

M. Composite Reconnaissance Sqdn-1
Team Operations

Historical Report, Yankee
1 Dec 1964 - 30 Sep 1965

- 1) 1 Dec 1964 - Mar 1965 [S&C 276 752]
- 2) Apr - Jun 1965 [279 437]
- 3) Jul - 30 Sep 1965 [286 768]

See also: VMCJ-1 Command Chronology, beginning 16 Apr 1965---

00433 65

24 MAY 1965

S. S. Wade

Nov-1, New York City. The Little Theatre

CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

1 Dec 64 - 2000

65 3180

FF13-5
3/CAR/jes
003A12365
MAY 4 1965

UNCLASSIFIED

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on CG 1st MAW ltr 3:RLT:pwr over 3480 Ser:
0026165 of 26 April 1965

From: Commanding General, Aircraft, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific
To: Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific

Subj: Historical Report, Yankee Team Operations from 1 December
1964 to 31 March 1965; forwarding of(S)

1. Forwarded.

J. H. Lavo
J. H. LAVOY
By direction

AIR FMFPAC	
S&C #	COPY #
1562-65	1

COPY # 1 OF 2 COPIES

2

UNCLASSIFIED

2.2337e

HEADQUARTERS
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Aircraft, FMF, Pacific
FPO San Francisco 96601

3:RLT:pwr
3480
Ser:0026165

26 APR 1965

UNCLASSIFIED

From: Commanding General
To: Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific
Via: Commanding General, Aircraft, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific
Subj: Historical Report, Yankee Team Operations from 1 December 1964 to 31 March 1965; forwarding of (S)
Ref: (a) CG FMFPAC 140313Z Nov 64
(b) CTF 77 Inst 003120.5
Encl: (1) Subject Report

1. In compliance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is forwarded. The basic report was prepared by Marine Composite Reconnaissance Squadron 1.
2. Attention is invited to reference (b) which is the standing operating procedures for Yankee Team operations that was promulgated during the reporting period. Copies of this document may be obtained by forwarding request with justification to Commander Task Force SEVENTY-SEVEN.
3. Unless otherwise directed, or circumstance dictate, 30 June 1965 will be the cut-off date for the next report.

D. A. Baigert
D. A. BAIGERT
By direction

Copy to:
VICJ-1

1stMAW SAC NO.	COPY #
203965	1

AIR FMFPAC	
S&C #	COPY #
1562 65	1

COPY NO. 1 OF 4 COPIES

UNCLASSIFIED


UNCLASSIFIED

003A11265
COPY. 1 OF 6

HISTORICAL REPORT OF VMCJ-1's PARTICIPATION

IN YANKEE TEAM OPERATIONS (S)

PERIOD COVERED: 1 DECEMBER 1964 - 31 MARCH 1965

PART I ORGANIZATIONAL DATA SHEET

PART II NARRATIVE

PART III SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1stMAW SEC NO.	COPY NO.
197865	1


UNCLASSIFIEDPage 1 of 13 pages

1562 65

UNCLAS

~~SECRET~~I ORGANIZATIONAL DATA SHEET

(1) Designation of Reporting Unit: The unit involved is a detachment varying from two to four RF-8A type aircraft, pilots and support personnel. Parent Organization: Marine Composite Reconnaissance Squadron 1.

(2) Period Covered by Report: 1 December 1964 to 31 March 1965

(3) Date of Submission of Report: 14 April 1965

(4) Name and Rank of Commanding Officer: The Commanding Officer of Marine Composite Reconnaissance Squadron 1 during the period covered is as follows:

LtCol O. W. Corman, USMC; 1 December 1964 - Present

(5) Location of Command Post at End of Period: Marine Composite Reconnaissance Squadron 1, Marine Corps Air Station, Iwakuni. The Yankee Team Detachment is aboard USS Coral Sea CVA-43.

~~secret~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

PART II
NARRATIVE SUMMARY

During the period 1 - 26 December 1964, VMJ-1 Detachment Alpha remained in a standby status both at MCAS Iwakuni and at NAS Cubi Point, as shown in supporting document No. 1. Day and night refresher carrier landings were accomplished on 19 December aboard the USS HANCOCK. On 27 December the detachment flew aboard the USS HANCOCK to remain in an operational status until 18 January 1965, attached to VFP-63 Detachment Lima.

The first operational flight by the VMJ-1 Detachment during this operating period was conducted on 1 January when 1stLt SIENICKI flew Yankee Team mission #3163: a road reconnaissance flight on route EW-3. The results were partial coverage due to weather.

