

FIGHTER SQUADRON SIXTY THREE  
c/o Fleet Post Office  
San Francisco, California

504F ✓  
VF-63/A12  
EAR:rcb  
Ser 1

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19 AUG 1952

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From: Commanding Officer  
To: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: Historical Report; forwarding of

Ref: (a) OPNAV INSTRUCTION 5750.2

Encl: (1) Historical Report for the period 1 January 1952 to 30 June 1952

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

*Ward S. Miller*  
WARD S. MILLER

Copy to:  
CinCPacFlt  
ComAirPac  
ComFairAlameda

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HISTORICAL REPORT  
OF  
FIGHTER SQUADRON SIXTY THREE  
1 JANUARY 1952 to 30 JUNE 1952

LT [REDACTED], USNR

HISTORICAL OFFICER

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CHRONOLOGY

1. LCDR Ward S. MILLER, USN, Commanding.
2. Fighter Squadron SIXTY THREE attached to Carrier Air Group TWO, under operational and administrative control of Commander Fleet Air Alameda, Commander Air Force, Pacific Fleet - 1 January 1952 to 10 March 1952.
3. Temporarily embarked in U.S.S. BOXER (CV-21) in the Sea of Japan.
4. 1 January 1952 to 7 February 1952 temporarily based ashore at ALB, Santa Rosa, California. 7 February 1952 to date, temporarily embarked in the U.S.S. BOXER (CV-21).
5. None.
6. 9 January 1952 - Administrative and Material Inspection was conducted by Commander Fleet Air Alameda. In proof of its high state of readiness, Fighter Squadron SIXTY THREE received the highest grade awarded in Air Group TWO.

29 April 1952 - LTJG [REDACTED], USN, while on a combat mission over Korea, received severe damage to his aircraft when hit by enemy AA. He immediately turned his plane for the coast, which was only a few miles away. Before reaching the water his plane burst into flames and he was forced to bail out. By slipping his parachute he missed a high cliff and landed on the beach just south of Wonsan. He immediately inflated his life raft and paddled seaward but shore machine guns opened fire and deflated his raft. Search and Rescue facilities were activated upon his "Mayday" call and subsequent transmissions by the flight leader, LCDR Ward S. MILLER. A division of Corsairs flew RESCAP over the downed pilot until he was picked up by the helicopter from the LST 799 in Wonsan Harbor. LTJG RICE received 3rd degree burns on his neck and wrists and 2nd degree burns on the face and hands. His recommendations are as follows: (1) Wear a summer flight suit over the Mark III survival suit. The fire in the cockpit burned off the leg of his summer flight suit and without this protection the survival suit would have been burnt rendering little or no protection to the pilot who was in water of 50° temperature for 45 minutes.

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(2) That cotton scarfs be used under the neck band of the Mark III Survival Suit to eliminate serious neck burns from the rubber neck-band.

22 May 1952 - LTJG [REDACTED] p. [REDACTED]'s aircraft was hit by flak while on an attack over enemy territory in Korea. He immediately turned toward the coast and made a controlled ditching West of Yodo Island in Wonsan Harbor. The plane was on fire at the time of the ditching. He was picked up by the helicopter from the U.S.S. BREMERTON (CA-130). The pilot was in the water for 20 minutes and suffered no injuries. The next day he was returned to the U.S.S. BOXER.

22 May 1952 - LT [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]'s aircraft was hit by flak while making an attack over enemy held territory in Korea. Though the plane was smoking profusely LT SMYER flew it out to sea making a controlled water ditching alongside of the U.S.S. WALTON (DE). He was picked up after being in the water 10 minutes, suffering only minor lacerations and bruises.

18 June 1952 - LTJG [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]'s aircraft was hit by flak during an attack on Hamhung, Korea. Unable to maintain power he flew toward the beach. He made a controlled water ditching Northeast of Hungnam. The pilot was picked up uninjured 40 minutes later by a helicopter from the LST 799 in WONSAN Harbor.

