



VFA-146 Hot Rod

The scheme on VFA-146s CAG jet was inspired by CDR Jethro Hansen. CDR Hansen was the old CO of VFA-146 and was quite the gear-head and muscle car afficionado. As the owner of a 1951 Mercury (see pic), he had an idea in his head for a cool paint scheme!

Originally this A/C was painted with blue/yellow flames when it went out on cruise in support of OEF. Once out to sea though the corrosion control guys on the USS Stennis wanted to do something a little more patriotic.

AN Adrian Quintero came up with an idea for a new paint scheme. After he drew up his idea for a design, it was submitted to Master Chief Gallegos who is the maintenance chief over VFA-146. Up the chain it went and it was hard for anyone to say no to this very patriotic and striking scheme!

It took about 3-4 days for the guys in Corrosion Control to finish painting this jet and one of the interesting highlights of this scheme are that there are exactly 50 stars on the entire A/C if you include the national insignia; this was done by design.

Another detail of this scheme is the "Moose" that is painted under the front windscreen. Capt R.C. "Dawg" Thompson wanted this painted on the aircraft in memory of former squadron mate of his. "Moose" was a former Top Gun pilot at Miramar NAS. He perished on Flight 93 on 11 Sept. 2001 while subduing the terrorists during the failed attack on Washington DC.

Capt R.C. "Dawg" Thompson who was the CAG on the OEF cruise flew this aircraft during the first VFA-146 strike on Afghanistan. CAG Thompson was the first one "over the beach" and CDR Jethro Hansen was right behind him and was the second VFA-146 pilot over Afghanistan.



CDR Hansen poses with two of his most prized possessions. His '51 Mercury and the Blue Diamond's three-tone gray aggressor painted Hornet. Photo courtesy of CDR Jethro Hansen.





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