Through the 5th of January only two operational flights were flown as airborne standby for Yankee Team missions. On 6 January 1stLt YOUNG flew mission #2279 on EW-1 route with successful results. An airborne spare flight for mission #2266 was flown on 7 January, and on 8 January a photographic mission was flown in the Camrahn Bay area of South Vietnam. Both sorties were flown by 1stLt SIENICKI. The latter flight produced negative results due to a generator failure.

An EW-2 route was flown by 1stLt YOUNG on 9 January, with only partial results due to weather. A Barrel Roll mission was conducted on 10 January by 1stLt SIENICKI on EW-2 route for bomb damage assessment. No flights were flown on the 11th and 12th. On the 13th the VMJ-1 Detachment flew two sorties into the Camrahn area for weather reconnaissance.

No flights were flown on 14 January due to weather and on the 15th one sortie was launched into the Camrahn Bay for photographic reconnaissance. The results were again negative due to weather. The operational commitments for this operating period were concluded on 18 January when VMJ-1 Detachment Alpha departed the USS HANCOCK to remain in a standby status at NAS Cubi Point.

During this period the detachment logged a total of 37 flight hours with 27 arrested landings. Four Yankee Team sorties and 19 other sorties were flown, including official photo of a non-Yankee Team nature, airborne spares for Yankee Team photo missions, weather reconnaissance and other cyclic operations. VFP-63 Detachment Lima flew a total of 12 Yankee Team missions and 5 night photo missions of an official non-Yankee Team nature.

Each Yankee Team photo sortie was provided with one airborne standby aircraft and one on deck spare, manned and ready with engine running. Camera configurations were generally station 2 split vertical with KA-53

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

cameras in stations 3 and 4, either vertical or at 81 degrees. Station 1 was also loaded but forward firing photography was not conducted due to altitude restrictions imposed on the flights.

The assigned altitude for Yankee Team photography was 10,000 ft without exception. Under no circumstances was the pilot to deviate from this altitude even if mission accomplishment had to be sacrificed. On numerous occasions cloud cover precluded good photography. During the Yankee Team Barrel Roll missions the photo aircraft was allowed to descend below 10,000 ft, but then only to 4,000 ft AGL in order to obtain accurate bomb damage assessment photography. No low level high speed photography was assigned.

Inflight refuelling was utilized for the longer missions with one KA-3B tanker and two A-4 aircraft airborne as spare tankers. Refuelling was generally conducted enroute beginning at Danang and continuing, if necessary, to the Laotian border. On the inbound portion of the flight, tankers were also positioned over Danang, but refuelling was usually unnecessary at this time. The limited range, endurance, and speeds imposed a liability to the photo aircraft but inflight refuelling greatly alleviated this problem. The escorts involved were F-8C and F-8E aircraft.

The next operating period for the VMCJ-1 Detachment Alpha commenced on 13 February aboard the USS CORAL SEA under the operational control of VFP-63 Detachment Delta. The VMCJ-1 Detachment had remained in a standby status from 19 January to 12 February both at MCAS Iwakuni and at NAS Cubi Point.

The first Yankee Team mission, #2317, for the detachment was flown on 19 February by Major MITCHELL. Two low level targets were assigned. Both were military strongpoints, one at the town of Ban Nhommarath and one at Ban Natude. Both targets are in the Pan Handle area of Laos at approximately 17-30 N. and 105-10 E. The mission was flown at 350 ft AGL and at 550 KIAS utilizing all cameras including the KA-56 Panoramic Camera. Heavy concentrations of automatic gun emplacements are located at both targets but no enemy ground fire was observed. The targets were particularly difficult to orient because of the weather which was 0.6 cumulus build-ups with bases at 1500 feet and visibility 2 to 4 miles in haze. Coverage was obtained of both targets. It was noted that the IMC capability of the KA-56 Camera was nearly exceeded at the above airspeed and altitude since the nearest portions of the area covered were slightly blurred on the negative.

On 20 February, Yankee Team Barrel Roll mission #20 was flown by 1stLt DODSON. The objective was bomb damage assessment of armed road recco flown by four A-1H aircraft. The area was route #9 in the Pan Handle area of Laos. No activity on the road was noted by the attack aircraft and consequently the ordnance was expended on a pre-briefed "dump" target located 10 miles west of Bun Houci Sane (16-36 N. 106-22E.).

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

Lt DODSON obtained excellent coverage of the ordnance drop with low level forward firing oblique photography.

No flights were conducted on 21 February. On 22 February Major MITCHELL flew weather reconnaissance in advance of a heavy photo mission in the Plaines des Jarres area. Enroute back to the ship, he was assigned a special photo mission for coverage of a fording point on a stream located at 16-54 N., 105-52 E. A KA-53 Camera was used at 8,000 ft for a three line strip mosaic. 100% coverage was obtained.

