



# Fist of the Fleet Association

a non profit 501 (c) (19) military organization

## NEWSLETTER

January 2020

Preserving the Past Providing for Today

Promoting the Future

### WINTER EDITION

By: Jerry "Ricochet" Fritze

Way back on Fri, Jan 30 1976 *USS Ranger CV-61*, with VA-25 aboard as part of CAG TWO, departed Naval Air Station North Island in San Diego Bay for the first post-Vietnam War cruise. We would return on Sept 7, after a cruise of 226 days. *USS Lincoln CVN-72* and its embarked Carrier Air Wing 7 deployed on Apr 1 2019 from Norfolk, Va., for a planned seven-month deployment. However, shortly after leaving the East Coast, *Lincoln* was sent to the Middle East as tensions with Iran rose. While operating in a tight box in the North Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman, *Lincoln* served to deter Iran at the same time the strike group was also supporting ongoing combat operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. All told, *Lincoln* spent more than 222 days operating in the U.S. Central Command region. The ship and her crew arrived at their new San Diego, California homeport this Jan 20 having spent more time deployed than any carrier since the mid-1970s – 295 days.

There were good days for us way back when, as well as bad ones, including the inevitable working parties. Because I was TAD to AIMD I was put to work painting the heads, hand-stacking supplies in the reefers during UNREPs, and hanger deck and flight deck watches. Even to this day I think I pulled more than my fair share of these duties. To relieve the kind of mind-numbing boredom that can drive you absolutely bat-shit there were movie nights in Hanger Bay One (My Name is Trinity, Phase IV and other low-budget junk) a boxing contest, an amateur band contest, or rack-time with cheesy novels. I managed to read the entire Mack Bolan *Executioner* series that year. Or, you could blow your brain cells apart watching *Star Trek* over and over and over on KRAN-TV. Eventually though, three things happened: I picked up guitar-playing again, I became one of the best Spades players on the whole damn boat, and I began to write. Over 400 poems and songs later I am still writing and playing, and last October I gave a Command Performance at my niece's wedding in Santa Cruz, Ca. The point is in the following question: *What did you bring home from the cruise?* Trinkets? Knick-Knacks? Yeah, so did I. But out there on the trackless seas I found something else, something beyond the bonds of the fellowship of the sea; and far beyond anything I could have imagined at the time. I found me, and I wasn't even looking. I knew I had changed even though I didn't know how much; it would be years before I would begin to understand that. But I began to realize early on that my time at sea in the United State Navy, on board an aircraft carrier with 5,000 people, most of whom I would *never* know, would follow me for the rest of my life, and would in many cases dictate how I would act and react to life's events. Every day I get up and look forward, and then immediately look behind, not forgetting *for one moment* those 226 days that forever changed my life. On Sept 7 I was handed back to the squadron and put on a final working party off-loading the boat. My parents were waiting for me but I couldn't tell them it would be sometime before I was done and ready. They'd just have to wait. As I stood there chucking yellow gear from the rolling ramps into a truck I took a long look at *Ranger*, bow to stern. Well, I may or may not be a man, I thought, but I sure as hell am no longer a *boy*.

(FROM LEFT) AEAN G.F.Fritze, AQ3 S.S.Terrill, AEC W.P.Waldroup-Shop Chief, AQ2 D.L.Headley and AQ3 R.S.Demientieff.



See you in September!

~Ricochet~

#### Mission Statement

Perpetuate the history of Naval Aviation Squadrons VT-17, VA-6B, VA-65, VA-25 and VFA-25,

Remember deceased veterans and comfort their survivors,

Conduct charitable and educational programs,

Foster and participate in activities of patriotic nature,

Assist current active squadron members, and

Provide assistance to family members in times of emergency.

