

121st TACTICAL FIGHTER GROUP



LINEAGE

357th Fighter Group constituted and activated, 1 Dec 1942
Inactivated, 20 Aug 1946
Redesignated 121st Fighter Group and allotted to ANG (Ohio), 21 Aug 1946
Extended federal recognition, 26 Jun 1948
Redesignated 121st Fighter Bomber Group, 16 Oct 1952
Redesignated 121st Fighter Interceptor Group
Redesignated 121st Tactical Fighter Group
Inactivated, 10 Oct 1974

STATIONS

Hamilton Field, CA, 1 Dec 1942
Tonopah AAFld, NV, 4 Mar 1943 **7 Mar 1943**
Santa Rosa AAFld, CA, 3 Jun 1943
Oroville AAFld, CA, 18 Aug 1943
Casper AAFld, WY, 7 Oct-9 Nov 1943
Raydon, England, 30 Nov 1943 **1 Dec 1943**
Leiston, England, 31 Jan 1944-8 Jul 1945
Neubiberg, Germany, 21 Jul 1945-20 Aug 1946
Rickenbacker ANGB, Columbus, OH
Dayton Municipal Airport, Vandalia, OH, 26 Jun 1948
Springfield Municipal Airport, Springfield, OH, Jun 1956
Lockbourne Air Force Base, OH, Nov 1958

ASSIGNMENTS

Ninth Air Force, 7 Dec 1943
Eighth Air Force, 30 Jan 1944
United States Air Forces in Europe

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-39
P-51B
P-51C
P-51D
P-51K

COMMANDERS

LTC Loring F. Stetson, Jr., 1 Dec 1942
LTC Edwin S. Chickering, 7 Jul 1943
Col Henry R. Spicer, 17 Feb 1944
Col Donald W. Graham, 7 Mar 1944
LTC John D. Landers, 11 Oct 1944
Col Irwin H. Dregne, 2 Dec 1944
LTC Andrew J. Evans Jr, 21 Jul 1945
LTC Wayne E. Rhynard, 20 Nov 1945
LTC Dale E. Shafer, (Acting 26 June 1948)
Rodney Boren, 1 Sep 1948
Dale E. Shafer, 18 Oct 1951
Albert Line, 1960
Paul Hoover, 1962
Donald Griffith, 1964
John Taylor (Interim, 1971-1972)
Donald Griffith, 1972
Harry Cochran, 1973
William Casey, 1973

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Air Offensive, Europe
Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Germany, 6 Mar and 29 Jun 1944
Derben, Germany, 14 Jan 1945

French Croix de Guerre with Palm
11 Feb 1944-15 Jan 1945

EMBLEM

Per fess nebuly azure and or, in chief a chaplet azure and argent winged or, in base a cubit arm in armor brandishing a sword proper hiked bronze. (Approved, 27 May 1953)

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

SEMPER OMNIA—All Things at All Times

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

As 1942 came to a close, many people started to arrive at Hamilton Field. Their accommodation was to say the least basic, tar paper huts on a mud flat, and at this time there was a shortage of supplies and equipment, but the new Fighter Group soon began to take shape. The first Commander of the group was Lt Colonel Loring Stetson Jr, four other officers were, Major Donald Graham (operations officer) he later commanded the group, Major Robert Romine (group Adjutant), Capt Alfred Craven (intelligence officer) and Capt Irwin Dregne (operations and training officer) who also became a Commanding officer of the group. The three Sqn commanders were Capt Hubert Egnés, Capt Varian White and Capt Stuart Lauler.

On the 4th March 1943 the 357th started their first move, Hamilton Field was to be left behind, the new location was in the desert of Nevada, Tonopah. The training base at Tonopah was spread over a very large area, and the primary mission of the base was for Bombing and Gunnery. When the 357th arrived it had only been in use for about 3 months, and it was here at Tonopah that the 357th got their first aircraft, the P-39. Again at Tonopah were the tar paper huts and a lot of concrete, there were no hangars then for maintenance, so all the ground crews work was done outside in all weathers. The three Sqns were doing a lot of flying, day and night to get experience as quickly as possible, as the move to Europe could come at any time, so the ground crews were working flat out just to keep the P-39's serviceable. In the three months of heavy training at Tonopah there had been only 3 fatalities due to aircraft accidents, but this would rise during the months to come.

The 3rd June 1943 the 357th were to move again and they would be split up too. The 362nd Sqn were moved to Haywood, California, HQ and the 363rd/364th Sqn's went to Santa Rosa, one month later they too were split. The 363rd went to Oroville, and the 364th moved to Marysville in the middle of that August.

