

MARINE FIGHTER ATTACK SQUADRON 323  
Marine Aircraft Group 15 (Rein)  
9th Marine Amphibious Brigade, FMFPac  
FPO, San Francisco 96602

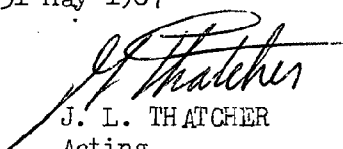
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5750  
5 June 1967

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 15 (Rein)  
Subj: Command Chronology; submission of

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2  
(b) WgO 5750.1B  
(c) MAG-13 GruO 5750.1C  
(d) BrigO 5750.1B

Encl: ✓(1) Command Chronology for the Month of May 1967

1. In accordance with references (a) through (d), enclosure (1) is hereby submitted for the period 1-31 May 1967

  
J. L. THATCHER  
Acting

VMFA-323

May 1967

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

Unit: Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323

Location: MCAS Iwakuni, Japan

Period: 1-31 May 1967

Part I - Organizational Data

<u>A. NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>BILLET</u>	<u>DATES</u>
Gordon H. KELLER Jr.	LtCol	Commanding Officer	1-31 May
John L. THATCHER	Major	Executive Officer	1-31 May
John (n) HUBNER	Major	Operations Officer	1-10 May
Joseph B. WUERTZ	Major	Operations Officer	10-31 May
Ronald C. ANDREAS	Major	Administrative Officer	1-22 May
George (n) BERTHELSON	Captain	Administrative Officer	22-31 May
Joseph B. WUERTZ	Major	Logistics Officer	1-10 May
William W. MACKAY	Major	Logistics Officer	10-31 May
Charles W. BROWN	Major	Maintenance Officer	1-31 May
Larry K. GRISSETT	Captain	Aviation Safety Officer	1-31 May

B. Unit Location and Dates

MCAS Chu Lai, Republic of South Vietnam 1-16 May 1967  
 MCAS Iwakuni, Japan 16-31 May 1967

C. Average Monthly Strength

<u>1. Officer</u>	<u>On Hand</u>	<u>Manning Level</u>	<u>T/O</u>
a. Naval Aviators	19	21	26
b. Naval Flight Officers	18	21	26
c. Avn Ground Officers	5	5	5
d. Naval Flight Surgeons	1	0	0

<u>2. Enlisted</u>			
a. Marine	308	325	318
b. Navy	4	0	0

Enclosure (1)

#### D. Important Visitors

1. On 29 May 1967, Brigadier General Jacob GLICK visited the squadron in garrison at Iwakuni and was briefed on the mission and capability of the F4B.

#### Part III - Significant Highlights

A. During the month of May the squadron flew combat missions in Vietnam until 15 May in support of the 3rd MAF, the 7th Air Force and the Army of the Republic of South Vietnam. Following is a partial Battle Damage Assessment Summary:

Enemy Killed by Air	2 Confirmed/42 Probable
Structures	29 Destroyed/7 Damaged
Bunkers	33 Destroyed/1 Damaged
Secondary Explosions	5
Road Cuts	16
Ford Cuts	5
Gun Emplacements	10 Destroyed
Tunnels	5 Damaged

B. During the first week in May, the squadron's primary efforts were directed toward numerous close air support missions for Marines fighting for Hills 861 and 881, 6 miles northwest of Khe Sanh. Also, a number of night close air support and armed reconnaissance flights were conducted.

C. The outstanding mission of the month was flown by Captain G. T. SCHMIDT (RIO, Captain J. J. HARE; wingman, Captain M. E. COSTELLO/Captain M. S. SHORE, RIO) on 2 May. After completing a helicopter escort, they were diverted to a CAS mission south of Danang. Although short on fuel and receiving intense hostile fire, they delivered their ordnance with pinpoint precision, accounting for 25 enemy killed by air (probable), seven structures destroyed and three bunkers destroyed.

