

Our Navy

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The Sky's the Limit

*Pertinent Paragraphs
on Naval Aviation*



By C. M. Hatcher

IF THE Japs have a word for "duck," they're probably using it plenty these days when they see the new TIGER-CATS, that twin-engined fighter recently thrown into action in the Pacific. Termed the F7F in Navy parlance, the latest Grumman battler to be given public recognition is one of those versatile designer's dreams which can lug bombs, toss rockets, intercept, cover bombers on long range mission, fly night hawk expeditions and do everything else but have a baby for you . . . which is about all they haven't been asked to do.

This fine new fighter-bomber isn't the last Grumman to delight Navy pilots and give Marines a lift, but it's the latest one we can talk about for a time. For the next several months TIGERCAT production will go to Marine squadrons. From advance bases altogether too close to Tokyo to make Dai Nippon happy these big shark-nosed jobs will be able to comb out all the reluctant dragons as well as the "eager-beavers" among the Sons-of-B—er, Heaven.

In line with recent tendencies toward heavier and heavier planes, a tendency which may be sharply reverse in new models now that jet propulsion and other ideas are having their innings, the TIGERCAT is big as well as rugged. Its powerful 2100 HP Pratt and Whitney 2800 "C" Double Wasp engines hurtle it through the air at a speed which the always conservative Navy press releases say is "in the 425 miles per hour class at critical altitudes."

Want to climb with the F7F? Better be prepared to make better than a mile-a-minute straight towards the azure, then. The Hamilton Standard props can be goosed up for that always desirable extra "oomph" with the use of the now familiar water-injection feature in the engine plant.

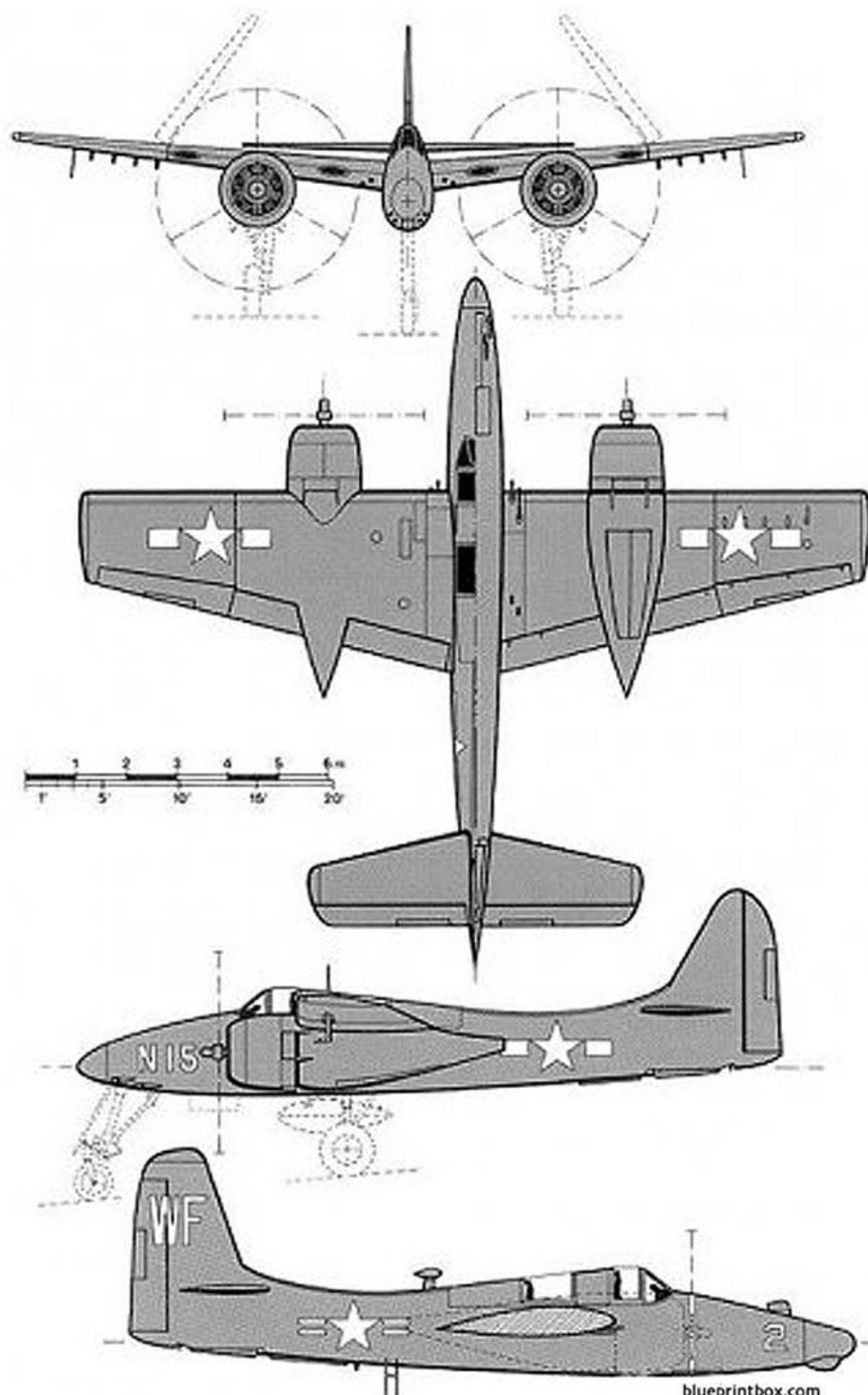
Of course it's a pleasure to look on a neatly streamlined job like the F7F, but the first question any practical sailor-airman asks is, "What'll it do in action?"

'Tigercat'

Among other things, the TIGERCAT will produce more firepower than the Hellcat or Corsair, will carry four thousand pounds of bombs or a full sized marine torpedo, and can carry a whole broadside of rockets or rockets and bombs under the wings. With a 300-gallon drop tank for extra fuel, the F7F can range further than either the F6F or the F4U . . . and that's saying something as all carrier people know.

One excellent use being made of the TIGERCAT is its night-fighter version. As the F7F-2N the twin-engine fireball can track down approaching aircraft, locate enemy ships, prowl for special hunting targets and in many other ways make itself thoroughly objectionable to the stealthy Jap.

You fellows in the lookout spot ought not to have too much trouble with recognition. The long, narrow fuselage, curved pointed nose, large tail and rudder up-sweep and twin engine nacelles make it a distinctive picture in the air. And that streamlined look pays dividends . . . the F7F is built to come on back to the barn on one engine.



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