



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

FIGHTER SQUADRON ELEVEN

UNIT 60554

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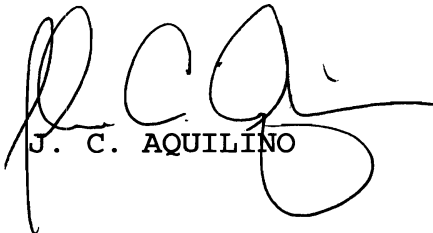
From: Commanding Officer, Fighter Squadron ELEVEN
To: Naval Aviation History and Archives
1242 10th Street SE, Washington Navy Yard,
Washington, DC 20374-5059

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2001

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST.5750.12G
(b) CNO ltr 5750 Ser N78H/02U656236 of 2 Jan 02

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology of Outstanding Events
(3) Narrative of Outstanding Events
(4) Biography of CDR John C. Aquilino
(5) Photo of CDR John C. Aquilino
(6) Photo of VF-11 Aircraft

1. Per references (a) and (b), enclosures (1) through (6) are hereby submitted.


J. C. AQUILINO

Copy to:
COMCARGRU SIX
COMCARAIRWING SEVEN
COMFITWINGLANT (N002)

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

COMMANDING OFFICER
CDR John C. Aquilino

EXECUTIVE OFFICER
CDR Leif E. Lagergren

LOCATION OF COMMAND
Naval Air Station Oceana
Virginia Beach, Virginia

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL ASHORE
Commander, Carrier Air Wing SEVEN
Commander, Fighter Wing, U.S. Atlantic Fleet
Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet

OPERATIONAL CONTROL AFLOAT
Commander, Carrier Air Wing SEVEN
Commander, Carrier Group SIX

AIRCRAFT
F-14B Tomcat
Tail Code "AG"

CARRIER ASSIGNMENTS
USS JOHN F KENNEDY (CV-67)
Homeported at Naval Station, Mayport, Florida

MISSION
Fleet Air Superiority and Power Projection Missions, including:
Combat Air Patrol, Air Intercept, Maritime Air Superiority,
Strike, Strike Escort, Forward Air Control (Airborne), Close Air
Support and Combat Search and Rescue.

CHRONOLOGY OF OUTSTANDING EVENTS

JANUARY

01-07 Holiday Leave Period

FEBRUARY

01-14 FAC(A) Detachment NAS El Centro
10 First Fleet F-14 squadron to drop Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM), NAS China Lake

MARCH

05-12 Deck Certification for USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV 67)

APRIL

15-31 A/A Strike Fighter Advanced Readiness Program (SFARP)

MAY

01-09 A/A SFARP

JUNE

04-15 A/G SFARP, NAS Fallon

JULY

10-23 Tailored Ship's Training Activity (TSTA)

AUGUST

06 Fly Over of NFL Hall of Fame Game, Canton, Ohio
10 Change of Command: CDR John Aquilino relieves CDR Milton Abner

SEPTEMBER

11-20 Deployed in Support of Operation NOBLE EAGLE
12-20 TSTA II/III
20-30 COMPTUEX

OCTOBER

01-20 COMPTUEX

NOVEMBER

22-25 Air wing Fallon
26-30 Thanksgiving Holiday Leave Period

DECEMBER

01-19 Air wing Fallon
20-31 Holiday Leave Period

NARRATIVE OF OUTSTANDING EVENTS

The events that took place in September made the year 2001 a year that no one will soon forget. Fighter Squadron ELEVEN's involvement in the events following September 11th made the year of long and demanding workups seem a minor price to pay to be ready to support our country. On September 11th VF-11 was tasked to launch ten aircraft to the USS JOHN F KENNEDY (CV 67) in support of Operation NOBLE EAGLE in order to provide coastal defense for the east coast of the United States. Every member of the squadron, from the most junior sailor to the Skipper, acted heroically. They left their families behind in a time of need and put their commitment to support and defend this country foremost. Within a matter of hours the Maintenance Department had fixed all unsafe discrepancies and had produced ten combat ready jets. The aircrew acted patiently and professionally as they awaited instructions and direction from their superiors on a long emotional day. Luckily, the air combat services of VF-11 were not needed in the aftermath of the tragedies that took place. After a short stay along the eastern coast as a show of force, VF-11 was able to resume training for cruise. The ensuing workups took on a whole new meaning as VF-11 prepared to deploy in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and America's war on terrorism.