[www.fistofthefleet.org](http://www.fistofthefleet.org)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's definitely winter and the snow in Park City is excellent for the winter sports. But I have much more to report than the weather and ski conditions. Plans are moving forward for our reunion, "**Fist 2020**". As scheduled, we are coordinating the reunion with Tailhook '20 at the Nugget Hotel and Casino in Reno, NV beginning **Thursday, September 10 through Sunday, September 13**. We have reserved a block of 40 rooms at the discounted rate of \$120 per night plus tax and the hotel is waiving the normal resort fee. We'll provide a special reservation code for you to use in the coming days. The hotel recently completed a major renovation of all the rooms, plus the casino and restaurants. Our schedule will include a banquet, probably on Thursday night with special recognition for certain members of the squadron who have just returned from their deployment. And we are working hard to keep the cost of this reunion as low as possible to encourage enlisted personnel to attend. If Tailhook doesn't satisfy your aviation appetite, you can extend your stay for the Reno Air Races which run from September 16-20.

And here's another important update. **The Fist Association Directory is now available online** through our website. It is password protected for members' privacy. We will be distributing the password by email or postcard in the near future, and we'll include reunion information on the postcard for those members who decline to use email. You can also use the postcard to update your directory information or advise us of changes by email. Please let us know if you wish all or part of your contact information to be excluded from the directory.

Finally, here's my version of stump the band for you aviation trivia experts.

The easy questions.

- 1.) The letters DC in DC-3, DC-10 and so forth stand for?  
a. Douglas Civilian b. Douglas Commercial c. Douglas Company d. Douglas Corporation
- 2.) This man was born a Ukrainian peasant in 1895 and became a wealthy American by inventing and manufacturing a "quarter-turn-to-lock" fastener found on most airplanes. His name was William \_\_\_\_\_?  
a. Dzeus b. Dzus c. Zeus d. Zuse

And now for a really tough question.

- 3.) Estimate within 5,000 feet the absolute ceiling of the highest flying birds.

And the answers are:

- 1.) b, therefore the DC-3 is the Douglas Commercial model number 3.
- 2.) b, the Dzus fastener is the most effective way to join non-structural panels so as to allow quick assembly and disassembly.
- 3.) While swans have been observed as high as 29,000 ft., the highest flying bird appears to be the Ruppell's Vulture, one of which collided with a Boeing jetliner over the Ivory Coast in Africa at Flight Level 410.

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Carry on,  
Chalks

### Blue Angels Tour Dates



Mar 14 NAF El Centro Annual Air Show      Mar 21/22 LA County Air Show Lancaster CA  
Mar 8/29 MacDill Air Fest FL

Apr 4/5 NAS Kingsville TX      Apr 18/19 JB Charleston Air and Space Expo SC  
25/26 Vero Beach Air Show FL

May 2/3 MCAS Cherry Point      Jun 9/10 Dyess Big Country AirFest TX  
16/17 McGuire AFB, NJ      20 UN Naval Academy Air Show Annapolis  
23/24 Jones Beach Air Show NY

## **SKIPPER'S CORNER**

**WE ARE HOME!** The Fist of the Fleet returned home to our loved ones Saturday January 18, and Monday January 20 following nearly 10 months away in the Mediterranean, Middle East, and South China Sea on an around the world tour. Setting the record for a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier deployment, the Fist of the Fleet served honorably under extraordinary circumstances to send a clear message of strength and deterrence to Iran, Russia, and China. The 294-day deployment, the longest since 1973, eclipsed the previous record of 290 days also set by the USS Abraham Lincoln in 2003 at the initial stages of the Iraq War.

The emotional reunion with our families brought tears of joy as all of us reintegrate back into back into our personal lives and normal society. I held command quarters on Friday afternoon, January 24, and declared "deployment officially over." All our Sailors had returned home safely from San Diego, and as I write this half the squadron should be enjoying much needed time off on post-deployment leave. I personally thanked all of them for a job well done as the Fist of the Fleet undeniably achieved mission success.

With the squadron back home in Lemoore, our ten mighty F/A-18Es that have been carrying the load for the last ten months will undergo some much needed maintenance as we prepare for our post-deployment material condition inspection. The pilots look forward to upgrading aircraft capabilities and tactics as we return to choosing our own training path. Operations department plan is for possible detachments for training opportunities.

Fist of the Fleet Association, you can be justifiably proud of how the current Fist of the Fleet Sailors have continued your legacy. And with that I can finally say CHEERS! Time to go enjoy a cold one to celebrate the magnificent job this team has accomplished!

