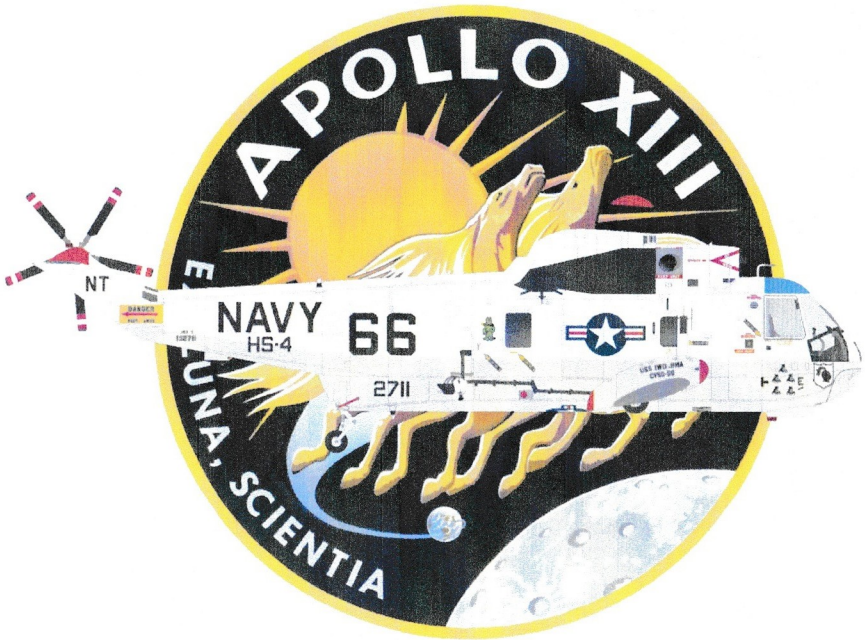
"Old 66"

The Navy's most famous Sea King

Designed for
1:72 FUJIMI
REVELL-GERMANY
and CYBER-HOBBY
SEA KING KITS



Apollo 13 recovery
April 17, 1970

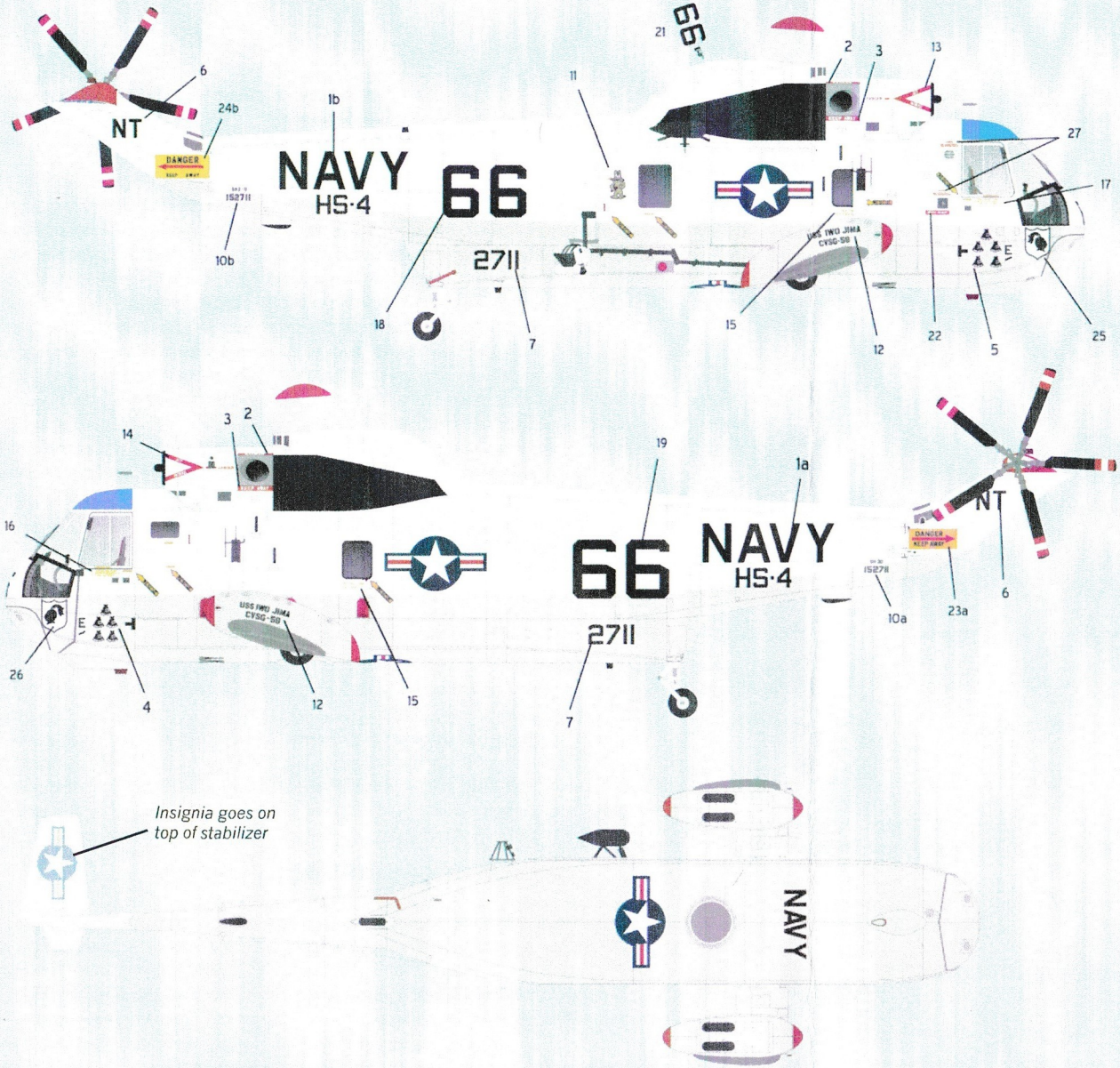
The final recovery for "Old 66"