During the summer months young new pilots were arriving, and the training was still very intense, with this came more fatalities, a loss of another 8 men due to flying accidents and many non Fatal throughout the base. There were several Command changes during July, Col Stetson went to North Africa and was replaced by Col Edward Chickering, Capt Lauler, Commander of the 363rd Sqn was taken ill and Capt Clay Davies took his place for a short time, unfortunately he was killed in a plane crash on the 7th July, so Major Donald Graham took the post for about a month. Then on the 28th Sept the 363rd were given orders to move again with HQ, 357th Fighter Group, this time to Casper AA fld in Wyoming. Also the 362nd were moved to Pocatello, Idaho, and the 364th went to Ainsworth, Nebraska, These were to be the final moves before leaving for England. In late October the final inspection of the group took place, the report dated 24th October read, "Combat fitness and training of personnel and equipment is considered very satisfactory, and this unit is recommended for overseas movement on readiness date". So early in November 1943 the 357th

Fighter Group headed out by rail to Camp Shanks, New York, were on the 23rd November they would board the RMS Queen Elizabeth for the 6 day trip to the Firth of Clyde in Scotland.

When the 357th first arrived in England their new station was Raydon) Station 157, it was a small village about 6 miles from the town of Ipswich, and the 357th were all moved in by the 7th December. The field was a sea of mud and any vehicle that strayed off the concrete areas would certainly be stuck. It was wet, cold and dismal, not a bit like home, although it would only be short stay here as they would again be moved. The result of the German bombing in 1940 was still very visible to the new arrivals, when on leave to the nearby towns they would notice the lack of clothing and food available, fuel and luxuries were as everything else, very scarce. But the people did their best to make the most of what they had, and in most cases made the Americans welcome.

Very soon orders were issued by the U.S. Army Air Force, United Kingdom, assigning the 357th Fighter Group to the Ninth Air Force, then undergoing a build up after moving from the Mediterranean. The Ninth were to be the primary air support force for American forces during and after the invasion of France. A few days later they were assigned to the IX Fighter Command. It was on the 19th of December that the group received their first Fighter, a single P-51B. It arrived in an Olive drab and grey paint scheme, and was not even new. It had been very well used by the RAF, and the roundels were still visible under the new paintwork. This was the first of many of the type the 357th would take into combat, and by the end of December they had fifteen. (Link)? The small number of P-51s that were available during the two months at Raydon restricted the much needed transition training; the three Sqns had only seventeen between them and the bulk of them only arrived shortly before the first combat missions.

The first missions from Raydon were not flown by the whole group, but a few pilots at a time. Commanders and Flight leaders flew their first sorties with the 354th Fighter Group out of nearby Boxted; they had completed several combat missions, so their Knowledge of combat was a help to the new 357th. The 354th were the first of the Mustang Fighter Groups, but they had been assigned to the Ninth Air Force at a time when the Eighth Air Force needed a long-range fighter. So the 357th was to become the first P-51 Group in the Eighth Air Force, and also they were to move again, This base was to be home for the rest of the war, Station F-373, Leiston Airfield.

On their arrival at Leiston, German Propaganda Radio's Lord Haw Haw (William Joyce) welcomed the new 357th Fighter Group to their new location, and Nicknamed them: "YOXFORD BOYS"

After the transfer of the 357th to the Eighth Air Force and the move to Base F-373 Leiston, aircraft for the group started to arrive very rapidly from Wharton in the first week 74 P-51's were available, enough to start operations.

Leiston was typical of the many airfields being built in East Anglia at this time, although no two would be the same, it was sixty miles from London, and only three miles inland from the North Sea. Leiston was in fact the closest Eighth Air Force base to German occupied Europe, Approximately one hundred miles away. It was built by British contractors, and had three concrete runways roughly in the shape of an A. The longest was 6,000 feet and the other two were 4,200 feet, just enough for a fully laden P-51. The control tower stood out on its own where it had a good

view of the airfield, and there were many other buildings spread over a large area.

