

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
FIGHTER SQUADRON TWO ZERO ONE

NAVAL AIR STATION
DALLAS, TEXAS 75211

VF-201
1973
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5700

20 MAR 1974

From: Commanding Officer, Fighter Squadron TWO ZERO
ONE, Naval Air Station, Dallas, Texas 75211
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)

Subj: Command History; submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAV INST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Command History of VF 201 with annexes

1. As required by reference (a), enclosure (1) is
hereby submitted for calendar year 1973.


P. J. SMITH

Copy to:
Directory of Naval History (OP-09B9)
COMNAVAIRESFOR
CVWR-20

20 MAR 1974

Command History
Fighter Squadron 201
1973

Chronology:

Fighter Squadron 201 was commanded by Commander N. M. GILLETTE until November 10, 1973, at which time he was relieved by Commander P. J. SMITH.

January - February Prepared for weapons cruise to MCAS YUMA. AMSC ██████ received Navy Achievement Medal.

March - April CDR ██████, LT's ██████ and ██████ to NAS Oceana for training against VF 32. Supported RTU-201 cruise. Services for VAW 207 at NAS Norfolk.

May - June Exercise with USS INDEPENDENCE on ORE. Services with DD 1096 from NAS New Orleans. Air Wing 20 MINI-GAGGLE at NAS Cecil. AMS2 ██████ received Navy Achievement Medal.

July - August Flyover on 4th of July. Prepared for second MCAS YUMA weapons cruise.

September - October Supported RTU-201's second cruise. First used new NAS Dallas Naval Air Maintenance Training facility. LCDR ██████, LT's ██████, ██████ and ██████ to Nellis AFB against the 414th IWS. Memorial Day Flyover. First Wave enlisted. Reported aboard.

November - December Change-of-command ceremony. Fifty men to fire fighting on C-9 transport.

Enclosure (1)

20 MAR 1974

Command History
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Fighter Squadron 201 commenced 1973 with a bang...and a boom, and a "swoosh". It was the annual active duty cruise at MCAS Yuma, and the sounds were those of ordnance being expended against a variety of targets.

Led by CDR N. M. GILLETTE, the "BOOMERANGS" had been grooming their 12 F8H "Mig Killers" for the big show. January 28th through February 10th found squadron pilots and maintenance men refreshing and requalifying in all aspects of ordnance procedures, from preparation to delivery on target. When the final totals were calculated, the squadron had amassed over 360 flight hours; thousands of rounds of 20mm cannon, zuni rockets and Sidewinder missiles were expended.

Continuing in its desire to provide fleet support, the squadron sent CDR [REDACTED] and LT's [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to provide dissimilar ACM for VF 32. For five days, March 12-16, the F8's and F4's from the NAS OCEANA based squadron turned and twisted, zoomed and dived in the traditional dog fight that is the fighter pilots forte. It was excellent training for all aircrews against a dissimilar adversary.

During the months of April and May the squadron concentrated primarily on "in house" training. Emphasis was placed on readiness in an all weather environment. Pilots intensified their training with the complex air-intercept radar. A liaison was established with Bergstrom AFB for use of their GROUND CONTROL INTERCEPT facilities in conjunction with the F8 airborne intercept radar. VF 201 also sent a detachment of F8's to NAS NORFOLK to work with our air group "WILLY FUDDS" of VAW-207. In another coordinated exercise, opposition against USS INDEPENDENCE. Air group alpha strikes allowed squadron pilots intercept experience with fleet controllers.

Reserve Carrier Air Wing Twenty acted as host during the CAG "MINI-GAGGLE", 6 June through 10 June at NAS CECIL, Florida. A detachment of five pilots, LCDR's [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED], flew the "Mig Killers" in coordinated air wing Alpha Strikes, in simulated air combat with air wing A-4's, and in rocket and strafe strikes.

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It was a first for squadron pilots against the SEPTAR water-borne drone target. All the pilots agreed that firing the Zuni rockets at the speeding boat was a real challenge.

The end of June marked the end of Fiscal Year 1973 and the Squadron's first 4000 flight hour year.

July operations were conducted mostly in the Dallas area. Squadron pilots had a chance to "parade-the-colors" in a 4th of July flyover at Richardson High School. In an effort to project the Naval Air Reserve image before the public, VF-201 participated in a Memorial Day flyover, the Armed Forces Day Beauty Pageant, where Miss Jean Springer, VF 201 candidate captured 2nd runner-up, and numerous civic club speaking engagements. Active duty officers LCDR [REDACTED], officer-in-charge, and LCDR [REDACTED] have been guest speakers for the LIONS Clubs, OPTIMISTS and local church groups throughout the year.

