

UNITED STATES ATLANTIC FLEET
AIR FORCE
FIGHTER SQUADRON FORTY-THREE
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31 July 1952

From: Commanding Officer, Fighter Squadron FORTY THREE
To: Office of Chief of Naval Operations
(Aviation History and Research Section)

Subj: Historical Report

Ref: (a) OpNav Instruction 5750.2

Encl: (1) Subject Report

1. In accordance with reference (a) the historical report for the period 1 January to 30 June 1952 is herewith submitted.


C.W. GUNNELS, Jr.

~~RESTRICTED~~
Security Information

FIGHTER SQUADRON FORTY THREE

HISTORICAL REPORT 1 January - 30 June 1952

LTJG R.R. DUGGER, Jr., USNR - HISTORICAL OFFICER

RESTRICTED

Enclosure (1)

~~RESTRICTED~~
Security Information

CHRONOLOGY

January:

Introduction

- 2nd LT H.E. MITCHELL detached
- 15th Annual Administrative/Material Inspection
- 22nd Gunnery competition at 15,000 feet
- 24th Pilots day carrier qualified on the U.S.S. ~~IRATE~~
- 31st Competitive exercise in rockets

February:

- 8th Received first F4U-4 Aircraft
- 8th/26th During this 18 day period the squadron did the following:
 - 1. Transferred 16 F4U-5's
 - 2. Received 16 F4U-4's
 - 3. Flew pilot familiarization flights in F4U-4's
 - 4. Flew day and nite FCLP flights in F4U-4's
 - 5. Flew 25,000 feet gunnery competition in F4U-5's
- 11th Close air support training exercise
- 21st LTJG K.K. COBB reported for duty
- 27th Squadron moved to NAAS, Oceana to embark in U.S.S. CORAL SEA
- 29th All aircraft aboard the U.S.S. CORAL SEA (CVB-43) without mishap

March:

- 2nd LT SCHANBACK and LT MADDOX reported for duty
- 3rd Departed Norfolk for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
- 14th Nineteen (19) pilots night carrier qualified
- 27th Operational Readiness inspection by ComFairJax
- 28th LT SCHANBACK had deck accident

April:

1st Competitive exercise in bombing
4th Squadron aircraft returned to NAAS, Cecil Field
8th Debarked squadron personnel from U.S.S. CORAL SEA for NAAS, Cecil Field
11th LTJG P.E. LUCAS transferred to VF-74
15th Transferred four pilots for separation
15th Squadron personnel departed for Norfolk
16th BRANCH, AM3, killed in auto accident
16th Fourteen authorized advancements in rate
17th Planes and remaining squadron personnel departed NAAS, Cecil Field for Norfolk
17th ENS PETERSEN had take-off accident
18th All personnel and planes aboard U.S.S. CORAL SEA
18th LTJG R.R. DUGGER reported for duty
19th Departed Norfolk for Med. cruise
28th Arrived Gibraltar

May:

3rd Arrived Oran, Algeria
14th Arrived Cagliari, Sardinia
17th Squadron beer party at Cagliari
23rd Arrived Gulf Juan, France
24th Squadron personnel departed for Paris tour
28th Arrived Genoa, Italy
29th Squadron personnel departed for Switzerland tour

June:

7th Arrived Taranto, Italy
11/13th Participated in Operation Beehive II

13th Squadron flight time record set
13th 39,000th landing made by LTJG A.E. NASTOS
16th Arrived Naples, Italy
24th Participated in Operation June Primer

NARRATIVE

January:

January 1, 1952 found VF-43 stationed at N.A.A.S., Cecil Field. The squadron was now sixteen months old and a well trained, well seasoned outfit.

The squadron organization was as follows:

Commanding Officer - - - - CDR C.W. GUNNELS, Jr.
Executive Officer - - - - LCDR L. BARKER
Operations Officer - - - - LCDR E.J. BECKER
Administrative Officer - - LT W.R. AUSTIN
Maintenance Officer - - - LT W.G. HORTON
Material Officer - - - - - LT H.F. DONNELLY
Ordnance Officer - - - - - LTJG A.E. NASTOS
Leading Chief - - - - - J.M. YOUNG, ADC

During the first few weeks of the new year the squadron was busily engaged in preparation for the annual Administrative/Material Inspection.

