

333rd FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

333rd Fighter-Day Squadron constituted, 13 Nov 1957

Activated, 8 Dec 1957

Redesignated 333rd Tactical Fighter Squadron, 1 Jul 1958

Redesignated 333rd Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, 22 Mar 1971

Inactivated, 15 Feb 1991

Redesignated 333rd Fighter Squadron and activated, 1 Nov 1991

STATIONS

Seymour Johnson AFB, NC, 8 Dec 1957–4 Dec 1965

Takhli RTAFB, Thailand, 8 Dec 1965–15 Oct 1970

McConnell AFB, KS, 15 Oct 1970

Luke AFB, AZ, 22 Mar 1971

Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, 31 Jul 1971–15 Feb 1991

Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, 1 Nov 1991

Seymour Johnson AFB, NC, 1 Oct 1994

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Eglin AFB, FL, 10 Mar 1964–c. 15 Mar 1965

ASSIGNMENTS

4th Fighter-Day (later, 4th Tactical Fighter) Wing, 8 Dec 1957

355th Tactical Fighter Wing, 8 Dec 1965

23rd Tactical Fighter Wing, 15 Oct 1970

58th Tactical Fighter Training Wing, 22 Mar 1971
355th Tactical Fighter (later, 355th Tactical Training) Wing, 31 Jul 1971–15 Feb 1991
602nd Air Control Wing, 1 Nov 1991
355th Operations Group, 1 May 1992
4th Operations Group, 1 Oct 1994

ATTACHMENTS

4485th Composite Wing, 10 Mar 1964–c. 15 Mar 1965

WEAPON SYSTEMS

F-100, 1957–1960
F-105, 1960–1970
A-7, 1971–1976
A-10, 1976–1991
A-10, 1991
F-100C
F-105D
F-105F
A-10A

COMMANDERS

LTC Paul O. Hoza, 8 Dec 1957
Maj Andrew J. Chapman, 23 Jul 1960
Maj Marvin T. Johnson, 1 Sep 1960
Maj Zachery T. Forester Jr., 18 Jul 1961
Maj Andrew J. Chapman, 26 Oct 1961
LTC Claire P. Chennault Jr., 18 May 1962
Maj Douglas E. Whatley, 21 Feb 1964
LTC Kenneth L. Skeen, 9 Aug 1965
LTC Francis B. Clark, 14 Oct 1965
LTC Kenneth L. Skeen, 1 Nov 1965
LTC James A. Young, 1 Feb 1966
Maj Howard W. Leaf, 4 Jul 1966
LTC Donald K. Salmon, 16 Aug 1966
LTC William C. Norris, 31 Mar 1967
LTC Robert M. Wall, Aug 1967
Maj Balden, c. Sep 1967
LTC Louis D. Braun, 11 Sep 1967
LTC Robert L. Jondahl, 2 Aug 1968
LTC Richard M. Heyman Jr., 2 Dec 1968
LTC Richard E. Little, 11 Jul 1969
LTC Waymond C. Nutt, 1 Feb 1970
LTC William H. Lewis, 22 Aug 1970
LTC Theodore K. Case, 1 Jul 1971

LTC Carlos Gonzales, 13 Nov 1972
LTC Robert V. Baird, 19 Jul 1974
LTC Thomas B. Thompson, 25 Aug 1975
LTC Dale C. Tabor, 12 Aug 1977
LTC W. A. Veal, 12 May 1979
LTC Gary D. Lape, 15 May 1981
LTC Ralph J. Walker, 20 Aug 1982
LTC David A. McDonald, 10 Sep 1984
LTC Victor A. Hill, 19 Aug 1986
LTC Stephen M. McClain, 25 Sep 1987
LTC Bradley A. Smith, 16 Jun 1989-15 Feb 1991
Unkn, 1 Nov 1991-30 Jan 1996
LTC David B. Sampson, 31 Jan 1996
LTC Donald G. Seiler, 15 Aug 1997
LTC Daniel B. Bakke, 4 Jun 1999
LTC Billy J. Gilstrap Jr., 12 Jan 2001
LTC Dean Reed, 22 Nov 2002
LTC Mark D. Kelly, 23 Apr 2004
LTC William P. Acker, 10 May 2006
LTC Jeanie M. Leavitt, 24 Aug 2007
LTC Gabriel V. Green, 24 Oct 2008
LTC Jefferson O'Donnell

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

Vietnam
Vietnam Defensive
Vietnam Air
Vietnam Air Offensive
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II
Vietnam Air/Ground
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV
Tet 69/Counteroffensive
Vietnam Summer/Fall 1969
Vietnam Winter/Spring 1970
Sanctuary Counteroffensive
Southwest Monsoon

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Presidential Unit Citations (Southeast Asia)

1 Jan–10 Oct 1966

11–12 Aug 1967 and 24–28 Oct 1967

12 Apr 1968–30 Apr 1969

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device

12 Oct 1966–11 Apr 1967

12 Apr 1967–11 Apr 1968

1 Jul 1969–15 Oct 1970

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

[31] Jul 1971–1 Jun 1973

1 Oct 1976–31 May 1978

1 May 1990–30 Apr 1992

1 May 1990–[15 Feb 1991]

1 Jun 1994–31 May 1996

1 Jun 1998–31 May 2000

1 Jun 2000–31 May 2002

1 Jun 2002–31 May 2003

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

1 Apr 1966–15 Oct 1970

EMBLEM



On a disc, Red, an Air Force Blue globe, grid lines White; over all in saltire two white lances grasped in base by two Silver Gray mailed fists, outlines and details Black. (Approved, 13 Jun 1958. Approved in 1994)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

