

MARINE FIGHTER ATTACK SQUADRON 323
Marine Aircraft Group 13
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMF, Pacific
FPO, San Francisco 96602

3:HGM:bjw
5750
8 Mar 1968

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 13

Subj: Command Chronology; submission of

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

Encl: ✓(1) Command Chronology for the month of February 1968

1. In accordance with references (a) through (d), enclosure (1) is hereby submitted for the period 1 to 29 February 1968.

P. G. Bozman
P. G. BOZMAN
By direction

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VMFA-323

CMD CHRON

FEB 1968

COMMAND CHRONOLOGYUnit: Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323Location: Chu Lai Air Base, Republic of VietnamPeriod: 1-29 February 1968PART I - Organizational Data1. Commander and Staff

<u>NAME</u>	<u>BILLET</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>PERIOD</u>
Harry T. HAGAMAN	Commanding Officer	LtCol	1-29 Feb
Paul G. BOOZMAN	Executive Officer	Major	1-29 Feb
Henry G. MILLER JR.	Operations Officer	Major	1-29 Feb
Edward R. BAILEY	S-1 (Administration)	Major	1-29 Feb
Dennis F. O'ELOCK	S-4 (Logistics)	Capt	1-20 Feb
Anthony R. PAVONI	S-4 (Logistics)	Capt	20-29 Feb
Warren A. FERDINAND	Maintenance Officer	Major	1-29 Feb
Rabun N. PATRICK	Aviation Safety Officer	Capt	1-29 Feb

2. Task Organization and DataOrganization

Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323
 Marine Aircraft Group 13
 1st Marine Aircraft Wing,
 Fleet Marine Force, Pacific

Location

Chu Lai Air Base, Republic of Vietnam

Commanding OfficerDate of Office

Lieutenant Colonel Harry T. HAGAMAN

13 Oct 1967 - Present

3. Average Monthly Strengtha. Marine Officers

(1) Naval Aviators..... 15
 (2) Naval Flight Officers..... 15
 (3) Aviation Ground Officers..... 4

Enclosure (1)

b. Naval Officers..... 1
 c. Marine Enlisted..... 245
 d. Naval Enlisted..... 0

4. Important Visitors to the Command

a. There were no important visitors to the Command during the month of February.

PART II - Narrative Summary

The month of February was the seventh month of combat operations for the squadron on its present tour of duty in the Republic of Vietnam. Weather conditions in Southern I Corps were very good considering it was a monsoon month. Squadron combat sorties were restricted mostly by target weather in Northern I Corps which was very poor most of the month. The squadron flew 356 combat sorties during this period. Combat hours flown totaled 383.3. The squadron flew a total of 358 sorties, 387.8 hours, and expended 704.3 tons of ordnance during the month of February.

Close Air Support, Direct Air Support, and TPQ missions were flown in support of all Marine ground operations in the I Corps Tactical Zone (ICTZ) including operations Kentucky, Lancaster, Scotland, Neosho, Khe Sanh, and two new operations: Houston, near Phu Loc; and Tampa, west of Danang. The predominance of ordnance and sorties went to the Khe Sanh area due to the massive NVA/VC build up in that area. Steel Tiger missions were de-emphasized in favor of in-country sorties.

January went out with a real bang and February was more or less a recover and regroup period. Aircraft availability and sortie rate decreased for many reasons.

This squadron spent two weeks on a six plane air-to-ground hot pad. The entire aircraft availability and maintenance effort was needed to support such a responsibility. Some outstanding strikes were flown during this period and will be enumerated below. Due to the concerted effort applied to Khe Sanh, BarCap missions were cancelled more than flown, although VMFA-115 was supported with back-up aircraft for one week.

The air-to-air pad activity was very limited due to the sporadic up and down status of Danang's primary pad. Our pad was launched only twice during the week. Night and day TPQ-10 radar bombing missions were prevalent during this period due to reduced ceiling and visibility in Northern I Corps. The increased Communist activity around Khe Sanh introduced more anti-aircraft weapons and firing incidents resulted in five aircraft sustaining battle damage.

Enclosure (1)

Two of the nine aircraft sustaining battle damage this month required many man hours and extensive repair work to become operational. Aircraft availability received a shot in the arm with the receipt of four aircraft transferred from other squadrons and the loss of only one aircraft; transferred to VMFA-542 in Iwakuni, Japan. No aircraft were sent to PAR or the modification programs this month.

There has been a constant threat of attack since the spring offensive began in late January. Squadron morale and a "can do" spirit is evident in the effort exerted by all hands in their primary duties and in extracurricular activities such as bunker building, guard duty, and the myriad of tasks to be performed in a combat zone. The three rocket attacks during this period have had a profound effect on the no longer complacent attitudes of all personnel. Protective battle dress is worn to and from work spaces during hours of darkness and an excellent state of readiness prevails throughout the squadron.

