



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON  
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY THREE  
FPO NEWYORK 09501

1980

VAW123/00:fas  
5700  
Ser **329**

08 NOV 1981

From: Commanding Officer, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron  
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY THREE (VAW-123)  
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)

Subj: Command History; submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12C

Encl: (1) VAW-123 Command History

1. In accordance with reference (a), Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWENTY THREE's Command History for calendar year 1980 is hereby submitted as enclosure (1).

  
E. J. GLAESER

Copy to:  
Director of Naval History (OP-09B9)

## VAW-123 COMMAND HISTORY

### I. SUMMARY OF EVENTS

01 JANUARY - 31 DECEMBER 1980

01 JAN - 07 JAN	Shore based at NAS Norfolk, VA
08 JAN - 11 FEB	Embarked aboard USS SARATOGA (CV 60) for TYT-II, III and ORE
12 FEB - 08 MAR	Shore based NAS Norfolk, VA. Preparation for Overseas Movement
09 MAR	Embarked USS SARATOGA, Mayport, Florida
10 MAR - 21 MAR	Enroute Mediterranean Sea
22 MAR - 26 MAR	Inport Rota, Spain
27 MAR - 05 APR	Conducted operations in the Western Mediterranean
06 APR - 11 APR	Inport Livorno, Italy
12 APR - 20 APR	Conducted operations in the Western Mediterranean
21 APR	Training Anchorage, Pollensa Bay, Mallorca, Spain
22 APR	Conducted operations in the Western Mediterranean
23 APR - 27 APR	Inport Palma de Mallorca, Spain
28 APR - 30 APR	Conducted operations in the Western Mediterranean
01 MAY - 04 MAY	Inport Naples, Italy
05 MAY - 18 MAY	Conducted operations in the Central Mediterranean
19 MAY - 24 MAY	Inport Tunis, Tunisia
25 MAY - 27 MAY	Conducted operations in the Western Mediterranean
28 MAY - 10 JUN	Inport Naples, Italy
11 JUN - 22 JUN	Conducted operations in the Central Mediterranean
23 JUN - 06 JUL	Inport Naples, Italy
07 JUL - 10 JUL	Conducted operations in the Western Mediterranean
11 JUL - 14 JUL	Inport, Barcelona, Spain

15 JUL - 17 JUL	Conducted operations in the Western Mediterranean
18 JUL - 24 JUL	Inport Naples, Italy
25 JUL - 31 JUL	Conducted operations in the Western Mediterranean
01 AUG - 05 AUG	Inport Palma de Mallorca, Spain
06 AUG - 11 AUG	Conducted operations in the Western Mediterranean
12 AUG - 16 AUG	Inport Malaga, Spain
17 AUG	Training Anchorage, Malaga, Spain
18 AUG	Training Anchorage, Rota, Spain
19 AUG - 27 AUG	Enroute Mayport, Florida
28 AUG - 09 DEC	Shore based at NAS Norfolk, VA
10 OCT	CDR F. J. GLAESER relieved CDR Norman L. CRAIG as Commanding Officer
10 DEC - 13 DEC	Carrier Qualification aboard USS AMERICA
14 DEC - 31 DEC	Based ashore at NAS Norfolk, VA

## VAW-123 COMMAND HISTORY

### II. Calendar Year 1980 Narrative

The dawn of the new year saw the SCREWTOPS once again preparing to go to sea. On 8 January the squadron embarked aboard USS SARATOGA (CV 60) for Type Training as a unit of Carrier Air Wing THREE. TYT-II was conducted in the Jacksonville OPAREA while enroute to the Puerto Rican OPAREA. TYT-III was run concurrently with READEX 1-80, a four day antiair warfare exercise that tested the battle group in an intense ECM environment. The final phase of the at-sea period was an Operational Readiness Evaluation which began on 1 February and concluded on 4 February. The squadron returned to Norfolk on 11 February.