LANCERS

OPERATIONS

In December of 1965, the 333rd Tactical Fighter Squadron, known as the "Lancers" launched out of Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina, arriving at Takhli with their 25 pilots on the 8th. Sufficient time remained after area checkouts for the squadron to complete more than 300 combat sorties that month. The 333rd supported the 355th TFW's "Rolling Thunder" strikes into North Vietnam losing several aircraft and pilots to the increasing defenses around Hanoi in early 1966. Late in April, when the Wing was permitted to hit the Thai Nguyen rail yards, the Lancers commander (Lt.Col. Jim Young) led the strike force which destroyed most of that vital facility. Throughout the rest of 1966 and on through the end of the bombing of the North in 1968 the men of the 333rd contributed significantly to making the 355th TFW "PACAF's Pride".

Although they destroyed numerous missile sites, the 333rd Iron Hands were victims to heavy losses from the defenses of their incredibly hostile environment and by mid-August 1966 the original F-105F's had all been destroyed or damaged beyond repair. The resulting increase in losses to strike aircraft was halted later in the year when a new batch of Wild Weasel F-105F's arrived and when the strike birds began carrying the Electronic Countermeasures (ECM) pod with them on their missions.

In 1967, the bomb sights of the Lancers continued to fall heavily on railyards and rolling stock with thermal power plants and steel mills taking a good share of the beating. The sprawling yards and industrial center of Thai Nguyen was one of the more memorable areas devastated.

As MiG-17s and the modern MiG-21s, given to the North Vietnamese by the Russians, began to take a heavier toll, strikes were authorized on their airstrips in October. The 333rd was along to get its share of enemy planes destroyed in the air and on the ground at Phuc Yen and Hoa Lac. In addition to joining wing missions the Lancers had some that were peculiarly their own. Members of the 333rd were trained in the firing of the AGM-12C and launched against targets requiring exact hits. With the 3,000 pound Bullpup, they destroyed an impressive number of bridges, tunnels and cave entrances.

Not operational, 15 Oct 1970–31 Jul 1971

Pilot training, Aug 1971–Feb 1991 and May–Sep 1992.

The 333rd TFS flew F-105s as part of the 355th TFW at Takhli RTAFB until the wing inactivated prior to its move to DM. The 333rd TFS activated with A-7Ds on July 16, 1971. In March, 1976, it converted to A-10s becoming the first operational Air Force squadron to fly A-10s.

In April and May, 1977, four A-10s from the 333rd TFS participated in Red Flag 77-76/Irwin II, in the California desert at Fort Irwin. The exercise, the largest exercise the A-10 had participated in up to that time, demonstrated the A-10's operational effectiveness and ability to survive under battle field conditions against armor threats. The A-10s operated from the Army's

Bicycle Dry Lake air strip, and coordinated their operations with Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Army aircraft. Threats were simulated on the Nellis AFB range complex, which has the capability of simulating all known Warsaw Pact anti-aircraft threats, and by the USAF Aggressor Squadron, at that time flying T-38s and F-5s operating from Nellis AFB. The A-10s were tracked with video tape machines through the optical view finders of the simulated ZSU-23 and ZSU-27 AAA sites. In 112 missions, the simulated ground fire was able to shoot down one A-10 with 23mm fire and one with a simulated SA-6. Three simulated kills were scored by the Aggressor Squadron aircraft employing Soviet Air Force Tactics. The average turn-around time for the A-10s was 15 to 20 minutes between missions. The desert conditions on the dry lakebed were often harsh, with blowing sand forcing ground crew to wear goggles and masks while working on the aircraft. The A-10 tactics consisted of a flight of two aircraft coordinating their attacks, one A-10 standing off to provide cover, trying to destroy the anti-aircraft defenses with Maverick missiles, while the second A-10 attacked the armored units with its GAU-8 cannon. The tests were successful, with the A-10 proving its ability to survive and deliver weapons in a tough, realistic combat scenario.

In August, 1978, the 333rd TFTS began training A-10 pilots for the 81st TFW, which was due to accept its first European based A-10s in January, 1979. Under the program name Ready Thunder, the 92nd TFS Avengers began transition from the F-4D to the A-10. Also in August the 354th TFW became the first fully combat-ready A-10 wing in the Air Force. The conversion of the 354th, based at Myrtle Beach AFB, South Carolina, from the A-7D to the A-10 had taken 13 months.

The squadron was inactivated on February 15, 1991, reactivating with the 602nd TAIRCW at DM on November 1, 1991, and returning to the 355th Wing, still at DM on May 1, 1992. During the summer of 1994 the 333rd turned its A-10s over to the 354th FS and moved to Seymour Johnson AFB, NC, as the F-15E air crew training squadron.

Getting a Taste of Deployment: Fourteen F-15Es and a large group of student pilots and weapons system officers will deploy Saturday, along with their instructors, from Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C., to Savannah, Ga., to train in an unfamiliar expeditionary environment. Supported by instructors and maintenance personnel from Air Force Reserve Command's 414th Fighter Group at Seymour Johnson, these students will conduct combat tactics training over the Atlantic Ocean and on unrestricted bombing ranges along the Georgia and Florida coasts. The training is designed to test their comfort zones and prepare them for deployments upon graduation. "We don't fight wars from home, we deploy. Training like an expeditionary force exposes students and all airmen to every aspect of sustaining and executing the mission on the road," said Lt. Col. Jefferson O'Donnell, commander of Seymour Johnson's 333rd Fighter Squadron that trains the F-15E aircrews. 2011

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.