CDR David Dartez

VFA-25 Commanding Officer



## **FROM THE COCKPIT:** By: LT Chris "Meathole" Honeycutt

Even though we were not home for the holidays this year, seeing the USS Truman enter the AOR to relieve us was a much welcomed "present." As we began transiting East towards home, the "no fly" transit days became longer and the anticipation of seeing our loved ones grew. We passed the time with card games, roll-ems and the cleansing of the many unworthy wogs roaming the ship. Mustaches began disappearing and ready room decorations started coming down. All signs that our return to home port was inching closer! Fly days were few and far between but when we had the opportunity to go bend the jets around, we were all chomping at the bit to slip the bonds of CVN 72. LT Gerald "Soul Patch" Anderson and LT Wes "Trash Blaster" Perkins put on a great show during the Air Power Demo and maintenance control worked around the clock to ensure all ten of our war chariots were prepared to fly off.

It was a team effort from start to finish and the Fist of the Fleet sustained the highest level of performance over the course of our record setting ten month deployment. A record that none of us had aspiration of setting, but one that we can hang our hats on and feel incredibly proud to be a part of. At one point underway we were on the exact opposite side of the globe but I never felt that far away from home thanks to the Fist Family and all the love and support from the home front. We thank you all for unwavering commitment to our mission and we look forward to the memories we will make together in the months ahead. Damn Proud to be a Fist!



## FROM THE HANGER DECK:

It is the first month of the New Year, and the Fists are finally coming home after a record setting 10-month combat deployment. 2019 was a challenging, yet rewarding year. The Fist of the Fleet continued to excel on deployment despite the many canceled port calls, deployment extensions, and the heart break of missing the holidays. Our families at home held the front line for us through all the heartbreaks, missed phone calls, and time away.

Though it was challenging, it wasn't all doom and gloom as three of our six total port visits provided excellent opportunities to explore parts of the world that many members of our squadron had never seen. First, we pulled into Palma, Spain which is a beautiful location with a very rich culture. We also pulled in Manama, Bahrain where Sailors thoroughly enjoyed their liberty while taking time to replenish much needed supplies at the Navy Exchange. Lastly, we pulled in Honolulu, Hawaii and reveled in the fact that we were finally on U.S. soil for the first time in over 280 days!

It has truly been my privilege to sail and work alongside this group of exceptional Sailors. During this previous year I have witnessed Fist Sailors of all paygrades work together in a cohesive team to ensure the squadron succeeded. Despite being the most undermanned squadron on board, we outperformed our counter parts and set the standard across the entire air wing. We are now a closer unit than we were ten months ago, and are ready to tackle all that 2020 has to offer.

Unfortunately, my time with the Fist of the Fleet grows short as I will transfer to CVW 11 to assume duties as CAG CMC in March. I will truly miss each member of this team, but I will always count myself as a member of the Fist Family. WHO YOU WITH? TWO FIVE!!!!

CMDCM(AW/SW) Jeremiah J. Holler  
Command Master Chief  
VFA-25 Fist of the Fleet



USS Lincoln CVN-72: Arriving

### Have you paid your 2020 Dues?

Annual Dues: \$25/YR

Life Time Dues \$200

Mail dues to Financial Officer:

Chuck Webster 2441 Lock B Road North Clarksville TN 37043

### Only Voting Members have access to the Directory

Become a Voting Member!

Visit the Base Exchange at

[www.fistofthefleet.org](http://www.fistofthefleet.org)

