

# USAF PHANTOMS in VIET NAM

## F-4E, F-4D, F-4C and RF-4C



### 58th TFS Gorillas



PAULA 01 F-4E-36-MC 65-790 Udon RTAFB, Thailand 2 MIG-21, 8 July 1972



### 336th TFS Rocketeers



DATE 04 F-4E-43-MC 69-7235 Udon RTAFB, Thailand MIG-21, 16 August 1972



### 4th TFS Fighting Fuujins



NEVER FORGOTTEN F-4E-44-MC 69-7271 Da Nang AB, RVN 1971



### 523rd TFS Wyverns



BASCO 03 F-4D-30-MC 66-7550 Udon RTAFB, Thailand MIG-21, 16 April 1972



### 67th TFS Fighting Cocks



SUNSET 01 F-4C-16-MC 63-7423 Korat RTAFB, Thailand 21 December 1972



### 11th TRS Owls



PEANUT BUTTER CRACKERS RF-4C-25-MC 65-863 Udon RTAFB, Thailand 1968

This decal sheet contains markings for eight McDonnell-Douglas F-4 Phantom IIs flown by USAF squadrons in Southeast Asia between 1967 and 1972. Three F-4Es, two of them MiG killers including Ace Steve Ritchie's double victory jet, an F-4D MiG killer, an F-4C Wild Weasel, and three RF-4C Photo Phantoms, including two in unique pre-tail code combat identification markings. Stenciling and insignia sufficient to do two aircraft is included.



**PAULA 01 F-4E-36-MC 67-362 58th TFS 1972**

**DATE 04 F-4E-43-MC 69-7235 336th TFS 1972**

**NEVER FORGOTTEN F-4E-44-MC 69-7271 4th TFS 1971**

**BASCO 03 F-4D-30-MC 66-7550 523rd TFS 1972**

**SUNSET 01 F-4C-16-MC 63-7423 67th TFS 1972**

**PEANUT BUTTER CRACKERS RF-4C-25-MC 65-863 11th TRS 1968**

**ROAD RUNNER RF-4C-26-MC 65-899 11th TRS 1967**

right side left side

both sides

white stripe

both sides

right side left side

both sides

short white stripe

long white stripe

right side left side

right side left side

right side left side

USAF 50899 ← → USAF 50899



# USAF PHANTOMS in VIET NAM

## F-4C, F-4D, F-4E and RF-4C

### Kit Notes

We recommend using the 1:48th scale Hasegawa F-4C, F-4D, and F-4E kits. The ProModeler F-4E kit which is actually the Hasegawa tooling may also be used because it represents an early E, before the wing slats were added. The Hasegawa RF-4B or RF-4C kit can be used for the Photo Phantom. The B kit lacks only the Air Force main wheels. On the RF-4 kits use the "angular" shaped nose and not the rounded one. Check our website for a comprehensive guide to using the RF-4B kit. Remove triangular stiffener plates from all horizontal tails. Check profile drawings for tail warning radar fairings and formation lighting and remove when not needed. Use slotted horizontal tails on F-4E only.

### Painting and Marking Notes

From early 1966, USAF Phantoms were finished in the T.O. 1-1-4 three color camouflage scheme of 30219 Tan, 34079 Dark Green, and 34102 Olive Green over 36622 Camouflage Gray. Although the patterns were specified, there was considerable variation in the application and photo references should be checked whenever possible. Radomes were painted 17038 Black. Underwing pylons were 36622 Gray but multiple and triple ejection racks (MERs and TERs) were 17875 Insignia White. USAF ordnance varied in color; HE munitions and cluster bombs were generally 34087 Olive Drab, napalm tanks were natural aluminum, ECM pods were either 17875 or 36622, while guided missiles and all other ordnance were usually 17875. It should be noted that aircrews did not always fly in fighters assigned to their squadron as the allocations were made daily on an as-available basis.

**Subject:** *Paula 01*, F-4E-36-MC Phantom II, 67-0362, 58th TFS, 432nd TFRW, Udorn RTAFB, Thailand.

**Camouflage and Markings:** USAF T.O. 1-1-4 camouflage. Medium Blue 15090 fin cap. Turbine warning stripe extends only up to the national insignia. Formation lights installed.

