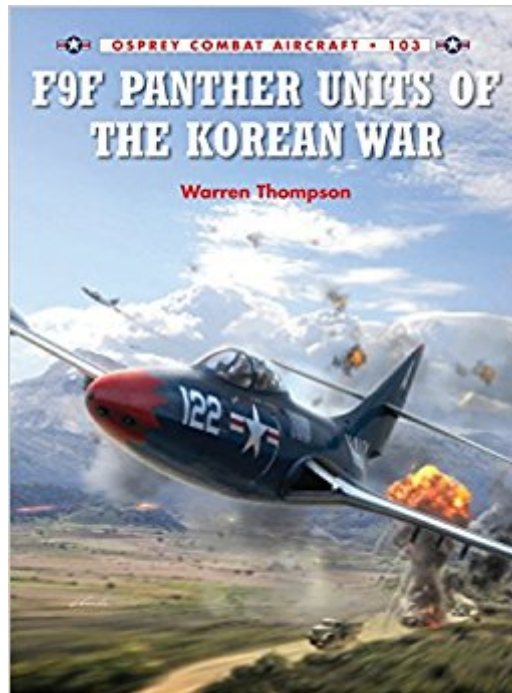


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F9F Panther Units Of The Korean War (Combat Aircraft)



Synopsis

In 1948 the USAF, Marine Corps and US Navy were concentrating on converting over to an all-jet force. When the Korean War started in June 1950, the USAF had built up a sizable jet force in the Far East, while the US Navy was in the early stages of getting F9F Panthers operational as replacements for its piston-engined F8F Bearcats. At about this time, the Marine Corps had also begun using the Panthers in limited numbers. Operating from aircraft carriers off the Korean coast, F9Fs helped stop the North Korean invasion within two weeks of the communists crossing the 38th Parallel. The Panthers, escorting carrier-based AD Skyraiders and F4U Corsairs, penetrated as far north as Pyongyang, where they bombed and strafed targets that the North Koreans thought were out of range. The Panthers also took the battle all the way to the Yalu River, long before the MiG-15s became a threat. The F9F's basic tasking was aerial supremacy and combat air patrols, but they also excelled in bombing and strafing attacks. The Marine Corps, with its two Panther squadrons, was also involved in close air support and interdiction near the frontlines. There were a total of 32 Panther squadron deployments during the war, along with several special detachments that operated the F9F-2/5P unarmed photo-reconnaissance versions.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Warren Thompson's latest offering from Osprey is everything I have come to expect from this outstanding historian of Korea, our "Forgotten War." The F9F's contribution to the conflict has always been overshadowed by the exploits of the Air Force's F-86's in MiG Alley. The fact that close

air support, while so vital to the troops on the ground, is nowhere near as glamorous as fighter dogfights is probably a factor. Also, there have been relatively few personal narratives by Naval Aviators who flew in Korea. Perhaps it was felt that Michener's "Bridges at Toko-Ri" and the later movie of the same name said all that needed to be said. Thompson proves, as he has in his other Korean combat works, that the conflict is a fertile field for narratives regarding the courage and skill of the aviators flying in the transitional era of combat going from props to jets. This outstanding book finally gives the F9F, and its aviators, the recognition that has been lacking. All of the units that operated the Panther are listed, details of their losses (including a gunsight photo from a MiG with a Marine F9 about to be shot down!), the cruises of the carriers they flew from, and the part they played in the strategic plans of the war. Stories from the aviators are there too, some of them first person. There's even a picture of Neil Armstrong's F9 when he was flying in VF-51. And the stories! They're great! And for those who want it, there are MiG combats as well-- including that "secret" one when a Panther shot down multiple MiGs in one engagement. One little correction. On page 52 is a photo of an F9F that has a rain cloud and BLPFSTK painted on the nose. According to the caption, the "meaning of the acronym has been lost to the years.

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