## \$\$\$\$ FIST OF THE FLEET ASSOCIATION FINANCIAL NEWS \$\$\$\$

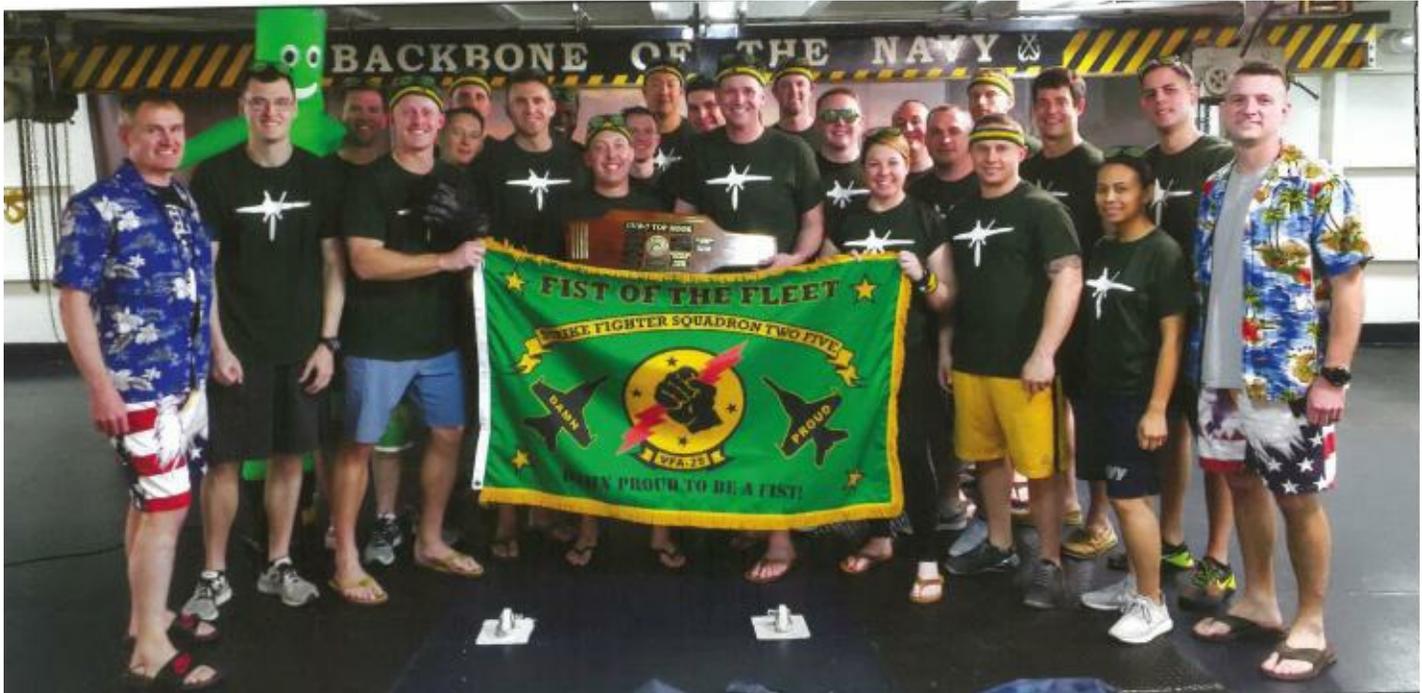
The financial health of the Association is still on solid ground. As of 31 December 2019, the Association has a balance of \$13,159.49 in savings and \$8,029.98 in checking with the Navy Federal Credit Union for a total of \$21,189.47. One of the main indicators of the Association's financial health and stability is the continued growth of its dues paying annual members and new life members. This number increased during the early months of 2019 with annual members Gunner Mills, Laurence Woodbury, Craig Bechtel, Thomas Mundrake, and Stuart Bugg paying their annual dues and a new Life Member being Erin Daymon.

During the twelve months of 2019 the educational committee received only three requests for Educational Grants from the squadron, but we must remember that the squadron was deployed for 291 days during the year. The Association paid Education Grants totaling \$456.25 to three different squadron personnel. The Association also paid the Ltjg Harry Jones Award to Lt. Gerald Anderson for \$500.00. We presented checks for \$500.00 to the 2018 VFA-25 Sailor of the Year, AE1 Erin K Daymon, and the 2019 Sailor of the Year AZ1 (AW) Tyler L. Newell. These awards also include a Life Membership.

The only other expense we had this year was a \$1100.00 donation to the 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Gulf of Tonkin Incident held at NAS Lemoore. After the event, the NAS Lemoore ANA unit gave us a gift of \$500.00 to help offset the gift we gave. I'm happy to report that the Association received unrestricted donations of \$800.00 and \$300.00 ear marked for the educational fund from members and friends of the Association.  
Chuck "Pooh" Webster

## DID YOU KNOW: NAVY, MILITARY AND OTHER INFORMATION

The squadron won the CVW-7 Top Hook Award for excellence in carrier landings during the TSTA/COMPTUEX line period and again for the first and second line periods of cruise.



