

DECLASSIFIED

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CONFIDENTIAL

WAR DIARY

VMO-251

October 1, 1943 to October 31, 1943.

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- October 1 Recognition, Skeet and Fixed Gunnery classes for pilots. Pilots familiarized themselves with planes by working with the plane crews. Flew section tactics. Twenty seven (27) enlisted men joined from Headquarters Squadron MBDAG-44. One (1) enlisted man transferred to Third Marine Aircraft Wing, FMF, MCAS, Cherry Point, N.C.
 - October 2 Skeet and Fixed Gunnery classes. Section tactics. 2nd Lt. Orville F. Lorch (NA) crashed FM-1 #15373 on Koehn Dry Lake caused by engine failure resulting in a forced landing. Pilot received lacerations on the right cheek. Plane stricken and transferred to Naval Supply, NAS, San Diego, California.
 - October 3 Recognition, Skeet and Fixed Gunnery classes. Section tactics.
 - October 4 Recognition, Skeet, and Fixed Gunnery classes. Section tactics.
 - October 5 Recognition, and Fixed Gunnery classes. 2nd Lt. Richard W. Hildebrand (NA) damaged wing tip of F4F-4 #5220 caused by pilot failing to realize plane started to ground loop. No injury to pilot.
 - October 6 Recognition, Skeet and Fixed Gunnery classes. Navigation hops and section tactics. Received eight (8) FM-1's from VMF-225, three (3) F4F-4's from VMF-225, one (1) F4F-4 from VMF-218 and one (1) F4F-3 from VMF-218.
 - October 7 Recognition, Skeet and Fixed Gunnery classes. Navigation hops and section tactics. 2nd Lt. Russell F. Neilson (NA) landed plane (FM-1 #15429) in slight skid causing groundloop. Damage to propeller and no injury to pilot.
 - October 8 Recognition and Fixed Gunnery classes. Section tactics. Received seven (7) FM-1's from VMF-218. One (1) enlisted man joined from CasCo #3 MD, USNH, San Diego, California.
 - October 9 Recognition and Fixed Gunnery classes. 2nd Lt. John F. Osterlund (NA) died as result of aircraft accident caused by pilot error. (FM-1 #32470) Pilot apparently lost control of plane on final landing approach causing plane to spin straight in. Plane complete washout.
 - October 10 Fixed Gunnery classes. Dummy Gunnery. Received one (1) FM-1 from VMF-218. Two (2) enlisted men to STAD in Bridgeport, Conn. in conn with inst in line maintainance of F4U Aircraft. One (1) enlisted man to STAD to Hartford, Conn. in conn with inst in aircraft engines.
 - October 11 Recognition and Fixed Gunnery classes. Dummy Gunnery.
 - October 12 Recognition and Fixed Gunnery classes. Dummy Gunnery. Received 7 FM-1 fr 218.
 - October 13 Recognition and Fixed Gunnery classes. Dummy Gunnery.
 - October 14 Recognition and Fixed Gunnery classes. Dummy Gunnery.
 - October 15 Dummy Gunnery.
 - October 16 Dummy Gunnery. 2nd Lt. John J. Mc Masters to TAD to escort the remains of the late 2nd Lt. John F. Osterlund to Arlington National Cemetary, Fort Meyers, Virginia. Intertype tactics (scramble)
 - October 17 Dummy Gunnery, Section tactics, and Intertype tactics
 - October 18 Dummy Gunnery and Section tactics.
 - October 19 Dummy Gunnery, Section tactics and Intertype tactics.
 - October 20 Dummy Gunnery and Section tactics. 2nd Lt. Richard W. Hildebrand (NA) and 2nd Lt. William J. Pirages (NA) collided in mid-air about 50 miles Northeast of Mojave Air Station. Both pilots chuted to safty, Pirages receiving slight bruises. Both planes Stricken, (FM-1 #20213 - FM-1 #14260)

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- October 21 Radar problem. One (1) enlisted man from STAD at Hartford, Conn. Three (3) enlisted men from STAD at Bridgeport, Conn. 1st Lt. Lee E. O'Harra joined from Headquarters Squadron, MBDAG-44.
- October 22 Radar problem. 1st Lt. Lee E. O'Harra (NA) damaged propeller and wing tip of plane (FM-1 #15139) caused by slight cross wind causing the plane to drift after normal landing. No injury to pilot. 2nd Lt. Orville F. Lorch (NA) made emergency landing 2½ miles southeast of MCAS, Mojave, California caused by trouble with fuel gauge. Plane stricken and pilot received slight lacerations above the right eye. 2nd Lt. Joseph A. Condon (NA) in landing plane (FM-1 #15442) run off the runway due to cross winds. Damaged the propeller, no injury to pilot. 2nd Lt. Howard T. Willey (NA) partially groundlooped plane (F4F-4 #20161) in landing caused by cross and gusty wind. Damaged left wing tip, no injury to pilot.
- October 23 Division tactics and dummy gunnery. Received four (4) FG-1's and twelve (12) F4U-1's from VMF-225. One (1) enlisted man to STAD to Naval Air Station, San Diego, California.
- October 24 Division tactics and dummy gunnery.
- October 25 Gunnery hops. Received one (1) FG-1 from NAS, San Diego, California.
- October 26 Recognition class. Gunnery hops. 2nd Lt. John J. Mc Masters from TAD in conn with escorting the remains of the late 2nd Lt. John F. Osterlund to Arlington National Cemetary, Fort Meyers, Virginia.
- October 27 Oxygen hops and Gunnery. Recognition class.
- October 28 Oxygen hops, Gunnery, dummy runs. Captain Thomas W. Furlow (NA) in plane (F4U-1 #17796) made wheels up landing due to carbureator stoppage causing engine to cut out. Fuselage buckled beneath cock-pit and center section inter-beam assembly fractured. No injury to pilot.
- October 29 Recognition and Fixed gunnery classes. Instrument instruction and gunnery.
- October 30 Instrument and Combat instructions. Received 1 F4U-1 from NAS, San Diego California. Major Carl M. Longley detached to Cherry Point, N.C. Joined one (1) enlisted man from VMF-218, MBDAG-44. One enlisted man from STAD at East Hartford, Conn.
- October 31 Gunnery hops.

RECAPITULATION

OFFICERS

ENLISTED MEN

PLANES

50

297

- 2 SNJ's
- 20 FM-1's
- 5 F4F-3's
- 4 F4F-4's
- 5 FG-1's
- 12 F4U-1's

Total 48