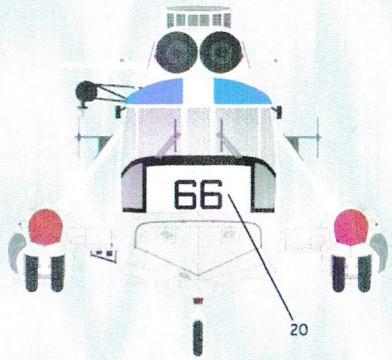
A JOINT PROJECT OF OLD 66 DECALS
AND STARFIGHTER DECALS

AD7202

Apollo 13 recovery

April 17, 1970





For its final Apollo recovery, BuNo 152711 differed in appearance from its Apollo 12 livery in several ways. The overall colors remained Insignia White (FS 17875) and Gull Gray (FS 16440), but the trim color on sponsons, tail and rotor cap changed to Insignia Red (FS 11136). On at least the starboard side, the aircraft appears to have received a new coat of white paint with a much less feathered border. The paint demarcation on the tail did not match that on the fuselage. In addition, several markings were replaced with stenciled versions, some of which had their own idiosyncrasies. The big "66" was repainted in a thick, non-standard format. Cockpit overhead windows were transparent blue.

The most famous addition was on the starboard cargo door, where "Albert the Alleygator," cigar in mouth, presided over the recovery while holding a lit stick of dynamite (despite popular perceptions and at least one museum re-creation, that wasn't a frog - and photographs from the recovery bear this out). The Apollo emblems on the nose were rearranged, and a fifth one for Apollo 13 was applied prior to the recovery and covered over; as "Old 66" landed aboard *Iwo Jima*, aircraft commander (and HS-4 CO) Chuck Smiley pulled a string from within the cockpit, revealing the fifth logo on the starboard side.

Photographs of the port side of 152711 in this scheme are difficult to find, but indicate the aircraft carried its basic Apollo 12 livery. Just in case you find photos to the contrary, the decal sheet includes both the "standard" and "stencil" versions for the port side, and several other markings for insurance purposes. (Sharp-eyed modelers will notice it's possible to build the Apollo 12 variant with the spare markings on this sheet!)

About this decal

Thanks for purchasing this decal. It's the result of an awful lot of work and research, and the desire to finally represent this historic aircraft at a particularly famous moment.

Note that this decal sheet is not all-inclusive -- while it contains the major markings for "Old 66," it doesn't include more typical stencils and other details, so grab those from other decal sheets if you want them.

Special thanks are due to everyone who assisted in the research process, notably David Weeks, whose research into recovery helicopters made this job a lot easier.

Kit and Conversion Notes

While not the most detailed kits in the world, the old but still good Fujimi SH-3 or HSS-2B kits are the quickest route for an SH-3D. Some boxings have parts for later variants, but still include the shorter stabilizer and teardrop-shaped sponsons. (Some boxings of the Westland Sea King include only the six-blade tail rotor, so shop wisely.) Although the tooling is old, the finished model has the right look to it, and a nice photoetch set is available from Eduard if you wish to add detail.

Cyber-Hobby's SH-3D and SH-3G kits (the same plastic in different boxes), while excellent kits from a technical standpoint, need a moderate amount of correction to build an accurate SH-3D. Tommy Thomason's blog at tailspintopics.blogspot.com has featured several posts regarding the Cyber-Hobby kit, and interested builders should consult those posts.

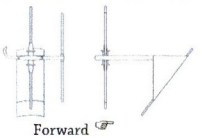
Revell-Germany's otherwise beautiful 2000-vintage Westland Sea King requires very careful removal of molded-on detail and several other modifications to represent any SH-3. (Its sponsons are also about 20% undersized.) However, a motivated modeler could build a nice SH-3D from this kit.

The Airfix/Heller and Lindberg Sea King kits have long since been superseded. Given the availability of better kits, it's best not to use them. Let the kids have fun building them, or keep 'em as relics.

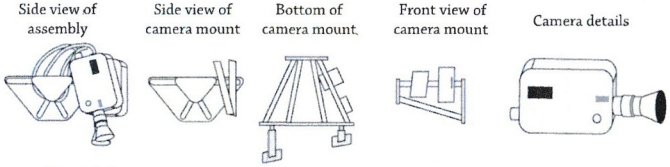
To more accurately depict "Old 66" as an Apollo recovery helicopter:

1. Do not install the AN/AQS-13 dipping sonar array. This was temporarily removed to provide additional room in the cabin during recovery. Install a cover over the hole in the cabin floor. The sonar well in the bottom of the hull remained, so do not plug it. (Contrary to what some published sources have stated, "Old 66" was a standard SH-3D configured to hunt submarines.)
2. Install a Yagi antenna on each sponson support strut (see drawings).
3. Install 70 mm cameras aft of and below the main cabin door (see drawings).
4. Apply gray tape along the route of the camera power cables. Use thin strips of painted tape to represent this. (You may want to place a piece of small-diameter thread under the tape for added effect.)
5. When appropriate, add the lifting sling beneath the starboard cargo door. Taped in place below the cargo door, this would have been unfastened and lowered to help bring the spacecraft to an apex-up position if needed. Use tape painted dark gray or black for best effect, and add a piece of thread beneath if you like. See the profile drawings on the other side for reference.

Yagi antenna (enlarged for detail)



70 mm cameras and mounts (enlarged for detail)



For 1:72 scale, reduce the above drawings to 50% original size.