



THE SKULL AND CROSSBONES SQUADRON, VF-17 in World War II. Cook. The unit history of one of the most successful top gun squadrons of their day. 152 Japanese aircraft destroyed in the air in only 76 days of combat, plus numbers of ships and troop barges destroyed. The unit had 13 Aces who took the Corsair into combat for the first time. 8 1/2" x 11", 240 pgs., over 350 photos, hdbd.....3771C \$45.00

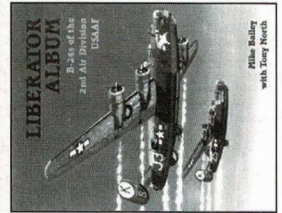
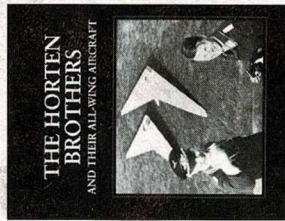
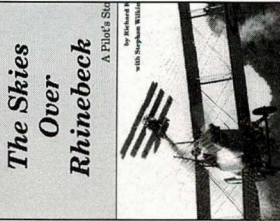
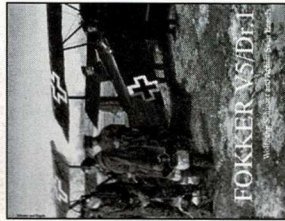
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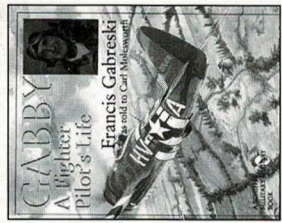
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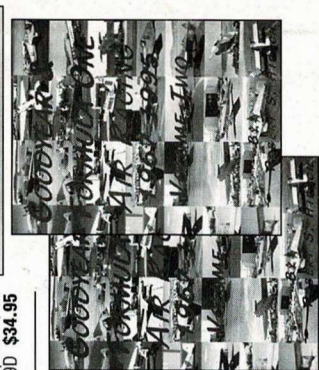
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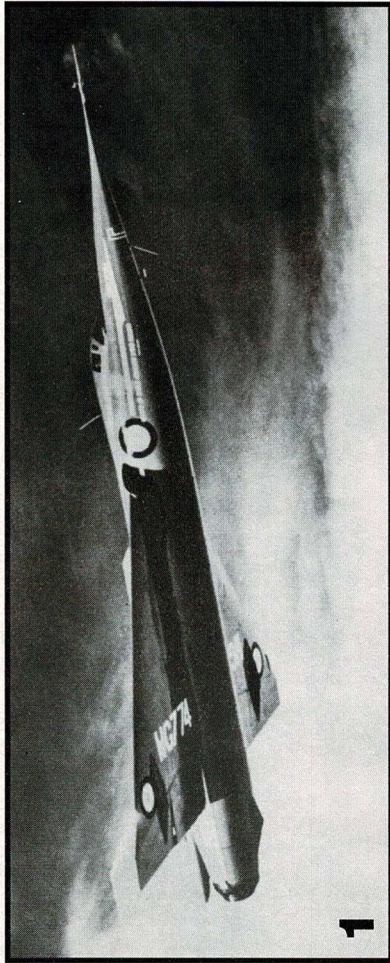
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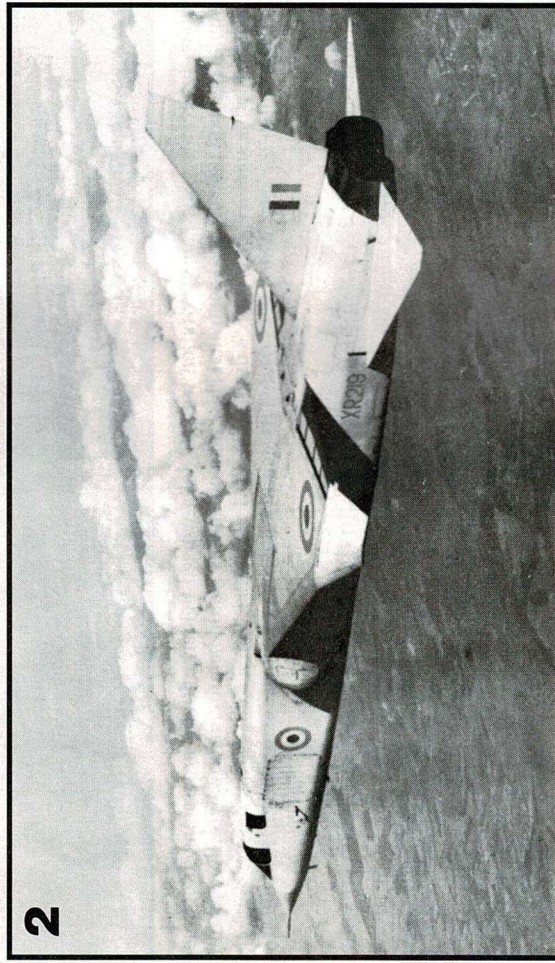
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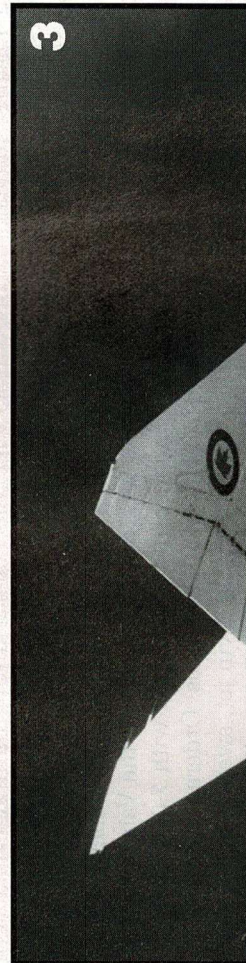