23 June 1952 - LCDR Ward S. MILLER's aircraft was hit by flak while attacking a strategically important hydro-electric plant nine miles Northwest of Tanchon, Korea. The plane immediately caught on fire and LCDR MILLER flew toward the coast. Because all engine controls and port flap were shot away he was forced to make a highspeed, controlled ditching. The pilot was picked up 50 minutes later by the helicopter from the U.S.S. HELENA (CA-75), with first, second, and third degree burns. Two days later he was transferred to the U.S.S. BOXER. His recommendation is as follows: (1) with average to heavy seas running, one should try and use 20° to 30° flaps on an F4U4 water ditching. This lessens the glide angle as you make contact with the water. The target, Kyoson #4, received 70% damage.

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NARRATIVE

1. This squadron is on its third tour in the Korean Theatre. An evaluation of operational procedures and experiences show that the training and operations outlines in enclosure 2 and 3 of the Historical Report for period of 1 July 1951 to 31 December 1951 still apply. Due to past and recent trends in the Korean War, an Air Intelligence Officer at the squadron level is an absolute necessity. Refer to appendix 1 of the Historical Report of 1 January 1951 to 30 June 1951.
2. OPERATIONS
  - a. The MARK III exposure suit was worn by the pilots when the water temperature dropped below 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The Mark III exposure suit was very satisfactory except for the neck and wrist seals which were easily torn. The exposure suits were not supplied with additional seals which created hardships. Recommendation to proper authority was made to remedy this.
  - b. In March 1952, a proposed operational doctrine was made up by each squadron and submitted to Commander Carrier Air Group TWO. From this came the CAG TWO operational doctrine to which Fighter Squadron SIXTY THREE contributed considerably in view of its large number of pilots experienced in the Pacific and Korean Areas.
3. MAINTENANCE
  - a. During the month of January, squadron maintenance continued to suffer due to lack of adequate facilities and the overwhelming influx of new personnel. These same conditions were discussed in the Historical Report for the period 1 July 1951 to 31 December 1951 and require no evaluation other than the fact they were slow to improve. As soon as the squadron embarked in the U.S.S. BOXER, however, on 8 February, a marked improvement in A/C availability was noted. This was due not only to the facilities available, but in the major part to the fact that at last the personnel situation was stabilized. Various crews were organized and training was emphasized particularly in the lower ratings. The Maintenance Department Organization was revised using current ComAirpac directives as a basis with innovations in minor particulars. The Maintenance Department is functioning smoothly and availability has risen to an all time high of 95.4%.

- b. The only change made to the Maintenance Department Organization worthy of notice was the re-assignment of the job of Maintenance Liaison and coordinator. Actually the responsibility of liaison and coordination of work within the Maintenance Department falls within the scope of the Maintenance Chief. In view of the many duties of the Maintenance Chief, other than these, and the special emphasis placed upon liaison and coordination, a responsible petty officer was selected whose sole duties are liaison and coordination. It is estimated, conservatively, that aircraft availability has increased ten percent.
- c. Two major changes were incorporated in the aircraft during this period. They were F4U A/C service change 432, installation of the Aero 14A bomb and rocket launcher, and service change 422, installation of the MK III set. Both changes required extensive rework of the wiring and various other items. Change 432 alone was estimated prior to installation, to require 80 man hours per aircraft. In view of the extremely short time available for installation, the complete kit being received just prior to embarkation in the ship, an assembly line was set up. Each man of the various maintenance divisions concerned was given a specific task to perform, therefore, being required to know only a small portion of each change. In this manner work was started and proceeded with astonishing ease. It is to be noted at this point that complete wiring diagrams for change 432 were not received until just prior to departing Pearl Harbor for Yokosuka, Japan, which delayed starting installations until this time. The installation in the sixteen aircraft assigned proceeded efficiently. The average time required for installation of the change in each aircraft was reduced to an estimated 35 man hours. Change 422 was handled in the same way and with the same satisfactory results.
- d. Only one RUDM worthy of note has been submitted during this period. It concerned the Carbon Dioxide emergency blowdown bottle for the main landing gear. Current installation allows the bottle to slide forward into the center section of the instrument panel making it inaccessible to the pilot. A simple bracket was devised by two enterprising metalsmiths which braces it well and does not allow slippage in any direction. This bracket is more adequately described in the RUDM. (VF-63 5-52)

