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1971
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FIGHTER SQUADRON ONE HUNDRED TWO
FLEET POST OFFICE
NEW YORK 09501

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

Subj: Command History for Calendar Year 1971 (OPNAV Report
5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Command History
(2) Officers' Roster
(3) Biography and Photograph of CDR W. B. KIRKCONNELL

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through
(3) are submitted.


W. B. KIRKCONNELL

Copy to:
DIRNAVHIST (OP-09B9)

FIGHTER SQUADRON ONE HUNDRED TWO
COMMAND HISTORY - 1971

1. Command Organization: Commander W. W. HARGRAVE, Jr., USN, [REDACTED]/1310, who assumed command of Fighter Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWO on 10 June 1970, was relieved by Lieutenant Commander W. B. KIRKCONNELL, USN, [REDACTED]/1310, in ceremonies held on board Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia Beach, Virginia on 14 June 1971. Lieutenant Commander KIRKCONNELL became the sixteenth Commanding Officer of Fighter Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWO and the first of that rank to command an aviation squadron since 1959.

2. Summary of Operations: The squadron returned to Naval Air Station Oceana from its tenth Mediterranean deployment on 31 January 1971. After a month standdown the squadron deployed a detachment of three F4J aircraft, five aircrews, and sufficient maintenance personnel to Naval Air Station Key West, Florida for "Hot-Pad" duty from 1 March 1971 to 21 March 1971. Shortly thereafter an additional detachment of three aircraft and three aircrews was assigned to alert duty at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba from 27 March to 3 April.

After the change of command in June, the squadron began shipboard operations off the coast of Virginia aboard USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62) in preparation for the Mediterranean deployment commencing in September. During the pre-deployment training operations, the squadron participated in a special air-to-surface missile evaluation. Firings were conducted to determine the tactics to be used in employing the F4/Sparrow III weapons system against surface targets. OPTEVFOR (VX-4) supplied the missiles and basic tactics for this exercise. The success of the new tactics was amply demonstrated by direct hits and substantial damage to the target, the former United States destroyer BLACKWOOD.

Qualifications in the operation of the newly installed "Charger Blue" electronic countermeasures equipment began in August. At the Pinecastle Electronic Warfare Range in northern Florida, each pilot and Radar Intercept Officer completed a training sortie utilizing all available electronic emitters. By September all aircrews were prepared to deploy with the improved equipment.

Fighter Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWO commenced its eleventh Mediterranean cruise on 16 September 1971 aboard USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62) as a unit of Attack Carrier Air Wing SEVEN (CVW-7).

Enclosure (1)

Moving into the Norwegian Sea on 20 September, the squadron began operations in support of NATO Fleet Exercise ROYAL KNIGHT. This NATO training exercise was designed to test the readiness and effectiveness of the NATO Striking Force Atlantic. Air opposition was provided by both the Royal Air Force and Norwegian Air Force. Fighter Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWO provided fleet air defense during the exercise. Though not part of the exercise, the squadron intercepted and escorted many Russian bomber and reconnaissance aircraft during their overflights of the carrier.

As an extension of ROYAL KNIGHT, USS INDEPENDENCE took part in exercise Magic Sword IV in the North Sea during the period 7 October to 10 October. In addition to fleet air defense missions, VF-102 also flew simulated strike missions into Northern Europe. An additional portion of the exercise allowed the squadron to test the compatibility of inflight refueling and deck launch procedures between NATO Allies. This squadron's Phantoms inflight refueled from Royal Air Force Victor tankers and the Royal Navy Buccaneer tankers on a routine basis. CDR KIRKCONNELL and LCDR [REDACTED] participated in a cross-deck operation with HMS ARK ROYAL on 8 October when they successfully landed and launched from the smaller but compatible British carrier.

The squadron entered the Mediterranean on board USS INDEPENDENCE on 12 October.

In early November the squadron took part in National Week XI by flying strike and photo escort missions as well as providing air defense for the task group. The exercise employed shore based Navy and United States Air Force aircraft as raids.

On 14 November 1971, the squadron participated in another, and more extensive, cross-deck operation with HMS ARK ROYAL in the Mediterranean. Four additional Diamondback crews took part in the cross-decking and at the same time Royal Navy Phantoms from 892 Squadron on board HMS ARK ROYAL cross-decked to USS INDEPENDENCE with the assistance from VF-102 Maintenance personnel.

The calendar year ended with one of the highlights of the cruise - a highly successful air-to-air missile shoot. The squadron was tasked to plan and organize the missile shoot for 6 and 7 December. Utilizing the NATO Missile Firing Installation (NAMFI) range north of the island of Crete, the CVW-7 fighters successfully fired on schedule a large number of Sparrow and Sidewinder missiles, the majority guiding to within lethal range of the MQM-74 targets.

Following this important exercise the squadron flew cyclic operations prior to arriving in Athens, Greece to wind up the year with a holiday period.

Enclosure (1)

3. Special Topics:

a. Statistics:

1971 Hours

JAN	311	MAY	234	SEP	332
FEB	67	JUN	238	OCT	275
MAR	230	JUL	505	NOV	455
APR	243	AUG	254	DEC	342

TOTAL 1971 FLIGHT TIME	-----	3485
TOTAL 1971 ABOARD CARRIER	-----	2160
TOTAL 1971 SORTIES ABOARD CARRIER	-----	1313
TOTAL 1971 DAY CARRIER LANDINGS	-----	954
TOTAL 1971 NIGHT CARRIER LANDINGS	-----	413
TYPE AIRCRAFT ASSIGNED	-----	F-4J
NUMBER AIRCRAFT ASSIGNED	-----	12

1971 Mediterranean Deployment Data

	<u>OPERATING DAYS</u>	<u>HOURS/SORTIES</u>	<u>DAY/NIGHT CARRIER ARRESTED LANDINGS</u>
SEP	10	171/118	94/24
OCT	14	275/160	110/50
NOV	20	455/276	180/95
DEC	14	342/206	136/66
TOTAL	58	<u>1243/760</u>	<u>520/235</u>

b. Major Modifications to the Weapons System:

Installation of the improved "Charger Blue" electronic counter-measures equipment began in May and proceeded until all twelve F-4J aircraft were modified. VF-102 and its sister squadron, VF-33, were the first squadrons to receive and deploy with this advanced equipment. Ten newly modified aircraft were flight checked on the Pinecastle Electronic Warfare Range. The remaining two aircraft were tested with ground emitters at NAS Oceana.

c. Major Material Casualties:

On 10 July the squadron lost two aircraft at sea off the Virginia Capes. The accident occurred during predeployment training operations aboard USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62). LT [REDACTED] and LTJG [REDACTED] ejected safely from aircraft bureau number 155777 and LT [REDACTED] and LT [REDACTED] ejected safely from aircraft bureau number 155538.