**Mission Description:** Captains Steve Ritchie and Chuck DeBellevue of the 555th TFS were leading a four-ship flight on 8 July 1972 covering an exiting strike force when *Disco* (an Air Force EC-121) intercepted North Vietnamese radio transmissions vectoring MiG-21s toward *Paula* Flight. Ritchie spotted one MiG but passed it by, knowing there was likely a second MiG trailing behind looking to get a shot at any unsuspecting Phantom that turned on his leader. Sure enough, Ritchie spotted the second MiG and turned hard to get behind him. When in position, Ritchie ripple-fired two Sparrows just in case one didn't work. These Sparrows, however, were the new "dogfight" AIM-7E-2s. Although the MiG-21 pilot saw the Phantom and started a hard break, the improved Sparrows homed in on the target and blew it out of the sky. By this time *Paula 04*, a new guy, had the first MiG-21 on his tail and called for help. Ritchie pulled his jet into a tight turn to get behind the MiG. Turning at 5Gs, he launched another Sparrow at the edge of its firing envelope. Not expecting it to guide properly, Ritchie readied himself for a gun attack, but the missile performed flawlessly and tracked the tightly turning target. The second MiG became a giant fireball and Ritchie's victory total stood at four.

**Mission Weapon Load:** AN/ALQ-101 ECM pod in left forward fuselage missile well, 3xAIM-7E-2 Sparrows in other fuselage wells, 2xAIM-9E Sidewinders on right inboard pylon, 600-gallon centerline fuel tank, and 2x350-gallon fuel tanks on outboard pylons.

**Subject:** *Date 04*, F-4E-43-MC Phantom II, 69-7235, 336th TFS, 8th TFW, Ubon RTAFB, Thailand.

**Camouflage and Markings:** T.O. 1-1-4 camouflage. Orange Yellow 13538 fin cap with thin White stripe beneath. No turbine warning stripe visible in our reference photo. Note formation lights but lack of tail warning radar. Red star and crew names added

**Mission Description:** The 336th TFS *Rocketeers* jokingly called themselves the *Chaffteers* because they were regularly assigned the role of providing a chaff corridor for the main strike force. 16 August 1972 was no different and Captains Fred Sheffler and Mark Massen were flying *Date 04*, on the far right side of an eight-ship chaff support formation headed to Vat Tri and Phu To, North Viet Nam. The flight was actively laying an effective chaff trail when suddenly and without warning, a green MiG-21 passed 200 feet off Sheffler's right wing doing Mach 1.1. As he was closest to the bandit, Sheffler was given flight lead. The remaining chaff bombs were quickly pickled off and Sheffler selected the F-4E's radar auto-acquisition fire control mode. A second and a half later, he launched an AIM-7E at the fleeing MiG. The bandit broke hard left, and in what became a maximum range launch due to relative speeds, the Sparrow impacted its target's wing root after an eleven-second flight. The MiG pilot ejected before his jet impacted the ground below. After the engagement, *Date* Flight reached critical fuel state and the Phantoms egressed the area to hit the tankers for the return trip home. This was the last of many air-to-air victories for Ubon-based F-4 squadrons.

**Mission Weapon Load:** AN/ALQ-87 ECM pod in the left forward fuselage missile well, 3xAIM-7E-2 Sparrows in the other fuselage wells, 6xM129 chaff bombs on the centerline MER, AN/ALQ-38 chaff dispenser on the right inboard pylon, 2xAIM-9E Sidewinders on the left inboard pylon, and 2x 350-gallon fuel tanks on outboard pylons.

**Subject:** F-4E-44-MC Phantom II, 69-7271, *NEVER FORGOTTEN*, 4th TFS, 366th TFW, Da Nang AB, Republic of Viet Nam.

**Camouflage and Markings:** Standard T.O. 1-1-4 camouflage. Orange Yellow trim, outlined in black, on canopy rails and adjacent fuselage areas for crew name placement. Crew names carried unknown. "Last three" of serial number on both sides of nose gear strut cover. Note lack of formation strip lights and tail warning radar fairing.

