

Below: Photographs of CV-8 are far less plentiful than of CV-6 (or, for that matter, of CV-5), but, albeit well-known, this is one of the best. It shows her famous 'splotted' Measure 12 scheme, well-battered around the boot topping at this point in her career. Single shielded 20mms are evident at the bow, and one of the port 5in/38s is angled skywards.

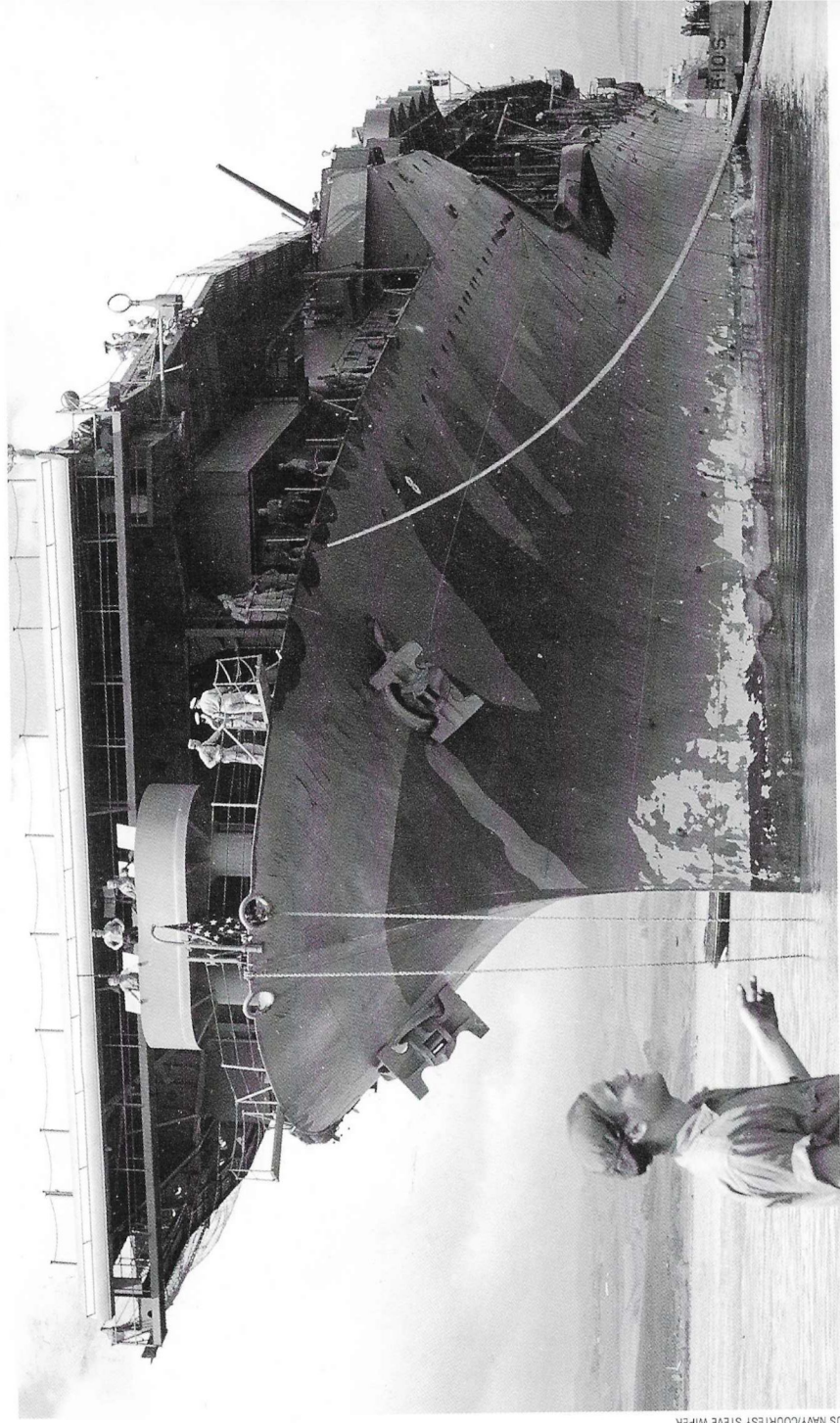
the ship began to receive her suite of 20mm Oerlikons; an outfit of 27 single guns was in place by the end of April, and this was extended to 32 barrels by the end of summer 1942, but, like her sister *Yorktown*, *Hornet* never did receive the 40mm Bofors intended for her. Her first air group was made up of VF-8, VB-8, VT-8 and VS-8 and equipped with, respectively, F3Fs and F4Fs, SBCs, SBNs and TBNs, and SBCs and SBDs, but by the end of 1941 the F3Fs and TBNs had been disembarked, the latter replaced by TBDs. By April 1942 the SBNs and SBCs had disappeared too, so that the air group now comprised eighteen F4Fs, fifteen TBDs and 32 SBDs (split between VB-8 and VS-8). The Army B-25 bombers embarked that month for the Tokyo Raid did not displace the carrier's regular air group, which was, however, consigned to the hangar while the Mitchells were being flown off.

From the summer of 1942 the ship was steadily squeezed as the numbers of aircraft embarked rose—27 fighters in June 1942, then 36 by the time of the ship's loss. Following Midway, the decimated VT-8 was re-equipped with the capable TBF Avenger torpedo-bomber.

COLOUR SCHEMES

Hornet was commissioned into the Fleet in Measure 12, as described in the colour notes for *Yorktown*. However, early in 1942 this Graded System was modified by the application of irregular, disruptive patterns ('splotches', in official US Navy parlance). Very little in the way of official guidelines was issued with regard to this measure other than that the splotches had to be large and of a specified colour, viz. 5-H if the background paintwork were 5-S and 5-S if it were 5-O (and *vice versa*). Following these instructions, *Hornet* had her hull paintwork broken up: in a unique interpretation of the guidelines, the sharp dividing line between the lower 5-S and the upper 5-O was transformed into a wavy, disruptive line with 5-N (Navy Blue) substituted for the 5-S (Sea Blue). The upperworks, more in conformity with the instructions, were splotted in Haze Gray, although the 5-H predominated, giving the impression that this was the base colour.

Flight-deck markings were as described for *Hornet*'s sister-ships in 1942, although uniquely for the Tokyo Raid two white stripes were painted longitudinally to port of the centreline in order to aid the Army pilots' take-offs.



US NAVY/COURTESY STEVE WIPER