January 2001 started the beginning of the deployment workup cycle for VF-11. The Red Rippers began rebuilding their qualifications as the squadron acquired many new and inexperienced personnel. The more seasoned Rippers had to take increased responsibilities and step up into the leadership role to train all the new nuggets. The Rippers had three Strike Fighter Tactics Instructors (SFTI) attend TOPGUN reblueing to refresh their tactical knowledge and teaching skills. Five aircrew graduated from Tactical Air Control Party (TACP), the ground Forward Air Control (FAC) course. Four aircrew completed their Strike Fighter Weapons and Tactics (SFWT) Level Three requirements and two aircrew finished their Level Two requirements.

With the cold and unfavorable east coast weather of February, the Rippers decided to take advantage of the ranges of California to complete FAC(A) training. The squadron detachment to NAS El Centro was the first detachment of the year for the Rippers. Five new aircrew received their FAC(A) qualifications. Another first for the Rippers came in February. The Rippers became the first fleet F-14 squadron to employ the Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM). VF-11 worked hand in hand with VX-9 to help provide the integration of Tape 321 and the JDAM software to the F-14B aircraft. The Rippers also received their first award of the year in February. VF-11 was awarded the Grand Slam Trophy for being the squadron that most successfully employed air-to-air weapons throughout the year. This was the second straight year the Rippers won this award.

March was a month mostly focused on unit level training. However, the Rippers also got their first chance of the year to get back to sea, helping the USS JOHN F KENNEDY (CV 67) attain their deck certification. This was an excellent opportunity for many of the new aircrew and flight deck personnel to gain some valuable "at sea" experience.

April and May brought the first of the two part, Strike Fighter Advanced Readiness Program (SFARP). Part one consisted of air-to-air tactics training. The Rippers spent a considerable amount of time in both the classroom and in the air refreshing and honing their skills. Also in April, the Rippers were honored to have their Maintenance Master Chief, AVCM(AW) [REDACTED] selected as the Association of Naval Aviation's Maintenance Chief Petty Officer of the Year.

Part two of SFARP began in early June. The Rippers departed to NAS Fallon in order to take advantage of the incredible resources, ranges, and training that Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center (NSAWC) made available to the fleet. The training included air-to-ground weapon deliveries, surface-to-air counter tactics, and air-to-air combat training. During SFARP the Rippers qualified five SFWT Level Four aircrew.

July was highlighted by a three week detachment to the KENNEDY for TSTA I. The emphasis was to once again become familiar with carrier operations. The Rippers quickly gained their sea legs and were ready for more training.

August was a busy month with a change of command. CDR John Aquilino relieved CDR Milton Abner.

The month of September changed all of our lives and refocused our attention on the training at hand. After supporting Operation Noble Eagle, the Rippers continued with their scheduled training. The squadron completed TSTA II/III and then cruised south to the Puerto Rican operating area for five weeks to complete COMPTUEX. After several weeks at sea the Rippers were happy to return home to their loved ones. The country that the squadron returned to in October was not the same as the one they had left several weeks earlier. The Rippers were sincerely moved by all of the support that they and the rest of the military received from the community following September 11th.

November was a month of uncertainty for the squadron. The Rippers maintained their readiness for action at a moment's notice, not sure when they would be tasked to deploy. By the end of the month it became clear that the new deployment date would be after the start of the New Year, so the Rippers left for a three-week detachment to NAS Fallon in order to finalize their pre-deployment air wing training. Before leaving for Fallon the Rippers attended the annual Fighter Fling banquet where they received the coveted "Mutha" Award, for being the most outstanding and spirited fighter squadron in the Navy and became the envy of all Tomcat squadrons.

The Rippers returned from Fallon a week before Christmas and were fortunate to be able to have some time off to spend with their families and loved ones before leaving for cruise. The year concluded with lots of field carrier landing practice and other training sorties to keep both the aircrew and jets proficient and ready to go to combat.

As the New Year began, the Rippers anxiously awaited the opportunity to serve their country. The Rippers were never more ready to support and defend the United States.