Before the group could cross into enemy airspace pilots would have to become aware of the limits and habits of their Mustangs, so there was a push to get pilots up and trained for the job ahead. They would find out how it would behave in a steep dive, how high they could go and what problems they might get in combat. The Eighth Air Force wanted to get their first Mustang group into the action, and "The Big Week" was about to begin. Code named operation Argument, this was to target the factories that built the Me109 and Fw190's, hopefully destroying a large part of fighter production, and the 357th would do their part. Feb 11th saw the first mission, a sweep into France lead by Maj. James Howard from the 354th Fighter Group, the only welcome they received was flak. The 12th and 13th also were to France this time led by Lt Col Don Blakeslee, commander of the 4th fighter Group. The 13th was for one 362nd pilot a lucky day, Lt Robert W. Brown was returning from Dieppe, well out to sea, when his engine stopped, and would not restart. It was time to leave the aircraft and on doing so his legs hit the tail section causing bad injuries, apart from this, the water he was going to land in was so cold that survival time was about twenty minutes. His May Day call had been heard, and after some thirty minutes he was pulled out of the water by an RAF rescue boat. After a long time in hospital he recovered but did not return to the 357th, and even fifty plus years later the problems from his injuries still remain, as with many other's.

20th Feb, 1944, saw the start of the big week and the Eighth Air Force pounded the factories in Germany, during the five days there were 2,800 bomber sorties, and 3,800 fighter sorties. The 357th were there from the start, on the 20th it was their first sortie into the enemy homeland, lead by Col Don Blakeslee from the 4th F/G, and the first combat loss from a group mission and the first of 600 air combat victories. Lt Calvert William's of the 362nd Sqn was the first with an air victory, and after shooting down an Me109 Lt Donald Ross had to bail out and was a POW for more than a year. Col Henry Spicer had taken Command of the Group on the 17th Feb 44 but did not lead until the 21st Feb, on this trip the Group lost one pilot and claimed shooting down two. Capt William O'Brien a future Ace with the 363rd shot down his first Me 109, also Lt Boyle shot the back end off a 109 but was himself hit and bailed out, to be taken prisoner. Most of the missions flown during this time were Bomber escort, penetration and withdrawal support, and sometimes it was not always the enemy that shot at the fighters.

On the final days of Big Week the 357th were involved in some heavy combat, claiming five enemy aircraft destroyed each day and also to losing two each day, out of the ten shot down four had been twin engine night fighters, German fighter controllers would often send them up against the Eighth Air Force bombers, as they had heavy forward fire power they would cause serious damage to the B-17s and B-24s. During the heavy combat on these days four pilots were lost, Lt Donald Rice was shot down by a Fw 190 and Lt Kehrer's engine failed both ended up in Stalag Luft 1, the other two were Lt Charles McKee and Lt Tom Beemer. Unfortunately they both fell to friendly fire, McKee was hit and badly wounded by a B-24 gunner but was able to bail out, Lt Beemer was hit by defensive fire from a B-17 and bailed out, but his parachute streamed and never properly opened, he hit tree's which slowed him down and probably saved his life. His legs were very badly injured and both he and Lt McKee were repatriated due to their bad injuries.

The next Target for the Eighth Air Force bombing campaign had to be Berlin, American aircrews

knew it and the Luftwaffe expected it.

Berlin, the R.A.F. had been there many times on their night raids, but as February of 1944 drew to a close the mighty Eighth had yet to venture to the "BIG D". Berlin was full of important legitimate targets, but more than that it was Hitler's home, the leader of the armies causing so much pain and death across Europe. The Eighth had to go to Berlin, and as the calendar rolled over to March 44, the time had come.

Leonard "Kit" Carson recalls the anticipation of flying a long mission to Berlin: "When the smell of the first all out mission to Berlin was in the air around the end of February, we were ready. By then I had 666 flying hours, 435 in first line fighters, and 32 hours in the P-51B. The status of our training was superb. The weather in England varies between poor and rotten for 240 days out of the year. The winter of 44/45 was the worst that Europe had seen for thirty years. Our runways and Nissen huts were floating in a sea of mud. As we went from mission briefing in group ops, to the squadron pilot's room on the flight line, one could feel the weight of the leaden grey overcast above. A few snowflakes would expire in the mud at our feet. How high would we have to climb today to get on top of it- 20,000-30,000 feet? Only yesterday I took my flight to 36,000 feet before we broke into sunlight and then the mission was recalled. back down through it again and grope your way back to England thirty feet above the North sea for 120 miles, with no horizon for reference because the fog dissolves into the water and your environment is just one grey mass of weather, it has no dividing line between sea and sky" This would occur on many missions to come.

