

VF-11
1972

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 Report; submission of

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Encl: (1) Command History Report

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted.



J. E. TAYLOR

Copy to:
CNO (OP-09B9)

COMMAND HISTORY REPORT

1972

I. Basic History

A. Chronology of Events

1 Jan to 9 Jan 1972 The Squadron was based ashore at NAS Oceana.

10 Jan to 13 Jan 1972 The Squadron CARQUALED aboard the USS F.D. ROOSEVELT.

14 Feb to 29 Feb 1972 The Rippers deployed to Hot Pad at NAS Key West, flying over 215 sorties in 15 days.

13 Mar to 14 Mar 1972 The Squadron deployed a detachment to the U.S. Air Force Interceptor Weapons School, Tyndall AFB, for dissimilar ACM, (Air Combat Maneuvering) against F106's.

26 Mar to 29 Mar 1972 The Rippers deployed a detachment to Andrews AFB, Washington D.C. for a coordinated Fly-Over with the Air Force, honoring our POW's & MIA's.

1 Apr to 26 Apr 1972 The Squadron, based ashore at NAS Oceana, aggressively participated in a program of dissimilar ACM with F106's from Langley AFB.

27 Apr to 2 May 1972 The Rippers CARQUALED aboard the USS FORRESTAL.

8 May to 12 May 1972 Based aboard the USS FORRESTAL the Squadron operated in the Western Atlantic.

20 May 1972 The Squadron Change of Command was held at 1100 with CDR Peter B. Booth relieving CDR Austin M. Lindsey. Following the Change of Command the World Famous Red Rippers held their forty-fifth reunion at NAS Oceana.

2 Jun to 27 Jun 1972 Based aboard USS FORRESTAL the Squadron operated in the Western Atlantic, participating in an Operational Readiness Evaluation.

24 Jul to 25 Aug 1972 The Rippers, based ashore at NAS Oceana, experimented with a four day work week, flying a total of 282 sorties in four weeks.

26 Aug to 31 Aug 1972 Based aboard USS FORRESTAL the Squadron operated in the Western Atlantic.

7 Sep to 17 Sep 1972 Based aboard USS FORRESTAL the Squadron participated in an Operational Readiness Evaluation.

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22 Sep to 29 Sep 1972 Aboard the USS FORRESTAL the Red Rippers deployed to the Mediterranean.

30 Sep to 8 Oct 1972 Aboard the USS FORRESTAL the Squadron operated in the Western Med.

9 Oct to 12 Oct 1972 USS FORRESTAL anchored at Gaeta and Naples, Italy.

13 Oct to 16 Oct 1972 Aboard the USS FORRESTAL the Squadron operated in the Ionian Sea.

17 Oct to 19 Oct 1972 The Rippers visited Istanbul, Turkey.

20 Oct to 27 Oct 1972 Aboard USS FORRESTAL the Squadron operated in the Aegean Sea participating in a CRAE exercise.

28 Oct to 3 Nov 1972 The Rippers visited Athens, Greece.

4 Nov to 8 Nov 1972 Aboard USS FORRESTAL the Squadron operated in the Aegean Sea participating 6-8 Nov in a Missilex conducted on the NAMFI Range.

9 Nov to 11 Nov 1972 The Rippers visited Thessaloniki, Greece.

12 Nov to 17 Nov 1972 Aboard USS FORRESTAL the Squadron operated in the Ionian Sea participating in National Week XIV.

18 Nov to 20 Nov 1972 USS FORRESTAL anchored at Souda Bay, Crete.

21 Nov to 27 Nov 1972 The Rippers again visited Athens.

28 Nov to 6 Dec 1972 Aboard USS FORRESTAL the Squadron operated in the Ionian Sea. One Ripper Aircrew participated in a Crossdeck exercise with the HMS ARK ROYAL.

7 Dec to 9 Dec 1972 The Rippers visited the island of Rhodes.

10 Dec to 18 Dec 1972 Aboard the USS FORRESTAL the Squadron operated in the Eastern Med participating in a Missilex on 11 Dec at the NAMFI Range.

19 Dec to 31 Dec 1972 The Rippers enjoyed Christmas 1972 in Athens, Greece and completed a successful year of operations.

B. NARRATIVE

WORLD FAMOUS RED RIPPERS FIGHTER SQUADRON ELEVEN 1972

The Forty-fifth year of the Navy's oldest, continuous fighter squadron, the World Famous Red Rippers, proved to be one of its most productive and certainly one of its most historical years. The year 1972 found the Rippers preparing for the future, a possible West Pac deployment and looking back on its past, the 45th Red Ripper Reunion.