**Mission Description:** In 1971, the 366th TFW spent much of its time flying interdiction missions against North Vietnamese supply routes in Route Package 1 (southern North Viet Nam), in I Corps, (northern South Viet Nam), and in southern Laos. Strikes were directed against roads, bridges, truck parks, munitions storage areas, and choke points, often at night when the trucks were rolling. Ordnance used varied with the target and time of day and usually included GP bombs, CBU, and/or "destructors" (retarded GP bombs with mine fuzes). Flares were carried for night missions and the Navy Mk25 Brighteye was preferred as it was brighter than the USAF's LUU-2 flares. ECM was carried for missions in the high threat areas of RP1 and Laos. Air-to-air missiles were usually carried only when going North.

**Typical Weapon Load:** Interdiction missions: 3xMk 82 500-lb GP (on TERs) or 1xMk83 GP on each inboard pylon, 6xMk82 GP or 4xCBU-24 on the centerline MER, 350-gallon fuel tanks outboard. For night missions, 1xMk25 Brighteye replaced the GPs on the right inboard pylon. ECM, when carried, was in the forward missile wells. For short range in country interdiction, 6xMk82 could be loaded onto the centerline MER for a total of 18 GP bombs.

**Subject:** *Basco 03*, F-4D-30-MC Phantom II, 66-7550, 523rd TFS, 432nd TFRW, Udorn RTAFB, Thailand.

**Camouflage and Markings:** Standard T.O. 1-1-4 camouflage. Nose and tail warning radomes 37038 Flat Black. Insignia Red 11136 with White cheat lines on tips of vertical and horizontal tails. White triangle style ejection seat warnings and full Red turbine warning stripe. Irregularly shaped red star added after the 16 April 1972 mission. Note unslatted horizontal tails.

**Mission Description:** On 16 April 1972, Major Dan Cherry and Captain Jeff Feinstein of the 13th TFS were on MiGCAP in one of the first major strikes against North Viet Nam during Operation *Linebacker*. About 40 miles west of Hanoi, *Basco* Flight jettisoned its tanks after *Red Crown* warned of incoming bandits. *Basco 01* was equipped with *Combat Tree* gear and detected bandits approaching head-on at 20 miles. Although cleared to fire beyond visual range (BVR) the two silver MiGs were allowed to close. The first MiG was downed by *01's* third Sparrow. Cherry, led the second element in a turn towards the engagement when a third MiG, this one camouflaged, was spotted coming heading for *01's* tail. Cherry went into max afterburner and climbed, following the bandit into a cloud. Breaking out, he had a perfect Sidewinder shot with the MiG in front of him, the sun behind. He fired but nothing happened. The MiG dove away and *04* took over the lead, firing all three AIM-7s, which missed. Cherry retook the lead in *03* and lined up, allowing Feinstein to get a solid radar lock on the speeding MiG. The Sparrow leaped off the Phantom and impacted the bandit, which was about 4,000 feet ahead of *Basco 03*. His right wing blown off, the MiG pilot ejected from his fatally stricken craft, passing within 30 feet of the now-supersonic Phantom. Low on fuel, *Basco* Flight returned to Udorn at treetop level, arriving home with less than 1,000 pounds of JP-4.

**Mission Weapon Load:** AN/ALQ-101 ECM pod in left forward fuselage well, 3xAIM-7E Sparrows in remaining fuselage wells, 2xAIM-9E Sidewinders on left inboard pylon, AN/ALQ-87 ECM pod on right inboard pylon, 600-gallon fuel tank on centerline, 2x370-gallon fuel tanks on outboard pylons.

**Project Save 550:** Phantom 66-7550 was recently moved from Enon, Ohio, where it had been on display at the VFW hall there, to Bowling Green, Kentucky, where it will be put on display at the new Aviation Heritage Park. For further details or to participate in this project, we recommend that you visit the *Save 550* website at [www.aviationheritagepark.com](http://www.aviationheritagepark.com).

**Subject:** (E)F-4C-16-MC Phantom II, 63-7423, *JAIL BAIT*, 67th TFS, 388th TFW, Korat RTAFB, Thailand.

**Camouflage and Markings:** Standard USAF T.O. 1-1-4 camouflage. Nose radar and tail warning radomes painted 37038 Flat Black. Insignia Red 11136 tips of vertical and horizontal tails. White cheat lines on vertical tail only. White triangle style ejection seat warning triangles and full Red turbine warning stripe. Note the AN/APR-25 antennas forward of the windscreens and unslatted horizontal tails. "DDD&C/C" painted across the left inlet ramp stood for "Don's Dirty Dozen & Crew Chiefs."