Additionally, the BOOMERANGS participate in a vigorous physical fitness program, including championships in football, tennis, softball, and awards in bowling and volleyball. Other awards for 1973 included the NAVY ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL for AMSC [REDACTED] and AMS2 [REDACTED], for their outstanding contributions to the squadrons effectiveness and readiness.

A second weapons deployment was in the mill for squadron personnel; the date was set for the 24th of August and the place, MCAS YUMA, of course. The entire month of August was spent busily meeting deadlines, preparing the sleek fighters for the two week "shoot-out".

The first round, strangely enough was not at Yuma, but over the sparkling blue waters of the Pacific Missile Range. In an incredibly complex operation involving 17 pilots, 15 targets and tight coordination between the squadron and Pacific Missile Range, all pilots were qualified against AQM targets in two days, without a misfire or lost sortie. Mr Ray Mason of P.M.R. said that it was one of the smoothest, most well executed exercises he had witnessed. The following week and a half were spent in air-to-air gunnery, air combat maneuvering, air-to-air refueling and air to ground weapons delivery at the Chocolate Mountain Impact Area. The cruise was a tremendous success on the part of all concerned.

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Of special mention were the efforts of squadron ordnance men, whom earned the Air Wing Commander's Letter of Commendation.

No sooner had the squadron returned from active duty than our affiliate, RTU-201, commenced its active duty. This was the second active duty cruise during calendar year 1973 that VF 201 and sister squadron VF 202 had supported. During September squadron maintenance first utilized the new expanded NAS Dallas Naval Air Maintenance Training Detachment facilities.

Additional training was accomplished when a 50 man force was sent to NAS Lemoore, California for fire-fighting via the new Navy C-9 transport aircraft. It was, without a doubt, the best airlift they had ever experienced. September also found a sad parting between the squadron and its LTV technical advisor, Mr. Ray DeLeva. Ray had been with the squadron since its commissioning in 1970.

The last day of September LCDR's [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] LT's [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] deployed to Nellis AFB, Nevada, to duel with the F4's of the 414th Instructor Fighter Weapons School. Five days of intensified tactical air maneuvering against students and instructors yielded more valuable training against a dissimilar adversary.

An unusual event was in store for the squadron for October. Airman Apprentice [REDACTED] became the first Wave to be assigned a maintenance billet working on the F8 aircraft. She was started in the best possible position to observe the F-8, on the line. From this she hopes to move into the jet mechanic shop, working on the J-57 powerplant.

The date was November 10, 1973 at Hangar 20, NAS Dallas. RADM JOHN GAVAN attended as the guest speaker. The scene was the second change-in-command ceremony for VF-201. Commander Nelson M. GILLETTE had commanded the "Boomerangs" since 3 June, 1972 when he had relieved Commander John LAMERS during the squadron's first change-of-command ceremony. CDR Phillip J. SMITH now relieved CDR GILLETTE as the Commanding Officer and CDR Phillip R. PITTS assumed the duties of Executive Officer.

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It was a gala occasion, with flags flying and dignitaries in attendance, including CAPT HERMAN, NAS Dallas Commanding Officer and CDR ELLIOT, CVWR-20.

The "Boomers" initiated another first when a detachment of aircraft and pilots participated in the "College Dart" adversary program at Tyndall AFB, Florida. It was the first time the F-106's from the Air Defense Command had met Naval Reserve Fighters. It was a tremendously successful week of 2 vs 2, 2 vs 4, escorting and patrolling tactics, pitting two nearly equal aircraft in their most demanding roles. It was the highlight of a calendar filled with tactics training, and a fitting way to finish the squadron's operational exercises.

Operationally the squadron was confronted with few problems during 1973. Lack of available carrier deck time did not allow pilot refresher in this phase of training. Dissimilar Air Combat Maneuvering against high performance adversaries was ample, however ACM with lower performance/subsonic adversaries were difficult to schedule due primarily to unavailability. Additionally, insufficient airborne radar intercept training was accomplished due to unavailability of installed operational radars.

From a maintenance standpoint the major difficulties centered around supply and parts availability. Also, problems with the J57 P420 fuel control units contributed to aircraft non-availability. Support from the Naval Air Station Intermediate Maintenance Activity on the APQ 149 radar system was less than adequate to insure operational radars for all aircraft. Once again lack of parts was the major contributing factor in down time.

In summary, the squadron enjoyed an accident free year, that allowed a maximum of training with the assets available. Primarily through its two cruises to MCAS YUMA, pilots, aircraft and maintenance men have combined their capabilities to effect necessary weapons delivery training. Services were provided in support of fleet activities and in providing fleet fighter squadrons with actual dissimilar adversary training. Finally, the squadron experienced its second change-of-command ceremony when CDR P. J. SMITH relieved CDR N. M. GILLETTE as Commanding Officer.