1977

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

FIGHTER SQUADRON ELEVEN

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From: Commanding Officer, Fighter Squadron ELEVEN
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)

Subj: Command History for 1977; forwarding of (OPNAV Report 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Command History Report

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted.

W. C. DURHAM
By direction

Copy to:
DIR NAVHISTCEN
COMFITWING ONE
COMCARAIRWING SEVENTEEN

COMMAND HISTORY REPORT

I. Basic History

A. Chronology of Events - 1977

01 JAN to 15 JAN	- Squadron operations, NAS Oceana, VA.
16 JAN to 15 FEB	- Operational Weapons Deployment, Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.
16 FEB to 03 APR	- Squadron operations, NAS Oceana, VA.
13 MAR	- 50th Reunion, NAS Oceana, VA
04 APR to 22 APR	- Fleet ACM Program with VF-43, NAS Oceana, VA.
23 APR to 31 MAR	- Squadron operations, NAS Oceana, VA.
01 JUN to 15 JUN	- Air Wing deployment (CVW-17) (Weapons/ACM), Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.
15 JUN to 06 AUG	- Squadron operations and Field Carrier Landing practice.
07 AUG to 16 AUG	- Air Wing Carrier Qualification in USS FORRESTAL (CV 59).
18 AUG to 23 SEP	- Squadron operations, NAS Oceana, VA.
24 SEP to 24 OCT	- Refresher Training, embarked in USS FORRESTAL (CV 59) off Cuban coast.
24 OCT to 10 NOV	- Squadron operations, NAS Oceana, VA.
11 NOV to 25 NOV	- Type Training ONE, embarked in USS FORRESTAL (CV 59) in Carribean.
23 NOV to 29 NOV	- Squadron operations, NAS Oceana, VA.
30 NOV to 11 DEC	- Type Training TWO, embarked in USS FORRESTAL (CV 59) in Carribean.
12 DEC to 31 DEC	- Squadron operations, NAS Oceana, VA.

B. NARRATIVE

Nineteen Seventy-seven marked the fiftieth year the RED RIPPERS have continuously operated as a fighter squadron.

January found the RED RIPPERS on deployment with Commander Carrier Air Wing SEVENTEEN to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. This deployment gave the Air Wing the opportunity to train as a team while FORRESTAL was in the yards. While on a routine training mission during this deployment, LT Tim Dobrovolny and LT Rick Mercker ejected from their burning aircraft. Both were successfully recovered uninjured off the coast of Puerto Rico. The RED RIPPERS returned to Oceana, Virginia on February 16th to conduct squadron operations and make plans for the upcoming 50th Reunion.

On March 13th the RIPPERS celebrated their 50th Anniversary as a fighter squadron. Hundreds of past and present RED RIPPERS and their families visited the squadron during the open house and dined at a gala banquet. Among the honored guests was Ike Schlossbach, the first Commanding Officer of the RED RIPPERS 50 years ago.

In April the RED RIPPERS began sharpening their Air Combat Maneuvering skills with the adversary services of Fighter Squadron Forty-three. During this intensive training program 112 sorties were flown. On April 15th LTs Barry & Quinn departed Oceana to attend the Navy Fighter Weapons School. Ron and JJ spent six weeks at "TOP GUN" flying against a variety of dissimilar aircraft.

From April 23rd through May 31st the RIPPERS were back in the sun at Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico for the second operational Weapons Deployment with Carrier Air Wing SEVENTEEN. The deployment was highlighted by a highly successful missile shoot by several RIPPER crews.

On June 15th Fighter Squadron ELEVEN returned to their families in Virginia Beach to conduct squadron training and begin Carrier Landing Practice in preparation for Air Wing Carrier Qualification. Beginning August 7th, the RED RIPPERS spent nine days in USS FORRESTAL (CV 59) qualifying pilots and radar intercept officers in day and night carrier landings. During this period, the squadron logged 96 day and 38 night arrested landings and fully qualified ten air crews.

For the remainder of August and September, the RED RIPPERS concentrated on a variety of training flights. Operating out of Naval Air Station Oceana, the squadron looked ahead to Refresher Training with Carrier Air Wing SEVENTEEN. On September 24th the World Famous RED RIPPERS were once again at home on the sea. Embarked in USS FORRESTAL (CV 59) with Carrier Air Wing SEVENTEEN, the RIPPERS headed south to the Carribean Sea to conduct Refresher Training off Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. During this intensive training period the squadron accumulated 135 day and 48 night carrier landings. During Refresher Training, LCDR W.C. "BULL" Durham attained the highest carrier landing grades in the Air Group and was

awarded the coveted "Golden Tail Hook". The favorite stop during this at-sea period was Port Au Prince, Haiti. The RIPPER officers and men enjoyed three days of sight-seeing, shopping, and dining in this exotic port. The FORRESTAL stop marked the first time in fifteen years that a United States Navy Aircraft Carrier had visited Port Au Prince.

On October 25th the squadron returned to Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia to continue aircrew training and to prepare for Type Training ONE and TWO on board USS FORRESTAL. During this in-port period, LTJG Dick Clark and LTJG JJ Quinn attended the Navy Fighter Weapons School "TOP SCOPE" program. This two weeks of intensive radar training prepared Dick and JJ to instruct aircrews in scope interpretation and the latest air intercept techniques.