4. ORDNANCE

One .50 caliber gun blast tube exploded, however, no defects were detected in the gun. Four (4) blast tubes have dents in them ranging in size from .014 inches in diameter to an elongated dent approximately 2.0 inches long. One tube was removed which was completely pierced. Cause unknown. One gun barrel was replaced due to worn out bore after firing approximately 25,000 rounds. Aero 14A racks have proved most satisfactory. The single drawback encountered is that no manual release mechanism is provided, thus making difficult the wing loading of incendiary clusters, long delay fuzed bombs, and other special ordnance. Ordnance personnel have encountered considerable difficulty with sway braces when

loading the Aero 14A racks. Procedure: bombs are hung on the racks with the sway braces extended due to the difficulty of manually cranking them into the rack and out against the bomb surface after the bomb has been latched into place. Problem: the complete cycle is very time consuming and would not allow complete rearming of all aircraft between strikes if completely carried out. Recommendations: with the sway braces left in the 90 degree position to the rack there is a slight swinging motion on the 100# GP bomb; it is considered that this will cause no trouble. The 250# GP and 260 Frags are not affected due to the large size of the bomb case.

APPENDIX

1. Resume of special targets, damage inflicted and ordnance expended by VF-63 in reporting period.

A. Special Targets

1. Chingjin - May 25, 1952 and April 13, 1952
2. Kowon - June 16, 1952
3. Namhung - June 17, 1952 and June 18, 1952
4. Hydro-electric facilities June 23, 1952 and June 24, 1952

B. Damage Inflicted by VF-63

	<u>DESTROYED</u>	<u>DAMAGE</u>
Rail Breaks	335	13
Buildings	121	13
Warehouses	14	36
Boats	40	26
Oxcarts	7	3
Trucks	11	11
Boxcars	33	18
Gun Positions	16	11
Supply Dumps	7	6
Locomotives	1	3
Observation Posts	0	1
Bridges	5	9
Cranes	0	1
Hydro-electric Plants	1	4
Oxen	10	0
Bypasses R.R.	5	3
Factories	0	4
Barracks	25	7
Transformer Stations	5	1

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33 Napalm

646 250# G.P.

2,131 100# G.P.

456 260# FRAG

148 1000# G.P.

472 500# G.P.

152 5" ATAR & HVAR

564,711 Rounds of 50 Caliber



PACIFIC FLEET AIR FORCE  
FIGHTER SQUADRON SIXTY-THREE  
% FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

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VF-63/A12  
VHJ:bd  
Serial: 162  
20 FEB 1953

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From: Commanding Officer  
To: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations  
(Aviation History and Research Section)

Subj: Semi-Annual Historical Report

Ref: (a) OPNAV INSTRUCTION 5750.2

Encl: (1) Historical Report for period 1 July 1952 - 31  
December 1952

1. In accordance with reference (a) subject report is forwarded as enclosure (1).

2. This letter is downgraded to unclassified upon removal of enclosure (1).

*V. H. Jennings, Jr.*  
V. H. JENNINGS, Jr.  
By direction.

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HISTORICAL REPORT  
OF  
FIGHTER SQUADRON SIXTY THREE  
1 JULY 1952 to 31 DECEMBER 1952  
ENS P. [REDACTED], USNR  
HISTORICAL OFFICER

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CHRONOLOGY

1. LCDR Ward S. MILLER, USN, Commanding 20 August 1951 to 31 October 1952. LCDR Elmon A. MILLER, Jr., USNR, Commanding 31 October 1952 to date.
2. Fighter Squadron SIXTY THREE attached to Carrier Air Group TWO, under operational and administrative control of Commander Fleet Air, Alameda, Commander Air Force, Pacific Fleet 25 September 1952 to date.
3. U.S. Naval Air Station, Alameda, California.
4. 1 July 1952 to 25 September 1952 temporarily embarked in USS BOXER (CVA-21). 25 September 1952 to date temporarily based ashore NAS, Alameda, California.
5. none
6. none

NARRATIVE

1. General: This reporting period may be broken down into two periods. The first half of the period is concerned with operations in the forward area and the last half upon return to CONUS.

a. 1 July 1952 to 25 September 1952 embarked in the USS BOXER (CVA-21) in the forward area and enroute CONUS. On 6 August 1952 Fighter Squadron SIXTY THREE was embarked in the USS BOXER (CVA-21) when a damaging and tragic fire broke out while operating off the east coast of Korea. All hands in the squadron distinguished themselves in their performance of duty fighting the fire. One officer and two enlisted men were awarded Bronze Star Medals by Com 7th Fleet for their heroic and courageous action. There were no personnel losses suffered by this squadron but administrative and personnel records were almost totally destroyed by the fire.

b. On return to NAS, Alameda the squadron was granted a leave and rehabilitation period that extended through 31 October 1952. In November the squadron began reforming with a new commanding officer and a nucleus of ten officers. As of this writing the squadron officer and enlisted complement is nearly full again.

