



CAF SoCal Wing F6F-5 Hellcat Notes

- Recovered from Fergus Falls MN in 1961 (left derelict on the airport)
- Purchased by CAF's Lloyd Nolan for \$20,000 in 1976
- Painted to represent VF-15 Cmdr. David McCampbell's F6F Minsi III aboard the USS Essex in 1944. He ended WW2 as the highest scoring Navy Ace with 34 victories.
- Operated by the CAF SoCal Wing since 1991.

General Grumman Hellcat Info

- First flight was on June 26th 1942 by Grumman's Bob Hall
- 12,275 Hellcat's built from 1942-45 @ \$35,000 each.
- 307 Navy Pilots Achieved Ace status in Hellcats. Over three times more than any other fighter.
- 19.5 to 1 kill ratio. 5,156 victories. More than twice that of any other fighter.
- Peak production was in March 44' when 640 were produced. That is almost 1 per hour! A U.S WW2 production record.
- Three months after its first flight it was approved for mass production by Navy Test Pilots after only three flights! (it took the Corsair 19 months and the F-22 raptor 10 years!)

Grumman "Iron Works"

- Navy had 19 ft. per second landing requirement for the Hellcat which equaled a vertical drop from 10 feet. The Navy asked Grumman to find out the actual breaking strength. Grumman went as high as a 21 foot vertical drop (the height of the hangar) and the landing gear never did fail.
- Hellcats never had a wing fail during combat maneuvering even when exceeding the 8G design limit.
- Nicknamed the “Grandfathers Fighter” due to its docile flying characteristics.
- Friendly competitor’s Chance Vought liked to say the Hellcat looked like the “Box” that a Corsair comes in. Grumman would say it’s Hellcat was “Functional Looking” not Ugly!

Hellcat Myth

- The secrets learned from a captured Japanese Zero in Alaska dictated the design of the Hellcat. Not True. The Zero was captured on June 3rd 1942. The Hellcats first flight was later that same month.

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