

1969

UNITED STATES ATLANTIC FLEET  
NAVAL AIR FORCE  
FIGHTER SQUADRON ELEVEN

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

Subj: Command History; submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12 series

Encl: (1) Basic Narrative  
(2) Chronology of Events  
(3) Documentary Annexes  
(4) Public Affairs Material

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (4) are submitted.

  
W. E. GREER, III

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DIRNAVHIST (OP-09B9)  
CINCLANTFLT  
COMNAVAIRLANT  
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\* Incorrect

WORLD FAMOUS RED RIPPERS

FIGHTER SQUADRON ELEVEN

BASIC NARRATIVE

Fighter Squadron ELEVEN, one of the nation's oldest and most famous continuously operating fighter squadron, traces its beginning to the year 1927 when Fighter Squadron FIVE adopted the name "Red Rippers" and the boar's head insignia.\* Another fighter squadron already in existence was soon deployed as a patrol and bombing unit and later returned to fighter status, but the Red Rippers have remained in the fighter community since their 1927 commissioning, proudly guarding their name, insignia, and traditions.

The boar's head and red and blue shield insignia of the Red Rippers is a familiar sight to both military and civilian personnel who have traveled abroad because squadron mementos in the form of plaques and stickers have been left all over the world during the squadron's forty-three years of service to the nation. In 1969 the Red Ripper name has probably been left on the moon for future visitors, since Captain Richard Gordon, crewman on Apollo Twelve, is himself a former Red Ripper fighter pilot.

Demonstrating uncompromising professionalism in Naval Aviation, the World Famous Red Rippers have proudly represented the United States by establishing countless records and traditions on their many deployments throughout the world. The 1969 Red Rippers have continued to enhance this fine record of accomplishment. On the move again for more than eight of the twelve months, the squadron spent only short periods of time at its home base, NAS Oceana in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

New Year's Day 1969 found the Red Rippers about midway through a long, nine-month Mediterranean cruise aboard the USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). During the last four months of the deployment 1,229 flight hours were accumulated by the Rippers flying 620 day and 140 night sorties. Most significant were operations during March in the Ionian Sea, with total hours for the month at least double those of any previous month. While underway that month there were almost daily intercepts of Russian-Egyptian Badger aircraft, and two aircrews received letters of commendation from Commander Sixth Fleet for their close-in photography of aircraft intercepted.

Other high points in the cruise were fire power demonstrations and air shows for NATO, the Italian War College, and Rear Admiral Charbonnet. During the 1969 portion of the cruise one Red Ripper made his 500th arrested landing aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59) and five more squadron pilots became double centurions. In the same period several prominent people were awarded the coveted Honorary Red Ripper Certificate after a flight in one of the squadron's F-4B Phantoms. Recipients were Father McCue, FORRESTAL's World Famous Catholic Chaplain; Wing Commander Cobban and Squadron Leaders Allen and King of the Royal Air Force; Lieutenant Colonel Jim Qualls, Seventh Air Force Liaison with the squadron;

Commander Mort Golde, Commanding Officer of the destroyer USS O'HARE; and Brigadier Egoisto Andalo of Italy.

Red Rippers often recall a notable incident that occurred during a 1969 in-port period at Athens. A newspaper article was generated that further publicized the Red Ripper name in this part of Europe. Substance of the report was that the familiar red flag bearing the words "Another Home of the World Famous Red Rippers" hanging from the front of the squadron Admin ashore, was mistakenly construed to identify a communist party headquarters. Behind the flag a surprised reporter found the U.S. Navy's oldest fighter squadron toasting a party attended by Rear Admiral Charbonnet and Captain Swanson, the Air Group Commander!

Late in April the FORRESTAL (CVA-59) was relieved by the USS KENNEDY (CVA-67) and on April 29th the Red Rippers arrived at Pier Twelve in Norfolk for a well-deserved rest.

During May there was a welcome-to-Phantoms party for the Blue Angels, a semi-formal "all hands" party at the Oceana Enlisted Club, and a going-away party for several officers. June highlights were two weeks of hot pad duty in Key West, Florida and the initiation of an elaborate, tactics-oriented training program by the new Operations Officer - - 473 flight hours were accumulated in these two months after the return home.