The squadron doctrine was brought up to date, the Administrative Department completed the conversion to the new system of Instructions and Notices, and the Commanding Officer set forth a new tactical organization for the squadron.

On January 2, LT H.E. MITCHELL was detached from the squadron and ordered to report to C.N.A.T., N.A.S., Pensacola¹.

NOTE:

1. ComFairJax disp. 141827Z

Everything was in readiness for the inspection which was held on 15 January by VF-33 and ComFairJax. As a result of this inspection the squadron received the award of "Good"¹.

Gunnery competition at 15,000 feet was held on 22 January.

On 24 January CDR GUNNELS took the four pilots, who had recently reported to the squadron, out to the U.S.S. LEYTE and all pilots successfully made a total of 63 day landings. The four other pilots were: LT J.I. THOMS, LTJG A.E. NASTOS, ENS D.R. GIBBS and ENS B.D. WILLIARD.

A competitive exercise in rockets was held on 31 January. The following six pilots were awarded the "E"².

1. CDR C.W. GUNNELS, Jr.
2. LCDR E.J. BECKER
3. LTJG P.E. LUCAS
4. ENS T.E. HADDOCK
5. ENS J.C. PETERSEN
6. ENS W.A. RICHARD

February:

The next task that faced the squadron was the conversion from F4U-5's to F4U-4's. Within an 18 day period, 8 February to 26 February, the squadron:

1. Transferred 16 F4U-5's³
2. Received 16 F4U-4's⁴

NOTES:

1. ComFairJax ltr ser 315 dtd 13 Feb 1952
2. ComFairJax ltr ser 277 dtd 11 Feb 1952
3. VF-43 Daily Aircraft Status Change Report
4. VF-43 Daily Aircraft Status Change Report

3. Flew pilot familiarization flights in F4U-4's
4. Flew day and night FCLP in F4U-4's
5. Flew 25,000 feet gunnery competition in F4U-5's. ENS CEREMSAK had the highest score with a 14.7%¹.

Close air support training exercises were held on 11-13 of February².

This exercise was conducted over Pine Castle impact area, where live loads of bombs and rockets were used.

LTJG K.K. COBB reported for duty from VF-44 on 21 February³.

On February 27th, VF-43 moved to N.A.A.S., Oceana and aboard the U.S.S. CORAL SEA (CVB-43) two days later. All the aircraft arrived aboard without mishap on 29 February.

March:

Two new pilots, LT G.S. SCHANBACK and LT W.H. MADDOX, reported to the squadron for duty on 2 March⁴. The next day the U.S.S. CORAL SEA, with VF-43 aboard, departed for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Night carrier qualification landings were conducted aboard the U.S.S. CORAL SEA on March 14. All of the pilots of VF-43, with the exception of ENS J.W. SMITH and ENS J.C. PETERSEN who were temporarily detached from the squadron, night carrier qualified at this time⁵.

LORDAN, J.C., PN1 was transferred from the squadron on 22 March, creating a serious deficiency in qualified personnel in the Administrative Department.

NOTES:

1. Confidential Speed letter, 18 Feb 1952 (ComFairJax)
2. VF-43 Master Flight Log entries of 11, 12, 13 Feb
3. VF-43 Squadron Log entry 21 Feb 1952
4. VF-43 Squadron Log entry of 2 March
5. VF-43 Master Flight Log entry 14 March

On 27 March, while still in Guantanamo Bay, an Operational Inspection was held by the Fleet Training Unit. The result of the inspection is confidential.

At 0520 on 28 March a plane, under the control of LT G.S. SCHANBACK, slid forward two or three feet along the flight deck, and the propeller struck a Marine plane which was parked ahead of it. Metal pieces from the Marine plane were thrown into the fuselage of two other VF-43 planes. Three VF-43 and one VMF 211 plane were damaged. The primary cause of the accident was listed as - wet and slippery deck, darkness, chocks under wheels slipped¹.

During the month of March the squadron made 287 carrier landings. This total exceeded the number made in any other month during the six month period covered by this report².

April:

April started out with a competitive glide bombing exercise on 1 April. The following pilots won the "E"³.