The remainder of the month of February was an easygoing period characterized by reduced activity as the SCREWTOPS prepared for a Mediterranean Deployment. During February, the squadron passed the milestone of 20,000 accident-free flight hours.

March was the month of deployment. The final hurried preparations were completed during the 1st through the 8th. On the 9th, the last tearful goodbyes were spoken, and the squadron proceeded south to Mayport and embarked in SARATOGA. On the morning of the 10th, the ship got underway for the Mediterranean Sea. On the 18th the squadron controlled a successful Open Ocean Missile Shoot with nine missiles fired and all drones recovered intact. On the 20th, the SCREWTOPS flew a MEDEVAC mission to Rota for a man injured in a flight deck mishap, using a special harness to allow the man to be moved without retraumatizing his leg injury. On the 22nd, the SARATOGA anchored at Rota, Spain for a five day port visit. On the 27th the ship sortied to begin operations in the Western Mediterranean. This at-sea period was marked by exercise MULTIPLEX 1-80, a multi-threat exercise which included air, surface, and subsurface attacks. Within the framework of the exercise, a passing exercise (PASSEX) was conducted with USS FORRESTAL (CV 59). These exercises did much to upgrade squadron training in both antiair warfare (AAW) and surface strike warfare.

April dawned with the SARATOGA and her airwing arriving in Livorno, Italy for a five day port visit. An eight day at-sea period beginning on the 12th gave the squadron an opportunity for another PASSEX with FORRESTAL. During this period the squadron, along with the rest of the airwing, operated in rough seas. A three day training anchorage on the 21st gave the SARATOGA a chance to hold a comprehensive safety standown placing emphasis on damage control, first aid, and flight deck safety. The month concluded with a five day port visit to Palma de Mallorca, Spain, beginning on the 23rd and ending on the 28th.

After a short two day at-sea period, the SARATOGA anchored at Naples, Italy for the first of several visits to this city. On the 5th of May the ship was underway for DAWN PATROL 80, a joint NATO exercise of considerable length (13 days). The exercise was marked by intense flight operations with absolute dependence on the E-2C to ensure the success of AAW, SSC, anti-shipping and power projection strikes. The Central Mediterranean exercise was truly multinational in nature with operations that included the French Carrier FOCH along with Italian and British units. Air opposition consisted of F-4, F-8, F-15, F-104, F-111 and B-52 aircraft. In addition to coordinating multiple War-at-Sea strikes and power projection strikes, the SCREWTOPS served as primary controller for Dissimilar Air Combat Training (DACT) which pitted CVW-3 F-4's against F-8's from FS FOCH and USAFE F-15's. Following the exercise and a five day port visit to Tunis, Tunisia, the SARATOGA sailed for Naples and a two week port visit.

During this June port visit, the SCREWTOPS deployed two aircraft to Sigonella, Sicily for a highly successful training detachment. SCREWTOP pilots flew over 25 hours of FCLP and instrument training flights while NFO's logged over 50 intercepts, many of them supersonic. Meanwhile, back in Naples considerable maintenance was accomplished on the remaining two squadron aircraft.

On 11 June SARATOGA was underway for operations in the Central Mediterranean. June 14th found the SCREWTOPS controlling an Open Ocean Missile Shoot concurrently designed to test the Mobile Sea Range (MSR) concept and to exercise United States freedom of navigation in the Gulf of Sidra, an area claimed by Libya as territorial waters. During an exercise, a section of Libyan Mirage III aircraft approached the exercise area, but were escorted by F-4's under SCREWTOP control. Despite problems with target drones, the missile shoot itself went well, allowing the airwing to prove the validity of MSR procedures. As the month of June ended, the SCREWTOPS and SARATOGA could be found again in Naples for another 2 week port visit. Once more the SCREWTOPS took advantage of the opportunity to deploy a training detachment to Sigonella with very successful results.