The squadron mourned the loss of Lieutenant John Perry and Lieutenant (junior grade) Dave Crane on July sixth when a landing accident at MCAS Cherry Point claimed their lives. July was a busy month for the squadron with air strikes out of NAS Cecil Field in Florida, the visit of twelve midshipmen, an ADMAT inspection, another going away party, a visit by the crew of the British aircraft carrier HMS EAGLE and a change of command. Commander W. E. Greer, III relieved Commander D. D. Davison and became the forty-second Red Ripper Commanding Officer.

It was in July that the squadron once again set the pace in training techniques by becoming the first operational fleet squadron to use tape recorders in airborne work. They are used on every hop and have become invaluable in debriefs. They are highly recommended for other fleet squadrons as a powerful training tool.

Early in August the emphasis was on preparing aircrews for the upcoming carrier qualifications and a heavy "bounce" schedule was flown at Fentress Field near NAS Oceana. Quals were completed from 11-13 August and on the 14th the squadron began its deployment to NAS Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, leaving detachments at Oceana and aboard FORRESTAL (CVA-59). The missile shoot was successfully completed and on August 23rd the Red Rippers flew to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and from there on to FORRESTAL. The Rippers flew 586 hours in these two months away from home; the squadron returned to Oceana September 23rd.

Three weeks later an emergency recall again brought the squadron out to sea, this time for three days aboard FORRESTAL. All but a handful of Rippers, who were away on leave, were aboard ship within hours of the recall notice. The return home was short-lived, since the squadron was back at sea two days later on their Operational Readiness Inspection.

Despite the loss of an aircraft, the ORI was a marked success for the F-4's bombing capability. The Rippers were tops in the Air Wing during the SINKEK, on which the Air Wing's grade depended. Attack aircraft scored only a scattering of hits with numerous runs after a Red Ripper had penetrated the hull of the target vessel with three Sparrow missiles. The Rippers then finished the job by inundating the hull with the fragmentations and explosions of eighteen Mark 83's. Less than five minutes later the ship sank.

November was a month of extensive preparation for the upcoming Mediterranean deployment. The squadron took delivery on several new aircraft, and many new crewmen were reporting directly from the replacement air group. Several officers also dedicated a great deal of time and work to provide inputs for a revision of the ORI and ADMAT.

On December 1st the squadron loaded its twelve aircraft aboard FORRESTAL at Norfolk and on the morning of December 2nd the Red Rippers once again left families and friends behind as the FORRESTAL sailed for the Mediterranean. During a somewhat stormy but otherwise uneventful Atlantic crossing the readiness of the Red Rippers was tested on several occasions by launching the condition CAP aircraft. The turnover was held December 12th and the Rippers, along with the other embarked squadrons, joined the operating Sixth Fleet forces. Enroute to waters south of Sicily various exercises were conducted including the bombing of Capo Tuelado, a target area near Sardinia, in which the Red Rippers participated. While operating east of Malta two squadron aircraft completed a successful night intercept of an Egyptian Badger aircraft. One of the Phantoms was flown by Captain C.A.L. Swanson, the Air Group Commander, and a Red Ripper of the early fifties.

On December 22nd, FORRESTAL entered the harbor at Cannes, France for a two-week anchorage, and the Red Rippers of VF-11 prepared for an enjoyable Christmas and New Year's Day in France.

COMMAND HISTORY REPORT

1. Chronology of events:

- 01 JAN 69 to 03 JAN 69: Continued Christmas visit in Cannes, France.
- 03 JAN 69 to 12 JAN 69: Normal operations of CW-17 off USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59) in the Central Mediterranean Sea.
- 13 JAN 69 to 20 JAN 69: Aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). The Squadron visited Valletta, Malta.
- 20 JAN 69 to 22 JAN 69: Enroute to Italy.
- 22 JAN 69 to 23 JAN 69: Aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). The Squadron visited Taranto, Italy.
- 23 JAN 69 to 27 JAN 69: Operations in the Western Mediterranean.
- 28 JAN 69 to 03 FEB 69: Aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). The Squadron visited Naples, Italy.
- 04 FEB 69 to 07 FEB 69: The Squadron participated in an Air Power demonstration for NATO and the Italian War College.
- 08 FEB 69 to 09 FEB 69: Anchored at Saros Bay, Turkey.
- 10 FEB 69 to 16 FEB 69: Aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). The Squadron visited Istanbul, Turkey.
- 17 FEB 69 to 21 FEB 69: Operations in the Aegean Sea.
- 22 FEB 69 to 28 FEB 69: Aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). The Squadron visited Athens, Greece.
- 01 MAR 69 to 07 MAR 69: Operations in the Ionian Sea which included Fire Power Demonstration for RADM CHARBONNETT.
- 08 MAR 69 to 09 MAR 69: Enroute Trieste, Italy.
- 10 MAR 69 to 17 MAR 69: Aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). The Squadron visited Trieste, Italy.
- 17 MAR 69 to 28 MAR 69: Operations in the Western Mediterranean with a short anchorage at Pollensa Bay, Spain.