January found the Rippers aboard "the Boat", a familiar home in 1972, for refresher CARQUALS (Carrier Qualifications) aboard the USS F.D. ROOSEVELT. Following the standard four day and two night traps for each pilot, the squadron returned to NAS Oceana to continue its aggressive ACM (Air Combat Manuevering) program.

The Rippers deployed again in February, this time to NAS Key West for Hot Pad duty. On this deployment the squadron had other plans besides the usual alert commitment, eight Ripper aircraft deployed and flew a total of 215 sorties in 15 days. Broken down, this included 87 ACM sorties, 50 against dissimilar aircraft, 35 air intercept sorties including 29 scramble hops, 41 bombing hops, 10 low level/ navigation sorties, 29 ferry missions and 13 test or miscellaneous sorties. Key West proved to be a very beneficial training detachment.

In March the squadron deployed four aircraft to Tyndall AFB, Florida for dissimilar ACM against Air Force F-106's at the U.S. Air Force Interceptor Weapons School. During the two days, 12 sorties were flown (2 versus 2) for a total of 18 engagements. The training which evolved from the flights, was thought to be extremely valuable to all parties involved. Of particular note is the F-106's close approximation to the Mig-21 series aircraft when it is flown aggressively. In this light the exposure experienced by the VF-11 crews was considered to be of vital benefit.

Following the return from Tyndall, the Rippers were selected to participate in a joint Navy-Air Force POW Fly-Over at Washington, D.C. Five aircraft departed for Andrews AFB on 26 March. Four of the five flew a missing man formation with four Air Force F-4C's from Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina. On 29 March, CDR P. B. Booth, Executive Officer of the Rippers pulled out of the formation over the Pentagon to honor the nations POW's and MIA's in Viet Nam.

The beginning of April found the Rippers again participating in dissimilar ACM, this time with the F-106's out of Langley AFB Virginia. An ACM training syllabus, a "Mini Top Gun", was developed by the Rippers in liaison with the Air Force in September of 1970. This program is still in effect at Oceana and is used by all the East Coast and even some West Coast Fighter Squadrons.

Starting on 27 April the Rippers began a series of CARQUAL/re-fresher periods aboard USS FORRESTAL. FORRESTAL had just returned to sea from a nine month overhaul in the Norfolk Naval Shipyard.

On 20 May the World Famous Red Rippers held their change of command and an anniversary reunion commemorating 45 years of aviation as the Navy's oldest continuous Fighter Squadron. RADM Edward L. Feightner, USN, Commander Naval Air Systems Command (logistics) and former Red Ripper Commanding Officer made introductory remarks which were followed by an address by guest speaker, VADM M. F. Weisner, USN, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air Warfare). At the completion of Admiral Weisner's address, CDR Austin M. Lindsey passed command of the World Famous Red Rippers to CDR Peter B. Booth, the 45th Red Ripper Skipper. On hand to witness the ceremony were CDR Booth's parents, ADM and Mrs. C. T. Booth USN(RET). Admiral Booth was Commanding Officer of the Red Rippers from 1941 to 1942.

Reunion ceremonies included the flying in of three fighter aircraft of the World War II vintage to NAS Oceana. The three were led by Red Ripper Warren G. "Dutch" Schulden in his P-51 Mustang. Al Sheeves flew in an F4F Wildcat and Mr. John Van Andel came in his F4U Corsair.

Over 200 Rippers and their guests attended the reunion with some of the more notable Rippers being Mr. B. Allison "Bud" Gillies who was with the squadron in 1927 when it was formed and CDR Rex R. Berglund, USN(RET) who travelled all the way from Hawaii to attend the festivities. Viet Nam Navy Aces LT Randy Cunningham and LTJG Bill Driscoll were on hand as the guests of honor.

On 2 June the Rippers flew out to the FORRESTAL to begin twenty straight days of training in the Western Atlantic concluding with the Operational Readiness Evaluation (ORE). The ORE was highlighted by an actual Alert 5 launch of a Ripper aircraft, against a Russian Bear aircraft, on a reconnaissance mission out of Cuba. LT [REDACTED] and his RIO LT [REDACTED] intercepted the Bear off the S.E. coast of the U.S. prior to its reaching the FORRESTAL's operating area and escorted it through the area.

The FORRESTAL was scheduled to deploy on 13 July for the Mediterranean, but a fire, in the Flag spaces, which spread into CIC spaces, set back deployment plans several months. The FORRESTAL immediately entered the Norfolk Naval Shipyard for repairs.

