



Tiger Tales

The Official Newsletter of HMM-262
The Flying Tigers



Summer 2009

<http://www.1maw.usmc.mil/index.asp?unit=%27hmm-262%27>



A Message From the Commanding Officer:

Flying Tiger Families and Friends,

The squadron performed magnificently during Exercise TALISMAN SABER 09. You should all be justifiably proud of your Marines and sailors. They worked long hours both day and night to provide the Marines of the Battalion Landing Team 3/5 and our Australian counterparts the best support possible. Day and night live fire, close air support, assault support and resupply all went as well as could be hoped for.

Our MWSS Marines provided us fuel at an expeditionary airfield and the Air Support Element provided airspace control. After a couple of days of liberty in Brisbane, Australia, the squadron once again boarded the USS Essex to begin the journey home.

Once we returned to Okinawa, we began the Aviation Combat Element turnover process with HMM-265. In doing so, we bade farewell to our squadron mates from HMLA-267, HMH-465, MALS-36 MWSS-172/171, and Det-18. We wish them safe travels home and look forward to serving with them again.

Congratulations are in order to LtCol Douglas Schueler and his wife Shannon on a successful command tour. He has checked into the Naval War College where he will be attending Top Level School. The Change of Command was 28 July in Brisbane, Australia on the deck of the USS Essex and was a fitting farewell to LtCol Schueler.

I am honored and humbled to be a member of the World Famous Flying Tigers and look forward to serving as the Commanding Officer. Semper Fidelis,

John P. "Vegas" Mee
LtCol USMC



EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

Tigers,
Our recent trip "down under" was a resounding success both professionally and personally. Exercise Talisman Saber was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for most of the Marines in the squadron to visit Australia and work with our Aussie

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allies. By all accounts, the exercise was a success and all leaders involved were pleased with the performance of the “Flying Tigers.” It also gave us the opportunity to conduct training on a more realistic basis than we have had in past exercises. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the flying over the training area and the Great Barrier Reef.

Our final deployment of the spring patrol was punctuated by crossing the equator and liberty visits to both Cairns and Brisbane, Australia. Everyone enjoyed the friendliness and hospitality shown by the Australians, and from feedback given by Aussies at both locations, the Marines of HMM-262 (REIN) were good ambassadors of the United States and will be enthusiastically welcomed back. All good things must come to an end and with the recent change of command and impending MEU turnover, the spring patrol is nearing completion. In the last few weeks, even before the end of the exercise, we started to say farewell to some of our squadron mates. Some of these fine Marines were members of our southern California detachments but many were core squadron members. The most well known of these were the Commanding Officer and Executive Officer. I was apprehensive about assuming the role of the XO from Maj Korenek after his enviable performance over the last year. I will try to maintain his level of performance as we transition into a new chapter in the “Flying Tigers” story. Semper Fi,

Major “Waldo” Gioia



SERGEANT MAJOR:

Greetings 262!

As your Sergeant Major, every last one of you continues to amaze me with your knowledge and compassion for your job. As I observe the Marines and Sailors of this great squadron, it truly motivates me to see you all doing what you do best and that is keeping the aircraft flying and the Corpsmen keeping the Marines fit. In a nut shell, “GREAT TEAMWORK.”

Congratulations are in order for all the Marines that were promoted and received an award this past quarter. Good job and keep up the good work.

I ask that we also congratulate our winners of last week’s boards, Marine of the Quarter (LCpl Attlee), NCO of the Quarter (Sgt Richardson) and Meritorious Sergeant (Cpl Sears). Get some!

Gunnery Sergeant Abreu, I know having your former senior drill instructor, who is our very own MSgt Hadley, to pin on your rank had to be a great feeling. I’m sure MSgt Hadley is extremely proud of you. That was truly awesome!

I would like to congratulate our previous commanding officer, LtCol Schueler, on his selection to Colonel and wish him and his family the very best. Sir, as your Sergeant Major, it

has been a smooth journey for my family and me. We will keep your family in our prayers as you all move on to better things. Good luck and may God continue to shine upon you.