Cyclic operations were conducted on 23 February and on the 24th no flights were flown. On the 25th, 1stLt DODSON flew Yankee Team Barrel Roll mission #22 which consisted of bomb damage assessment of an A-1E armed reconnaissance mission along route 8 in the Pan Handle area. The results of the mission was good. No enemy ground fire or transport activity was noted. Major MITCHELL flew airborne spare for this mission and for a previous mission flown by the VFP-63 Detachment.

Cyclic operations were conducted on 26 February and on the 27th four Yankee Team missions were scheduled which would coincide with an Air Force strike on the Quang Khe Naval Base in North Viet Nam. These missions were road reconnaissance of routes 8 and 12 in North Viet Nam and low level photography in Laos. The Air Force strike coded Rolling Thunder III was cancelled because of weather with subsequent cancellation of the Yankee Team missions. That evening, Major MITCHELL flew airborne spare for a night Yankee Team Barrel Roll mission of the VFP-63 Detachment.

No flights were flown by the VMCJ-1 Detachment on 28 February and cyclic operations were conducted on the 1st of March. Operation Blue Tree was conducted on 2 March in conjunction with Operation Rolling Thunder, an Air Force strike against the Quang Khe Naval Base north of Dang Hai, North Viet Nam. Major MITCHELL flew 30 degree oblique photography of the coast line from the NVN border to the 19 parallel. Coverage was 70% due to weather. On the same day 1stLt DODSON flew a bomb damage assessment mission for a bomb seeding operation which had been conducted on the 28th of February. Coverage was 20% due to weather.

No flight operations were conducted on the 3rd of March since Yankee Team responsibilities had been passed to the USS RANGER. On the 4th of March, the VMCJ-1 Detachment departed the USS CORAL SEA pursuant to CTF-77 instructions and proceeded to NAS Cubi Point in a standby status for possible call to the USS RANGER or the USS HANCOCK in the event of special operations.

The detachment remained in a standby status both at NAT Cubi Point and at MCAS Iwakuni until 15 March when it was again deployed aboard the USS CORAL SEA. The officers and enlisted personnel assigned remained the same. On 16 March cyclic operations were flown and on the 17th no

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

flights were conducted, the day being devoted to target planning, On 18 March cyclic operations were flown by the detachment.

Phase I of Operation Rolling Thunder VII was initiated on 19 March. The operation consisted of four phases with each phase involving strikes on military targets in North Viet Nam. The targets for this date were NVN Targets #53 and #55, both consisting of army supply and barracks areas located 22 miles NW of Vinh at 18-53 N., 105-08 E. One photo aircraft flown by Major MITCHELL was assigned to the strike to obtain bomb damage assessment. The weather was 2,000 scattered with 5 miles visibility. The photo coverage was excellent, with all-usable photos having been taken by the KA-56 Panoramic Camera at 800 ft and 530 KIAS. Bomb damage assessed was 70% for Target #53 and 90% for Target #55. Enemy AAA fire during the mission was moderate. 1stLt DODSON flew Yankee Team Barrel Roll mission #37 which consisted of bomb damage assessment for an armed road reconnaissance by A-1E aircraft of routes 12, 23 and 8 in the Laos Pan Handle area. No activity was noted by the attack aircraft and no photos were taken.

Cyclic operations were flown by the VMCF-1 Detachment on 20 and 21 March. On the 22nd a mission consisting of coastal reconnaissance of South Viet Nam was flown by 1stLt DODSON. The object of the flight was to find unfriendly shipping activity and to photograph all the coves and inlets for possible hiding places.

No tactical flights were flown on the 23rd of March due to practice being conducted for an air show. On 24 March Yankee Team mission #2381, consisting of medium altitude photography of route 6/65 leading east to the North Viet Nam border from the town of Sam Neus, was flown by Major MITCHELL. Major MITCHELL also participated in an air show for Prime Minister Quat of South Viet Nam and Ambassador Taylor.

On 25 March 1stLt DODSON flew bomb damage assessment for Barrel Roll mission 260y which was a bomb seeding mission of route 8 in Nape Pass (18-17 N., 105-06 E.). Photo results were excellent showing good hits on the road. Moderate ground fire was encountered.

