



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

1983

VF-102:00:wes
5750
Ser 123
05 March 1984

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

Subj: Command History, 1983

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12C

1. The following command history is submitted in accordance with reference (a).

January

The year 1983 began with Fighter Squadron 102 deployed on board USS AMERICA and proceeding into the Mediterranean after a Christmas portcall in Palma, Majorca. USS AMERICA relieved USS NIMITZ on station in the eastern Med, providing presence operations in support of the U. S. Marines in Beirut, Lebanon. VF-102 TARPS aircraft obtained the first imagery of a Soviet arms carrier with SA-5 Cannon missiles on board enroute to Syria. These Lebanon operations later earned the squadron the Allied Expeditionary Medal. A relaxing portcall was enjoyed by all in Athens, Greece, in the latter part of the month.

February

After an eventful transit through the Suez Canal, the squadron began operating in the Indian Ocean as part of Battle Group Golf. The highlight of the month was Operation BEACON FLASH flown over Oman in which VF-102 pitted its air-to-air skills against Omani BAC Jaguars and Hawker Hunters.

March

During March TARPS went into action again, flying 1200 miles to photograph the Soviet anchorage at Socotra Island. The second week was occupied with a portcall in Colombo, Sri Lanka, where the squadron enjoyed a well deserved rest. Back at sea, the squadron again participated in Operation BEACON FLASH in the skies over Oman, tangling with the Jaguars and Hunters of the Omani Air Force. The month culminated in a week long weapons week in the vicinity of Diego Garcia during which the squadron executed flawless AIM-7 Sparrow and AIM-9 Sidewinder missile shoots.

April

The month of April found the Diamondbacks operating in the western portion of the Indian Ocean enroute to a portcall in Mombasa, Kenya. A squadron party held on the beach in Mombasa was a huge success and enjoyed by all. After departing Mombasa, USS AMERICA returned to Oman for a final BEACON FLASH Operation. TARPS was again in action, photographically mapping the beaches of Kenya, Oman and Somalia for the upcoming multinational Operation BRIGHT STAR. During the routine mapping mission over Somalia, Somali Air Defense Forces fired a SA-2 Guideline surface to air missile at a VF-102 F-14, mistaking it for an Ethiopian MIG-23 Flogger. The missile exploded prematurely, and the two F-14's conducting the mission departed without damage.

Subj: Command History, 1983

May

The beginning of May found the squadron during its last days in the Indian Ocean enroute to a Suez Canal transit back into the Mediterranean. After a brief period relieving USS NIMITZ on station off Beirut, Lebanon, the squadron journeyed to Malaga, Spain, for the final portcall of cruise. While inport, four aircraft made an Air Combat Maneuvering (ACM) deployment to Decimomannu Air Field, Sardinia, for operations with USAF F-15's, F-5's and West German F-4E's. The Navy F-14's dominated the air-to-air contests, recorded and validated by the Sardinia Air Combat Maneuvering Instrumentation (ACMI). Before departing Malaga the squadron embarked the "Tigers" (Diamondback dependents) for a two week Tiger cruise enroute Norfolk.

June

June was a standdown month to give everyone a chance to reacquaint themselves with their families and regain their land legs.

July

The squadron swung back into action in July starting out with a Missilex, firing two AIM-7 Sparrows and two AIM-9 Sidewinders successfully. Two crews journeyed to NAS Miramar, California, for a six week course at the Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN). During July, the squadron was named AIRLANT's number one TARPS squadron for 1982 and 1983 at the annual Fighter Fling. VF-102's LCDR Lin "YANK" Rutherford was also named Fighter Pilot of the Year for the same period.

August

TARPS was again in the limelight during August as VF-102 swept all categories in the first annual AIRLANT Reaper Recce Roundup. Competing against other east coast TARPS squadrons for top honors in photographic reconnaissance, the squadron confirmed its status as the top east coast TARPS squadron. The latter half of August was spent at NAS Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, as Orange Air for USS INDEPENDENCE and USS KENNEDY.

September

Returning to NAS Oceana, the squadron began the Fleet Fighter Air Combat Maneuvering Readiness Program (FFARP) with VF-43. Fighting the nimble A-4 and F-5 adversaries on the ACMR was a continual challenge for the Diamondbacks. The results were impressive as VF-102 garnered the greatest amount of individual "E's" awarded any squadron since its inception.

October

The squadron hit the road again in October deploying to NAS Fallon, Nevada, for Air Wing weapons training. After many days of concentrated air-to-ground gunnery, strike-escort and TARPS missions, the squadron packed up its belongings as the entire Air Wing was recalled prematurely for a no-notice deployment on

Subj: Command History, 1983

board USS AMERICA. Returning to NAS Oceana the last weekend in October, aircrews began a concentrated field carrier qualification period for the impending deployment.

November

By the second of November, the squadron was at sea enroute to the Puerto Rican Operating Area. The exercise demonstrated convincingly that VF-102, the Air Wing and CV-66 were up to the task of deploying with minimal preparation and maximum safety and effectiveness. While at sea, the squadron completed the REFTRA phase of its workup cycle.

December

The first week of December was spent in port Nassau, Bahamas, a well deserved respite from the demanding workup routine. Back at sea, the squadron participated in the Initial Operational Test and Evaluation (IOT&E) of the HAVE QUICK radios carried by VF-102 F-14's. The squadron returned to Norfolk on 14 December after successful completion of Phase I of the workup cycle.

Preparing for the holidays, the squadron was tasked with a no-notice AIM-7 Sparrow missile shoot which went off without a hitch. As the year closed, the Diamondbacks looked back on a year marked by many operational successes, outstanding mission readiness and importantly, a high degree of safety.


W. W. COPELAND, JR.