Type Training ONE and TWO were both very successful for the RIPPERS. The pilots and RIOs honed their skills in all areas of fighter employment and logged 196 arrested landings on board FORRESTAL. Type Training ONE and TWO lasted until December 11th with a short in-port period at Naval Station Mayport, Florida from November 23rd until November 29th. The "Golden Tail Hook" stayed in VF-11 during Type Training TWO and was awarded to the RED RIPPER Commanding Officer, Commander R.R. Stoops for his outstanding carrier landing grades.

On December 12th the RED RIPPERS returned to Oceana to celebrate Christmas and conduct squadron operations in anticipation of the upcoming Operational Readiness Evaluation.

1977 was an outstanding year for Fighter Squadron ELEVEN. The RED RIPPERS' pride, professionalism , dedication to duty, and love of flying have made this, their 50th Anniversary, one of the most memorable years in RIPPER history. All the men of VF-11 look forward to a rewarding new year as they make final plans for a Mediterranean deployment in USS FORRESTAL in early 1978.

II. Operations Summary

MONTH	TOTAL HRS	HRS D / N	TOTAL TRAPS D / N	TOTAL SORTIES D / N
JAN	293.4	259.8/33.6	N/A	173 / 21
FEB	274.5	223.3/51.2	N/A	148 / 29
MAR	182.1	124.1/58.0	N/A	76 / 31
APR	194.7	178.2/16.5	N/A	169 / 10
MAY	281.0	245.5/35.5	N/A	155 / 19
JUN	341.4	267.3/74.1	N/A	186 / 42
JUL	191.6	97.2/94.4	N/A	75 / 69
AUG	213.5	126.0/87.5	96 / 38	107 / 83

Operations Summary (CONT'D)

MONTH	TOTAL HRS	HRS D / N	TOTAL TRAPS D / N	TOTAL SORTIES D / N
SEP	253.3	167.5/85.8	66 / 20	114 / 85
OCT	219.4	174.2/45.2	69 / 28	108 / 34
NOV	251.4	197.2/54.2	74 / 25	138 / 31
DEC	285.4	215.4/70.0	59 / 38	146 / 37

III. Squadron Officer Losses and Gains - 1977

17 February - LTJG Kent L. IVINS, USNR received for duty from Fighter Squadron 101.

17 February - ENS Peter D. PAULS, USNR received for duty from Fighter Squadron 101.

10 May - LTJG James K. DUFFY, USNR received for duty from Fighter Squadron 101.

10 May - ENS Kenneth R. HUNTER, USNR received for duty from Fighter Squadron 101.

25 May - LCDR Joseph H. FINDLEY, USN received for duty from Fighter Squadron 101.

31 May - LT Phillip M. TOMLINSON, USN transferred to Fighter Squadron 43 for duty.

15 June - LTJG John W. BOLYARD, USN received for duty from Fighter Squadron 101.

24 June - LTJG John J. "O" BOIS, Jr., USNR received for duty from Fighter Squadron 101.

30 June - LT David C. BLANTON, USNR released to inactive duty in U. S. Naval Reserve.

30 June - LT Frederick R. DELP, USN transferred to Naval Recruiting Command Detachment Pensacola, FL for duty.

30 June - LT Wesley L. SULLIVAN, USNR transferred to Chief of Naval Air Training, NAS Corpus Christi, TX for duty.

30 June - LT Gene R. SMITH, USNR transferred to Naval Air Station, Dallas, TX for duty.

30 June - LCDR Samuel L. JACKSON, USN transferred to Naval Air Station, Oceana, VA for duty.

Squadron Officer Gains and Losses (CONT'D)

5 July	- LT Charlie C. CONATSER, USNR transferred to Naval Fighter Weapons School, Naval Air Station Miramar, CA for duty.
21 July	- LT Eric E. MERCKER, USNR transferred to Naval Air Station, Oceana, VA for duty.
12 August	- LT Donald E. MOORS, USNR released to inactive duty in U. S. Naval Reserve.
22 August	- LT Richard T. MURPHY, USN received for duty from Fighter Squadron 101, Detachment Key West, FL.
15 September	- CWO3 Thomas I. LANGFORD, USN transferred to Commander Nuclear Weapons Training Group, Atlantic, Norfolk, VA for duty.
21 September	- LT Donn G. COKER, USNR transferred to Training Squadron 26, Naval Air Station Chase Field, Beeville, TX for duty.
7 October	- LCDR Richard T. JONES, USN received for duty from Fighter Squadron 171.
10 October	- LT William L. HITCHINGS, USN transferred to Naval Station Norfolk, VA for separation.
11 October	- ENS Marvin D. NOLEN received for duty from Naval Unit, Lowry Air Force Base, CO.
29 October	- LTJG Peter D. PAULS, USNR died of injuries incurred from self inflicted gunshot wound.
9 November	- LTJG Daniel L. MILLIMAN received for duty from Naval Justice School, Newport, RI.
6 December	- LTJG George E. CLAUSEN, USN received for duty from Fighter Squadron 171.
19 December	- LTJG William R. HERTEL, USN received for duty from Fighter Squadron 171.
28 December	- LTJG Stephen J. CORNER, USNR transferred to Fighter Squadron 101 for duty.