Two strikes were conducted on the 26th of March against radar sites located on Back Long Vi Island (20-09 N., 107-44 E.) and Cap Mui on with the former being flown by 1stLt DODSON and a VFP-63 Det pilot on the latter. Photo coverage of the strikes was satisfactory and revealed little damage inflicted to both sites however buildings adjacent to both radar sites were destroyed or damaged. Small arms and AAA fire at targets was moderate to heavy. 1stLt DODSON's aircraft sustained a small arms round hit in the starboard aileron. The weather at both targets was 3,000 scattered with heavy haze reducing visibility to 2 miles at some points. In addition, Yankee Team Barrel Roll mission #41

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

was flown this same day. The mission called for six A-1E and four A-4E bombers to seed a choke point on route 7 east of the Plaines des Jarres area. Major MITCHELL flew the photo aircraft for bomb damage assessment. The visibility was only 2 to 3 miles in haze in the target area located at 19-33 N., 103-49 E., near the town of Pha May. Good hits were obtained on the road and photo coverage was adequate. Moderate ground fire was observed in the hills on both sides of the road. No aircraft damage was sustained.

Cyclic operations were conducted by the VMCJ-1 Detachment Alpha on 27 March. On the 28th no flights were flown. On the 29th of March a maximum effort strike was conducted against the military installation and radar site at Back Long Vi Island. The attack was the most intensive effort thus far by the USS CORAL SEA. Attack aircraft included six A-3B aircraft loaded with four 1,000 lb. bombs each, releasing their ordnance from 15,000 ft. guided by their own radar. It was the first recorded drop by A3B aircraft in combat. In addition eight A-4E, ten A-1E, eight F-8D, and eight F-8B aircraft were utilized in the strike. The ordnance consisted of 500 and 1,000 lb. bombs, Zuni rockets, napalm and 20 mm. Repeated runs were made and the target was under bombardment for one hour and fifteen minutes. Ground fire was intense throughout the attack and consisted mostly of automatic 12.5mm with some quad 37mm. The target damage was extensive and secondary explosions took place in the middle of the island when some ammunition revetments were hit. There were five primary targets consisting of the radar antenna, communications shack, barracks area, admin building and antenna yard. Six secondary targets consisted of concrete buildings scattered throughout the island.

Midway through the strike photo runs were made at 500 ft down the length of the island by Major MITCHELL and 1stLt DODSON flying in formation in order to split the fire. After the A-4E aircraft completed their runs a final photo run in which a VFP-63 Det joined in with the two VMCJ-1 pilots. Photo coverage was excellent utilizing the KA-56 Panoramic Camera, forward firing KA-45s and 30 & 15 degree oblique KA-45's. Coverage indicated extensive damage to all primary target and complete destruction of the radar and communications building.

The heavy ground fire was fairly accurate. 1stLt DODSON, following in trail of Major MITCHELL, saw many tracers pass just behind his aircraft. 1stLt DODSON's aircraft sustained a 12.5mm hit in the vertical stabilizer just forward of the PC package. Three other aircraft were shot down during the raid.

During this operating period, from 13 February to 4 March, and from 15-31 March, VMCJ-1 Detachment logged a total of 103 hours and made 49 arrested landings. 15 Yankee Team missions, weather recon and cyclic operations. VFP-63 Detachment Delta flew a total of 29 Yankee Team photo missions.

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

Supporting document 2 contains a roster of personnel assigned to the Yankee Team Detachment during the reporting period.

Supporting document number 3 shows the pilot flight activity with a comparison of the Yankee Team mission flown to the overall flight activity during the reporting period.

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

VMCJ-1 DETACHMENT ALPHA
CHRONOLOGICAL RECORD OF ACTIVITY

1 December 1964 - 2 December 1964 - Standby MCAS Iwakuni
3 December 1964 - 14 December 1964 - Standby NAS Cubi Point
15 December 1964 - 17 December 1964 - Standby MCAS Iwakuni
18 December 1964 - 26 December 1964 - Standby NAS Cubi Point
27 December 1964 - 18 January 1965 - USS Hancock CVA-19
19 January 1965 - 22 January 1965 - Standby NAS Cubi Point
23 January 1965 - 31 January 1965 - Standby MCAS Iwakuni
1 February 1965 - 12 February 1965 - Standby NAS Cubi Point
13 February 1965 - 4 March 1965 - USS Coral Sea CVA-43
5 March 1965 - 9 March 1965 - Standby NAS Cubi Point
10 March 1965 - 14 March 1965 - Standby MCAS Iwakuni
15 March 1965 - 31 March 1965 - USS Coral Sea CVA-43

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

VMCJ-1 DETACHMENT ALPHA
PERSONNEL ROSTER

9 Nov - 10 Dec 64

Capt DERIEG, P. L.
 Lt GERMAN, I. J.
 Sgt CARTER, C. R.
 Sgt HALE, J. H.
 Cpl OLIVER, E. W.
 Cpl JENSEN, W. L.
 LCpl GUCKENBERGER, D. R.
 LCpl ELLEBRECHT, B. E.
 LCpl MCCORMICK, F. R.
 Cpl SPAGNUOLO, T. P.
 Cpl ENGEL, A. G.
 Cpl ANTONUCCI, J.
 LCpl ISAACSON, T. J.
 PFC KUKAWKA, T.
 PFC MILLER, M. F.