On the 4th March a Bomber Force again set out to attempt to reach Berlin, about 800 bombers had got up through the murk, and about the same in fighters. The B-17s pressed on for about two hours when they had a recall, many headed home, but it was thought to this day to be a hoax message from the Germans. Some bombers elected to go on 1 Sqn from the 100th Bomb Group and 3 of the 95th, a total of 29 B-17s to bomb Berlin for the first time. They arrived in the Berlin area without being attacked by German fighters, they thought they were probably alone as the fighters would have returned on the recall. Only they were pleasantly surprised when 4 Sqns of Mustangs turned up, like Calvary in a western, just as the German fighters arrived. 1 Sqn from the 4th Fighter Group and 3 Sqns from the 357th, these 8 Sqns of Bombers and Fighters were the first to carry out a U.S. attack on the City of Berlin.

For a fighter group that had been totally innocent of air combat in the skies over Europe only a few weeks ago, the 357th were now, in the month of March, embroiled in combat nearly every day. During this month alone over fifty victory claims were made for enemy aircraft destroyed, and many others that were hit but not claimed as destroyed. Unfortunately there had been losses for the group, sixteen pilots were reported missing, many of them would not return. In March alone the Luftwaffe had lost approximately 400 aircraft and close to 300 pilots.

Throughout the missions during the months of February and March the P-51, although a great aircraft, its engine and armament layout continued to frustrate the pilots and the maintenance crews. The abort rate was high for a variety of mechanical reasons, mission reports and combat reports would be full of references to gun jamming and guns that would fail to fire at all. During the Spring months a lot of effort went in at all levels to sort out the problems, most of the mechanical glitches were overcome but it was a slow process.

Flight line ground crews throughout the Eighth air force were responsible for many important and innovative improvements on aircraft and equipment, and their hard work and dedication is often not recorded. A 357th Armament NCO came up with the idea of taping and shellacking the gun firing solenoids, this would stop them freezing. Later in the year armament men would design a new mount for the K-14 gunsight, this was used by many units in the Eighth. In the middle of March, all P-51 groups received urgent instructions to correct a serious situation. In his diary for March 14th Joe DeShay (Crew Chief) wrote " Pulled all engine mounting bolts last night" Several P-51's had been lost when the engine broke away in hard pullouts, although none were from the 357th. Replacing all the bolts would have been a day and night job, and took 7 days to do all the groups aircraft.

Up to the end of March, all the Mustangs of the 357th were all in a dull olive drab and grey color scheme, this was getting rather ropey as much of it would come off when the shipping tape was removed. They all had white noses and white bands on the wings and tail surfaces, of course this poor appearance had no effect on their performance as a fighting machine, but the colors were to soon change. The final days of March saw the beginnings of what would result in the most colorful fighter force in all of aviation history. The white bands on wings and tail, and the white noses, had been introduced when the P-47's arrived a year earlier, it was hoped that it would make the P-47 look less like a Fw 190, this was used on the P-51, also because it looked very similar to the Me 109. In February 44, Col Hub Zemke the Commander of the 56th Fighter Group was given permission from the VIII Fighter Command to paint the noses of their P-47's in Squadron colors. Fighter Command was then awash with requests from other groups to do the same. On the 13th March General Kepner ordered a system to use nose colors for identification, and there started the very colorful Eighth Air Force. The 357th were assigned to the 66th fighter wing, and under the new nose color scheme all of the 5 groups in the 66th would have a checkerboard design on the nose, the 357th were to be the well known red and yellow. Although there are no surviving documents to verify the fact, it is thought that the 357th were to do more Stripping, painting and alterations to their aircraft color scheme's than other groups. All the early P-51's were OD and grey, but sometime in the spring they began to come through from the depot's in bare metal.

The 357th paint sprayers went to work on the new aircraft in two ways, one scheme was to paint the upper surfaces (Wing, tail and top of fuselage down to the canopy rim) in Olive Drab, leaving the fuselage sides in bare metal. Undersurfaces were painted grey or left again in bare metal. Then the other scheme was to paint the overall aircraft probably RAF green, with grey undersurfaces. After the invasion bare metal aircraft began to be predominate, partly to make them less visible against the Winter snow on the ground in Europe. Almost all 357th aircraft had names, sometimes on both sides, but usually on the left only, these would come from the pilot and occasionally from the ground crews that serviced the plane. Kill markings were normally painted on the left, forward of and under the cockpit, there was no set design for kill markings and they often differed from Sqn to Sqn. In the fall of 1944 the 363rd and 364th Sqns began to paint the rudder on their Mustangs, Red for 363rd, and Yellow for the 364th. The 362nd however, never used their White on rudders, as the aircraft were bare metal by then and the white would not have shown up.

