

John R. "Jack" Eckstein
Pensacola Pre-Flight Class 5-49



standing on wing of SNJ – a traditional publicity photograph

Pensacola



Eckstein holding tow banner

NAS Saufley Field during Gunnery Phase in SNJs (Basic Training)

"I'd had a very good day shooting up the banner to earn qualification in aerial Gunnery. That's how I remember the deal anyway."

early 1950



Jack in G-suit standing in front of an F4U-4

Squadron VF-194 deployed to El Centro for a couple of weeks of Bombing, Gunnery, Napalm, and Rocket Training as we began working up for deployment to Korea following fleet carrier Quals. I was transferred on message orders to VC-7 at NAS Moffett Field shortly after the picture was taken. VC-7 was in need of a Photographic Officer in the newly formed Heavy Attack Squadron which was scheduled to receive the North American Aviation AJ-1 "Savage," the Navy's first carrier-based atomic bomb capable aircraft. I had graduated from the U.S. Naval Photographic School in 1947 as an Aerial Photographer's Mate Prior to Flight Training in 1949-1950.

May 1950



Midshipman John Richard Augustus "Jack" Eckstein in cockpit of F4U-4 Corsair
Navy Advanced Carrier Qualification

Pensacola, Florida

July 1950



“Members of Pre-Flight Class 5-49 were graduated from Flight Training on the 16th of August 1950, shortly after the start of the Korean War. [left to right: Jack Eckstein, Herb Graham, and Neil Armstrong], pictured above, were among the happy group. After enjoying a short leave in our respective hometowns, I drove to Wapakoneta, Ohio, to pick up Neil, and the two of us continued on to Herb’s home in Stillwater, Oklahoma. The three of us set out on the great adventure, our first orders to duty as Naval Aviators at the Naval Air Station, North Island, California. There we were assigned to a pool of aviators at FASRON SEVEN awaiting the return of Carrier Air Group Five in USS *Valley Forge* that was still deployed in the waters off Korea.”



ADV CQ-8

Midshipman Jack Eckstein (left) with Fred Blechman after Blechman's sixth landing aboard USS *Wright* (CVL-49)

(Jack retired from the Navy as a Captain)

August 18, 1950