**Mission Description:** December 21 1972 was the fourth night of Operation *Linebacker II*. The previous nights saw nine B-52 losses to SAMs in the Hanoi area. Captain Bill McLeod and his EWO, Major Don Lavigne flew *JAIL BAIT* as *Suntan 01*, leading three three-ship hunter/killer teams consisting of one F-4C Weasel and two F-4Es loaded with CBU for flak suppression and two two-ship teams with one each F-4C and E. Coming off the tanker, *Sunset* flight was warned of a MiG-21 in front of them. Evading the MiG, McLeod's team went into orbit near Bac Mai. The first B-52s appeared and some 70 SAMs were launched by the NVA. The Bac Mai site was taken out by the F-4Es with their CBUs as it launched its SA-2s. McLeod rolled in to protect the F-4Es, evading a SAM fired at him by another site. The F-4Es called *Winchester* and headed for the tankers. Meanwhile, two BUFFs had been downed from a site east of Hanoi so McLeod turned *JAIL BAIT* in that direction. The last B-52 cell had cleared the coast when his warning panel lit up and the audio tone started screaming. Two SAMs were on the way! McLeod kicked rudder and headed for the site, launching both of his Shrikes. The site went off the air and both SAMs went ballistic. McLeod dodged them and tore across Hanoi at near-sonic speed, attracting a lot of 85mm AAA in the process. Lavigne provided a vector to the tankers and *JAIL BAIT* caught them just before fuel ran out. Then, they set a course back to Korat.

**Mission Weapon Load:** AN/ALQ-101 ECM pod in left forward fuselage well, 2xAIM-7E-2 Sparrows in the aft fuselage wells, 2xAGM-45 Shrikes on inboard pylons, and 2x370-gallon fuel tanks on outboard pylons.

**Subject:** RF-4C-26-MC Phantom II, 65-0863, *PEANUT BUTTER CRACKERS*, 11th TRS, 432nd TRW, Udorn RTAFB, Thailand, mid-1968.

**Camouflage and Markings:** T.O. 1-1-4 camouflage. White stripe on nose radome. Red triangle style ejection seat and photoflash pyrotechnic warnings. *Barrel Sharks* markings on centerline fuel tank. Remove formation lights. Note unslatted horizontal tails.

**Postscript:** On 10 April 1970, RF-4C 65-0863, *Falcon 34*, encountered hydraulic system failure and loss of controllability on the final approach to Udorn after sustaining battle damage on a mission over northwestern Laos. Both crew members ejected successfully, sustaining minor injuries when landing on the base itself. The aircraft impacted in a housing area on the base, destroying nine buildings and a trailer. The AFTN (American Forces Thailand Network) radio station was destroyed in the fire with nine broadcasters losing their lives.

**Subject:** RF-4C-26-MC Phantom II 65-0899, *ROAD RUNNER*, 11th TRS, 432nd TRW, Udorn RTAFB, Thailand.

**Camouflage and Markings:** Standard T.O. 1-1-4 camouflage. Red triangle style ejection seat and photoflash pyrotechnic warnings. Remove formation lights. Note unslatted horizontal tails.

**Mission Description:** On 7 November 1965, Major R.F. Ross and his navigator, Captain F.L. Hobbs were returning from a recon mission to Bac Giang, northeast of Hanoi, when their RF-4C was hit by a SAM. The Phantom had just completed its photo run at 24,000 feet and was jinking to throw off AAA and SAMs but unfortunately a missile exploded just beneath *Road Runner*, badly damaging its tail surfaces. Major Ross immediately headed towards the coast and he and his nav ejected safely over the Gulf of Tonkin, about 60 miles south of Haiphong. They were rescued by a Navy helicopter.

