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F/A-18C

VFA-25
Fist Of The Fleet
OPERATION IRABI FREEDOM "KNUCKLE SHAMPOO"



MSRP \$9.50 US

48-059

1/48th Scale
1/48th Monogram F/A-18C
1/48th Monogram F/A-18C
1/48th Monogram F/A-18C

WHAT'S OUT THERE?

- 1/48th Monogram F/A-18C
- 1/48th Monogram F/A-18C
- Airwaves Resin Cockpit
- Black Box Resin Cockpit
- Cutting Edge Wheel and Canopy Masks
- Curving Edge Flaps and Slats
- Edward Hornet Detail Set
- EZ Mask Mask Set



Very special thanks to Dennis McGrath at Lamoreo NAS for following me around the flightline that humid day!

Also a big thanks to CDR Jeff "Jethro" Hansen for his help!



P333613

Testors 1709
Humbrol HU148
Gunze Sangyo H318
Xtarcolor X107

P337038

Testors 1749
Humbrol HU33
Gunze Sangyo H12
Xtarcolor X104

P334375

Testors 1728
Humbrol HU127
Gunze Sangyo H308
Xtarcolor X136

P334380

Testors 1741
Humbrol HU128
Gunze Sangyo H307
Xtarcolor X135

Four-Star Performance!

The *Fist of the Fleet* emblem is known around the world: a black lightning bolt on a field of yellow wreathed with 3 stars. Each star represents a war in which F/A-25 has flown aircraft into combat: WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. The *Fist* has recently earned its fourth star for its vital role in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In July 2002, F/A-25 left NAS Lamoreo for a regularly scheduled six-month deployment on board the USS Abraham Lincoln. During that first six-month period, the *Fists* saw action in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom as well as over Iraq, performing missions required for Operation Southern Watch. In the fall and winter of 2002, as the United States moved closer to decisive action in dealing with Iraq, the USS Abraham Lincoln was ordered to stay or station in the Persian Gulf. After a total of three extensions and approaching their tenth

month away from home, the *Fists* joined other US military forces as the long awaited war to liberate Iraq and its people from Saddam Hussein began.

Any strain from the long deployment melted away on March 19, 2003, when F/A-25 began combat sorties in earnest and Operation Southern Watch abruptly turned into Operation Iraqi Freedom. The *Fist of the Fleet* laid the way to Baghdad from the very beginning including the daring first-night air strikes on the Iraqi capital in what has become known as the "Shock and Awe" campaign. F/A-25 put in long days, achieving an average daily combat sortie count of 20, while pounding the road to the coalition's ultimate objective, from Basra, to An Nasiriyah, Al Kut, An Najaf, Al Hliah, and ultimately Baghdad. The squadron's Heroic effort of more than 850 hours flown on 272 combat sorties over 18 straight days resulted in relentless and deadly strikes on the Iraqi Regime's

Medica, Baghdad, and Nebuchadnezzar Armored Divisions, military airfields, facilities, and command and control infrastructure.

The *Fists* showed their true colors when faced with the only real test in aviation combat: flying into countless missile engagement zones under heavy AAA fire. F6 *Fist* pilots flew their F/A-25C Hornets to their targets day after day, delivering ordnance on target to aid U.S. troops on the front lines as they made their way north. Although dodging missiles, rockets, and AAA over hostile territory became a part of daily life, F/A-25 suffered no losses. Tales from the cockpit spun around the ready room like individual sand storms as pilots reviewed Bomb Damage Assessment tapes from the FLIR pods on board.

Working closely with joint-allied forces in the air, on the sea, and on the front lines in the ground war, the *Fist of the Fleet* struck again and again in the most

Special thanks also go out to Capt. David "Knuckles Kneetant" and Lt. William Moynahan.

Thanks guys!!

dynamic and flexible air campaign in the history of armed conflict. From pre-planned strikes to "on-call" Urban Close Air Support, F/A-25 was involved in critical, time-sensitive attacks that proved to be crucial in the eventual downfall of the rogue Iraqi regime.

The F/A-25 Maintenance team provided the punch that delivered a total of more than 390,000 lbs of American military payload. Sortie completion rates were better than 98% for the *Fist's* war effort, despite constant high-tempo flight deck operations, ordnance loading, and critical, time-crunched repairs to the warbirds.

With its duties in the Persian Gulf complete, F/A-25 returned to the United States in May 2003. The entire squadron was proud of its Four-Star effort which came in a war that was fought like no other.

Tweebob's goal is to provide you with the most thoroughly researched decals that money can buy. We go beyond using traditional reference resources and many times speak with the actual crews and maintainers of our subject matter. Being modelers ourselves, we understand that there is no substitute for this painstaking research and we are proud to offer what we feel are the best decals on the market. If you have any subject matter that you feel should be the next Tweebob's creation, let us know. We'll be happy to listen to any and all customer input.