29 MAR 69 to 08 APR 69: Aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). The Squadron visited Barcelona, Spain.

09 APR 69 to 14 APR 69: Operations in the Western Mediterranean.

15 APR 69 to 19 APR 69: Aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). The Squadron visited Marseille, France.

20 APR 69 to 21 APR 69: Enroute to Rota, Spain.

22 APR 69 : Turnover with the USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CVA-67) and VF-32 and VF-14.

23 APR 69 to 29 APR 69: Crossing the Atlantic enroute to Norfolk, Virginia.

30 APR 69 to 19 MAY 69: Leave period and stand down following the cruise.

19 MAY 69 to 13 JUN 69: Based ashore at NAS Oceana, Virginia conducting normal training operations.

14 JUN 69 to 30 JUN 69: Deployed to NAS Key West where the Squadron stood continuous ready alert on "HOT PAD" duty.

01 JUL 69 to 06 JUL 69: Based ashore at NAS Oceana, Virginia conducting normal training operations.

06 JUL 69 : Tragic accident at MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina in which we lost an aircrew.

07 JUL 69 to 14 JUL 69: Based ashore at NAS Oceana, Virginia conducting normal training operations.

14 JUL 69 to 18 JUL 69: Participated in CW-17 Air Strikes in area of Jacksonville, Florida and had detachment at NAS Cecil.

19 JUL 69 to 23 JUL 69: Based ashore at NAS Oceana, Virginia conducting normal training operations.

24 JUL 69 to 25 JUL 69: ADMAT Inspection.

26 JUL 69 to 29 JUL 69: Based ashore at NAS Oceana, Virginia conducting normal training operations.

30 JUL 69 : CDR W. E. GREER III relieved CDR D. D. DAVISON.

31 AUG 69 to 10 AUG 69: Remaining at NAS Oceana, Virginia. The Squadron began a heavy "BOUNCE" schedule at Fentress Field in preparation for carrier qualifications.

11 AUG 69 to 13 AUG 69: Carrier Qualifications aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59) off the coast of Florida.

- 14 AUG 69 to 23 AUG 69: With a detachment at NAS Oceana, Virginia and aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). The Squadron deployed to Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico for a missile shoot and participation in a fleet exercise in the Caribbean Sea.
- 24 AUG 69 : The Squadron flew and airlifted to Guantanamo, Cuba.
- 25 AUG 69 to 23 SEP 69: Aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). The Squadron participated in exercises in the Caribbean.
- 24 SEP 69 to 17 OCT 69: Based at NAS Oceana, Virginia conducting normal training operations.
- 18 OCT 69 to 20 OCT 69: The Squadron was involved in an emergency deployment aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59).
- 20 OCT 69 to 22 OCT 69: Returned to NAS Oceana, Virginia to prepare for the Operational Readiness Test aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59).
- 23 OCT 69 to 07 NOV 69: Operational Readiness Inspection, during which time the Squadron lost an aircraft, but recovered the crew in good health.
- 07 NOV 69 to 01 DEC 69: Based at NAS Oceana, Virginia. A maximum effort was made to prepare new aircraft and new aircrews for the upcoming deployment.
- 02 DEC 69 to 11 DEC 69: Crossed the Atlantic aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59).
- 12 DEC 69 : Turnover with USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CVA-67) at Pollensa Bay, Spain.
- 13 DEC 69 to 22 DEC 69: Operations in the Western Mediterranean with one trip through the Ionian bringing the Squadron's first BADGER intercept of the cruise.
- 22 DEC 69 to JAN 70: Aboard USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). The Squadron visited Cannes, France.