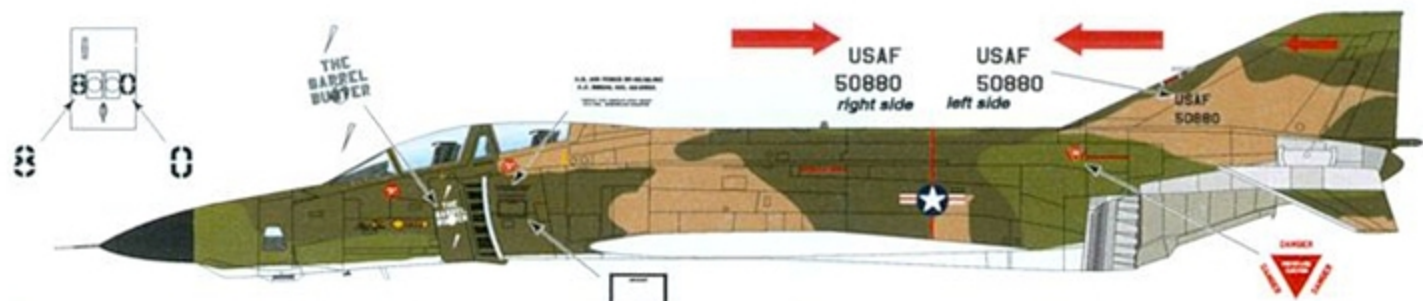
**Mission Load:** 2xAN/ALQ-87 ECM pods on the inboard pylons, 2x370-gallon fuel tanks on outboard pylons.

**Subject:** RF-4C-26-MC Phantom II 65-0880, *THE BARREL BUSTER*, 11th TRS, 432nd TRW, Udorn RTAFB, Thailand.

**Camouflage and Markings:** Standard T.O. 1-1-4 camouflage. Red triangle style ejection seat and photoflash pyrotechnic warnings. Remove formation lights. Note unslatted horizontal tails.

**Mission Description:** Lieutenant Colonel Vernon Ligon, CO of the 11th TRS and his navigator, Captain David Ford also became early victims of North Vietnamese SA-2 surface-to-air missiles when their recon Phantom was shot down about seven miles southwest of Phuc Yen on 17 November 1967. Lt Colonel Ligon had received SAM warnings and was jinking *The Barrel Buster* at 15,000 feet to no avail. The SAM exploded near the aircraft and damaged its tail surfaces forcing the crew to eject a few moments later. Both men were captured and taken to the Hoa Lo camp. Unfortunately for Vern Ligon, capture and imprisonment were not new experiences. He joined the Army Air Corps in March of 1942 and flew P-47 Thunderbolts with the 362nd FG until he was shot down over Brussels on his 35th mission in November, 1943. He escaped from a German *Stalag* but was quickly recaptured and held until his release in May, 1945. His long and varied Air Force career included command of a SAC B-47 squadron. He was shot down on his 26th mission in his second war but the experiences of imprisonment in Germany could not prepare him for the horrors he had to face in the North Vietnamese prison camps. Lt Colonel Ligon and Captain Ford were released on 14 March 1973.

