

1993 ✓



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

STRIKE FIGHTER SQUADRON 15

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

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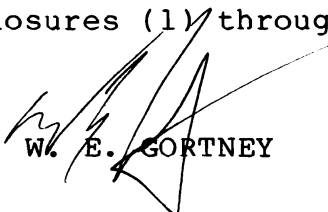
From: Commanding Officer, Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN
To: Director, Naval Aviation History and Publication Division
Naval Historical Center

Subj: CY-1993 COMMAND HISTORY REPORT

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E
(b) U. S. Navy Regulations Rev, 1990
(c) OPNAVINST 3120.32 Series

- Encl:
- (1) Command Composition and Organization
 - (2) Chronology of Recent Deployment and Turnaround
 - (3) Narrative History of 1993
 - (4) Commanding Officer's Biography and Picture
 - (5) Executive Officer's Biography and Picture
 - (6) Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN History
 - (7) Squadron Aircraft Photo
 - (8) Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN Notice 1301 dtd 13JAN94
 - (9) Enlisted Alpha Roster
 - (10) Monthly Aviation Statistic Summary
 - (11) VFA-15 Change of Command Program

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (11) are forwarded.



W. E. GORTNEY

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COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

1. The mission of Strike Fighter Squadron Fifteen is to maintain a maximum state of air combat readiness as a deterrent or strike capability against any and all enemies of the United States of America, as may be directed by higher command authority. The primary function of VFA-15 within that mission is to conduct offensive air superiority and air-to-surface attack operations.

2. Strike Fighter Squadron Fifteen is organized in two primary levels; command and department. The organizational structure has been established within the framework of primary billets authorized by the Chief of Naval Personnel and within the guidelines established in references (b) and (c). In this particular application, the organizational structure and billet descriptions depicted in reference (c) have been tailored, as necessary, to fit the structure of a deployable aviation command.

3. Strike Fighter Squadron Fifteen is based at NAS Cecil Field, Fl, commanded by CDR William E. Gortney and has an immediate external command relationship as outlined below:

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL

A. Command/Operational Control	Commander, Carrier Air Wing Eight NAS Norfolk, VA
B. Administrative Control (embarked)	Commander, Carrier Air Wing Eight
(ashore)	Commander, Strike Fighter Wing, Atlantic Naval Air Station Cecil Field, Fl
C. Technical Material	Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic/Naval Air Systems Command Washington, D.C.
D. Support Control	Commander, Strike Fighter Wing, Atlantic Naval Air Station Cecil Field, Fl

4. The ten (10) FA-18C HORNET aircraft assigned to the squadron have AJ tail code markings. The Bureau number breakdown is as follows:

AIRCRAFT	BUREAU NUMBER
300	164689
301	164631
302	164643
303	164646
304	164655
305	164661

Encl (1)

306	164666
307	164669
310	164673
311	164680

5. Strike Fighter Squadron Fifteen consists of 178 enlisted members and 23 officers.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF 1993 DEPLOYMENT AND TURNAROUND CYCLE

New Years Day at NAS Cecil Field	01 JAN
FLEETEX with CVW-8 SPMAGTF	15 JAN - 10 FEB
POM Period	15 FEB - 10 MAR
FLY ON USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN-71)	12 MAR
Turnover with USS John F. Kennedy (CVN-67)	25 MAR
Combat Air Patrol support of Operation Provide Promise	25 MAR - 12 APR
Flight Operations for Deny Flight provide Combat Air Patrol stations for no-fly zone over Bosnia	12 APR - 23 MAY
Transit to Avgo Nisi	24 MAY
Airwing live ordnance bomb exercise, Avgo Nisi	25 MAY - 27 MAY
Port Call at Rhodes, Greece	28 MAY - 02 JUN
Resume Operation Deny Flight missions	04 JUN - 26 JUN
Transit to Red Sea for Operation Southern Watch	26 JUN - 27 JUN
Transit Suez Canal	28 JUN
Flights in support of Operation Southern Watch	30 JUN - 13 JUL
Transit Suez Canal toward Naples, Italy	14 JUL
Port Call at Naples, Italy	18 JUL - 25 JUL
Resume Operation Deny Flight Missions	27 JUL - 05 AUG
Port Call at Corfu, Greece	06 AUG - 10 AUG
Resume Operation Deny Flight Missions	12 AUG - 24 AUG
Turnover with USS America (CV-66)	26 AUG
CVW-8 Missile Exercise off coast of Azores	31 AUG
Transit en route CONUS	01 SEP - 08 SEP
Airwing fly-off	06 SEP
Theodore Roosevelt pierside Norfolk, VA	08 SEP

Theodore Roosevelt pierside Norfolk, VA	08 SEP
Change of Command at NAS Cecil Field CDR J.J. Capalbo is relieved by CDR W.E. Gortney	14 OCT
Air to Ground Competitive Exercise with 07C Integration	17 OCT - 01 DEC
Air to Air Competitive Exercise	01 DEC - 20 DEC
Christmas leave period begins	20 DEC

NARRATIVE HISTORY OF 1993

1. Calendar year 1993 was an extremely busy, productive and historic year for the VALIONS of Strike Fighter Squadron Fifteen. Our objective this year, as in years past, was to maintain our high state of combat readiness and power projection capability while maintaining an unequaled reputation of excellence in the Strike Fighter Community. Our endurance and readiness was tested repeatedly during flight operations in the enforcement of a no fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina and Southern Iraq while deployed aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN-71).

