

F-4B PHANTOM II

Carrying a full load of Mk 82 bombs, this F-4B is depicted as it would have appeared during its first Vietnam cruise with VF-84 'Jolly Rogers' on board the USS Independence in late 1965. During this cruise, the squadron lost three aircraft in combat.

Unlike USAF Phantoms, the F-4B could not be flown from the rear cockpit. In Navy parlance, the backseater was the RIO (Radar Intercept Officer), whose job it was to operate the weapons system.

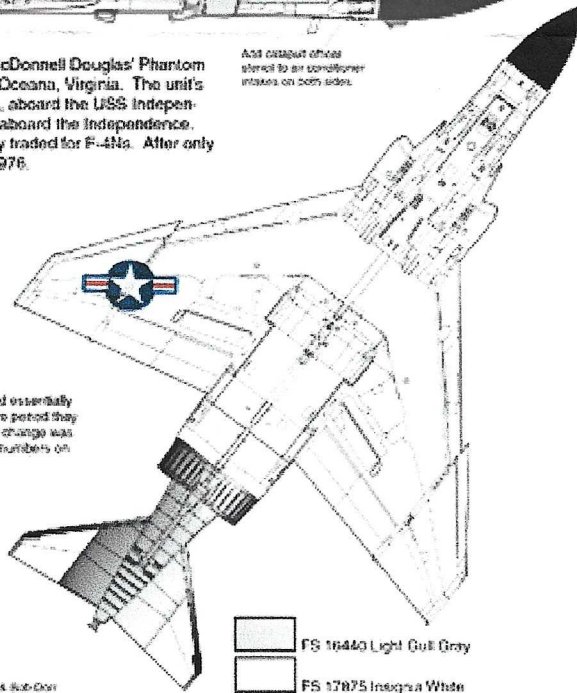
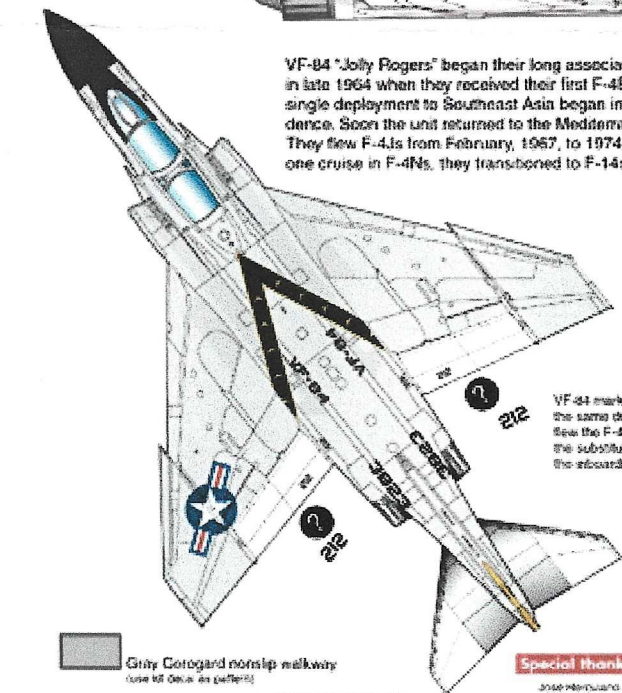
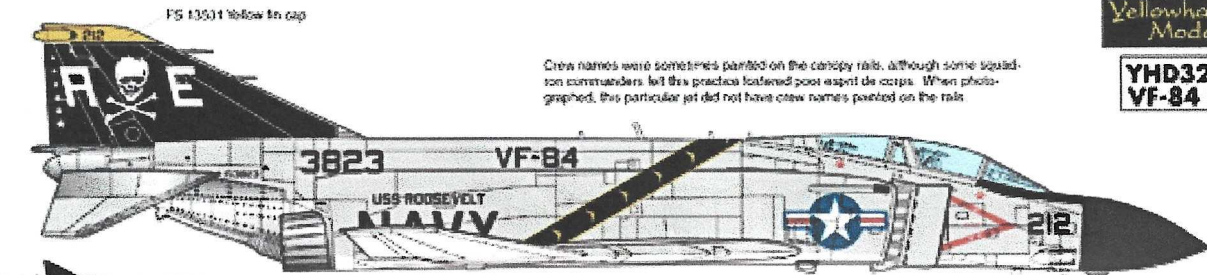
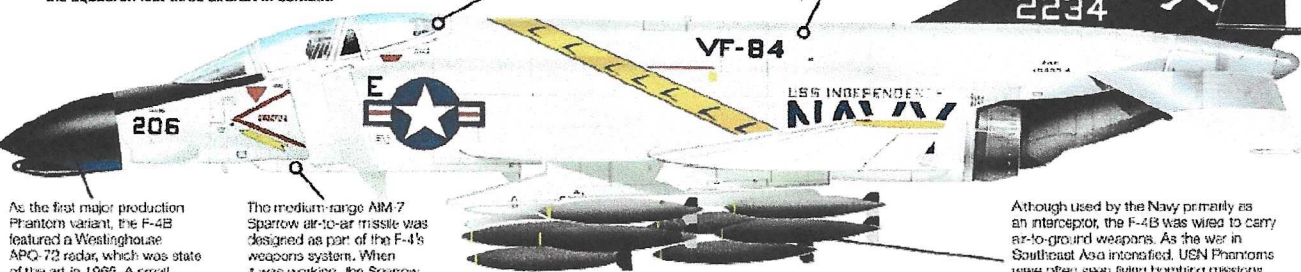
Sufficient clearance for the twin J79 engines resulted in the distinctive bulky profile, which gave rise to the type's nickname 'Double Ugly'. Above the engines were the fuselage fuel cells.

