**Hot Fueling**

The A4 could be fueled using the probe on front upper starboard side designed for inflight refueling. Also, this probe could also be used on the ground for fueling with an adaptor while the engine running.

**The Story:** In 1969, VMA-131 went to Rosey Roads for training. We plane captains found out what was probably our worst duty: *Hot Fueling*. A group of four plane captains would rotate for a day for to learn how to do it. I was in the first group.

The hot fueling area was located on the taxi way going to the flight line. A fuel pump was located on each side of the taxi way. A rolling platform was next to the pump in order to reach the A4s’ probe. These platforms were moved back and forth for each returning A4. The base personal gave quick instructions on the process. All you had to do was to roll the platform below the probe, sneeze the handles on the adapter. and push it on the probe.

We learned on first birds that it was not that easy. When the fuel pumps were turned on the hose became ridged and required considerable effort to handle. On our first group of returning A4s, the two of us on our platform took turns. By the fifth bird, we were tiring and my buddy was having trouble. He had the adapter aligned, so I walked behind and pushed. We had figured it out! The two Marines on the other platform saw us and started doing the same thing.

The only thing out there was a tiny shack which got so hot you didn't want to go in there. When a hop returned with 16 or so birds, it took the better of an hour to refuel. We had no idea of the actual temperature was but the weather was 95 degrees with 90% humidity, and the engines generated a lot of additional heat

There was nothing to do between hops and nowhere to hide. The last hop of the day ended with some touch and goes. We were bored and found a couple of brooms. So, we used our A4s as targets as they flew overhead. When hot fueling, you're very close to the cockpit and could look right into it. We got a surprise. After attaching the adaptor, we gave the pilots a thumbs up. Each pilot **shot us** with their fingers used as their side arm instead of a thumbs up.

We just about fell off the rolling platforms laughing our asses off. How hell did they see us? One of them obviously did, and the deed was planned by all of them.

It was a break that sorely was needed on a long hot day. Nothing like squadron teamwork!

Submitted by an old plane captain.

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