

ployed. This is followed by the deployment histories of the photoreconnaissance variants of the F2H-2. Another chapter covers the first night-fighter and nuclear-capable F2H-2 variants. A further chapter is devoted to operators of the substantially redesigned F2H-3 and -4 “Big Banjo” (a redesign that Burgess compares to the difference between the F/A-18C/D and F/A-18E/F in scope). Finally, the Canadian Navy and US Naval Reserve units that operated the F2H later in its career are also covered. Appendices cover carrier deployments by squadron, date, and assigned Air Wing.

As with all of the Osprey Combat Aircraft publications, this one contains many photographs (in both color and black and white) and superb illustrations by prolific Osprey illustrator Jim Laurier. This book certainly well covers one of the earliest of the Navy’s jet fighters and its contributions to the war in Korea.

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Modern Taiwanese Air Power: The Republic of China Air Force Today. By Roy Choo and Peter Ho. Vienna, Austria: Harpia Publishing, 2021. Illustrations. Maps. Photographs. Glossary. Bibliography. Pp. 94. \$31.95 paperback. ISBN: 978-1-950394-03-6

As tensions with the People’s Republic of China (PRC) have increased, this highly informative and well-illustrated monograph cannot be a timelier reference. From its opening pages, it is filled with interesting facts about the Republic of China (Taiwan) Air Force (ROCAF) and its operations and units. The rich assortment of photographs reinforce the narrative.

The ROCAF mission clearly highlights its criticality to the country’s survival in the event of a PRC assault on Taiwan. To meet its mission, the ROCAF maintains highly trained pilots and crews continually on combat air patrols (CAP) in response to PLAAF (People’s Republic of China Air Force) provocations. As well, it operates a highly sophisticated air surveillance network that includes a long-range Raytheon PAVE PAWS radar system. Operators using this can look thousands of kilometers into mainland China to provide both intelligence and early warning of missile and aircraft launches. The Air Force also operates anti-ballistic missile defenses, rounding out its role as the primary defender of Taiwan.

It is readily apparent that ROCAF fighter pilots have long been accustomed to flying combat air patrols, never knowing if and when the PLAAF will attempt to penetrate the island nation’s defenses. In past crises, they have engaged in air-to-air engagements with mainland China and have a history of incredible black operations conducted within the PRC during the Cold War.

The authors go beyond detailed descriptions of aviation assets to round out the current capabilities of the ROCAF. A highly sophisticated organization, it has continually upgraded to insure survivability in response to targeting by the PRC. Its capstone is the Joint Air Operations Center (JAOC). To enhance protection for its assets for rapid response it has hollowed out granite mountains, going deeply inside to park aircraft and support equipment. Complementing the very hard sheltering are numerous highway runways. Realizing that the PRC is fully aware of these runways, the ROCAF has highly capable rapid-repair teams trained to restore runways in hours and not days.

The ROCAF is always pursuing modernization and survivability. The threat from the PRC is real, and the mainland makes no secret of it. Because the ROC is totally dependent on its air force to survive, it pursues improvements in both its defensive capabilities and its ability to retaliate. Hence, it is armed with ballistic and cruise missiles to reach bases well inside the PRC.

The real challenge from the PRC is the overwhelming advantage it holds in its aircraft and, especially, its missile forces. Can the ROC survive an all-out assault? A November 2022 *New Yorker Magazine* article, citing current RAND wargaming, concludes that Taiwan cannot long survive alone. Hence, the United States and, possibly, Japan are game changers. Because of the importance of Taiwan to US security interests, the PRC must not miscalculate a US response. With that in mind, this monograph helps immensely in understanding the role of the ROCAF in the ongoing give-and-take between the PRC and Taiwan.

John Cirafici, Milford DE



In the Claws of the Tomcat: US Navy F-14 Tomcats in Air Combat Against Iran and Iraq, 1987-2000. By Tom Cooper. Warwick UK: Helion, 2021. Tables. Illustrations. Photographs. Notes. Glossary. Bibliography. Pp. 72. \$29.95. ISBN: 978-1-991311875-4

Helion is known for publishing large-format, soft-cover books covering a wide variety of subjects. Using the publisher’s own words, they offer books that feature “concise, incisive text, rare images and high quality colour artwork.” Having reviewed many of their publications over the years, I have to say their self-promotion is pretty much on the mark. This volume (one of the Middle East@War series) covers a relatively obscure aspect of naval air operations with a fair amount of detail and a focus that I doubt one can find anywhere but in an official history.

To say that Cooper is a prolific author is an understatement. An Austrian aerial warfare analyst and historian, he has written dozens of books (including many for

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