Early in their service careers, F-4Bs featured slick fin-tips, although later aircraft were retro-fitted with radar homing and warning receiver (RHAW) antennas housed in distinctive bullet fairings facing both fore and aft.

As the first major production Phantom variant, the F-4B featured a Westinghouse APO-72 radar, which was state of the art in 1965. A small undernose pod housed an infra-red seeker, although this was removed from the F-4J.

The medium-range AIM-7 Sparrow air-to-air missile was designed as part of the F-4's weapons system. When it was working, the Sparrow was an excellent missile, although in Vietnam it was prone to malfunctioning.

Although used by the Navy primarily as an interceptor, the F-4B was wired to carry air-to-ground weapons. As the war in Southeast Asia intensified, USN Phantoms were often seen flying bombing missions over North Vietnam, especially when there were not sufficient attack aircraft available. Most F-4 crews ceased bombing sorties.



FS 13531 Yellow fin cap

Crew names were sometimes painted on the canopy rails, although some squadron commanders led the practice forward postscript de rigueur. When photographed, this particular jet did not have crew names painted on the rails.

Yellowhammer Models™

YHD32002
VF-84 F-4J

VF-84 'Jolly Rogers' began their long association with McDonnell Douglas' Phantom in late 1964 when they received their first F-4Bs at NAS Oceana, Virginia. The unit's single deployment to Southeast Asia began in May 1965, aboard the USS Independence. Soon the unit returned to the Mediterranean, still aboard the Independence. They flew F-4Js from February, 1967, to 1974, when they traded for F-4Ns. After only one cruise in F-4Ns, they transitioned to F-14s in June 1976.

A31 cockpit offset aligned to an engine/interceptor intakes on both sides.

VF-84 markings remained essentially the same during the entire period they flew the F-4J. One small change was the substitution of larger numbers on the inward steps.

Grey Corogard nonslip walkway
(use 1/8" Devcon in pattern)

Special thanks to...

FS 16440 Light Gulf Gray
FS 17875 Insignia White