As the Calendars flipped over to April 1944, there were only about nine weeks before the biggest and most important event of the European war, Allied forces were to return in large numbers to the

continent, D-Day. The rumors around the bases said that it would be May, they were not far off the mark. April and May were to lead in to Operation Overlord, During this period the 357th flew forty seven mission. On many days in the early part of May there were two or three missions a day, and at least twenty three of these produced "no joy", Meaning no sign of the Luftwaffe. Yet on the other days there was heavy combat, enough to provide 154 Victory claims, but sadly also the loss of 30 pilots. With Overlord fast approaching , all the Allied air forces were literally pounding all the railroads, highways, airfields and canals. This process was to reduce the enemies ability to move his forces and supplies, and on the 21st May this campaign reached full steam with Operation Chattanooga.

On the 5th June the orders came to spray the Groups Mustangs with Eighteen inch black and white stripes, Five on the wings and the fuselage, the reason was still kept from the men. The engineering officers were told to tell them it was to Identify the group as the "Yoxford Boys". On the following day June 6th the Briefing placed the first take-off at 02.10, Colonel Graham leading, it was to be an uneventful mission. The weather was bad and only a handful of aircraft got together for what was to be nearly a seven hour mission with no enemy contact, and it was the same for the other Sqn's. June, with D-Day in its first week, was one of the momentous times in World War II and brought with it, for a short time different kind of War. It had been a machine gun war for the 357th until now, but there was now a large number of bombs on the racks, to be dropped on all kinds of enemy targets. Glide bombing , skip bombing, and dive bombing, the group tried them all with often good results. During the month of June the contact with enemy fighters was low and only twenty-nine claims were made, with a loss of nine pilots.

19 April 1945 was the last time the 357th was to fire its guns in anger. It was the Group's best day against the ME-262s, with four destroyed and three others damaged. Flew its last mission, an escort operation, on 25 Apr 1945. Moved to Germany in Jul and assigned to United States Air Forces in Europe for duty with the army of occupation.

In 15 months of combat, the 357th had flown 318 combat missions and had claimed a total of 592 kills, 15 probables, and 118 damaged enemy planes in the air; and 120 kills and 74 damaged on the ground. Following the war, the 8th Air Force final victory assessments credited the Group with destroying a total of 688 enemy aircraft. In accomplishing these kills, 43 pilots became air aces and nine became air/ground aces.

The middle of July brought the final movement as a Group when it moved to base R-84, an ex-Luftwaffe Station at Neubiburg near Munich.

In August 1946, the 357th Fighter Group reached the end of the line. On 20 August 1946, three years, three months and 20 days after its creation, deactivation orders became effective and the 357th Fighter Group ceased to exist.

The 357th Fighter Group was redesignated 121st Fighter Group and allotted to the Ohio Air National Guard on the 11 Aug 1946. Extended Federal Recognition on 26 Jan 1947 the proposed Air Base Station was Lockbourne Army Air Base Columbus, Ohio. This group was never formed and the above authorizations and unit was disbanded and new Federal Recognition Orders were issued effective 26 June 1948 with a new station location Dayton Municipal Airport, Vandalia,

Ohio.

The 121st Tactical Fighter Group with Headquarters at Dayton Municipal Airport, Vandalia, Ohio, was activated in February of 1947 and was composed of the 166th at Lockbourne, the 162nd Fighter Squadron at Vandalia and the 164th at Mansfield.

The 121st Fighter Group Headquarters Buildings were a cluster of WW II built hangers located in the north east section of the Dayton Municipal Airport, Vandalia, Ohio. Redesignated 16 Oct 1952 from Headquarters, 121st Fighter Group to Headquarters 121st Fighter Bomber Group. Redesignated 121st Fighter Interceptor Group 20 June 56, Redesignated 121st Tactical Fighter Group 14 Nov 58.

Activated (Berlin Crisis) 1 Oct 1961-20 Aug 1962.

121st Tactical Fighter Group personnel and equipment served with the newly formed 7121st Tactical Fighter Group at Etain France standing fighter alerts and doing patrol duties in that area. A complete reorganization of the Ohio Air National Guard Group concept and operational function occurred after the Ohio Guard units return from Federal to State status 20 Aug 1962. In 1961, all units of the 121st Wing were called to Active Duty because of the Berlin Crisis. Approximately 1,000 members were based on Etain-Rouvres in France. Remainder of the Wing personnel were located at their home stations. An achievement in which much pride can be taken was the flight to France. The pilots of the 166th flew their F-84F's to Etain via the Azores and Spain without a single abort or other incident, thus demonstrating a high level of competence on the part of maintenance personnel as well as the pilots. The overseas portion of the Wing was returned to Ohio in July 1962 leaving their aircraft in France for use by their successor, the 366th Tactical Fighter Wing.