Marines and Sailors, I ask that we not lose focus on the task at hand. Stay motivated and thanks for all you do.

-Sergeant Major Robertson

ADMINISTRATION S-1:

Balikatan 09 was a great success in the S-1 shop. We showed our expeditious capabilities moving from the ship to being land-based for the length of the exercise. Upon returning to Futenma, we welcomed two new additions to the shop: SSgt Zarate, who is taking over for GySgt Hjorten as Admin Chief, and Maj Moor, as the new OIC. The large turnover in the shop kept us busy as we prepared for Talisman Saber ‘09.

Upon the completion TS09 the S-1 shop was flooded with awards to be processed for many hard charging “Devil Dogs.” S-1 now prepares for its ranks to be cut due to the 31st MEU detachment personnel departing back to San Diego, CA.

Just as Maj Moor is getting comfortable as the OIC he is now shifting roles and taking over the DoSS. Capt Tyson will be coming over from Operations to take over as the new OIC.

- Capt Nick “Catfish” Harvey

INTELLIGENCE S-2:

For the month of July, the Tigers’ S-2 began with an enjoyable liberty port in Cairns, Australia. After returning from the port visit, the S-2 kicked into high gear supporting the ACE with a number of flight briefs, pilot debriefs, and a multitude



A CH-46E Sea Knight prepares to land on the deck of the USS Essex during Exercise Talisman Saber '09 in Australia.

of threat briefs. Throughout the exercise the S-2 also gained valuable training in producing C2PC overlays, developing daily updates on the enemy situation, and aerial photography, as well as other products in support of the MEU. Talisman Saber '09 went smoothly for HMM-262 (REIN) with the timely and accurate products for the multitude of missions such as CASEVACs, CAS, Aerial Reconnaissance, Troop Insertions and Extracts, resupplies, etc. After the successful completion of the exercise the S-2 participated in

the Change of Command. Following the ceremony, the ship and the unit enjoyed another fantastic liberty port in the city of Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

-1stLt Sean Gallagher

OPERATIONS S-3:

The last few months have found the World Famous "Flying Tigers" extending our professional reputation throughout the Pacific Theater as we achieved a myriad of operational accomplishments.

April began with the Operations Department

executing a successful embarkation of HMM-262(REIN) aircraft aboard Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) shipping for the transit to the Republic of the Philippines for Exercise Balikatan '09. This exercise presented the unique challenge of sending the entire Aviation Combat Element (ACE) ashore to Clark Air Base in order to participate in joint operations with Filipino Marines. After a weeklong transit past the Straits of Taiwan involving Carrier Qualification proficiency and daily flight planning, the



Major Aaron Marx, HMLA-267 Det OIC and squadron operations officer.

Squadron made the 50-mile transition ashore. Within hours, a make-shift hangar was set up at the southern end of the airfield and the ACE was fully operational. The next two weeks found Tiger aircraft crisscrossing the entirety of the island of Luzon as HMM-262(REIN) was tasked with a multitude of missions that ranged from Close Air Support of infantry units operating at the Crow Valley Range Complex, to Casualty Evacuation missions to the major metropolitan hospital in Manila, to passenger and cargo movements between Filipino bases. Instructor pilots from the Squadron trained our allied counterparts in Night Vision Goggle operations, terrain flight profiles, and the shipboard environment. This training culminated in the first

ever carrier landing performed by a Filipino helicopter crew and a joint close air support mission by a division of aircraft consisting of an AH-1W SuperCobra, a UH-1N Huey, and a Filipino MD-500 Defender, providing fires in the Crow Valley Range. By executing this wide variety of missions, the squadron showcased the unique ability of the ACE to conduct sustained operations ashore.

Following a successful retrograde from Clark Air Base to ARG shipping and several days of well earned liberty in the port of Subic Bay, the “Flying Tigers” steamed north back to Okinawa to prepare for our next challenge, Exercise Talisman Saber in Queensland, Australia.