1. LT G.S. SCHANBACK
2. LTJG C.M. ANDERSON
3. LTJG K.K. COBB
4. ENS R.J. CEREMSAK

On 4 April fourteen VF-43 aircraft departed from the U.S.S. CORAL SEA at Gitmo, Cuba for N.A.A.S. Cecil Field. Four days later the remainder of the squadron personnel debarked at Mayport, Florida for Cecil Field and one more plane was launched from the ship for Cecil Field.

NOTES:

1. Aircraft Accident Report 2-52
2. Monthly Aircraft Activity Report
3. ComFairJax ltr ser 754 dtd 10 April 1952

LTJG P.E. LUCAS was detached on 11 April and ordered to report to VF-74 for duty¹.

On 15 April, four pilots, ENS T.E. HADDOCK, ENS C.B. RITCHEY, ENS W.A. RICHARD, and ENS H.G. SIMMERMAN, were detached from VF-43 and ordered to report to FasRon NINE for further transfer to a Separation Center².

On 15 April most of the squadron personnel departed N.A.A.S., Cecil Field for Norfolk, Va. where it was to go back aboard the U.S.S. CORAL SEA for a six month cruise in the Mediterranean Sea³.

The first squadron fatality came on 16 April with the death of BRANCH, Walter M., AM3, 558 33 41, USN, in an automobile accident⁴.

As the results of successful completion of service-wide competitive examination, VF-43 had fourteen authorized advancements in rate on 16 April⁵.

On 17 April the planes and the remainder of the squadron personnel departed Cecil Field for Norfolk. ENS J.C. PETERSEN aborted his take-off due to a partial loss of power, rolled 100 feet off the end of the runway and nosed up. . After nosing up the plane fell off on the starboard wing and back down to the normal position. The propeller was damaged, but the pilot was unhurt. He flew the plane on up to Norfolk the next day. The primary cause of the accident was attributed to material failure⁶.

NOTES:

1. BuPers disp 221935Z Sept 1951
2. VF-43 Squadron Log entry of 15 April
3. VF-43 Squadron Log entry of 17 April
4. VF-43 ltr ser 260-52 dtd 29 May 1952
5. NC/AG/G.Lakes: 500(11/chn)P17-2/1-3 ser 2045 dtd 28 March 1952
6. Aircraft Accident Report 3-52

On the 18th all planes and personnel were aboard the U.S.S. CORAL SEA without further mishap.

The squadron received its first A.I.O., LTJG R.R. DUGGER, Jr., on 18 April¹. The next day the U.S.S. CORAL SEA, with VF-43 aboard, departed Norfolk for Mediterranean waters, with 21 pilots, one non-flying officer, 118 men and 15 F4U-4 aircraft. After conducting air operations on the way across the Atlantic we arrived at our first port of call, Gibraltar, on 26 April.

May:

The ship arrived at Oran, Algeria, her second port of call, on 3 May. While there, a very interesting tour to the French Foreign Legion Headquarters at Sidi Bel Abbes was made by many of the squadron personnel.

On 14 May the U.S.S. CORAL SEA anchored at Cagliari, Sardinia. While here, the squadron had a beer party which was enjoyed by all hands.

The next port of call, Gulf Juan, France, was the one for which all hands had been waiting eagerly. This port is part of the French Riviera which is a beauty spot of the world and the best liberty area in the Mediterranean. From Gulf Juan five members from VF-43 made a four day tour to Paris, France.

On 28 May the ship arrived Genoa, Italy. From here nine officers and men from the squadron took a five day tour to Switzerland. The tour included a short stay in Lucerne, Interlaken and in Bern, the capital of Switzerland.

NOTES:

1. VF-43 Squadron Log entry of 18 April 1952

For the month of May the squadron aircraft availability hit its peak with an average of 90% availability¹. This is an excellent record considering the intensity and amount of hours flown during the period.

