

## Sea Control Squadron THIRTY SEVEN [VS-37]

**"Boomerangers"/"Roostertails"/"Sawbucks"**



Sea Control Squadron THIRTY SEVEN was established as VS-871, a Reserve Squadron, to active duty on 01 July 1951. It was re-designated as VS-37 on 24 June 1953, and disestablished on 01 March 1995 at NAS North Island, CA.

[VS-37](#) was established in 1946 at [NAS Oakland, California](#), as reserve Attack Squadron (VA) 76E.

In 1948, the squadron was re-designated Composite Squadron (VC) 871

In 1949 was re-designated Air Antisubmarine Squadron (VS) 871.

On 1 May 1951, the squadron was called to active duty in the Korean War and based at [NAS Los Alamitos, California](#), with TBM-3S/3W Avengers. The squadron deployed to the Korean War Zone in October 1952 on board Bataan (CVL 29), returning in February 1953 aboard Badoeng Strait (CVE 116).

On 24 June 1953, VS-871 was re-designated [VS-37](#) and during the next month was equipped with the AF-2S/2W Guardian (where the distinctive Rooster Tail / Tail Flash horizontal stabilizer markings were first utilized ) , moving the following year to [NAS North Island, San Diego, California](#).

[VS-37](#) made one deployment to the western Pacific (WESTPAC) on board Princeton(CVS 37) in 1954-1955, helping cover the evacuation of Nationalist Chinese forces from Tachen Island. Upon return, [VS-37](#) switched to the S2F-1 Tracker twin engine anti-submarine aircraft. Later that year, the S2F-2 arrived providing a larger Torpedo Bay and more capacity for Sonobuoys. All S2F-2s were painted midnight blue.

In October, 1956, under the command of CDR Neil S. Weary, VS 37 boarded the USS Philippine Sea, CVS 47, for Carrier Qualifications. Two weeks out, COMSINCPAC in response to the Suez crisis, ordered the Philippine Sea, CVS 47, with VS-37 and HS-2 aboard, to make an emergency deployment to Hawaiian waters, where the order of the day was to find, identify and track all unidentified Submarines in the area. For eight weeks, the task force cruised Hawaiian waters tracking suspected Russian Submarines. As the crisis cooled down, the ship and crew returned to San Diego for replenishment and to load all VS-37 Personnel and equipment.

On January 6, 1957, The USS Philippine Sea, CVS 47, with VS-37 and HS-2 aboard, once again departed for Hawaiian waters. The Squadron completed carrier qualifications and in March, 1957,

departed for Japan. During the stay in the Far East, the Squadron visited several ports which included Yokosuka, Sasebo, Osaka/Kobe and Okinawa. A visit was also made to Hong Kong. On two occasions, the Squadron off loaded to operate from NAF Atsugi during their stay in Japan.

On August 6, 1957, VS-37 returned to San Diego where men and equipment were off loaded. Immediately following the return, the Squadron was transferred to NAS Los Alamitos.

In 1958, the Squadron made another WESTPAC cruise aboard the USS Yorktown, CVS 10.

In May 1960, with S2F-1/1S aircraft, [VS-37](#) began a long association with Hornet (CVS 12), making six deployments to WESTPAC through 1969. After the first, the squadron was split in half, forming VS-35 as a sister squadron, and in 1961 moved back to [NAS North Island, San Diego, California](#), becoming the Navy's first West Coast squadron to receive the S2F-3 version. [VS-37](#) made two cruises with S2F-3 (S-2D) versions and three Vietnam War cruises with S-2E versions during which the squadron flew patrol and gunfire spotting missions off the coast of Vietnam.

In May, 1971 VS 37 deployed aboard the USS Bennington, CVS 20, as part of Carrier Anti-Submarine Group 59, returning home in November of the same year.

In August 1976 the Navy's last S-2 Tracker aircraft, operating with VS-37, was withdrawn from active service. Many of the pilots who flew the Tracker credit it with being the Navy's most versatile airplane of its era. The S-2 first entered service with VS-26 in February 1954 and provided the Navy with 22 years of active service.

In October of 1992, Captain J.P. Kelly reported to Sea Control Squadron 37 (VS-37) as the Executive Officer and assumed command in January 1994 making two deployments aboard USS KITTY HAWK (CV-63). During his command tour, VS-37 earned the 1994 COMNAVAIRPAC Battle "E", the Admiral Jimmy Thatch and Arnold J. Isabel awards for ASW excellence, the "Golden Wrench" award for superior squadron maintenance and "Top Hook" honors in CVW-15.

#### Deployment Summary

Depart Date	Return Date	Aircraft Type	Carrier	Tail Designation
28 Oct 1952	26 May 1953	TBM-2 S/W	CVE 116	SU-XX
1954	1955	AF-2 S/W	CVS 37 USS Princeton	SU-XX
12 Oct 1956	Aug 6, 1957	S2F-1/2	CVS 47 USS Philippine Sea	SU-XX
1958	1959	S2F-1/2	CVS 10 USS Yorktown	SU-XX
Jul 1960	1961	S2F-1/2	CVS 12 USS Hornet	SU-XX
Jul 1962		S2f-3	CVS 12 USS Hornet	NV-3X
10 Oct 1963	15 Apr 1964	S-2D	CVS 12 USS Hornet	NV-3X
12 Aug 1965	23 Mar 1966	S-2E	CVS 12 USS Hornet	NV-3X
27 Mar 1967	28 Oct 1967	S-2E	CVS 12 USS Hornet	NV-3X
30 Sep 1968	12 May 1969	S-2E	CVS 12 USS Hornet	NV-20X
May 1971	Nov 1971	S-2E	CVS 20 USS Bennington	NT-21X
23 Nov 1973	9 Jul 1974	S-2G	CV 63 USS Kitty Hawk	NH-70X
1 May 1975	15 Dec 1975	S-2G	CV 63 USS Kitty Hawk	NH-70X
26 Sep 1978	17 May 1979	S-3A	CV 64 USS Constellation	NG-7XX
10 Sep 1980	5 May 1981	S-3A	CV 61 USS Ranger	NE-7XX
1 Sep 1982	28 Apr 1983	S-3A	CVN 65 USS Enterprise	NH-7XX
20 Feb 1985	24 Aug 1985	S-3A	CV 64 USS Constellation	NK-7XX
4 Sep 1986	20 Oct 1986	S-3A	CV 64 USS Constellation	NK-7XX
11 Apr 1987	13 Oct 1987	S-3A	CV 64 USS Constellation	NK-7XX
1 Dec 1988	1 Jun 1989	S-3A	CV 64 USS Constellation	NK-7XX
16 Sep 1989	19 Oct 1989	S-3A	CV 64 USS Constellation	NK-7XX

23 Jun 1990	20 Dec 1990	S-3A	CV 62 USS Independence	NK-7XX
1 Apr 1991	11 Dec 1991	S-3A	CV 63 USS Kitty Hawk	NL-7XX
3 Nov 1992	3 May 1993	S-3B	CV 63 USS Kitty Hawk	NL-7XX
24 Jun 1994	22 Dec 1994	S-3B	CV 63 USS Kitty Hawk	NL-7XX