PROFILE: Chance Vought F4U Corsair
(<u>Variants/Other Names:</u> Goodyear FG-1; Brewster F3A-1)

HISTORY:

Development of the Corsair began in 1938, when the US Navy issued a request for a new single-seat carrier-based fighter. The Chance-Vought company won the contract with their unique, gull-winged airframe pulled by the largest engine then available, the Pratt & Whitney R-2800 Double Wasp. The wing design was necessitated by the tall landing gear which was, in turn, necessitated by the huge propeller required to propel the plane at the desired high speeds.

The prototype of the Corsair was first flown on 29 May 1940, but due to design revisions, the first production **F4U-1** Corsair was not delivered until 31 July 1942. Further landing gear and cockpit modifications resulted in a new variant, the **F4U-1A**, which was the first version approved for carrier duty.

The Corsair served with the US Navy, US Marines, the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm, and the Royal New Zealand Air Force (and later, the French Aeronavale), and quickly became the most capable carrier-based fighter/bomber of the war. Demand for the aircraft soon overwhelmed Vought's manufacturing capability, resulting in additional aircraft being produced by the Goodyear Company (as the **FG-1**) and the Brewster Company (as the **F3A-1**). Production ceased in 1952. Over two dozen Corsairs are believed to be still airworthy, most in the United States.

NICKNAMES:

Bend-Wing Bird; Bent-Wing Ensign Eliminator; Bent-Wing Monster; Whistling Death; Horseshoe; Super Stuka; U-Bird, Hose Nose; Hog Nose; Sweetheart; Hog.

SPECIFICATIONS (F4U-1A):

Engine: 2,000hp Pratt and Whitney R-2800-8 radial piston engine
Weight: Empty 8,980 lbs, Maximum Takeoff 14,000 lbs.
Wing Span: 41ft. 0in.
Length: 33ft. 4in.
Height: 16ft. 1in.
Performance:
Maximum Speed at 20,000ft: 420 mph
Cruising Speed: 185 mph
Service Ceiling: 37,000 ft.
Initial Climb Rate: 3,100 feet/min.
Armament:
Six 12.7mm (0.50 in) machine guns, wing-mounted.

NUMBER BUILT: 12,571

NUMBER STILL AIRWORTHY: ~28