From 11 - 13 June VF-43 participated in Operation Beehive II. This was a joint operation of five nations; Britain, France, Greece, Italy and the U.S. During this operation the squadron flew:

1. Strike hops against air fields
2. Combat Air Patrol
3. Search and strike flights against enemy convoys and surface forces
4. Close air support

On Friday, June 13, VF-43 set a squadron record by flying more hours than its planes and pilots had ever flown before in any one day. The total was 117.8 or 7.85 average for each of the squadron's fifteen aircraft. The 13th ended three days of intensive flying during which 319.7 hours were logged, twelve maintenance checks were pulled, and 86 out of 88 scheduled sorties were flown². CDR GUNNELS gave a "WELL DONE" to all hands.

On June 13th LTJG AL NASTOS made the 39,000 carrier landing to be made aboard the U.S.S. CORAL SEA. A cake which was presented to him that afternoon on the flight deck was enjoyed by all hands as well as squadron personnel.

The ship arrived Naples, Italy, 16 June. While there trips were made by squadron personnel to Rome, Sorrento, Pompeii, and the Isle of Capri.

NOTES:

1. Aircraft Availability Report
2. Monthly Aircraft Activity Report

Another operation, June Primer, was conducted on 24 June. This was a combined Army and Air Force exercise in which the Navy was given a small but important roll for the first time. The squadron was assigned targets which were over 300 miles from the coast line in the interior of Europe.

CONCLUSION

A carrier landing competition within Air Group FOUR was commenced on 19 May. In the five operating periods thus far completed VF-43 has taken four first and one second place.

At this time every officer in the squadron is enrolled in at least one correspondence course and many are enrolled in more than one.

The aircraft availability has continued to rise throughout this period and the planes are just now reaching the high standards desired¹.

The combat readiness of the squadron also has continually risen reaching its peak, thus far, in the month of June².

NOTES:

1. Aircraft Availability Report
2. Combat Readiness Report

APPENDIX I

STATISTICS

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Flight hours F4U-5 ¹	693	284				
Flight hours F4U-4 ²		262	755	577	429	928
Flight hours SNB ³	207	79	8	13	0	0
Total Flight hours ⁴	900	625	763	590	429	928
Instrument Time ⁵	114	69	45	44	30	61
Carrier Landings ⁶	71	25	287	169	143	285
Availability of A/C - % ⁷	77	79	88	89	90	71
Cost per flight hour - \$ ⁸	19	19	14	20	22	16

NOTES:

1. Monthly Aircraft Activity Report
2. Monthly Aircraft Activity Report
3. Monthly Aircraft Activity Report
4. Monthly Aircraft Activity Report
5. Combat Readiness Report
6. Monthly Aircraft Activity Report
7. Aircraft Availability Report
8. Monthly Operating Cost Report

APPENDIX II

CRUISE ITINERARY

3 March	Departed NORVA for Guantanamo Bay
7/27 March	Guantanamo Bay area
29/30 March	Port Au Prince, Haiti
3/4 April	Guantanamo Bay area
8/19 April	Norfolk, Virginia
28/29 April	Gibraltar
3/10 May	Oran, Algeria
14/19 May	Cagliari, Sardinia
23/28 May	Gulf Juan, France
28 May/2 June	Genoa, Italy
7/10 June	Taranto, Italy
16/22 June	Naples, Italy

UNITED STATES ATLANTIC FLEET
AIR FORCE
FIGHTER SQUADRON FORTY THREE
CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

VF-43/A12
SERIAL: 53-53
LB: tn

29 January 1953

From: Commanding Officer, Fighter Squadron FORTY THREE
To: Office of Chief of Naval Operations
(Aviation History and Research Section)

Subj: Historical Report

Ref: (a) OpNav Instruction 5750.2

Encl: (1) Subject Report

1. In accordance with reference (a) the Historical Report for the period 1 July through 31 December 1952 is herewith submitted.