2. Calendar year 1993 began with the VALIONS home at Cecil Field preparing for an upcoming Mediterranean deployment in March. As a last preparation for at sea operations we participated in FLEETEX 1-93 with Carrier Wing 8 and the newly incorporated Special Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF) from 15 January to 10 February. Final preparations for deployment were completed during a Planning for Overseas Movement period from 11 February through 10 March.

On the twelfth of March the Valions embarked in USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN-71) and officially began Mediterranean deployment 2-93. Shortly after our departure, newly elected President Bill Clinton and Secretary of Defense Les Aspin visited the Roosevelt.

This was an interesting event with several Valions being able to speak with the new President on defense-related issues. After transit of the Atlantic and arrival in the Mediterranean Sea, turnover was completed on 25 March with the USS John F. Kennedy (CV-67) and CVW-3 and the Valions assumed the watch on station in the Adriatic Sea. Immediately we began flight operations in support of Operation Provide Promise and flew approximately 12 unit level training sorties per day utilizing air to air, air to ground, and smart weapons tactics through 11 April. On the twelfth of April the Valions began Operation Deny Flight and the enforcement of a United Nations mandated no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina. Two overland Combat Air Patrol stations were continuously manned with the help of Dutch F-16's, French Mirage 2000's, U.S. Air Force F-15's, and later British Tornados and Turkish F-16'S. In late April the ship hosted a visit by "NIGHTLINE" with Dave Marash and featured an interview with VFA-15 pilots LCDR Jim Papageorge and LT Jack Moriarty. Our first Steel Beach picnic and Beer Day was held 24 April with no sign of a port call in the near future.

The ninth of May saw the continuation of Operation Deny Flight combined with unit level training. The ship transited to Avgo Nisi 24 May where the Valions began live ordnance training, specifically with Laser Guided Munitions. The Valions led the airwing in the demonstration of a new self-lasing capability provided to the Hornet by the incorporation of a new laser in the Laser Target Designator/Rangefinder. The results were extraordinary with the squadron demonstrating an 80% success rate on deliveries with the new capability. The exercise culminated with the Valions leading a

outstanding liberty. At the completion of the port visit, Operation Deny Flight was again joined by VFA-15 from 12-24 August, and on 26 August turnover with the USS AMERICA (CV-66) and Carrier Airwing One was completed. Departure from the Mediterranean was on 29 August and we began the trip home. During the Translant Airwing Eight held a Missile Exercise off the coast of the Azores with three Valions scoring E's on two AIM-9 Sidewinder and one AIM-7 Sparrow missile shots.

Quarters for CVW-8 was held 4 September and the Valions took the TOP HOOK award for a second consecutive deployment with four VFA-15 pilots finishing in the Airwing Top Ten. The airwing flew off on 6 September for a homecoming at NAS Cecil Field. USS Theodore Roosevelt arrived pierside two days later on 8 September and Mediterranean Deployment 2-93 was officially complete with the VALIONS main body arrival at Cecil Field.

After a well deserved crew rest period, Commander J.J. Capalbo was relieved by Commander W.E. Gortney on 14 Oct as the forty-fourth Commanding Officer of VFA-15. CDR Capalbo received orders as CO of VFA-125 in Lemoore, Ca. Flying resumed on 17 Oct with a big push on Air to Ground Competitive Exercise and 07C Operational Flight Program ^{Integration}. The new software was welcomed by all pilots and significantly improved the already impressive air-to-air capabilities of the FA-18C. Air to Ground Competitive Exercise was completed on 1 Dec. Immediately thereafter the Valions began an Air to Air Competitive Exercise program with VF-45 and completed the exercise on 20 Dec with 14 pilots earning recognition on the coveted Strike Fighter Wing Atlantic Commodores List. Finally, the

major airwing strike using VFA-15 developed LGB deliveries. Additionally, the VALIONS achieved a significant safety milestone on 28 May by passing one year mishap free. Our first port call came 28 May in Rhodes, Greece and lasted through 2 June.

Flight operations resumed 4 June in support of Operation Deny Flight where the Valions remained on station until 26 June. While in transit to a port visit in Marseilles, France we were instructed on 26 June to transit at best speed to the Red Sea and expect to fly in support of Operation Southern Watch. Tensions were high due to the alleged assassination attempt of former President George Bush by the Iraqis, and transit of the Suez Canal was conducted on 28 June en route to the Red Sea. Our participation in Operation Southern Watch began on 30 June with missions over Southern Iraq. Flights were in excess of five hours over the desolate land of Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Missions in support of Southern Watch included VFA-15 led airwing missions to real world targets throughout Southern Iraq and culminated with CDR Bill Gortney leading the airwing in a theater-wide, coalition mirror image joint strike. Operations in the Red Sea were completed on 14 July with the transit of the Roosevelt through the Suez Canal en route to a port visit in Naples, Italy. The port visit lasted eight short days from 18-25 July.

Flight operations for Deny Flight missions began once again on 27 July and lasted through 5 August and included air to air Combat Air Patrol and Air to Ground close air support missions. A port call in Corfu, Greece came from 6-10 August and a hidden treasure was discovered. Corfu was the model of gracious hospitality and

year ended with all of the Valions enjoying the holiday season with some well deserved leave.