

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

3:KSS:gra
5750
6 June 1968

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 13 (Attn: S-3)

Subj: Command Chronology, submission of

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.1A
(b) WgO 5750.1B
(c) GruO 5750.1D

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

1. In accordance with reference (a) through (c), enclosure (1) is
herewith submitted for the period 1 through 31 May 1968.

D. J. SLEE
D. J. SLEE

1968-4-323

CMD CHRON

MAY 1968

COMMAND CHRONOLOGYUNIT: Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323Location: Chu Lai Air Base, Republic of VietnamPeriod: 1-31 May 1968

Part I - Organization Data

1. Commander and Staff

<u>Name</u>	<u>Billet</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Period</u>
Don J. SLEE	Commanding Officer	LtCol	16-31 May
Daniel I. CARROLL	Executive Officer	Major	1-31 May
Henry G. MILLER Jr	Operations Officer	Major	1-6 May
Karl S. SMITH	Operations Officer	Major	7-31 May
Edward R. BAILEY	S-1 (Administration)	Major	1-31 May
Philip R. KRUSE	S-4 (Logistics)	Captain	1-8 May
Larry T. HIGBEN	S-4 (Logistics)	Captain	9-31 May
Warren A. FERDINAND	Maintenance Officer	Major	1-31 May
Rabun N. PATRICK	Aviation Safety Officer	Captain	1-8 May
Philip R. KRUSE	Aviation Safety Officer	Captain	9-31 May

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. WAGAMAN
 Lieutenant Colonel Don J. SLEE

13 Oct 1967 - 16 May 1968
 16 May 1968 - Present

3. Average Monthly Strength

a. Marine Officers

- (1) Naval Aviators.....14
- (2) Naval Flight Officers.....15
- (3) Aviation Ground Officers.....4
- (4) Marine Enlisted.....277
- (5) Naval Enlisted.....0

Inclosure (1)

b. Other Officers

(1) Naval Officers (NC).....1

4. Important Visitors to the Command

a. Brigadier General Homer S. HILL, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Deputy Commander visited Marine Aircraft Group 13 on 16 May 1968 to participate in the Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323 change of command ceremony.

b. General C. W. ADRIANIS, USA Commander, US Forces Vietnam, visited the Chu Lai Air Base and Marine Aircraft Group 13 on 30 May 1968 as part of his assumption of Commander of US Forces, Republic of Vietnam.

Part II - Narrative Summary

The month of May 1968 was the tenth month of combat operations for VMFA 323 on its current tour of duty in the Republic of Vietnam. The weather was excellent over most of I Corps except for occasional layers of low clouds in the Khe Sanh and Dong Ha areas. This caused some flights to be diverted to other targets within I Corps. This local condition had no significant effect on overall flight operations during this reporting period.

VMFA 323 had nine days of the air to ground alert during the month of May. Increased availability coupled with the enthusiastic efficiency of maintenance made May the most active month in terms of combat sorties flown since October 1967.

The value and accuracy of air to ground ordnance delivery by VMFA 323 received new significance and incentive when this squadron, and others in the Chu Lai area were called upon to destroy confirmed enemy rocket sites which were within sight of the airfield. These rocket sites were determined to be part of the complex that had fired several volleys of 122MM rockets into the Chu Lai Air Base. It is to be noted that no attacks by rocket have occurred since May 28, the date of attack by concerted air strikes, and the time of this writing. Numerous secondary explosions and fires resulted from this action. The efforts of VMFA 323 were particularly rewarding to our enlisted personnel who were able to watch the air strikes from the squadron revetment area. Their individual feelings of satisfaction increased with each bomb, rocket, and napalm delivery.

On 16 May 1968, command of VMFA 323 passed to Lieutenant Colonel D. J. SLEE. In precise ceremony the new squadron commander pledged his efforts to the squadron and called for the continuing excellent support of officers and men.

Enclosure (1)

Marine Aircraft Group 13 received enemy rocket fire on May 5th, 14th, and 23rd resulting in damage to four aircraft of VMA 323. There was fortunately no injury to personnel of this squadron. One round impacted roughly 51 yards from the squadron ready room but caused only an increased interest in secure bunkers.

During May, flight crews enjoyed the highest sortie rate of the current Vietnam tour. An increase in aircraft availability coupled with a limited number of aircrews resulted in more flights per crew member. As the hours per aircrew increased so did his enthusiasm. Repeated exposure of aircraft to daily close air support missions and the ground fire that ensues resulted in seven aircraft receiving hits by enemy fire. No aircrew injury or loss of aircraft occurred.

