Monday Maritime Matters

Description

Before I get started, donâ€™t forget to get your day old dose of â€œSunday Ship History,â€• this week with the theme of songs, when you finish the post here.


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LCDR James â€œJimmyâ€• Thach, USN â€“ CO VF-3, c. 1942

He retired as as Admiral after a long and honorable career in the service of our nation, but he made his name by pioneering air tactics, specifically, the â€œThach Weaveâ€• in response to the capabilities of the Japanese Zero fighter to better the chances of the F4F Wildcat. From Wikipedia:

> [â€¦]
> Working at night with matchsticks on the table, he eventually came up with what he called â€œBeam Defense Positionâ€•, but what soon became known as the â€œThach Weaveâ€•. It was executed either by two fighter aircraft side-by-side or (as illustrated) by two pairs of fighters flying together. When an enemy aircraft chose one fighter as his target (the â€œbaitâ€• fighter; his wingman being the â€œhookâ€•), the two wingmen turned in towards each other. After crossing paths, and once their separation was great enough, they would then repeat the exercise, again turning in towards each other, bringing the enemy plane into the hookâ€™s sights. A correctly-executed Thach Weave (assuming the bait was taken and followed) left little chance of escape to even the most maneuverable opponent.
> [â€¦]

As CO of VF-3, flying from USS YORKTOWN (CV-5), at the Battle of Midway, he had his pilots successfully use this tactic against the Japanese, playing a part in the surprise success over the approaching forces. He was aided by ENS â€œButchâ€• Oâ€™Hare, later to win the Medal of Honor, in the development and execution of this ground breaking tactic. Later, the Marine pilots of the â€œCactus Air Forceâ€• flying from Guadalcanal with cannibalized F4F Wildcats as their main fighter, employed this tactic as well.

After the Battle of Midway. LCDR Thach was placed where his keen mind could really be multiplied: Training new Naval Aviators. Unlike the enemy (Germans and Japanese), who kept their best pilots on the front lines, the US adopted a policy of rotating experienced combat pilots back to the school houses

to pass along their lessons learned written in blood to give new pilots an instant advantage upon arrival in theater.

Later, CDR Thach was assigned to ADM John McCain Srâ€™s (Sen John McCainâ€™s Grandfather) Staff and was present for the Japanese Surrender at Tokyo Bay.

Proving his skills for better better warfighting tactics, he was recognized by Time Magazine in 1958 for his work with an experimental anti-submarine warfare (ASW) unit aboard USS VALLEY FORGE (CVS-45). Later, he presided over the development of the A-7 Corsair II for the Navy (the USAF also bought this airframe).

ADM Thach retired in 1967, and passed away in 1981.



USS THACH (FFG-43) and SH-60B Seahawk

USS THACH was commissioned 3/17/1984, and is a â€œFlight IIIâ€• version of the USS O.H. PERRY Class Guided Missile Frigates. She was initially outfitted with the full compliment of ASW equipment that was retrofitted aboard the Flight I and II ships of the class.USS THACH has been an active participant in the the Operation Iraqi Freedom Campaigns.In honor of this great tactician, the USS THACH (FFG-43) was named for him.

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