Upon return to MCAS Futenma, the squadron was rejoined by two recent Weapons and Tactics Instructor (WTI) course graduates, Capt Dan “Squeaky” Schierling and Sgt Michael Burgett.

Additionally, the Operations Department was augmented by Sgt Robert Heite, newly arrived



Capt. Andrew Robbins heads toward Mt. Suribachi during a PME trip to Iwo Jima.

on the island. One of the major preparations required for the upcoming exercise in Australia was the need to streamline the tracking of flight hours while operating afloat. Thanks to many hours of hard work put in by SSgt Mercado, Sgt Heite, Cpl Greenough, LCpl Smith, LCpl Moya-Albarracin, and 1stLt Christman, the Operations clerks set up a new database that can be used independently of the sporadic internet connection that often times occurs while conducting blue-water operations. Without a doubt, their efforts drastically reduced the administrative workload necessary during daily flight operations.

As the month of June concluded, the Flying Tigers again embarked aboard vessels from Expeditionary Strike Group Seven for the journey to Australia. The two-week transit involved many days of open-ocean operations and the opportunity for a few Marines to participate in the traditional “Shellback” ceremony as we crossed the equator into the Southern Hemisphere.

Upon arriving in Australian waters, the squadron pulled into the tropical city of Cairns for a working port visit. This allowed the squadron to conduct some needed aircraft maintenance and accomplish last minute coordination with our Australian counterparts prior to kicking off the exercise.

Talisman Saber '09 provided the “Flying Tigers” with the opportunity to conduct tactical training against a living and



Several members of the squadron took the opportunity to visit Corregidor during Exercise Balikatan.

thinking enemy force provided by Australian and U.S. Army Reserve units. On any given mission, the aircraft were able to practice tactical flight techniques such as terrain flight, section mechanics, and aerial reconnaissance. The exercise was an overwhelming success and after a few more days of sailing, the Flying Tigers pulled into the port of Brisbane.

The first order of business upon arrival was a heartfelt farewell to our Commanding Officer, LtCol Doug “Shubone” Schueler. The squadron formed up on the flight deck for the solemn change of command ceremony and welcomed LtCol John “Vegas” Mee as he assumed command of the “Flying Tigers.” The squadron returned to Okinawa Aug 12, with the dets returning to California less than two weeks later.

-Capt D.W. Underwood

LOGISTICS S-4:

The Logistics department has continued to be busy due to operations with the 31st MEU Spring Patrol Cycle. The embarkation and debarkation of the squadron onto the USS Essex and movements ashore for Balikatan ‘09 and Talisman Saber ‘09 provided significant challenges which have been met and overcome. Additionally, the Logistics department provided supplies as needed to prepare the squadron aircraft to pass the Australian Quarantine Inspection before Talisman Saber ‘09. While deployed for Talisman Saber ‘09, we supported a cross-decked AH-1/UH-1 DET from the USS Essex to the USS Denver for CALFEX in Australia. During the Force-on-Force portion of Talisman Saber, our Bulk Fuel specialists provided an outstanding FARP at Sam Hill

airfield, which greatly increased the operational capabilities of the ACE. At the completion of Talisman Saber 09 we supported the Squadron Change of Command from LtCol Schueler to LtCol Mee. Now back at Futenma, the Logistics department is now focused on the 31st MEU turnover with HMM-265 and assisting the DET Marines return to their families and homes in California.

– Capt Parley “Grimace” Williams

HUMAN AFFAIRS S-5:

The S-5 shop has been busy since the last installment of Tiger Tales. The pool party at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines was as refined as it gets in the Marine Corps. The Stotsenburg Hotel welcomed us back with open arms making the party a great success. Success here is judged by the number of people soaking

wet by the end of the night. It was a refreshing end to a busy couple weeks in very hot and humid weather. After Balikatan, we returned to Okinawa and said goodbye to several of our own. S-5 changed up the scenery from the usual on base Habu Pit to Peter's Place, an off base Chinese restaurant frequented by Marines on Island. Food was devoured, beers were drunk, and goodbyes were drawn out, but still none of it could compare to the deafening sound of pilots singing karaoke. So much for double hearing protection! While some left Okinawa, soon after a few made it to the "Flying Tigers'" last crusade before leaving for Australia. The battle was against HMM-265 for the infamous Phrog Cup. The battleground was the Semper Fit Gym and anywhere we could hold a competition. The Flying Tigers took the volleyball, football, relay race, and soccer events. Most noteworthy was the domination of the soccer arena by our underdog team without jerseys or even shin guards to their names. At a tie, it all came down to a



