

1987



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

STRIKE FIGHTER SQUADRON 15

FPO MIAMI, FL 34099-6201

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
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From: Commanding Officer, Strike Fighter Squadron 15

To: Director of Naval History (Op-09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT SYMBOL 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12D

(b) STRKFITRON 15 INST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization (U)

(2) Chronological History for CY 1987 (U)

(3) Narrative History for CY 1987 (U)

(4) Commanding Officer's Biography (U)

(5) Commanding Officer's Photograph (U)

(6) Picture of HORNET FA-18 VALION Aircraft (U)

(7) Officer Roster for CY 1987 (U)

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), enclosures (1) through (7) are forwarded.

*M. W. Smith*  
M. W. SMITH

*Logged*

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION (U)

Strike Fighter Squadron 15, homeported at Naval Air Station, Cecil Field, Florida, flies the McDonnell Douglas F/A-18 HORNET. The VALIONS are assigned to Commander, Light Attack Wing ONE and attached to Commander, Air Wing EIGHT on board USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71). CDR John W. Curtin is the VALION's Commanding Officer, with 10 F/A-18 aircraft tail numbers 300-307, 310 and 311.

Enclosure (1)

STRIKE FIGHTER SQUADRON 15  
CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY FOR CY 1987 (U)

JANUARY

- 06 Squadron received first F/A-18A, BUNO 163113. Side number 300 assigned.
- 08 VFA-15 Change of Command. CDR P. C. Landon relieved by CDR J. W. Curtin, CDR M. W. Smith - XO.
- 28 CO makes first flight in A/C 300, BUNO 163113.

FEBRUARY

TRANSITION CONTINUES

- 08-11 Command's first shipboard ops for training of flight deck personnel. USS CORAL SEA (CV-43) in conjunction with VFA-106 CQ det.
- 26 First section go. XO, LCDR [REDACTED]

MARCH

- 01-07 First CQ det - aboard USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71).
- 04 CAG [REDACTED] makes first carrier landing in A/C 300, BUNO 163113.
- 10 First bomb dropped.
- 13 First division go. Fighter escort. XO, LCDR [REDACTED], LT [REDACTED], LT [REDACTED].

APRIL

- 20-25 CQ det aboard USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV-67). 2 A/C, 4 pilots CQ including CO, LCDR [REDACTED], LT [REDACTED], LT [REDACTED].
- 30 Command PFT Exam.

MAY

- 8-16 Luke AFB det for air-to-air exercise.
- 8 2 A/C leave for Luke AFB advance det.
- 9 Airlifts to Luke AFB.

Enclosure (2)

MAY (cont.)

- 10 4 A/C cross country to Luke AFB.
- 11 Commence ops at Luke AFB.
- 16 6 A/C return to Cecil Field. Airlift returns to Cecil Field. 85 sorties scheduled; 80 sorties flown; 94% completion rate.
- 27-28 CLAW-1 ADMAT Inspection. Overall outstanding comments from inspectors.

JUNE

- 1-6 CQ det - USS FORRESTAL (CV-59). 2 A/C. Last CQ det for VFA-15 pilots. All pilots are clear of the RAG.
- 2 First gun shoot. XO, LT [REDACTED], LTJG [REDACTED].
- 3-4 MacAir photographer here for first VFA-15 photo exercise.
- 9 Last A/C received; side number 311, BUNO 163143.
- 10 Advance det leaves for MCAS Yuma, Arizona.
- 12 8 A/C fly off to MCAS Yuma, Arizona.
- 13 First airlift to MCAS Yuma, Arizona.
- 13-26 Det to MCAS Yuma, Arizona for bombing.
- 14 Second airlift to MCAS Yuma, Arizona.
- 15 Commence bombing. First bomb dropped this det is a "Bullseye" by LT [REDACTED]
- 20 First active F/A-18 Navy fleet squadron to shoot 5" Zuni Rockets. Total number shot, 48.
- 23 First live ordnance dropped.
- 25 Completed det flight ops. 196 sorties scheduled; 191 sorties flown; 97.4% completion rate.
- 26 8 A/C depart MCAS Yuma, Arizona to return to Cecil Field. First airlift returns to Cecil Field.
- 28 Second airlift returns to Cecil Field.

## JULY

- 5 Airlift departs for NAS Key West, Florida.
- 6 Aircraft depart for NAS Key West, Florida.
- 6-21 Squadron pilots successfully complete SFARP and start night FCLP flying. 165 sorties flown for a total of 164.5 hours.
- 22 Airlift and aircraft depart NAS Key West, Florida to return to NAS Cecil Field.