Several officers and men have been transferred to this squadron from VMFA-122 on a reciprocal basis to alleviate a simultaneous rotation of that squadron's personnel in the same month.

Some of the highlight missions flown during February were:

8 February: LtCol HAGAMAN (RIO Capt BRANDON, WM Capt O'MARA/1/Lt PAWLOSKI) flew a Tally-Ho mission in the DMZ and received a BDA of multiple structures destroyed with 7 KBA confirmed.

14 February: Major BOOZMAN (RIO 1/Lt BARRON, WM Major TAYLOR/Capt HIGBEE) was scrambled from the hot pad on a mission to Khe Sanh where they subsequently received a BDA of 3 anti-aircraft positions destroyed and 7 KBA confirmed.

14 February: Major FERDINAND (RIO Capt BRANDON) scrambled from the pad to Danang and their BDA was 3 KBA confirmed.

15 February: LtCol HAGAMAN (RIO Capt BRANDON, WM Capt LEIGH/1/Lt BARRON) was scrambled from the hot pad to the Danang area which resulted in 16 KBA confirmed.

15 February: Major BAILEY (RIO Capt MARZIOLI, WM Capt PATRICK/1/Lt SANDERS) scrambled from the hot pad to work in very close proximity to friendlies in the Danang area. The resultant BDA was 31 enemy KBA confirmed.

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During February, the combined squadron Battle Damage Assessment received from controlling agencies, amounting to about 10% of all missions flown, follows:

Enemy Killed by Air.....	96	Confirmed/10 Probable
Structures.....	63	Destroyed/12 Damaged
Bunkers	15	Destroyed/2 Damaged
Secondary Explosions.....	12	
Sampans.....	12	Destroyed/5 Damaged
Bridges.....	1	Destroyed/1 Damaged
Fighting Holes.....	8	Destroyed
Road Cuts.....	1	
Artillery Sights.....	1	Direct Hit/Destroyed
Anti-Aircraft Positions.....	3	Destroyed

PART III - Significant Events

1. Personnel:

Joined	Officer	6	Enlisted	28
Dropped	Officer	5	Enlisted	29
Promotions	Officer	0	Enlisted	4
2. Awards: Distinguished Flying Cross - 1 (Capt R. N. PATRICK)
Air Medals - 1
Meritorious Mast - 1
3. Air Operations: February statistical summary as follows:

Total Combat Sorties	356	Group/Other Pilots Flying	9
Total Flights	358	Avg Group/Other Pilot Sorties	5
Total Combat Hours	383.3	Avg Group/Other Pilot Hours	6.2
Total Flight Hours	387.8	Avg NFO Strength	15
Avg Pilot Strength	15	Avg NFO Hours	25.8
Avg Pilot Sorties	20	High Day (Sorties) 8 Feb 68	21
Avg Pilot Hours	25.8	High Day (Hours) 8 Feb 68	24.4

4. Maintenance: February Monthly Averages

Aircraft Assigned	15.6
Avg Aircraft On-Board	11.9
Avg Aircraft Available	4.6 (38.7%)
Avg Hrs for A/C On-Board	32.6

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Aircraft Transferred/Received:

<u>BuNo</u>	<u>To/From</u>	<u>Date</u>
148405	R VMFA-542	5 Feb 68
148406	R VMFA-542	26Feb68
151012	R VF-121	28Feb68
152211	R VF-121	28Feb68
151443	T VMFA-542	3Feb68

Aircraft Sent/Returned PAR/MOD, NAS Atsugi, Japan: None

Aircraft Sustaining Battle Damage:

<u>Incident No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Damage</u>	<u>BuNo</u>	<u>Side No.</u>
31-68I	15Feb68	ECHO	148405	WS-16
32-68I	15Feb68	FOXTROT	150648	WS-03
33-68I	17Feb68	ECHO	149452	WS-02
34-68I	17Feb68	ECHO	151483	WS-01
35-68I	18Feb68	ECHO	151459	WS-10
36-68I	18Feb68	ECHO	151013	WS-11
37-68I	18Feb68	ECHO	148405	WS-16
38-68I	21Feb68	FOXTROT	148423-	WS-13
39-68I	21Feb68	ECHO	151013	WS-11

5. Ordnance: February expenditures by type and number as follows:

<u>Type</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Tons</u>
MK81 2501b LD GP Bomb	707	90.5
MK81 2501b Snake-Eye Bomb	1156	185.8
MK82 5001b LD GP Bomb	1122	30.1
MK82 5001b Snake-Eye Bomb	11	3.1
MK117 7501b LD GP Bomb	172	58.1
MK77 5001b Napalm	195	49.8
2.75" FFAR	1444(76)	16.0
MK83 10001b LD GP Bomb	None	0
Total	3428	704.3

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