



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

FIGHTER SQUADRON TWO ZERO ONE

NAVAL AIR STATION

DALLAS, TEXAS 75211

1986

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From: Commanding Officer, Fighter Squadron TWO ZERO ONE
To: Chief of Naval Operations OP-05D2, Washington, DC 20350-2000

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY

1. Reserve Fighter Squadron Two Zero One operates as part of Carrier Air Wing Reserve Twenty (CVWR-20). VF-201 was commanded by CDR D. F. Palmer until December, 1986 when CDR S.S. Brainerd assumed command.
2. Fighter Squadron Two Zero One faced a dynamic challenge at the start of this competitive cycle. The challenge of continuing to aggressively fly the F4S in all strike fighter roles while beginning the transition into the F-14 Tomcat. If mobilization of the squadron had occurred prior to the squadron shifting to C-5, VF-201 would have been required to mobilize in the F-4. Consequently, the squadron's honed edge of F-4's operational readiness was preserved through concentrated flight operations. Sole concentration in maintaining F-4's readiness would have detracted and hampered VF-201's abilities to effectively, professionally, and safely transition into the F-14A, so almost simultaneously the Hunters implemented a comprehensive, multi-faceted aircrew preparatory ground training plan to ready aircrewmembers for transitional training. The dynamics and demands of this challenge worked in VF-201's favor in preparing the Hunters to overcome the obstacles and problems which were to materialize at the end of the competitive cycle.
3. From 16-21 March, the squadron deployed to NAS North Island for extensive training in the air-to-air or DACT areas. Flying against TA4 and F14 aircraft further enhanced the aircrews abilities and squadron readiness. 62 sorties (104.6 hours) were flown during the detachment.
4. Annual Active Duty for the squadron occurred at NAS Fallon from 10-23 May. The unit flew 262 hours and 192 sorties while conducting numerous air-to-air, air-to-ground, and air wing coordinated operations sorties, many on the TACTS Range, in support of CVWR-20's combat readiness. 73 graded exercises were conducted with over 95% resulting on "E" awards. By the end of Fallon every aircrew was combat ready.
5. In July VF-201 documented its improvement and readiness to move on to the F-14 transition. CVWR-20's readiness review showed vast positive changes in the squadron's maintenance, training, and operational areas. Following the completion of the review the Hunters prepared for detachments to Hill AFB and NAS North Island in order to maintain the squadron's high level of readiness.
6. The purpose of the detachment to Hill AFB, Utah 1-9 August 1986, was to train in air-to-ground, strike warfare, air-to-air against radar equipped 4th and 5th generation fighters and emphasize full utilization of the F-4's weapons system. While participating in SEASAW 86, VF-201 completed training in low level navigation, conventional weapons delivery, air-refueling from KC-10 tankers, strike

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planning and coordination, coordinated strikes, and dissimilar air combat maneuvering. The "Real World" scenarios and environment provided the low altitude high speed regime needed for the Hunters to preserve the razor's edge of excellence in combat readiness.

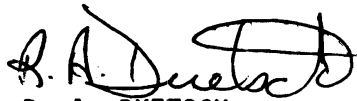
7. The detachment to NAS North Island 8-13 September 1986, served as the bridge between the squadron's past and its future. While on deployment the squadron flew a wide variety air combat maneuvering sorties against TA-4's in perpetuating VF-201's fine air-to-air skills. At the same time the squadron availed itself of the F-14 trainers at NAS Miramar as a means of introducing the new airplane to its aircrews. This was the squadron's last detachment in the F-4 and the Hunters bid the venerable, yet formidable Phantom a fond farewell.

8. In October 1986, F-14 aircrew training began in earnest. Preparation training for classes in VF-101 consisted of multi-media, multi-faceted ground training coupled with extensive reviews and rigorous testing. Once the individual pilot or RIO completed this training he possessed an effective level of Tomcat systems knowledge and was ready to progress to the CAT VI program at VF-101. Everyone in the squadron knew the Hunters were a F-14 squadron when on the last of October the first F-14, 158634, arrived from VF-302.

9. By the time the last Phantom's departure in late December VF-201 was already deeply entrenched in the new aircraft. The Hunters had already completed two of three VF-101 classes, including one which required the Hunters hosting a very hastily formulated detachment of VF-101 aircraft and personnel to Dallas for the purpose of flying squadron transition pilots when the weather was below minimums in Virginia. VF-201 was glad to assist and proud of the detachments success. With the beginning of the new year, the Hunters would receive the first block 60/65 upgrade aircraft from Grumman Aerospace, completed the remaining one third of VF-101 required training and started to look forward to the intensive year ahead.

10. Fighter Squadron 201 continued to add to its over 11,000 hours of accident free flying. The emphasis on safety in the total mission concept continues to enhance the mission capability of the squadron.

11. 1986 was an exceptional year for VF-201. The command exceeded its goals in all areas of competition and achievement. The F4 Phantom was phased out of operation and the squadron received and commenced operating its F14 "Tomcat" aircraft. The "Hunters" of VF-201 look forward to the new year and the many challenges ahead. All hands can be proud of being part of Fighter Squadron 201 during 1986.


R. A. DUETSCH
By direction