## **GREEN TAILS OVER 'NAM: OPERATION LINEBACKER II - AIR DEFENSES PART 2: FAN SONG**

The Fan Song is the engagement radar for the S-75/SA-2 family of SAMs. First deployed in strength during the Vietnam conflict, and later used extensively in the Middle East and Africa, the SA-2 was the first Soviet SAM to be used in anger and accounted for large numbers of Western aircraft until electronic countermeasures were developed. The system was cloned by PLA and still remains widely in use, even though Russia has replaced it with the SA-10/20 system. There are at least six known variants, one of which is a PLA clone. Details of PLA modifications to the design are not public knowledge. There are sufficient differences in the PLA designs to regard these as unique derivatives. The antenna configuration of the PLA variants generally follow the Fan Song A arrangement.

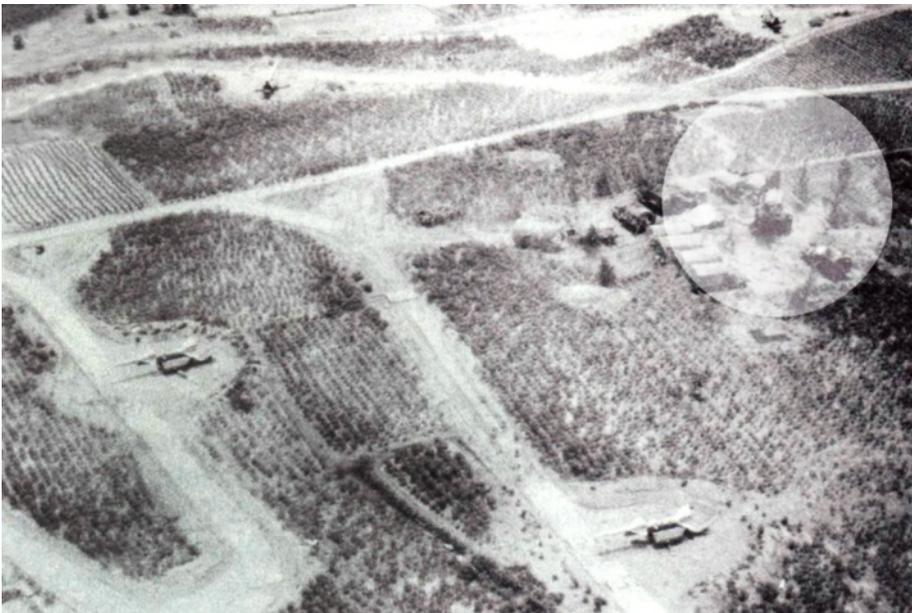
The SNR-75 family of radars employ, by modern standards, a complex antenna arrangement which is employed to effect range and angle tracking of the intended target, and of the transponder beacon in the tail of the missile round. The proximity fused missile round is “dumb” in the sense that it is a pure command link design, which is flown to a collision with the target using a command uplink embedded in the SNR-75 radar. A characteristic feature of the Fan Songs is the use of fixed trough antennas, which in “narrow beam” configuration each produce a flapping fan shaped beam, one in the horizontal plane and one in the vertical plane, used for angle tracking. While usually described as “Lewis Scanners”, as like the Lewis Scanner they employ a rotating feed to effect beam steering, the internal design is uniquely Russian and termed a “Metal Air Lens”. It employs a folded internal path, with the 7.5° x 1.1° degree fan shaped mainlobe steered through a 16° arc; earlier variants of the Fan Song producing a 10.0° x 1.1° degree mainlobe steered through a 20° arc. The angular velocity of the rotating feed produces a 54 millisecond sweep cycle duration.