## AUGUST

- 3 Airlift departs for NAS Norfolk, Virginia for on-load to USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71)
- 6 Aircraft depart for USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71) Carrier Qualifications.
- 13 Aircraft complete Carrier Qualifications, depart for NAS Cecil Field.
- 14 Off-load USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71). Airlift departs for NAS Cecil Field. Pilots logged 114 day landings and 67 night landings as well as Tail Hook Award.
- 21 Aircraft, airlift depart for NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.
- 24 Eight missiles launches in eight hours. All were direct hits or near misses. The drone QF-86 was then gunned down by squadron aircraft because of stability problems.
- 28 Aircraft and airlift return to NAS Cecil Field. 65 sorties scheduled; 88.7 hours flown. Because of missile shoot results, VFA-15 finished a close second for "Fox One" Award.
- 31 Squadron wins CLAW-1 Bombing Derby.

## SEPTEMBER

- 1 Squadron chops to Carrier Air Wing 8.
- 9 2 aircraft depart for NAS Miramar, California for Top Gun.
- 11 Airlift departs for NAS Miramar, California for Top Gun.
- 20 Aircraft and airlift depart for NAS Fallon, Nevada for "Constant Peg" exercise.

OCTOBER

- 9 Aircraft and airlift return from NAS Fallon, Nevada.
- 9 Airlift departs for NAS Norfolk, Virginia to land aboard USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71).
- 11 Aircraft depart to USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71) for Carrier Qualifications.
- 14 Aircraft depart USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71) to return to NAS Cecil Field. Pilots log 62 day landings, 22 night landings; finish a close second in Tail Hook Award competition.
- 16 Off-load USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71). Airlift returns to NAS Cecil Field.
- 26 Start CWTPI. AO's in formal school.
- 29 Pilots complete NATOPS evaluation. Results - outstanding.

NOVEMBER

- 2 AQ's in CWTPI formal school.
- 15 2 aircraft and support personnel depart for USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV-67) to assist filming of movie SUPERCARRIER.
- 16 Pilots in CWTPI formal school.
- 18 Aircraft and personnel return from USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV-67).
- 23 CWTPI Administrative Review/enlisted exams.
- 24 CWTPI Release and Control Checks and inert loads.

DECEMBER

- 1 CWTPI live load of 3 aircraft and load/unload 1 aircraft.
- 3 Complete CWTPI. Overall grade of outstanding - 96.13%.
- 13 Aircraft, airlift depart for NAS Oceana, Virginia.
- 18 Aircraft, airlift depart NAS Oceana, Virginia to return to NAS Cecil Field.
- 30 Last flight for year completed. Total flight hours - 2900; total embarked hours - 399; total carrier landings - 451 (day - 350; night - 101).

STRIKE FIGHTER SQUADRON 15  
NARRATIVE HISTORY FOR CY 1987 (U)

Nineteen Eighty-seven opened quickly and never slowed down. January saw the first VALION HORNET arrive, followed by a Change of Command and the first flight of aircraft 300 by the Commanding Officer.

The VALIONS of VFA-15 started to expand their areas of operation in February, March and April with the acceptance of aircraft and sea qualifications detachments aboard USS CORAL SEA (CV-43), USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71), and USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV-67). This period of time also saw the VALIONS drop bombs for the first time as well and the first division go in VALION aircraft.

Luke AFB was the next stop for the VALIONS as they participated in air combat maneuver training with the Air Force. In a five day period, 80 sorties were completed with valuable training and increased respect the outcome for both the VALIONS and the Air Force. May was brought to a close with an administrative material readiness inspection from Commander, Light Attack Wing 1 with an overall grade of outstanding.

June started with a sea qualification on board USS FORRESTAL (CV-59). This was significant because with its conclusion all VFA-15 pilots had successfully completed the RAG. The VALIONS' last HORNET was received on 9 June. Detachments to MCAS Yuma, Arizona, NAS Key West, USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71) and Roosevelt Roads, P.R. closed out the summer.

Strike Fighter Squadron 15 became a part of Carrier Air Wing EIGHT in September and continued to be on the road with detachments to NAS Miramar (TOP GUN), NAS Fallon and USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71).

November was a time for school and inspections for the VALIONS with the squadron's first Conventional Weapons Tactical Proficiency Inspection (CWTPI). This inspection was completed with outstanding results on the first of December. After a short detachment to Naval Air Station Oceana, the VALIONS took a much deserved rest with a standdown period for the Christmas holidays.