3. Documentary Annexes

Part I. Flight Information

<u>Month</u>	<u>Total Hours</u>	<u>Day Hours</u>	<u>Night Hours</u>	<u>Total Hops</u>	<u>Day Hops</u>	<u>Night Hops</u>	<u>Carrier Landings</u> <u>Day / Night</u>		<u>Catapult Shots</u>
Jan	248.6	212.9	35.7	153	131	32	107	26	146
Feb	234.0	191.0	43.0	142	117	25	109	33	142
Mar	483.0	383.0	100.0	296	232	64	216	80	290
Apr	263.0	228.0	35.0	159	140	19	119	29	148
May	252.0	248.9	3.1	162	160	2	0	0	0
Jun	221.0	213.0	8.0	151	147	4	0	0	0
Jul	244.0	227.9	16.1	177	158	19	0	0	0
Aug	280.0	190.0	90.0	240	158	82	85	31	116
Sep	306.0	252.0	54.0	226	183	43	82	48	130
Oct	244.0	191.0	53.0	190	134	56	98	21	119
Nov	215.0	168.0	47.0	169	119	50	42	13	55
Dec	264.0	226.0	38.0	165	133	32	134	26	150



3. Documentary Annexes

Appendix A, Part 1

Ordnance Expended  
January 1969 - January 1970

<u>Type Ordnance</u>	<u>Amount</u>
MK-76	850
2.75 RKT	654
AIM 7	19
AIM 9	24
MK-81	177
MK-82	106
MK-83	28
M904E2	311
ZUNI	60
MK-77 FIRE BOMB	8
MK-24 FLARES	25

### 3. Documentary Annexes

#### Part II. Personnel and Administrative Section

1. The allowance of this command changed in October 1969 from 246 to an allowance of 239. On 31 December 1969, the squadron on board count was 215, about 90% of allowance.

2. The squadron was involved in the following legal matters in 1969:

CO's Mast: 18  
Summary Courts: 02  
Special Courts: 00

3. The reenlistment rate of the squadron for 1969 was as follows:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Number Assigned</u>	<u>Number Eligible</u>	<u>First Cruise</u>	<u>Career</u>	<u>Number Reen.</u>	<u>First Cruise</u>	<u>Career</u>	<u>Overall Rate</u>	<u>First Cruise</u>	<u>Career</u>
Jan	223	05	04	01	01	00	01	2%	0%	100%
Feb	221	02	02	00	00	00	00	0%	0%	0%
Mar	220	05	04	01	01	00	01	20%	0%	100%
Apr	218	06	06	00	01	00	00	0%	0%	0%
May	217	01	01	00	00	00	00	0%	0%	0%
Jun	239	04	04	00	00	00	00	0%	0%	0%
Jul	246	13	12	01	03	02	01	23%	14%	100%
Aug	250	12	12	00	00	00	00	0%	0%	0%
Sep	251	13	12	01	01	00	01	8%	0%	100%
Oct	248	21	21	00	00	00	00	0%	0%	0%
Nov	226	14	14	00	02	02	00	15%	15%	0%
Dec	215	01	00	01	01	00	01	100%	0%	100%

CASUALTIES

Fighter Squadron ELEVEN experienced three casualties during the period  
January 1969 to January 1970:

LT John Logan PERRY

USNR 659702

Approximately 2143 on 6 July 1969 resulting from  
an aircraft landing accident at MCAS Cherry Point,  
North Carolina.

LTJG David Samuel CRANE

USNR 727680

Approximately 2143 on 6 July 1969 resulting from  
an aircraft landing accident at MCAS Cherry Point,  
North Carolina.

AMH2 Louis Zigmund SIERUTA

USN B13 41 97

Approximately 2340 on 1 October 1969 resulting from  
an automobile accident in Deerfield, Massachusetts.

COMMAND HISTORY REPORT

3. Documentary Annexes

Part III. Deployment Information

01 JAN 69 to 01 MAY 69	USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59), MED
01 MAY 69 to 13 JUN 69	NAS OCEANA, VIRGINIA
14 JUN 69 to 30 JUN 69	NAS KEYWEST, FLORIDA
01 JUL 69 to 10 AUG 69	NAS OCEANA, VIRGINIA
11 AUG 69 to 13 AUG 69	USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59)
14 AUG 69 to 24 AUG 69	NAS ROOSEVELT ROADS, PUERTO RICO
24 AUG 69 to 23 SEP 69	USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59), CARIBBEAN
24 SEP 69 to 17 OCT 69	NAS OCEANA, VIRGINIA
17 OCT 69 to 20 OCT 69	USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59)
20 OCT 69 to 22 OCT 69	NAS OCEANA, VIRGINIA
23 OCT 69 to 07 NOV 69	USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59), ORI
07 NOV 69 to 01 DEC 69	NAS OCEANA, VIRGINIA
02 DEC 69 to JAN 70	USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59), MED
TOTAL 1969	134 DAYS at NAS OCEANA
	231 DAYS DEPLOYED