In the late model Fan Song E, the radar used a pair of roof mounted narrow beam parabolic antennas to transmit, and the trough antennas to transmit and receive, the latter intended Scan On Receive Only (SORO) regime developed as an Electronic Counter-Counter Measure against angle jamming techniques. As the trough antennas are fixed in polarisation, separate transmit antennas were employed, with mutually orthogonal polarisations, one used for the elevation or  $\epsilon$ -channel, and one for the azimuth or  $\beta$ -channel. The complete antenna head can be steered in azimuth by rotating the cabin on the rotary mount, while the antenna head can be tilted in elevation using mountings on the roof of the cabin. The antennas were employed in specific regimes of operation, depending on the operating mode of the Fan Song.

Search Mode is employed to acquire targets for engagements, and the Fan Song crew is cued to the target by an acquisition radar such as a P-12 Spoon Rest, usually supported by a nodding heightfinder. In search mode, the P-11 and P-12 trough antennas are locked into a “wide beam” configuration with a 7.5° x 16° mainlobe section, the intent being to maximise detection volume while accepting poor angular accuracy. Transmissions are at a low PRF of 828-1,440 Hz, and the pulse duration is extended to maximise pulse energy. Once the target has been acquired, the Fan Song will switch into one of several tracking modes. In these modes the radar emits through the paired P-13 and P-14 parabolic antennas, each of which transmits a linearly polarised but mutually orthogonal signal. Transmissions are in a high PRF regime, typically at 1,656-2,880 Hz, with a shorter pulse duration.

In RS or Manual Track mode the operator uses either the radar scope or the external TV telescope (analogue vidicon tube) to manually track the target. This is the fallback operating mode under severe countermeasures conditions when the automatic mode cannot maintain lock. In AS or Automatic Track mode the P-11 and P-12 trough antennas are configured in narrow beam mode and employed to produce the well known flapping scan beams to generate target angle track outputs in azimuth and elevation, respectively. This is a SORO mode as the jammer cannot know the scan cycle produced by the internal rotating antenna feed. A third automatic mode, termed ASAP mode, is also employed and uses automatic track and antenna steering.

Once the command link guided missile has been launched, its position must be tracked, and steering commands must be sent to the missile. The circular polarised P-15 antenna is used to transmit the pulse modulation K1, K2, K3 and K4 uplink signals to the missile. The missile transponder beacon is tracked in range and angle using the P-11 and P-12 trough antennas.



## GREEN TAILS OVER 'NAM: OPERATION LINEBACKER II - AIR DEFENSES PART 2: SA-2

The **S-75 (NATO SA-2 Guideline)** is a Soviet-designed, high-altitude air defense system, built around a surface-to-air missile with command guidance. Following its first deployment in 1957 it became one of the most widely deployed air defense systems in history. It scored the first destruction of an enemy aircraft by a surface-to-air missile, with the shooting down of a Taiwanese Martin RB-57D Canberra over China on 7 Oct '59 that was hit by a salvo of three V-750 missiles at an altitude of 65,600 ft. This success was credited to Chinese fighter aircraft at the time in order to keep the S-75 program secret.

This system first gained international fame when an S-75 battery, using the newer, longer-range and higher-altitude V-750VN missile was deployed in the 1960 U-2 incident, when it shot down the U-2 of Francis Gary Powers overflying the Soviet Union on 1 May '60. The system was also deployed in Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis, when it shot down another U-2 (piloted by Rudolf Anderson) overflying Cuba on Oct 27 '62, almost precipitating a nuclear war. North Vietnamese forces used the S-75 extensively during the Vietnam War to defend Hanoi and Haiphong. It has also been locally produced in the People's Republic of China under the names HQ-1 and HQ-2.

**Layout:** Each battalion will typically have six, semi-fixed, single-rail launchers for their V-750 missiles positioned approximately 200 to 330 ft. apart from each other in a hexagonal "flower" pattern, with radars and guidance systems placed in the center. It was this unique "flower" shape that led to the sites being easily recognizable in reconnaissance photos. Typically another six missiles are stored on tractor-trailers near the center of the site.