During May VMA 323 supported thirteen different operations in the I Corps area. Of these flights the most noteworthy was on 4 May. A flight of two F4B aircraft manned by Maj. J. R. DAILEY and WFO 1/Lt H. A. HILL with Capt. R. L. THOMAS Jr. and WFO 1/Lt R. D. MANN near Dong Ha received a battle damage assessment as follows; 4 bunkers destroyed, 11 structures destroyed, 2 secondary explosions, and 37 killed by air. For this action both pilots have been nominated for the Distinguished Flying Cross. Both Naval Flight Officers have been nominated for the single mission air medal.

During May the combined squadron battle damage assessment received from controlling agencies is delineated as follows:

Enemy Killed by Air (EKA).....	87 Confirmed/16 Probable
Military Structures.....	232 Destroyed/32 Damaged
Bunkers.....	327 Destroyed/28 Damaged
Secondary Explosions.....	48
Fighting Holes.....	12 Destroyed/10 Damaged
Road Cuts.....	2
Mortar Positions.....	1 Destroyed
Rocket Positions.....	6 Destroyed
Automatic Weapons Positions.....	5 Destroyed/1 Damaged
Trench Line (Meters).....	1,405 Destroyed/50 Damaged
Trails (Meters).....	100 Destroyed
AAA Sites.....	1 Destroyed
Secondary Fires.....	9
Bridges.....	1 Destroyed
Storage Area.....	1 Destroyed

Part III - Significant Events

1. <u>Personnel:</u>	Joined	Officer 6	Enlisted 11
	Dropped	Officer 2	Enlisted 2
	Promotions	Officer 1	Enlisted 11

Enclosure (1)

2. Awards: Air Medal..... 90
 Distinguished Flying Cross.... 1
 Navy Achievement Medal..... 1 (V)
 Meritorious Masts..... 11

3. Air Operations: May Statistical Summary

Total Combat Sorties	589	# Group/Other Pilots Flying - 7
Total Flights	617	Average Group/Other Pilots Sorties - 13
Total Combat Hours	628.3	Average Group/Other Pilots Hours - 15.1
Total Flight Hours	660.9	Average NFO Strength - 14
Average Pilot Strength	11	Average NFO Hours - 45.1
Average Pilot Sorties	47	High Day (Sorties) 2 May - 33
Average Pilot Hours	55.5	High Day (Hours) 2 May - 37.2

4. Maintenance: May Monthly Averages

Aircraft Assigned.....	19
Average Aircraft on Board.....	16
Average Aircraft Available.....	8
Average Hours for Aircraft on Board...	41.3

Aircraft Transferred/Received:

BuNo	To/From	Date
152313	From VF-21	7 May 68
152270	From VF-21	7 May 68
151483	To VF-21	7 May 68
152322	To VF-21	7 May 68
152313	To Shoehorn MCD	23 May 68

Aircraft Sustaining Battle Damage:

Incident No	Date	Damage	BuNo	Side No
7-68A	4 May 68	Bravo	152275	WS-15
4-68G	5 May 68	Echo	148406	WS-5
5-68G	5 May 68	Echo	152275	WS-15
6-68G	5 May 68	Echo	152270	WS-8
45-68I	11 May 68	Echo	149449	WS-6
46-68I	11 May 68	Echo	151012	WS-18
7-68G	23 May 68	Echo	148405	WS-16
47-68I	25 May 68	Echo	152270	WS-8
48-68I	25 May 68	Echo	148405	WS-16
49-68I	27 May 68	Echo	152275	WS-12
50-68I	28 May 68	Echo	152271	WS-4

Enclosure (1)

5. Ordnance: May Expenditures by Type and Number

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Tons</u>
Mk 81 250lb Snakeye Bomb	1648	242.9
Mk 82 500lb L/D G.P. Bomb	35	9.3
Mk 82 500lb Snakeye Bomb	2586	740.0
Mk 117 L/D G.P. Bomb	495	197.5
Mk 77 500lb Napalm Bomb	516	134.3
2.75inch F.F.A.R.	166	31.9
5inch ZUMI Rocket	1291	60.3
D-27 CEU	8	3.2
Total Ordnance Pieces Loaded.....	7172	
Total Ordnance Pieces Dropped/Shot.....	6745	
Total Bombs Loaded.....	5485	
Total Bombs Dropped.....	5288	
Total Tonnage.....	1119.4	
Total Tonnage (Bombs).....	1327.2	
Drop Percentages.....	96.15%	

Enclosure (1)