Activated 26 Jan 68 and stationed for duty at Kunsan, Korea, doing patrol duties duration of the Pueblo Crisis. Reverted back to State control 16 Jun 69 and stationed at Lockbourne Air Force Base (renamed Rickenbacker AFB 18 May 74), Columbus, Ohio 1969 With the advent of the USS Pueblo Crisis, the 121st Tactical Fighter Group was again ordered to active duty 26 January 1968, and initially assigned to the 113th Tactical Fighter Wing.

The 121st Tactical Fighter Group was relieved from assignment to the 113th Tactical Fighter Wing effective 22 April 1968, due to reorganization of the Wing and its subsequent movement to Myrtle Beach Air Force Base, South Carolina. The 121st Tactical Fighter Group was then assigned to the 833rd Air Division, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, North Carolina, with no change of station. The 121st Tactical Fighter Group demonstrated a high level of proficiency and state of training by processing their personnel into active duty in record time and passing all preliminary readiness inspections conducted by higher headquarters.

During the period April and May 1968, several of the recalled ANG Tactical Fighter units were deployed to South Viet Nam, serving with distinction. On 25 June 1968, the 121st Tactical Fighter Group departed for Kun-san Airbase, Republic of Korea. The air-refueled deployment included stops at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, and Anderson Air Base, Guam. The 121st arrived in Korea for a one year duty tour on 28 June 1968, forming the 354th Tactical Fighter Wing along

with the 127th Tactical Fighter Squadron from McConnell Air Force Base, Wichita, Kansas. The 121st TFG/166 TFS was the first F-100 unit to arrive in Korea and immediately assumed the alert commitment, relieving F-4D's of the 4th Tactical Fighter Wing. The 166 Tactical Fighter Squadron flew operational sorties for one year in support of the 5th AF commitments. We redeployed to Ohio again with 25 aircraft without an abort. Four pilots volunteered and flew combat missions on TDY with F-100 units in SEA. In addition, we have six (6) other pilots assigned who flew combat missions in SEA. We have a total of 15 pilots who have flown combat tours on board at this time.

The 121st Tactical Fighter Group was released from active duty 18 June 1969. The remainder of 1969 and all of 1970 were spent rebuilding the aircraft and replacing personnel. The 121st Tactical Fighter Group was again called on very short notice to participate in a JCS Exercise due to cancellation of an Indiana ANG unit originally tasked to support this exercise. On 16 April 1971, the 121st Tactical Fighter Group deployed 8 aircraft with 2 airborne spares from Lockbourne Air Force Base utilizing KC-97L tankers to Elmendorf AFB, Alaska. This unit represented the Tactical Air Command in this joint TAC/ALCOM Exercise Punchcard X'IV. Close air support and air defense missions were flown from 19 through 23 April 1971. On 25 April, these 8 F-100 aircraft redeployed using ANG KC-97 to Lockbourne AFB, Ohio. All scheduled tactical missions and deployments were completed without aborts or incidents.

357th FG P-51B. Olive and grey factory finish. P-51B, C, D & K: natural metal with high proportion of field applied camouflage during summer of 1944. A few a/c with limited application of dark green to upper surfaces. At least one example with shadow shading. Most a/c with complete dark green uppers and light blue grey (sky) or medium grey lower surfaces. A few P-51Ds had all camouflage paint removed December 1944 onwards. Squadron codes: 362FS—G4; 363FS—B6; 364FS—C5. Group markings: red, yellow, red ringed spinner (equal widths), 12 inch red and yellow checkerboard band round cowling, 6 inch squares. Squadron rudder colors from November 1944: 363FS—red; 364FS—yellow; 362FS—no color. OTU a/c had numerals for individual identity.

The 357th Fighter Group
The Yoxford Boys

Station:
Leiston
Station Callsign:
Earlduke
Group Callsign:
Rightfield to 22 April '44 then:
Dryden (A Group)
Silas (B Group)

Eyesight (C Group)
(No Squadron Callsigns in C Group)



Air Force Order of Battle
Created: 29 Sep 2010
Updated:

Sources