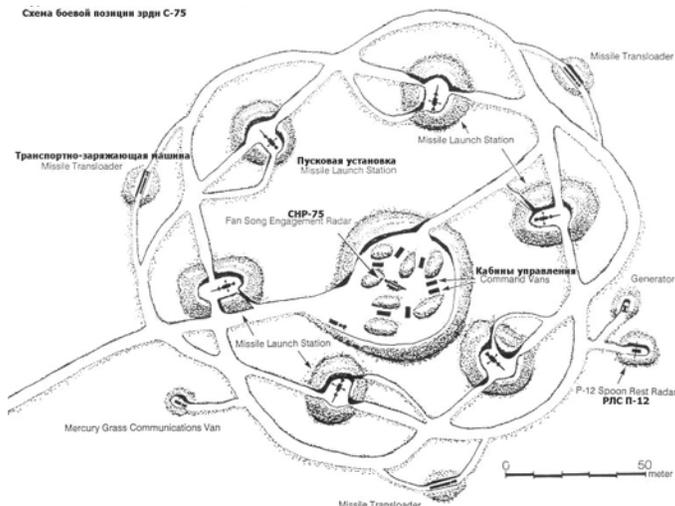
**Missile:** The V-750 is a two-stage missile consisting of a solid-fuel booster and a storable liquid-fuel upper stage, which burns red fuming nitric acid as the oxidizer and kerosene as the fuel. The booster fires for about 4–5 seconds and the main engine for about 22 seconds, by which time the missile is traveling at about Mach 3. The booster mounts four large, cropped-delta wing fins that have small control surfaces in their trailing edges to control roll. The upper stage has smaller cropped-deltas near the middle of the airframe, with a smaller set of control surfaces at the extreme rear and (in most models) much smaller fins on the nose.

The missiles are guided using radio control signals (sent on one of three channels) from the guidance computers at the site. The earlier S-75 models received their commands via two sets of four small antennas in front of the forward fins while the D model and later models used four much larger strip antennas running between the forward and middle fins. The guidance system at an S-75 site can handle only one target at a time, but it can direct three missiles against it. Additional missiles could be fired against the same target after one or more missiles of the first salvo had completed their run, freeing the radio channel.

The missile typically mounts a 430 lb. fragmentation warhead, with proximity, contact, and command fusing. The warhead has a lethal radius of about 213 ft. at lower altitudes, but at higher altitudes the thinner atmosphere allows for a wider radius of up to 820 ft. The missile itself is accurate to about 246 ft., which explains why two were typically fired in a salvo. One version, the SA-2E, mounted a 650 lb. nuclear warhead of an estimated 15 kiloton yield or a conventional warhead of similar weight.

Typical range for the missile is about 28 mi, with a maximum altitude around 66,000 ft. The radar and guidance system imposed a fairly long short-range cutoff of about 1,600 to 3,300 ft., making them fairly safe for engagements at low level.