A CH-53 prepares to land on the crowded deck of the USS Tortuga.

pull on the rope. The entire squadron crowded in to count cadence for our team. If any of our Marines are without rhythm it wasn't evident on this day. The finale was provided by a few reluctant but motivated Marines who after 10 rounds around a baseball bat could hardly stand, let alone sprint, to a small orange cone at the other end of a sea of shouting people. The Phrog Cup competition was a welcome break in the long hours and hard work it took to get the squadron and aircraft ready for Talisman Saber.

First stop for S-5 was a Kangaroo Court in Cairns where pilots have a chance to receive or change their callsign. The S-5 gives it's thanks to 1stLts Christman and Schiler for their fine detective work in locating the perfect place for general merriment. Only one question remains after that night: Betty, what were you thinking!?! Now Talisman Saber has come to a close, and as the rest of the squadron prepares to turn over the MEU, the S-5 is hard at work preparing for more farewells, the Futenma Flightline Fair, and the Marine Corps Birthday Ball.

-Capt Courtney Slafter

DoSS (SAFETY):

It's time for Tiger Tails again, and the Department of Safety and Standardization (DoSS) certainly has no shortage. Over the last three months the atmosphere in DoSS, normally rife with professionalism, was also rife with change. The most



Sgt Eric Driz, left, and Cpl Diego Ascencio replace an environmental control unit in an AH1 Cobra helicopter.

noticeable change was the removal and replacement of our fearless (yet prudent) leader, Maj "Waldo" Gioia. The loss is bittersweet, because although we will miss him, he is still nearby in spirit, and also in person.

Maj Donald "DC" Moor stepped right in to fill the role of the squadron's top safety professional, leaving the rest of the DoSS shop very little opportunity to "party like the parents are away." Maj Moor was the squadron's personnel officer for three months before becoming the DoSS, and is now dexterously running both shops while he waits for a replacement for his old billet.

Capt David "DUH" Dixon, the Cobra detachment's NATOPS representative and owner of what was potentially the largest brain in DoSS, departed in May destined for Harvard Business School (*THE* Harvard) on an Olmstead scholarship. Receiving the scholarship is a rare honor, and we are sure Capt Dixon will do well.

Capt Seth "LAMPS" Jerue is now filling the roles of AH-1 Cobra and UH-1 "Huey" NATOPS officers.

Capt Joe “Frombie” Heintz, the NATOPS officer, left for flight school in late July. Apparently he had never finished his last few RI flights, but he was erroneously given his wings due to a recordkeeping blunder. No matter, the issue will soon be resolved.

1stLt Jon Schiler, the most junior resident of the shop, is now running the NATOPS program with the youthful vigor so typical of thirty year old lieutenants.

August brings even more change as the detachment personnel prepare to return to

California, so Capt Seth Jerue and Capt Nate Robinson will be going home to their respective squadrons as well.

Capt Ryan “DC” Bobber, the squadron Ground Safety Officer, is maintaining an air of professionalism even though he is considering challenging Maj Moor to a cage match to decide who will keep the rights to the callsign “DC.” Capt Bobber has invoked the classic “I was here first” defense, which is certainly a valid argument. On the other hand, Maj Moor points out that he was assigned the callsign long before Capt Bobber.

In response to the cage match idea, Maj Moor is prepared to suggest the issue be settled with a round of rock-captains-major, which is apparently a variation of rock-paper-scissors in which the major always wins.

