Is Star of

Navy Meet

naval-weapons meet.

Ryan Firebee

Ryan Firebee jet targets, served fresh every 30 minutes

on a race-track range, 50 miles off the coast of Southern Cal-

ifornia, will highlight the early

morning hours of Operation Top

Gun, the navy's fourth annual

Operation Top Gun headquart-

ers will be at the marine corps' auxiliary air station. Yuma, with participating units from Brown

Field, San Diego, and the Pt.

Mugu missile test center, Pt.

will last through tomorrow.

Mugu. The meet, now under way,

Operation Top Gun marks the

first time the navy will use a

remote - controlled, free - flying

high performance jet target in

Air-launched from P2V Neptunes and JD-1D jig-dogs, south-

east of San Nicholas island, the

remote controlled KDA-4s will scoot to mission altitude before taking assigned positions on the oval range bordered by San Nich olas and the Santa Cruz island

chain. The Top Gun target has

been assigned the inner range

of the large off-shore Pacific

missile range, approximately 50

miles off the Pt. Mugu Naval

Utility Squadron Three (VU-3)

from the Brown Field Naval Aux-

iliary Air Station south of San

3 and the target department at

Pt. Mugu will handle the target

operation, with launch craft staging from Brown Field and Pt. Mugu. Additionally, a P2V launch airplane from Guided Missile

Support Squadron 2, Roosevelt

Roads, Puerto Rico, has been as-

signed to the Firebee operation.

wits with the jet-fast Firebee in

mons, two of the Navy's highest

performance, all-weather jet

fighters. The F8U-1 Crusaders,

laden with the deadly heat-seeking Sidewinders will scramble

from the Marine Crops Auxiliary

Air Station, Yuma, Arizona, the home base for Operation "Top

Gun," while the F3H Demons, armed with the Sparrow III guided missiles, will chase the Fire-

bee from their base at Pt. Mugu.

In all, 13 launch craft will

stage from the Brown Field and

Pt. Mugu sites to "serve" the

Firebee to the defending fighter-

Sixty Fifebees, all clad in the

bright Dayglo paint, in special

Top Gun configuration, will be

on deck for four days of realistic

combat. The KDA-4, the Navy

member of the Ryan Firebee fam-

Top Navy pilots will match

F8U-1 Crusaders and F3H-2 De-

Diego, and Missile Training Unit

Missile Test Station.

major weapons meet action.



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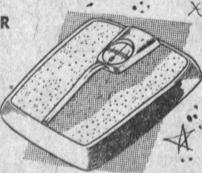
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ily, is a high performance remote controlled jet target missile, and holder of the Navy's target aircraft endurance and altitude

interceptors.

In a record flight at the Naval Air Missile Test Center, Pt. Mugu, the KDA-4 flew over 48,-000 feet at 500 miles an hour in a total flight of one hour, 18 minutes, with 53 minutes of the total flight time above 40,000 feet. On fuel depletion, the target glided to 14,000 feet where parachute recovery was com-manded. The KDA-4 is powered by a Fairchild J-44 turbojet en-

The KDA-4 was flown by the U.S. Army, the Royal Canadian Army and the Royal Canadian Air Force in evaluation of the Army's Nike Hercules at the U.S. Army's First Arctic Test Detache ment, Fort Churchill, Manitoha, Canada, last winter.

The KDA targets will be remotely controlled by two ground controllers at Pt. Mugu. With targets scheduled on range at 30 minute intervals, the first controller will fly one target on the range while the second controller monitors the launch and climb to mission altitude of a second bird.

Firebee ground crews will work round the clock at both Brown Field and Pt. Mugu to keep fresh targets ready for battle. The Top Gun schedule calls for eight KDA targets the first and third morne ings of the meet for Sidewinder action, four KDA's the first and third afternoons for Sparrow firing

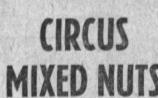
On the fourth and final cleanup day of the meet, two KDAs will be on station from 8 to 16 a.m. for Sparrow, four targets from 10 to 12 a.m. for Sidewind. er, two Firebees from 1 to 3 p.m. for Sparrow and four KDAs from 2 to 5 p.m. for Sidewinder action.

The defending fighters will be vectored to the attacking Firebae targets by ground controllers at

Pt. Mugu. The Firebees will streak across the range at 30 minute intervals. the first smashed in their attack by deadly missiles, or until the mission is completed and a fresh bird is brought on station. The retired targets will be flown to the recovery area, where the ground controller will command parachute recovery and the KDA-

4 will drift gently into the ocean. Two HUS-1 helicopters, equipped with boom and pelican hook, will fish the Firebees from the briny water and return them to a special decontamination sit at Pt. Mugu. Crews will flush the salt water out of the Firebees and load them for shipment back to Brown Field.

In a new wrinkle in Firebea recovery, navy frogmen will ride along to aid Firebees back to safety by making adjustments, if necessary, to the Firebee recovery boom.



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