Retrained and refreshed, the SARATOGA got underway on 7 July for three days of operations in the Western Mediterranean centered around Exercise DASIX, a joint U.S./French exercise designed to test the French Air Defense System through a series of multiple power projection strikes ranging from single aircraft penetrations to ALPHA strikes. The final day of the exercise was dedicated to DACT conducted between French F-1 Mirages and U.S. Navy F-4 Phantoms under E-2 control. The cooperation and enthusiasm provided by both the French and U.S. participants made the exercise an unqualified success for all concerned. On July 11th, SARATOGA arrived in Barcelona, Spain for a three day port visit.

Underway again on the 15th, SARATOGA conducted two days of operations enroute to her home away from home, Naples. Following a six day port visit, the ship was underway on 25 July for Western Mediterranean operations and Exercise Multiplex 4-80 which culminated in a Salto de Quirra Missile Shoot on the 30th.

As August began, SARATOGA anchored at Palma de Mallorca for a five day port visit. Underway on the 6th for a final week of operations in the Western Mediterranean, the SCREWTOPS found themselves in Malaga, Spain on the 12th for the final port visit of the cruise. A two day succession of training anchorages, one at Malaga on the 17th and one at Rota on the 18th, completed the necessary turnover with USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV 67), and on the 19th of August SARATOGA began the trip home to Mayport, Florida. On the 26th, squadron aircraft were flown off the ship with the remainder of the squadron being airlifted to Norfolk following the ship's return to port on the 27th.

Following a shortened post cruise standown period, the squadron started turnaround training with initial focus on preparing for a Unit NATOPS Evaluation in October. On 10 October the squadron was officially chopped from CVW-3 to CVW-11, ending an 11 year association with CVW-3 and USS SARATOGA. From the 28th to the 30th of September the squadron sent a detachment to Cecil Field for alert duties while the SARA made her transit to Philadelphia to commence the Service Life Extension Program (SLEP).

With the return of the detachment at the beginning of October, the squadron was tasked with providing an aircraft on three hour alert to provide AEW assistance to NORAD. Concurrent with these alert services the squadron again provided services for SARATOGA on the 17th through the 19th of October and for USS AMERICA on the 28th through the 31st. Also, on 21 through 23 October the SCREWTOPS participated in an extensive electronic warfare exercise conducted with FITWING ONE and selected USAF units. SCREWTOP aircrews gained much needed exposure to airborne jammers and AIC under jamming conditions.

On October 16th, the squadron celebrated its 12th anniversary of accident-free flying. During this period the squadron has amassed over 21,000 flight hours and 4682 traps during 10 deployments.

It was also in October that CDR Frederick J. GLAESER, USN relieved CDR Norman L. CRAIG, USN as Commanding Officer. In a ceremony held on the 10th at NAS Norfolk, CDR Glaeser assumed command of the squadron and CDR James N. MAHOOD assumed the position of squadron Executive Officer.

November found the SCREWTOPS intensifying their training schedule in preparation for the next deployment. From 4 through 7 November, the squadron underwent a Command Inspection conducted by Commander, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Wing TWELVE. November flight operations included LINKEX's with USAF AWACS aircraft, as well as two MISSILEX's conducted on the 24th and 25th of November. Field Carrier Landing Practice assumed an intensified pace as SCREWTOP pilots prepared for carrier qualifications. From the 19th through the 30th, the squadron once again found itself tasked with alert commitments. These commitments continued on into December.

As 1980 wound down during the month of December, the squadron continued its preparations for Type Training. On 10 December SCREWTOP pilots commenced a three day Carrier Qualification period aboard USS AMERICA. Of five pilots participating, three received their initial night qualification and two others renewed night qualifications. Additionally, the squadron participated in a MISSILEX with the USS AMERICA and mission crews also received LINK-4A training with Oceana based F-14's when assets were available. During December, VAW-123 also provided LINK-11 services to the RCA Laboratory in southern New Jersey to assist development and testing of the AEGIS missile system.

As the New Year of 1981 dawned, the SCREWTOPS could look back on a highly successful year punctuated by a successful Mediterranean deployment, and also look ahead to new horizons in her upcoming deployment to the Indian Ocean aboard USS AMERICA.