Laughlin BARKER
Acting

Copy to:
ComFAirJax
CVG-4
Operations File
Central File (2)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
SECURITY INFORMATION

FIGHTER SQUADRON FORTY THREE
HISTORICAL REPORT 1 JUNE - 31 DECEMBER 1952
LTJG R.R. DUGGER, Jr., USNR - HISTORICAL OFFICER

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

ENCLOSURE (1)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
SECURITY INFORMATION

HISTORICAL REPORT

JULY * DECEMBER

1952

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CHRONOLOGY

JULY:

1st Aboard the USS CORAL SEA (CVA-43)
17th LTJG Kenneth K. COBB 481123/1315 detached
25th LTJG James C. PETERSEN 507390/1315 detached

AUGUST:

7th & 8th MedLandEx (Mediterranean Land Exercise) at Suda Bay,
Crete
9th MXD (Malta Exercise - Defense) at Malta
14th Three new pilots reported aboard:
 LT Richard M. SPIVEY, 390898/1315
 LTJG Richard A. STACK, 507588/1310
 ENS Howard M. CHAPMAN, 542027/1325
16th ENS Alan D. TIBBETTS, 535262/1325 promoted to LTJG
21st LT Donald L. MC GRAW, 477441/1310 crashed into the sea
 on take-off
30th LT Hugh F. DONNELLY, 396203/1315 was presented three (3)
 combat citations at Captains' Inspection.

SEPTEMBER:

8th Commander Charles W. GUNNELS, Jr., 100125/1310, squadron
 skipper, made an emergency water landing.
30th O.R.I. (Operational Readiness Inspection) of Air Group
 FOUR

OCTOBER:

4th Departed Lisbon, Portugal for Norfolk, Virginia
12th Planes flew off USS CORAL SEA (CVA-43) for NAS,
 Jacksonville, Florida
13th Men arrived NAS, Jacksonville, Florida
16th Seventeen (17) men made advancement in rating
30th Received one (1) F4U-4 Aircraft
31st LT William G. HORTON, 283443/1310 detached

NOVEMBER:

- 3rd LCDR Vernon L. MICHEEL, 99986/1310, prospective C.O. reported aboard.
- 6th Received one (1) F4U-4 Aircraft
- 7th Received one (1) F4U-4 Aircraft
Squadron annual dinner dance at the Mayflower Hotel
- 19th Received first two (2) F9F-5's in transition from F4U-4 to F9F-5 type aircraft
- 20th LTJG William L. HEMBREE, 496419/1315 reported for duty
- 24th Transferred five (5) F4U-4 Aircraft
Held gunnery competition at 15,000 feet (Three pilots won "E"'s)
Received third F9F-5 Aircraft
- 25th Relieving ceremonies for CDR C.W. GUNNELS, Jr., 100125/1310
LCDR Vernon L. MICHEEL, 99986/1310 assumed command
LTJG Melvin C. MORRIS, III, 494775/1310 and LT John L. SULLIVAN, 461011/1315 reported aboard

DECEMBER:

- 4th Transferred four (4) F4U-4 Aircraft
- 5th LT Donald L. MC GRAW, 477441/1310 detached
- 8th ENS Charles H. KNIGHT, 557928/1325 reported aboard
- 17th Received one (1) F9F-5 Aircraft
- 18th Preliminary Administrative Inspection by Air Group FOUR staff and other officers in Air Group
- 20th Transferred one (1) F4U-4 Aircraft
LT Robert L. SCOTT, 485568/1310 detached
- 25th Transferred one (1) F4U-4 Aircraft
- 29th Received two (2) F9F-5 Aircraft

NARRATIVE

(3)

JULY:

On 1 July 1952, Fighter Squadron FORTY THREE, in company with the rest of Air Group FOUR, was making the Mediterranean cruise aboard the U.S.S. CORAL SEA (CVA-43).

The Squadron Organization was as follows:

Commanding Officer - - - - - CDR C.W. GUNNELS, Jr.
Executive Officer - - - - - LCDR Laughlin BARKER
Operations Officer - - - - - LCDR E.J. BECKER
Administrative Officer - - - - - LT D.L. MC GRAW
Maintenance Officer - - - - - LT W.G. HORTON
Material Officer - - - - - LT H.F. DONNELLY
Ordnance Officer - - - - - LTJG A.E. NASTOS
Leading Chief - - - - - J.M. YOUNG, ADC

At this time the squadron had on board twenty (20) qualified pilots, one (1) ground officer (A.I.O.), and one hundred and fifteen (115) men.