10 Dec 64 - 19 Jan 65

Lt YOUNG, H. W.
 Lt SIENICKI, K. J.
 LCpl ANDERSEN, A. M.
 Cpl BLAIS, L. V.
 LCpl BETTS, E. F.
 Cpl DEMARCHI, P. W.
 Cpl HALL, C. G.
 LCpl HILL, L. W.
 Cpl JACKSON, R. D.
 LCpl KARP, R. R.
 PFC KYLE, J. D.
 PFC MUZIK, D. A.
 LCpl SMITHSON, S. J.
 Cpl SMOOT, J. A.
 Cpl VONDENKAMP, E. E.
 Sgt SALT, A. J.

1 Feb - 31 Mar 65

Maj MITCHELL, J. J.
 1stLt DODSON, J. G.
 Sgt BROWN, R. H.
 PFC ALBERT, A. M.
 PFC BRINKEMA, G. B.
 LCpl BURNS, J. A.
 Cpl COOK, E. T.
 LCpl ELLEBRECHT, B. E.
 PFC HAFIS, J. W.
 LCpl HILL, O. E.
 Cpl JOURDAN, K. L.
 PFC KUKAWKA, T.
 Cpl PUTMAN, P. O.
 PFC REED, R. E.
 PFC SCHINDLER, G. L.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT No. 2

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~VMCJ-1 DETACHMENT ALPHA
PILOT FLIGHT ACTIVITY

<u>DATES</u>	<u>SHIP</u>	<u>Total Yankee Team Missions Flown Sorties/Hours</u>	<u>Total Yankee Team Missions Flown by VMCJ-1 Pilots Sorties/Hours</u>	<u>Other Flights Flown by VMCJ-1 Pilots Sorties/Hours</u>
27 Dec - 18 Jan	USS HANCOCK	16/38.4	4/8.2	19/32.6
13 Feb - 4 Mar	USS CORAL SEA	16/34.5	6/12.7	23/43.2
15 Mar - 31 Mar	USS CORAL SEA	28/55.9	9/20.8	14/24.7

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT No. 3

Page 11 of 23 Pages

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~GLOSSARY OF TERMSYANKEE TEAM

- Code name for U. S. missions over Laos involving photographic, weather and electronics intelligence reconnaissance.

BARREL ROLL

- Code name applying to U. S. armed reconnaissance and prebriefed air strikes against infiltration routes and facilities in Laos.

ROLLING THUNDER

- Code name assigned to reprisal strikes against the DRV.

BLUE TREE

- Code name for photo reconnaissance missions in North Vietnam of highway routes and military build up areas

EARLY WARNING (EW) ROUTES

- Infiltration routes in Laos which are objectives of Yankee Team and Barrel Roll missions. At present there are three routes which are referred to as EW-1, EW-2 and EW-3.

FORWARD FIRING PHOTOGRAPHY

- Camera located in nose section of the aircraft facing forward of the direction of travel. Line of sight of the camera depressed from the horizontal, usually 25 degrees in the RF-8A. May be referred to as forward firing oblique. Used for low altitude reconnaissance, such as for approach route recce, etc. Also useful for bomb damage assessment. Scale of photography varies from foreground to background.

OBLIQUE PHOTOGRAPHY

- Camera facing outboard on either side of the aircraft perpendicular to the direction of travel. Line of sight of the camera depressed from the horizontal usually 5, 15, or 30 degrees. Used for low altitude reconnaissance, such as for bomb damage assessment. Scale of photograph varies from foreground to background.

VERTICAL PHOTOGRAPHY

- Camera facing downward and perpendicular to direction of travel of aircraft. Line of sight of the camera depressed 90° from the horizontal. Used for low or high altitude reconnaissance and suitable for stereoptic viewing in imagery interpretation. Scale constant throughout photograph.

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~KA-56 PANORAMIC CAMERA

- Aerial photographic camera utilizing a rotating prism device in front of the lens to produce lateral horizon to horizon coverage. Combines all the features of vertical and oblique photography in one camera system. Generally used for low level reconnaissance.

~~SECRET~~