

Darrell J. Ahrens

F-105 History

11-Feb-68

240

The seventeenth F-105 RTU Class 68FR graduated at McConnell AFB KS. The class started on 27 Aug 67 with 29 students, but 25 completed the course. Maj David J. Carroll dropped out for medical reasons. Lt Col George M. Wentch joined the class in the formation phase on 1 October 1967.

Maj Kenneth E. Lamberton became the fourth RTU student killed in the crash of F-105D 61-0143 on 14 Nov 67 during air-to-ground rocket training at the Smoky Hill Range.

The class deployed for conventional weapons delivery training to George AFB CA between 23 Jan - 8 Feb 68 with the 561 TFS. The squadron commander was Lt Col Harry D. Sultz, Jr. Maj Richard Matthews was the top student and shared Top Gun with Maj Russ Youngblood.

This was the largest RTU conducted at McConnell to date and required two IPs on a 30-day TDY from Nellis AFB to aid the transition of the class. The students were:

Col David William Winn	Maj Robert E. Evans
Lt Col Guy J. "Jack" Sherrill	Maj Arthur E. Hood
Lt Col George M. Wentsch	Maj Clarence E. Langford
Lt Col Jack Modica, Jr.	Maj James R. Gibbons
Maj George C. Avila, Jr.	Maj Richard D. Matthews
Maj William W. Berkman	Maj Samuel L. Ray, Jr.
Maj Bill V. Brown	Maj Albert L. Villaret
Maj Seymour R. Bass	Capt Richard Kenneth Allee
Maj Russell A. Youngblood	Capt Darrell J. Ahrens
Maj Ralph D. Waddell, Jr.	Capt Robert C. Amos
Maj Raymond M. Viscarra	Capt Thomas O. Carlson
Maj Eugene E. Cirillo	Capt Jack D. Brooks
Maj David J. Carroll	Capt Donald D. "Dudley" Swofford
Capt James V. Barr	

The ranking class member, Col Winn, "... was born in Austin, Minn., in 1923. He graduated from Austin Central High in 1941 and attended Carroll College, Waukesha, Wis., until he enlisted as an aviation cadet in the U.S. Army Air Corps in February 1942. He was commissioned a second lieutenant and received his pilot wings in February 1943.

"During World War II, General Winn served with the Twelfth Air Force and flew combat missions in the B-26 and P-38 aircraft from Sardinia and Italy. He returned to the United States in November 1944 and flew Mustangs, Thunderbolts and P-80s as a gunnery instructor in the Air Training Command fighter-gunnery research squadron. General Winn separated from the Air Force in 1948 and returned to school at the University of Minnesota. He was a member of the Minnesota Air National Guard until he was recalled to active duty in February 1951.

"General Winn served with the 109th Fighter Squadron at Minneapolis until August 1952. He then was transferred to Germany where he became a squadron operations officer in the 86th Fighter Wing. In August 1955 he was assigned to the 94th Fighter Squadron at Selfridge Air Force Base, Mich. In 1958 General Winn resumed studies at the University of Minnesota under Project Bootstrap and graduated in August of that year with a bachelor of arts degree in journalism.

"His next assignment was to Headquarters Air Defense Command at Ent Air Force Base, Colo., where he served until July 1962 as a member of the Air Defense Command tactical evaluation unit and operational readiness inspection team as chief of the Operational Readiness Inspection

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Branch and flew F-102 and F-106 aircraft.

"From July 1962 to May 1964, he was an exchange officer with the Royal Air Force, flying Hawker Hunters and English Electric Lightnings. He completed this tour of duty as an operations staff officer at Fighter Command Headquarters.

"He next was assigned to the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as military secretary of the United States section of the Canada-United States Military Cooperation Committee and of the Canada-United States Regional Planning Group, NATO, in Washington, D.C. From July 1966 to June 1967, General Winn attended the National War College and completed graduate studies in international affairs at The George Washington University.

"In March 1968 he was assigned to the 355th Tactical Fighter Wing at Takhli Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand, as assistant deputy commander, operations. ... " (USAF general officer bio at <http://www.af.mil/AboutUs/Biographies/Display/tabid/225/Article/105193/brigadier-general-david-w-winn.aspx>.)