**Mission Load:** 2xAN/ALQ-87 ECM pods on the inboard pylons, 2x370-gallon fuel tanks on the outboard pylons.

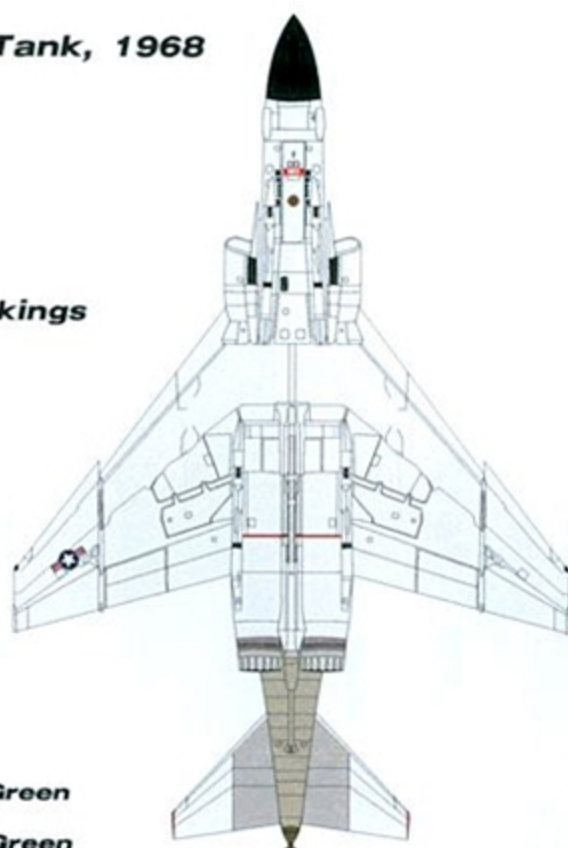
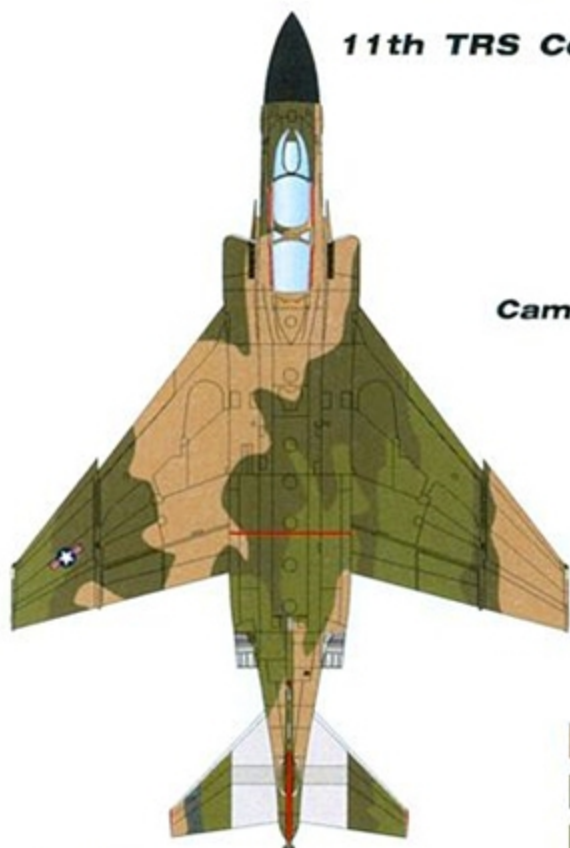


**THE BARREL BUSTER RF-4C-26-MC 65-880 11th TRS October, 1967**



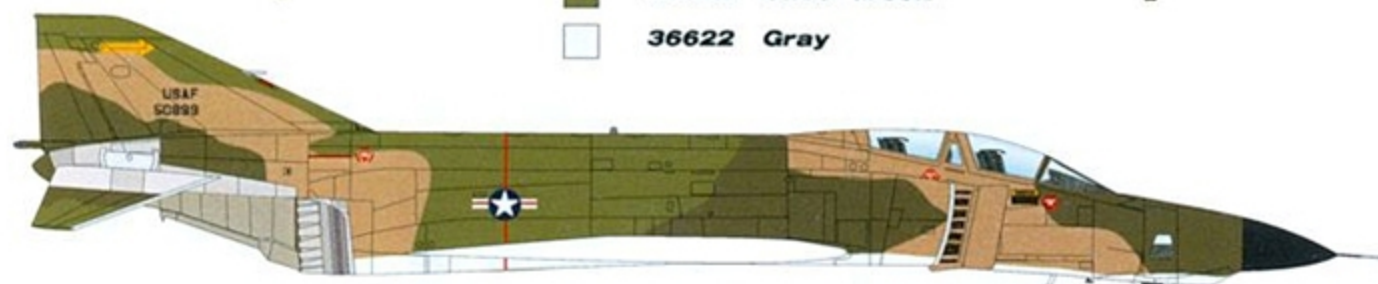
**11th TRS Centerline Fuel Tank, 1968**

**Standard F-4  
Plan View  
Camouflage and Markings**



**FS595A Colors**

- 30219 Tan**
- 34079 Dark Green**
- 34102 Olive Green**
- 36622 Gray**



**Standard F-4 Right Side Camouflage and Markings**

**References**

- F-4C/D/RF-4C Phantom II in detail & scale Part 1, D&S Vol. 43, by Bert Kinzey, 1994
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- McDonnell F-4D, by René Francillon, Aerofax Minigraph 4, 1985
- McDonnell F-4E Phantom II, by Tim McGovern, Aerofax Minigraph 20, 1987
- McDonnell RF-4 Variants, by Jay Miller, Aerofax Minigraph 13, 1984

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