Stay tuned to see what happens.
- **Capt Nathan Robinson**

MAINTENANCE:

The Maintenance Department spent the entire month of April located on Clark Air Base, Philippines, for Exercise Balikatan.



A CH-53E helicopter pulls up to a refueling hose trailing a KC-130 aircraft during Exercise Talisman Saber.

During this time, the Maintenance Marines worked tirelessly in support of the exercise, conducting phase maintenance on two CH-46s and numerous FCFs on all type/model/series aircraft. Additionally, a Remain Behind Team (RBT) stayed on the Essex during the exercise, completing phase maintenance on a UH-1N and FCF on a CH-46. Upon completion of the exercise all aircraft made their scheduled fly-on to the USS Essex as the squadron linked back up with it's Legaspi detachment and was once again whole. The conclusion of the month coincided with the end of the exercise and the return of all aircraft and maintainers back to MCAS Futenma.

With another successful fly-on and off accomplished, by May the Maintenance Department had returned to Futenma at full tilt in preparation for Exercise Talisman Saber and the strenuous challenges it would face with inspections by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS).

During this time the Phrogs showed no signs of slowing down, as they waded through the long and arduous task of meticulously cleaning aircraft in preparation for their AQIS inspections. In the face of this impending task, the Maintenance Marines were still able to complete phase maintenance on a UH-1N, all while supporting a continuous flight schedule. Simultaneously, the Maintenance Department began preparations to accept two new birds from

HMH-465 through C-5 transfer. This coincided with the Squadron sending two CH-53s to SDLM, which required both birds to be inspected and inventoried before shipment to Korea.

Extraordinary efforts were made by Marines across the entire squadron in order to push aircraft through the AQIS process and meet our ARG fly on goals.

With literally no time to spare, all aircraft necessary to accomplish Exercise Talisman Saber safely flew on to the USS Essex. The squadron was able to fly three AH-1Ws, two UH-1Ns, three CH-53s, and all twelve CH-46s. This was in no small way attributed to the relentless efforts of the Maintenance Marines' dedication to returning aircraft to a mission capable status upon completion of the AQIS inspections.

July has seen the maintenance department busy supporting exercise Talisman Saber in Australia. As the exercise winds down, the core squadron Marines look forward to returning to Okinawa while detachment Marines anticipate their return to California.

-Capt Stephen "Leroy" Taute

MEDICAL:

The squadron had no major medical issues during our recent deployment to Australia. Everyone's hard work to improve medical readiness has paid off. The squadron is now above 90% for full medical readiness. Please continue to come to medical to get your shots and complete

paperwork to help us maintain this level of readiness.

As many of our fellow Marines and Sailors prepare to return to California, remember that this is a time when people are injured either due to complacency or as a result of rushing to get the job done. Take the time to keep each other safe.

As always, please be sure to check with medical if you have questions about any health related issues.

- LT D. De Cecchis, MD (FS)



FAMILY READINESS:

Summer is always a big transition period for the military community on Okinawa. That is especially true this year for our family readiness team. Not only do we have a new Commanding Officer and Executive Officer, we've also lost our two family readiness assistants, Shan Tyson and Jessica Korenek. Shan was the backbone of much of the squadron's family readiness efforts for the past couple of years, and since last fall, her and Jessica have together served as mainstays of the program. As they move on, however, we are looking for replacements.

Family Readiness Assistants are appointed by the Commanding Officer to support the FRO and the Family Readiness Program. Their responsibilities include helping welcome unit families, providing

feedback from unit families, assisting with information and referral services, and helping publicize unit events.

On September 14th we're planning a meet the new commander brief. We'll talk more about volunteering opportunities then. In the meantime, if you have questions or are interested in volunteering, please call me at 636-5385 or 090 5733 7724. You can also reach me by e-mail at ronald.r.appling@usmc.mil

Another upcoming event is our Jane Wayne Day on Oct. 9, which we'll hold in conjunction with Marine Aerial Refueler Squadron 152 and Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 1. The event will give spouses an opportunity to learn about and experience some of the things their Marines do on a regular basis. Our planned activities include displays of a CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter and a C-130 aircraft. We're also hoping to show spouses the aircraft simulators, have a Marine Corps Martial Arts demonstration, and give spouses an opportunity to fire weapons using the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer. Invitations will be sent out by the first of Sept. with an RSVP date of Sept 18. If you're an HMM-262 spouse and haven't received an invitation by the 10th, please let me know.