Capt Robert C. Amos had been a B-52 pilot who flew combat missions to Vietnam from Andersen AFB, Guam, where he was assigned to the 736 Bomb Squadron, 454 Bomb Wing. His mission on 21 Feb 1966 included an extra pilot -- the actor AF Reserve BG Jimmy Stewart. Their B-52, call sign Green 2, was in a 30-ship bomber stream where they dropped 51 750-pound bombs on the target, a VC stronghold NW of Saigon. The 12-hour mission went smoothly until they returned to Guam where a split-flap indicator posed difficulties for landing. After Capt Amos prepared his crew for a hazardous touchdown, the condition was traced to a malfunctioning flap indicator rather than actual split flaps and Capt Amos landed his plane without trouble.

After his F-105 training, Capt Amos was assigned to the 357 TFS, 355 TFW, at Takhli.

23 TFW History, Jul - Dec 67, USAF microfilm MO554, frames 1024, 1071, and 1138 & History Net article, "Mr. Stewart Goes to Vietnam" by Warren E. Thompson, Aug 2009.

14-Apr-68

6801

Also, on 14 April 1968, the 34 TFS launched "Bass" flight. The lineup was:

- #1 - Capt William A. Thomas, Jr.
- #2 - Capt Darrell J. Ahrens
- #3 - Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr. flying his 60th combat mission.
- #4 - Capt Joseph S. Sechler flying his 29th combat mission two days after he returned from R&R in Bangkok. He logged 2:40 flying time.

Col Dye recorded the mission in his Mission History where he listed his call sign as "Bass 1". They dropped through weather using Sky Spot on a troop concentration in Steel Tiger. They then did armed recce in RP-1. "No significant sightings."

Joe Sechler, mission log via e-mail 28 Apr 10 & Rufus Dye Mission History log

30-Oct-68

4200

During October 1968, twenty-one pilots from the 34 TFS and 469 TFS received medals approved by 7 AF. They were:

- Maj Ivor K. Goodrich DFC SO G-3158 23 Oct 68 (8 Mar - 3 Sep 68) and AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-3275 23 Oct 68 (8 Mar - 3 Sep 68)
- Capt Kenneth G. Lindell DFC SO G-3160 17 Oct 68 (14 Jul 68)
- 1Lt David T. Dinan III DFC SO G-3161 17 Oct 68 (14 Jul 68)
- Capt Richard E. Tracey DFC SO G-3169 17 Oct 68 (15 Jul 68)

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Maj Albert F. Oppel AM SO G-3245 23 Oct 68 (25 Aug - 19 Sep 68)
Maj Manford C. Holly, Jr. AM SO G-3246 23 Oct 68 (25 Aug -16 Sep 68)
Capt Barry G. Swarts AM SO G-3250 23 Oct 68 (29 Aug - 21 Sep 68)
Capt John S. Murphy AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-3273 23 Oct 68 (3 Mar - 24 Sep 68)
Maj Douglas A. Roysdon AM (10 - 19 OLC) SO G-3278 23 Oct 68 (24 Feb - 2 Oct 68)
Maj Clarence E. Langford AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-3281 23 Oct 68 (29 Mar - 26 Sep 68)
Capt Jack D. Brooks AM (1 - 6 OLC) SO G-3284 23 Oct 68 (24 Apr - 5 Sep 68)
Capt Anthony F. Germann AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-3286 23 Oct 68 (4 Mar - 1 Oct 68)
Capt Douglas R. Young AM (18 OLC) SO G-3286 23 Oct 68 (26 Aug 15 - Sep 68)
Lt Col Dorwyn D. Shaver AM (22 - 26 OLC) SO G-3289 23 Oct 68 (30 Sep 67 - 14 Aug 68)
Lt Col John J. Gaudion AM (10 OLC) SO G-3291 23 Oct 68 (6 Sep - 23 Sep 68)
Lt Col Isaac M. Glass AM (1 OLC) SO G-3291 23 Oct 68 (25 Aug - 29 Sep 68)
Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr. DFC (4 OLC) SO G-3023 5 Oct 68 (8 Jun 68) downgraded from SS
Capt Lamont H. Pharmer DFC (2 OLC) SO G-3024 5 Oct 68 (9 Jun 68) downgraded from SS
Capt Darrell J. Ahrens AM (1 OLC) SO G-3032 5 Oct 68 (1 Jun 68) downgraded from DFC
Maj Sterling H. Wood AM (1 OLC) SO G-3032 5 Oct 68 (30 May 68)
Capt John E. Hartman AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-3092 10 Oct 68 (23 Feb 67 - 5 Feb 68)