While the ship was anchored at Golfe Juan, France, on the seventeenth of July, LTJG Kenneth K. COBB, 481123/1315 was detached and ordered to report to FASRON SIX.¹

On the twenty-fifth, LTJG James C. PETERSEN, 507390/1315 was detached and ordered to report to the nearest separation center upon arriving in the U.S.²

The recreational facilities at Suda Bay, Crete were inadequate to handle the large number of naval personnel that were present. To augment

1. ComAirLant Dispatch 092151Z June 1952

2. BuPers Dispatch 301711Z June 1952

these facilities the squadron participated in organized athletics, game hunting, and squadron parties. One of the most successful squadron get togethers of the entire cruise was a beer party for the officers and men held on a remote beach at Suda Bay.

AUGUST:

Fighter Squadron FORTY THREE took part in MedLandEx (Mediterranean Land Exercise) at Suda Bay, Crete on the seventh and eighth. This was a combined exercise of Greek and U.S. Forces. The squadron made simulated strikes against the mainland, and gave close air support to the marines in their amphibious invasion of the beach.

This exercise had great value in getting the pilots accustomed to briefing on assigned targets, and then going out and locating these targets. It also emphasized the extreme need for accurate information and coordination when furnishing close air support. Many of the pilots felt, however, that the strikes were not coordinated properly, which caused much of their efforts to be wasted. They arrived and remained on station over "enemy" territory too long while waiting for the marines to reach the beach. There was insufficient time left for actual close air support.

A combined British and U.S. exercise, MXD (Malta Exercise Defense) took place on the ninth of August. Fighter Squadron FORTY THREE made simulated strikes on assigned targets on the island of Malta.

This proved to be a very beneficial exercise because actual wartime conditions were assumed. The pilots were given a complete background briefing of the island as to its strategic importance, its defenses, and its offensive potential. The British Jets put up a realistic defense and

the pilots received a good idea of the problems involved in making strikes on a well fortified area.

Three new pilots reported aboard on the fourteenth. They were LT Richard M. SPIVEY, 390898/1315, LTJG Richard A. STACK, 507588/1310, and ENS Howard M. CHAPMAN, 542027/1325.¹ These officers came to VF-43 from VF-32. All three of these pilots had to make day and night refresher carrier landings in the F4U-4 Aircraft. This was accomplished by arranging for them to make their FGLP at Grottaglie Airfield N.E. of Taranto, Italy. They make their required refresher day landings aboard ship on 18 August.

ENS Alan D. TIBBETTS, 535262/1325 was promoted to LTJG on 16 August.²

On the twenty-first at 0604, LT Donald L. MC GRAW, 477441/1310 crashed into the sea on take-off in plane 309 (BuNo 96942). The accident was due to lack of flying speed on take-off. Further investigation revealed that due to the high outside temperature, the length of deck run should have been increased. The pilot received second degree burns on his face, wrists, and legs, but was otherwise unharmed. The plane was lost.

On 30 August, while the ship was anchored in Augusta Bay, Sicily, LT Hugh F. DONNELLY, 396203/1315 was presented with three (3) combat citations at Captain's Inspection. These citations were, (1) the Air Medal and two Gold Stars in lieu of a second and third Air Medal. The citations were for combat missions flown in World War II.³

1. VF-32 P16-3/00/JLC:VPC, Ser 462

2. ALNAV 3351

3. ComCar3rdDiv Ser 0218 of 13 August 1945

SEPTEMBER:

The recreation facilities in Augusta Bay, Sicily were also very limited, so organized athletics were encouraged. An all hands party proved especially successful in maintaining high morale after the arduous operations just completed.

On the eighth of September, Commander Charles W. GUNNELS, Jr., 100125/1310, squadron skipper, made an emergency landing in the water in plane 301, (BuNo 97356). The pilot was on the down-wind leg of a carrier approach when his engine stopped. He pulled up his wheels and made a smooth water landing. The pilot was uninjured and was returned immediately to the ship by helicopter. The plane sank in 1200 fathoms of water.¹

Many of the squadron personnel took advantage of the planned tours from Cannes, France. On 20 September they departed, some for Paris, France, others to see points of interest in Switzerland.

An O.R.I. (Operational Readiness Inspection) of Air Group FOUR was held by ComCarDivSix on 30 September 1952. For this inspection, VF-43 flew gunnery and strike flights.