--Ron Appling

Promotions:

May Promotions

1. Sgt Demetrius Douglas
2. Sgt Dustin Jones
3. Sgt Caleb Ryan

4. Sgt Christopher Taylor
5. Sgt Joshua Wheeler
6. Cpl Steven Bigos
7. Cpl Samuel Derenne
8. Cpl Thomas Dowd
9. Cpl Paul Lombardo
10. Cpl Heath Prestwich
11. Cpl Matthew Waybourn
12. LCpl William Jones

June Promotions

1. Sgt Matthew Wimer
2. Cpl Juan Sanchez
3. LCpl Michael Cassidy
4. LCpl Jose Cordobamelo

July Promotions

1. Capt Courtney Slafter
2. Capt Robert Steinhauser
3. Capt Donald Underwood
4. GySgt Pedro Abreu
5. GySgt Jose Garcia
6. Cpl Cody Curtis
7. Cpl Chayn House
8. Cpl Gene Menard
9. Cpl Sam Munoz
10. Cpl Jerome Nero
11. Cpl Bret Watts
12. LCpl Robert Boss

August Promotions

1. Sgt Clint Carosiellie
2. Sgt John Fager
3. Sgt Sean Kayser
4. Cpl Jamie Barnes
5. Cpl Cesar Camarena
6. Cpl Brandon House
7. Cpl Joseph Rohrer
8. LCpl John King
9. Pfc Nicholas Evans
10. Pfc Brandon Isaak
11. Pfc Seth McDonald

Awards:

Certificate of Commendation

1. Sgt Quincy Newman
2. Sgt Christopher Blank
3. Sgt Matthew Burgett

4. Sgt Kyle Shaw
5. Sgt Artemio Magana
6. Sgt Joshua Wheeler
7. Sgt Dustin Jones
8. Sgt Ryan Murphy
9. Sgt Nick Colby
10. Sgt Matthew Sherrill
11. Cpl Steven Gray
12. Cpl Alexander Sexton
13. Cpl Stanislaw Paniak
14. Cpl Christopher Goodwin
15. Cpl Sean Billock
16. Cpl Bryan Cubero
17. Cpl Christopher Glass
18. LCpl Rowan Attlee
19. LCpl Zaida Moyalbarracin
20. LCpl Philip Slocum

Meritorious Mast

1. Sgt William Drieling
2. Sgt Charles Palmer
3. Cpl Kurt Udseth
4. Cpl Arturo Fernandez
5. Cpl Russel Layman
6. Cpl Johathan Jordan
7. Cpl Rebecca Loew-Kies
8. Cpl Matthew Nebergall
9. Cpl Daniel Brown
10. LCpl Patrick Cass

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal

1. Capt Nels Dahlgard
2. Capt John Coates
3. 1stLt David Fulkerson
4. 1stLt Sean Gallagher
5. GySgt James Allen
6. SSgt Randy Jarmon
7. Sgt Ricky Broadway
8. Sgt Eric Driz
9. Sgt Bryan Graham
10. Sgt Chance Hensley
11. Sgt Christopher Taylor
12. Sgt Bonnie Widman
13. Sgt Casey Zimmer
14. Cpl Michael Greenough
15. Cpl Laura Ryggs



Flying Tigers Retain Phrog Cup

The Flying Tigers retained possession of the prized Phrog Cup trophy during a field meet competition against HMM-265 on May 29. The closely-contested meet pitted the two squadrons against one another in a variety of sporting events such as soccer, football, basketball, and more. Though the score was close throughout the day, the Flying Tigers prevailed after winning the final event, the tug-of war.



The USS Tortuga and the USS Denver steam toward Australia