D. On 15 May, nine aircraft led by the Commanding Officer, LtCol G. H. KELLER, Jr. departed Chu Lai, RVN for MCAS Iwakuni, Japan. Five aircraft flew non-stop refueling with VMGR-152 tankers near Okinawa. The squadron move to Iwakuni was marred, however, by a last minute cancellation of logistic transport aircraft by the Air Force. Six days later, the main body of troops and equipment arrived at Iwakuni, where the squadron commenced flight and general military technical training.

Enclosure (1)

Part IV - Significant Events

A. Personnel: Joined.....Officer 8, Enlisted 11  
 Dropped.....Officer 2, Enlisted 16  
 Promotions.....Officer 0, Enlisted 3

B. Administration. Administrative loads increased with the deployment of the squadron to Iwakuni commencing 15 May. The bulk of this work involved the processing of orders, preparing unit diaries and making service record book entries.

C. Awards. Squadron aircrewmembers received a total of 45 Air Medals for meritorious achievement while flying combat missions over Vietnam.

D. Flight Operations. The increased tempo of combat operations begun in March and April, continued right up until the departure of the squadron to Japan. The bulk of missions flown were of the close air support type, particularly in the Khe Sanh area. 750 pound bombs were also used for the first time in some months with a high degree of success against fortified positions.

The deployment to Japan was uneventful. Training commenced immediately at Iwakuni with the goal of getting the three non-qualified pilots who joined in April as far advanced in the syllabus as possible in order to prepare them for the impending weapons deployment to Naha. In addition, a number of refresher instrument and air-to-air weapons flights were conducted. A brief statistical summary follows:

Total Hours.....	441
Total Combat Hours.....	314
Total Sorties.....	340
Total Combat Sorties.....	260
Average Pilot Strength.....	16
Average Pilot Sorties.....	21
Average NFO Strength.....	20
Average NFO Sorties.....	17

E. Ordnance. May saw the squadron drop it's 50,000th bomb. Another record for the squadron was beaten on 1 May when 81 tons of ordnance was dropped, virtually all in the Khe Sanh area. Ordnance dropped in May included:

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<u>TYPE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	
MK-81 250 lb Bomb	382	
MK-82 500 lb Bomb	1736	Total
MK-117 750 lb Bomb	222	Weight: 660 Tons
MK-77 500 lb Napalm	304	
2.75" FFAR	436	

F. Training. Due to the squadrons delayed deployment to Japan, training was only accomplished during the last week of May. This included General Military Subjects for enlisted members and ground training for officers. Plans for June include pistol requalification, the PRT, gas chamber and NBC training, and continued GMSF, technical and ground training. Fam firing of the M-16 rifle is expected to be in July and August as well as swimming qualification.

G. Logistics. May's logistic highlight was the movement of 167, 815 pounds of equipment and 320 personnel from Chu Lai to Iwakuni. Six aircraft were used: 1 USMC KC-130F, 4 USAF C-130, and 1 USAF C-124. The movement was complicated by the cancellation on 14 May of all USAF logistic transport aircraft. The move was finally accomplished seven days later as USAF aircraft became available.

H. Maintenance. A number of circumstances in May made maintenance somewhat difficult: a total of 13 aircraft were transferred or received, for one week squadron aircraft were in Iwakuni while maintenance personnel were in Chu Lai, and finally, five aircraft were sent to NAS Atsugi for radar modifications.

Aircraft Assigned.....20  
 Avg Aircraft On-Board.....12  
 Avg Aircraft On-Board Available..... 5 (42%)  
 Avg Hrs Flown per A/C On-Board.....37.1

Aircraft Transferred:	<u>Date</u>	<u>BuNo</u>	<u>To/From</u>
	15May	151456	VMFA-115
	"	151452	"
	"	151412	"
	"	151455	"
	20May	149456	NAS North Island

Aircraft Received:	<u>Date</u>	<u>BuNo</u>	<u>To/From</u>
	15May	148414	VF-151
	"	149416	VF-161
	"	149422	VF-121
	"	152322	VF-143
	"	150478	VMFA-115
	"	151468	"
	"	151464	"
	"	152331	"

Enclosure (1)