The combination of fine cooperation from a well trained ships' company and a well seasoned group of pilots enabled the Air Group to receive a mark of Excellent on the inspection.² This mark indicates the high state of readiness of the Air Group, which had just broken all previous records for hours flown and safety of flight from a U.S. Navy carrier in the Mediterranean Sea.

OCTOBER:

In Lisbon, Portugal on 2 October the officers of Air Group FOUR had a very successful party at which they entertained local guests, officers of the ship's company, and members of Air Group SEVENTEEN from the F.D.R.

-
1. VF-43 Squadron Log Entry of 8 September 1952
 2. ComCarDivSIX ltr FB2-6/A5TJG:ser 0125 dtd 30 September 1952

On the fourth of October VF-43, aboard the Coral Sea, departed Lisbon, Portugal for Norfolk, Virginia.

Planes flew off the Coral Sea (CVA-43) at 0700, 12 October 1952, destination - NAS, Jacksonville, Florida.¹

The following day at 1430 the men arrived at NAS, Jacksonville, by train.²

Seventeen (17) men made advancement in rating on the 18th of October.³

On 30 October VF-43 received an F4U-4 Aircraft (BuNo 81479) from FASRON 6. This plane was a replacement of one of the planes lost at sea.⁴

LT William G. HORTON, 283443/1310 was detached on the 31st and ordered to Special Weapons Facilities, Kirkland Air Force Base, Albuquerque, N.M.⁵

NOVEMBER:

LCDR V.L. MICHEEL, 99986/1310, prospective Commanding Officer, reported aboard on 3 November 1952.⁶

Received one (1) F4U-4 Aircraft (BuNo 96829) from FASRON 6 on 6 November. On the following day another F4U-4 Aircraft (BuNo 97366) was received from FASRON 6.⁷

The entire squadron held its annual dinner dance at the Mayflower Hotel on the evening of the 7th of November.

-
1. VF-43 Squadron Log Entry of 2 October 1952
 2. VF-43 Squadron Log Entry of 3 October 1952
 3. U.S. Naval Exam. Center, U.S. NTC Gt. Lakes, Ill., ltr ser. EC-A5294 dtd 26 September 1952
 4. VF-43 Daily Aircraft Status Change Report (OpNav X-Ray 29-52)
 5. Pers-B 115 j - pb - 1 of 28 October 1952
 6. Pers B 115c-mv-1 19 September 1952
 7. VF-43 Daily Aircraft Status Change Report (OpNav X-Ray 28-52)

On the 19th the squadron received the first two (2) F9F-5's BuNos 125991 and 126003, in the transition from F4U-4, prop type to the F9F-5 jet type aircraft.¹

LTJG William L. HEMBREE, 496419/1315 reported for duty on the 20th.²

On the 24th of November five (5) F4U-4 aircraft (BuNos 81365, 81391, 97005, 97104, 97344) were transferred to NAS, Quonset Point, Rhode Island.³

Gunnery competition at 15,000 feet was conducted by VF-43 on the 24th. Outstanding scores were made by the following pilots; LTJG R.J. CEREMSAK 26%, LTJG A.D. TIBBETTS 22%, and LT J.I. THOMS 23%. These pilots were authorized by ComFAirJax to wear the "E" for gunnery on their aircraft.⁴

On the 24th of November, VF-43 received the third F9F-5 aircraft (BuNo 124984).⁵

A Captain's Inspection followed by relieving ceremonies for CDR C.W. GUNNELS, Jr., 100125/1310, was held on the 25th of November. LCDR Vernon L. MICHEEL, 99986/1310 assumed command of VF-43.⁶

Also on this day, LTJG Melvin C. MORRIS, III, 494775/1310,⁷ and LT John L. SULLIVAN, 461011/1315⁸ reported aboard.

DECEMBER:

On the fourth of December four (4) F4U-4 Aircraft were transferred.

