to "Crusaders". After an intense training period, VMF-122 also became the first Marine squadron to become carrier-qualified on the F-8, in 1959. This aircraft was one of the early models operated by the squadron out of MCAS Yuma in March 1960. It was decorated with a lance on the fuselage, in addition to the sword and crusader's shield (VMF-122's squadron badge) on the fin.



F-8A BuNo 143693, VMF-215 "Fighting Corsairs"

This unit, based at NAS Olathe, received F-8A Crusaders in 1964. This specific aircraft appeared to have paint patches of a shade darker than the standard Light Gull Grey applied at different locations. The "7K" tailcode was changed to "5K" in 1968.



F-8B BuNo 145520, VMF-122 "Crusaders", 1962

This F-8B from VMF-122 "Crusaders" was based at MCAS Beaufort in May 1962. Shortly after, the "Crusaders" transitioned to the all-weather capable F-8E and was re-designated VMF(AW)-122. 145520 carries a blue-coloured Sidewinder training missile.