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1. Strangely enough, Fairey Aviation, which was destined never to achieve a production contract after the launch of its rather mundane antisubmarine Gannet turboprop - it went into service in 1955 - might have had the most exciting interceptor of its day, had not Great Britain decided to turn to the U.S. for its combat planes two years later. Their FD.2 shattered the World Speed record on March 10, 1956, at 1,132 mph. and was accelerating at the end of each run. It made its maiden flight with a Rolls-Royce Avon turbojet in October, 1954, and could have been put into production after further testing, but both the RAF and the British government were already committed to buying future aircraft from the U.S. Even Rolls-Royce did not cooperate with Fairey. The company had to sponsor and fund its record tries and was later forced to operate the FD.2 in France, to get around a new law which prohibited supersonic flights over England at altitudes above 30,000 ft. Even so, the FD.2 proved its reliability when, in the course of a single month it made 52 flights, one third of them supersonic, with a total duration of 18 hours. They were for naught, as government officials were still discounting the FD.2's records when the project languished for lack of funding.



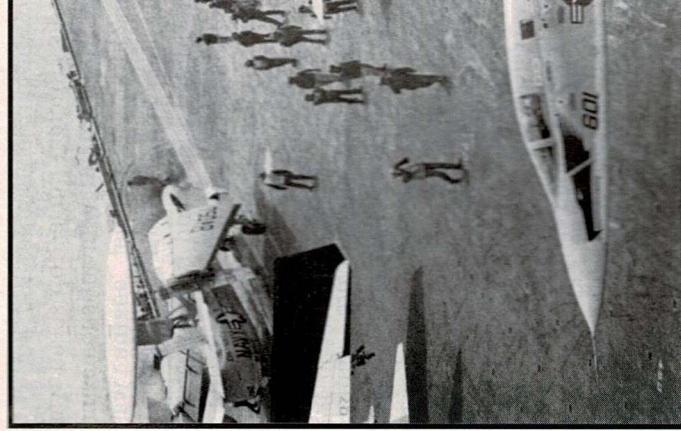
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3

2. English Electric, designers of the Canberra bomber, also suffered from foolhardy cost-cutting measures. Its TSR-2 tactical strike jet bomber might have been the most successful of the 1960s, but its designers were hampered by a government committee that nearly emasculated the aircraft. Programmed to operate at Mach 1 speeds at low level and Mach 2 at altitude, the TSR-2 would have had a range of 1,200 miles with a 2,000 lbs. bomb load on internal fuel only, but was also equipped to carry a variety of weapons. It had realistic short field performance, capable of operating from grass strips less than 3,000 ft. long. An advanced navigation/attack system unerringly located its targets and it was provided with a radar-computer flight control system. Designed for armed recon, it was to have been equipped with side-looking radar and was to serve both the RAF and the Navy. A contract for nine test aircraft was placed in October, 1960, and the first of the two-man crew TSR-2s was scheduled to fly early in 1963, eighteen months before the maiden flight of the similar General Dynamics F-111A, but escalating costs, delays and problems with the aircraft's Olympus engines cast shadows over the project. At this juncture, the Royal Navy decided to go with the much more pedestrian and cheaper Blackburn Buccaneer as its low level attack machine. The TSR-2 was now cancelled and the RAF would have to wait another dozen years until the advent of the Tornado to have its own attack aircraft.

3. British engineers and designers were not the only ones who were frustrated. In Canada, after building the finest of the F-86 Sabrejets under license and equipping it with a Canadian Orenda 8,250 lb. thrust Iroquois engine - see *Wings* October 1982, available in back issue - Avro of Canada proposed what might have been the finest delta-winged fighter of its day. The C-105 Arrow was a brilliant concept that was borne out in both its line and performance potential. Begun in 1953, it flew for the first time five years later, rolling out 28 months after metal was cut. With a maximum weight of 62,000 lbs., the giant interceptor demonstrated a sustained speed of 1,540 mph. and a service ceiling of 68,000 ft. This at a time when the USAF was operating the transonic F-100 and Lockheed's early F-104As were being grounded for persistent problems. The



4 & 5. In the same size category as the Arrow, the A-5 Vigilante was the largest attack bomber operations and not only revealed how versatile were, but how willing the U.S. government was to ideas, an advantage not always given to air countries. The swept back high wing drove the to speeds approaching 1,400 mph. A linear length of the fuselage, between the G.E. Y179 5 - allowed bombs to be ejected to the rear; a design feature placed a pair of fuel tanks above. When the fuel from these was exhausted they with the weapon, providing aerodynamic stability. The first A-5s reached the fleet in June. full story of the Vigilante see January 1981 *A* and April 1985 *Wings*, available in back issue.

the *Resistance*, where he took the ne later captured and imprisoned at Bu tion camp, but managed to survive. I tion industry after the end of Ger helped design his own homegrown e illand Vampire which the French w and build under license. In February of the Dassault MD 450 Ouragon, on maiden flight and France was firmly c.