



# A Complete History of U.S. Combat Aircraft Fly-Off Competitions: Winners, Losers, and What Might Have Been

By Erik Simonsen

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## A Complete History of U.S. Combat Aircraft Fly-Off Competitions: Winners, Losers, and What Might Have Been By Erik Simonsen

Since the first days of rivalry between the Wright Brothers and Glenn Curtiss, aircraft manufacturers have been vying for lucrative military aircraft contracts and competing for prized long-term production runs. As a result, many advanced and now legendary aircraft have been designed, built, and flown in every generation of aviation development. Focusing on the Cold War era, this book shows readers how crucial fly-off competitions have been to the development of America's military air arsenal.

This book not only explains in detail how fly-off competitions are conducted, it shows the reader what both competing aircraft designs looked like during their trials, and then what the losing aircraft would have looked like in operational markings had it actually won. Described in vivid detail are the specific aircraft and how they fared, as well as the inside political maneuvering and subterfuge involved in often-controversial aircraft contract awards.

Beginning with the Boeing B-47 Stratojet's decisive victory over rival Convair and Martin designs and ending with today's advanced unmanned aerial marvels, this book covers every era of Post-World War II aviation. Author Erik Simonsen uses 120,000 words of text and over 550 photos, some uniquely created for this work, to provide the reader with many of aviation's most tantalizing 'might have beens'.

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### **Editorial Review**

#### Review

"An outstanding tale of post-WWII-era-fly-off competitions for bombers and fighters. A must read." (Fran Landrus *IPMS/USA* 2016-07-22)

"All in all, this is a very good book produced to extremely high standards that will fill an important gap in any aviation history collection." (George Hulett *Air Classics* 2016-08-10)

"An interesting look into the competition process as well as a useful history of aviation evolution." (Chris Banyai-Riepl *Internet Modeler* 2016-09-19)

"Simonsen's superb study sports lots of spellbinding stuff." (David L. Veres *Cybermodeler* 2016-07-15)

"Simonsen's fascinating review of key procurement programs is sure to engender nostalgia." (Philip Handleman *Aviation History* 2016-11-23)

"... makes for fascinating reading." (Guy Norris *Aviation Week* 2016-12-19)

"Excellent entertainment for American aerophiles everywhere." (*Finescale Modeler Magazine* 2016-09-26)

#### From the Back Cover

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Beginning with the Boeing B-47 Stratojet's decisive victory over rival Convair and Martin bomber designs and ending with today's Lockheed F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, this book covers every era of Post-World War II aviation. Author Erik Simonsen uses his advanced modeling skills coupled with the wonders of modern digital photography to create highly believable images of aviation's most tantalizing "might have beens."

#### About the Author

Since the late 1960s Erik Simonsen has been photographing all types of military, commercial, business and sports aviation subjects. What started as a hobby has turned into part-time professional work, as Simonsen authored two photographically illustrated books, entitled *Spy Planes* and *This is Stealth*, and numerous magazine articles.

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