

Stink Bomb

For US naval aviators, it is a red-letter event—the day in fall 1965 when Attack Squadron 25 toilet-bombed Vietnam. Sailors on board USS Midway wanted to mark the dropping of its six-millionth pound of ordnance. They took a commode, built a rack, tail fins, and nose fuse for it, and hung it on an A-1H Skyraider. No one told the captain. When the pilot, Cmdr. Clarence Stoddard Jr., launched, the bridge PA system barked, “What the hell was that on 572’s right wing?” Stoddard flew from Dixie Station to the Mekong Delta. He put the A-1 into a dive and launched “Sani-Flush,” as the “special weapon” was named. It came off the pylon, turned in the wind, and nearly hit the wingman. It is said to have whistled all the way to the ground. The wingman filmed it all.

Though weird, the “Toilet Bomb” had a Korean War predecessor. In August 1952, an officer of Attack Squadron 195 told a reporter, “We dropped everything on them [North Korea] but a kitchen sink.” That was all it took. Sailors quickly built a “Sink Bomb,” a 1,000-pounder blended with an actual kitchen sink. Lt. j.g. Carl Austin, flying an AD-4 from USS Princeton, dropped it on Pyongyang.



Stoddard, aboard Midway, awaits launch. Note white “special weapon” on outboard pylon.



USN photos

“Sani-Flush,” viewed from the deck plates.



In Korea, it was the Kitchen Sink Bomb.



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