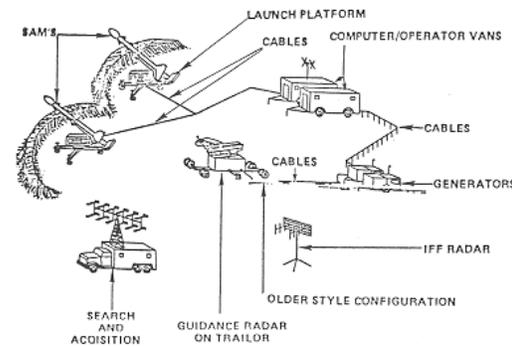
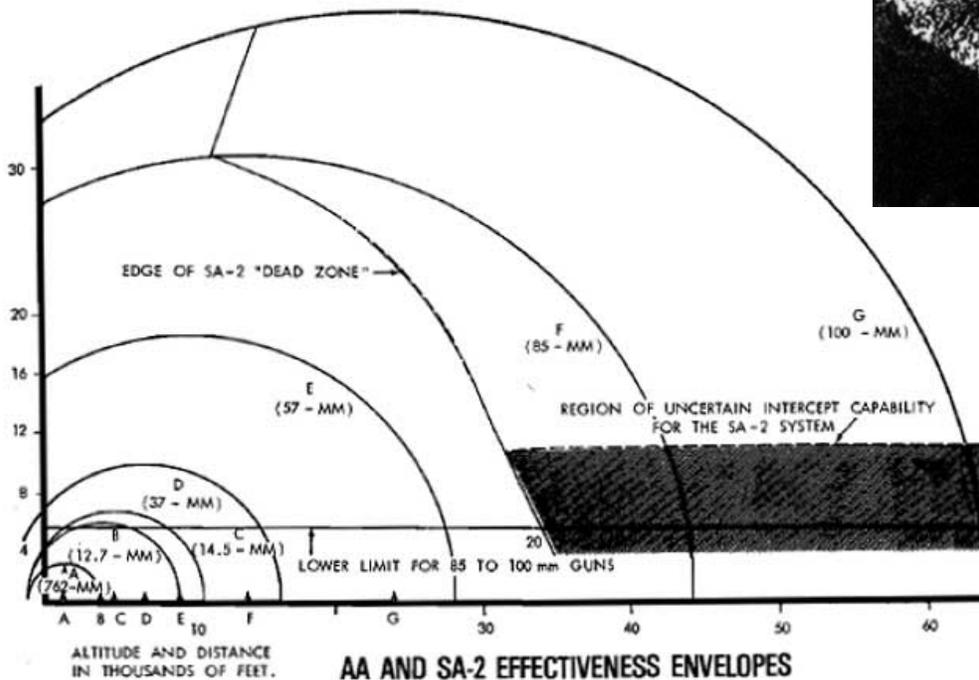
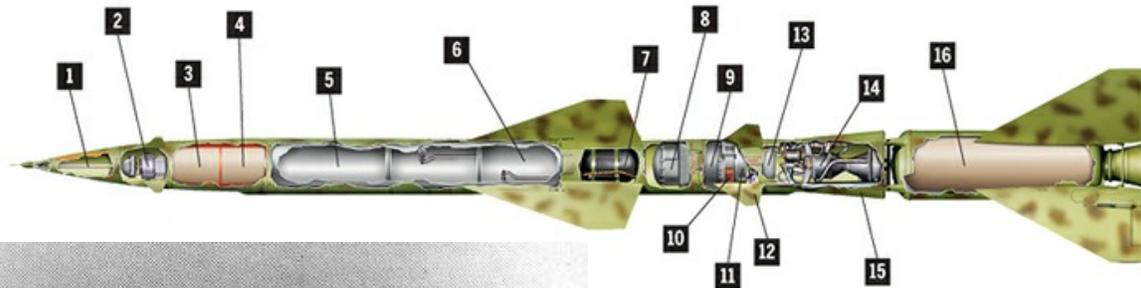
The S-75 typically uses the P-12 early warning radar (NATO: "Spoon Rest"), which has a range of about 171 mi. The P-12 provides early detection of incoming aircraft, which are then handed off to the acquisition Fan Song radar. These radars, having a range of about 40 mi, are used to refine the location, altitude, and speed of the hostile aircraft. The Fan Song system consists of two antennas operating on different frequencies: one providing elevation information and the other azimuth information. Regimental headquarters also include a Spoon Rest, as well as a Flat Face long-range C-band radar and Side Net height-finder. Information from these radars is sent from the regiment down to the battalion Spoon Rest operators to allow them to coordinate their searches. Earlier S-75 versions used targeting radar known as Knife Rest, which was replaced in Soviet use, but can still be found in older installations



Spoon Rest Radar

# SA-2 GUIDELINE/S-75 DVINA

- |  |                                 |  |
|--|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Radio proximity fuze transmit antenna     | 5. AK-20F oxidizer mélange tank | 12. Cruciform controls   |
| 2. FR-15 Shmel radio proximity fuze          | 6. TG-02 propellant tank        | 13. OT-155 Isonate turbopump gas-generator propellant tank     |
| 3. V-88 high-explosive fragmentation warhead | 7. Compressed air tank          | 14. Isayev S2.711V rocket engine                               |
| 4. Radio proximity fuze receive antenna      | 8. AP-75 autopilot module       | 15. Adapter fairing  |
|  | 9. FR-15Yu command link module  | 16. PRD-18 boost power plant with 14 tubes of NMF-2 propellant |
|  | 10. Battery                     |  |
|  | 11. Transducer                  |  |



## NEXT TIME IN FISTORY: GREEN TAILS OVER 'NAM THE 12-DAY WAR