2. Operations: During the period in the forward area the operational doctrine of CVG-2 mentioned in the 1 January 1952 -

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30 June 1952 report was adhered to with continued success. Fighter Squadron SIXTY THREE had five (5) pilots shot down during the entire cruise and all five (5) were rescued. In November 1952 F9F-2 aircraft were received and were replaced by F9F-5 aircraft in December 1952. Flight operations consisted mainly of familiarization hops. Most remaining pilots received refresher training at FASRON EIGHT IFTD for renewal of Standard Instrument Rating cards.

3. Maintenance: Maintenance problems while embarked in the USS BOXER (CVA-21) have been thoroughly discussed in the 1 January 1952 - 30 June 1952 report. Maintenance problems came thick and fast, however, when F9F type aircraft were assigned in November. Primarily, two factors caused this condition: (1) Transfer of a large number of experienced maintenance personnel upon arrival CONUS, and (2) Almost total unfamiliarity with jet operations for those remaining. Consequently, as many men as possible have been sent to schools to receive jet engine training and experience.

4. Ordnance: These comments pertain only to the part of the reporting period spent in the forward area.

a. Wider and speedier dissemination of AIR OPS schedules (and changes thereto) would facilitate planning of work loads.

b. Stagger the night loading times by squadrons to eliminate unnecessary delays caused by several squadrons all trying to load the same type of bombs at the same time. This would also allow the ordnance crews maximum rest and more regular night rations.

c. Secure radio antennae horizontally to prevent "feed back" to the arming wires and electrical circuits of aircraft stacked in the immediate vicinity of the antennae. Arming wires and rocket "pig tails" have become too warm to touch.

d. There was an insufficient number of bomb skids and bomb skid adapters. Loading time was lost because there were not enough skids to maintain a steady flow of ordnance from the magazines to the flight deck. Empty skids had to be returned to the magazines for reloading while loading crews were standing by awaiting ordnance. All skids should have safety straps to prevent bombs from falling off the skid when passing over arresting wires and barricades. Pneumatic tires or larger wheels on the the bomb skids would allow easier passage over arresting gear cables.

e. Bring up aircraft from the hangar deck in sufficient time to allow loading. Unscheduled aircraft were sometimes

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brought up just shortly before a launch and without notification it would be loaded for a hop. Rushing the loading could easily lead to accidents or result in the aircraft being short-loaded. This applies primarily to aircraft that were declared "UP" at the latest possible moment. A definite time limit for bringing up aircraft should be established. Sufficient loading time prior to launching time must be allowed when a time limit is established.

f. Ordnance Safety Precautions and orders should be available from the ship when the Air Group embarks. Specific orders and precautions for each type of aircraft and its particular ordnance equipment would be most desirable.

g. To date the squadron has had no experience with F9F aircraft ordnance.

APPENDIX

1. Resume' of ordnance expended during reporting period:

6 Napalm	237-250# G.P.	138-M-38 CLUSTERS
42-1000# G.P.	155-100# G.P.	52 - ATAR & HVAR
111-500# G.P.	106-260# FRAGS	59,500 rounds of 50 Cal. ammo.

2. Special targets hit during this period:

- a. 5 August 1952 - Kyosen #1 hydro-electric plant.
- b. 29 August 1952 - Pyongyang - 2 maximum effort strikes.
- c. 1 September 1952 - Musan Iron Works - This was the first strike of the war against Musan, located on the Tumen river border of Manchuria. Complete surprise was effected and no flak was encountered.

3. Summary of damage inflicted:

	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
Railcuts	34	-
Boats	-	1
Buildings (barracks and warehouse)	81	21
R.R. cars	6	8
Bridges	3	-
Gun positions	1	+
Hydro-electric plants	-	2

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