-
1. VF-43 Daily Aircraft Status Change Report (OpNav X-Ray 30-52)
 2. ComAirLant FF4-2/P16-4/00 ser 762 of 17 November 1952
 3. VF-43 Daily Aircraft Status Change Report (OpNav X-Ray 33-52)
 4. ComFAirJax ser ltr 2381 of 3 December 1952
 5. VF-43 Daily Aircraft Status Change Report. (OpNav X-Ray 31-52)
 6. VF-43 Ser ltr 489-52
 7. ComAirLant FF4-2/P16-4/00 ser 793
 8. ComAirLant FF4-2/P16-4/00 ser 789

One (1) plane BuNo 97366 went to VMA 332, the other three (3) planes BuNos 97172, 96829, 81479, went to VMA 333.¹

LT Donald L. MC GRAY, 477441/1310, was detached on 5 December, and ordered to report to Superintendent, U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California.²

On 8 December ENS Charles H. KNIGHT, 557928/1325 reported aboard.³

On 17 December VF-43 received one (1) F9F-5 Aircraft (BuNo 125257) from VX-3 NAS, Atlantic City, N.J.⁴

The squadron received a preliminary Administrative Inspection on 18 December. The inspecting party was composed of Air Group Staff Officers and selected officers from other squadrons in the Air Group. The Air Group Commander initiated this inspection as an aid to the squadrons in preparing them for the regular Administrative Inspection. It proved very helpful in pointing out the weaknesses and strengths of the different departments in the squadron. On this inspection the squadron received a score of Excellent.

On the 20th one (1) F4U-4 Aircraft (BuNo 80872) was transferred to O&R, NAS, Quonset Point, Rhode Island.⁵

LT Robert L. SCOTT, 485568/1310 was detached on the 20th and ordered to report to Chief of Naval Advanced Training, NAS, Corpus Christi, Texas.⁶

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1. VF-43 Daily Aircraft Status Change Report (OpNav X-Ray 32-52)
 2. Pers-B 115g-BLC-1 of 13 October 1952
 3. ComAirLant ser ltr 914
 4. VF-43 Daily Aircraft Status Change Report (OpNav X-Ray 34-52)
 5. VF-43 Daily Aircraft Status Change Report (OpNav X-Ray 35-52)
 6. C.O., VF-43 Pers-B115j-BLC-1 of 10 November 1952

VF-43 transferred one (1) F4U-4 Aircraft (BuNo 97309) to O&R, NAS, Quonset Point, Rhode Island on the 25th.¹

On the 29th of December VF-43 received two (2) F9F-5 Aircraft (BuNo 125279) from FASRON 2, and (BuNo 125267) from VX-3, Atlantic City, N.J.²

When the year ended, the squadron had on board twenty four (24) pilots, one ground officer (AIO) and one hundred twenty nine (129) men.

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1. VF-43 Daily Aircraft Status Change Report (OpNav X-Ray 36-52)
 2. VF-43 Daily Aircraft Status Change Report (OpNav X-Ray 37-52)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

STATISTICS

	<u>JULY</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEPT</u>	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>
Flight time F4U-4 ¹	432.6	624.3	615.8	250.8	410.9	214.5
Flight time IV-2 ¹	---	---	---	---	---	19.4
Flight time SNB ¹	---	---	---	---	112.9	54.5
Flight time F9F-5 ¹	---	---	---	---	5.6	15.7
Instrument time ¹	27.3	29.	18.3	18.4	54.7	29.7
Night (visual) time ¹	40.1	51.9	26.7	---	---	10.6
TOTAL FLIGHT TIME ¹	432.6	624.3	615.8	250.8	529.4	304.1
Carrier landings ¹	141	216	177	54	---	---
Availability in % ²	85	81	88	77	62	50
Cost per flight hour in \$ ³	14	16	16	18	17	23

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1. Monthly aircraft activity report
 2. Aircraft availability report
 3. Monthly operating cost report

APPENDIX II .

ITINERARY

2 - 6	July	Golfe Juan, France
7 - 8	July	Cannes, France
9 - 15	July	Marseilles, France
24 - 26	July	Suda Bay, Crete
27 - 31	July	Athens, Greece
2 - 6	August	Salonika, Greece
13 - 18	August	Palermo, Sicily
23 - 28	August	Taranto, Italy
28 - 31	August	Augusta Bay, Sicily
11 - 13	September	Split, Yugoslavia
16 - 25	September	Cannes, France
2 - 4	October	Lisbon, Portugal
12 - 12	October	N.O.B., Norfolk, Virginia
13 - _	October	N.A.S., Jacksonville, Florida