This mishap caught everyone in VF-11 a little unprepared. All squadron training was geared for the July deployment. New plans were set and the Rippers began a month long experiment on 24 July; a four day work week. A total of 64 sorties was set for the first week. Enthusiasm was so high that week, that 26 sorties were flown on the first day with a total of 76 for the week. The experiment continued for the

next four weeks, each week proving to be an unqualified success. Field landing practice was heavily stressed throughout this period to keep aircrews proficient for the day FORRESTAL would be back at sea.

On 26 August the Rippers were back again aboard FORRESTAL for refresher landings after a two month layoff. A mini ORE was held in early September and the Rippers were off for the Mediterranean on 22 September, exactly 2 months and 9 days late.

On the translant, a single Ripper aircraft piloted by the Executive Officer, CDR James E. TAYLOR and his RIO LT [REDACTED] were launched on a 5 minute alert against a simulated Russian Bear. The FORRESTAL's first operating period in the Mediterranean began on 30 September. During this period the Rippers flew 125 sorties, greatly enhancing the squadrons readiness. Forty of the sorties were flown at night. The Automatic Carrier Landing System (ACLS) aboard FORRESTAL also required several service hops during this period to maintain certification for night ACLS landings.

Following a short inport period in Naples, Italy, the FORRESTAL steamed for Istanbul, Turkey with very little operating along the way. The next at sea period began on 21 October. During this period a total of 103 sorties were flown: 52 CAP, 14 ACM, 19 Bombing and various other service hops. Twenty-six were flown at night with a boarding rate of 96%. The day boarding rate was 95% with a 65.5% overall for OK passes.

The period 4 November to 18 November encompassed two operating periods with a short port visit to Thessaloniki, Greece. On 6-7 November the squadron participated in a missile launch exercise on the NAMFI Range north of Crete. Out of 7 events launched (two aircraft per event) during the exercise, only three were cleared to launch AIM 7E missiles. All three guided and one knocked the target, an MQM-74,

out of the sky. Two AIM-9B missiles were fired. Various problems were encountered ranging from those with the control ship to range and drone problems. All in all the exercise proved very frustrating to all concerned.

On 13 November the Rippers began participation in National Week XIV. A total of 83 sorties were flown during this NATO exercise of which 39 were CAP, 28 Search/CAP, 10 bombing sorties, four alert 5 launches and 2 miscellaneous test hops. Forty-two were launched at night. The planning and execution of National Week XIV was strongly oriented toward the ASW mission and the surface-to-surface missile threat, which is reasonable considering the present Med environment. However CAP aircraft utilization was not optimized to conform to a "real world" combat environment.

The final at sea period in November began on 28 November and went through to 6 December. The Rippers flew a total of 99 sorties, 29 of which were at night. The highlight of this operating period was a cross decking exercise with HMS ARK ROYAL in which a single Ripper aircraft, flown by LT [REDACTED] and his RIO LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED], landed aboard the British carrier.

After leaving Rhodes on 9 December the USS FORRESTAL, operating in the Eastern Med, again participated in a missile exercise on the NAMFI Range. On 11 December a total of 5 events (9 aircraft) were launched during an eight hour period, for AIM-7E and AIM-9B firing, utilizing the MQM-74 target with smoke and flares. Poor communications with the controllers was the major problem area. Four AIM-7E2 missiles were fired and 6 AIM-9B missiles were launched with varying degrees of success. Sixty day sorties were launched during this period with an 85.2% boarding rate, and 49 night sorties were launched with a 92.3% boarding rate.

Following this at sea period the FORRESTAL pulled into Athens for the Holidays.

Enclosure (1)

d) 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 DAY</u>	<u>LANDINGS / NIGHT</u>
JAN	219.1	140.1	79.0	211	126	85	53	19
FEB	296.1	273.3	22.8	274	259	15	0	0
MAR	191.4	157.9	33.5	177	140	37	0	0
APR	186.2	121.0	65.2	199	115	84	65	28
MAY	244.5	192.4	52.1	191	136	55	69	7
JUN	387.2	316.1	71.1	252	206	46	189	50
JUL	249.8	193.4	56.4	222	176	46	0	0
AUG	326.8	226.2	100.6	330	207	123	108	31
SEP	249.4	161.9	87.5	156	98	58	86	53
OCT	363.8	253.7	110.1	233	156	77	150	69
NOV	337.5	226.2	111.3	207	126	81	118	77
DEC	297.0	206.4	90.6	177	116	61	112	64

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