388 TFW History, Oct - Dec 68, USAF microfilm NO585, frames 1767 - 1768.

14-Nov-68

7887

Two weeks after the halt of bombing missions in North Vietnam and the suspension of the 100-mission combat tour on 1 November, the 388 Combat Support Group published Special Order P-94 that adjusted the DEROS of F-105 pilots and EWOs in the three fighter squadrons in the 388 TFW. The new dates anticipated when each man would complete his one year in combat. The two-page order introduced the list with the directive, "The DEROS of the following officers, organization indicated, PACAF, this station, are changed as indicated. Authority: AFM 36-1 and PACAF Msg 080408Z Nov 68." The names were:

Capt Darrell J. Ahrens	34 TFS	10 Mar 69
Capt James V. Barr	34 TFS	10 Mar 69
Lt Col Earl F. Bancroft	34 TFS	30 Jun 69
Capt Oral L. Bell	34 TFS	16 Apr 69
Col Felix A. Blanchard	469 TFS	2 Feb 69
Maj Eugene A. Bonfiglio	44 TFS	20 Apr 69
Maj George K. Bowling	44 TFS	30 May 69
Capt Donald R. Brian	44 TFS	1 Apr 69
Maj David Brog	44 TFS	28 Jan 69
Capt Jack D. Brooks	34 TFS	10 Mar 69
1Lt Robert E. Bryan	469 TFS	12 Jun 69
Maj Ralph C. Budde	44 TFS	19 Apr 69
Maj David J. Carroll	469 TFS	16 Apr 69
Capt Donald D. Carson	44 TFS	1 Apr 69
Maj Richard P. Cisco	44 TFS	22 Apr 69
Maj Robert M. Clark	44 TFS	31 May 69
Maj Robert G. Denison	44 TFS	22 Apr 69
1Lt David T. Dinan III	469 TFS	12 Jun 69
Maj Altman Doty	469 TFS	16 Jun 69
Maj John J. Doyle, Jr.	44 TFS	9 Feb 69
Capt Ralph E. Durnbaugh	34 TFS	16 Apr 69
Capt Arthur G. Duston IV	34 TFS	16 Jun 69
1Lt Robert C. Edmunds, Jr.	469 TFS	30 Jun 69
Capt Olin K. Everett	34 TFS	1 Mar 69
Maj Stanley E. Goldstein	44 TFS	28 Jan 69

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Capt Gene D. Hartman	469 TFS	16 Apr 69
1Lt David S. Hartman, Jr.	34 TFS	12 Jun 69
1Lt Ronald A. Hoffmeyer	34 TFS	12 Jun 69
1Lt Clarence J. Holm	469 TFS	12 Jun 69
Capt Lawrence E. Huggins	44 TFS	9 Dec 68
Capt Jerry E. Knotts	44 TFS	9 Feb 69
Capt Lawrence LeMieux	44 TFS	1 Apr 69
Capt Kenneth G. Lindell	469 TFS	12 Jun 69
Capt James E. Logan	44 TFS	31 May 69
Maj Richard D. Matthews	34 TFS	11 Apr 69
Maj Lorne F. McCormick	34 TFS	20 Apr 69
Maj Thomas P. McGowen, Jr.	44 TFS	31 May 69
Capt Richard R. Middleton	44 TFS	20 Apr 69
1Lt Phillip A. Miller	469 TFS	12 Jun 69
Maj John F. O'Donnell	388 TFW	4 Jun 69
Maj Thomas J. Phelan, Jr.	44 TFS	22 Apr 69
Capt Victor B. Putz	44 TFS	1 Apr 69
Maj Bernard C. Reck	44 TFS	31 May 69
Capt John W. Redmond	388 TFW	16 Jan 69
Maj John J. Revak	44 TFS	28 Jan 69
Capt James L. Rossetto	44 TFS	23 May 69
Capt Ronald L. Shepard	44 TFS	17 Feb 69
Maj William A. Smith	44 TFS	31 May 69
1Lt Ronald D. Stafford	34 TFS	12 Jun 69
Maj Paul F. Swanson	34 TFS	12 Jun 69
Maj Russell J. Tagliareni	44 TFS	23 May 69
Capt Chester H. Thatcher, Jr.	34 TFS	15 Jun 69
Maj John J. Thornton, Jr.	44 TFS	26 Apr 69
1Lt Marshall D. Tilley	469 TFS	12 Jun 69
Maj Clarence J. Tolle, Jr.	44 TFS	22 Apr 69
Capt Richard E. Tracey	469 TFS	16 Jun 69
Maj Albert L. Villaret	44 TFS	23 May 69
Maj Richard E. White	34 TFS	16 Apr 69
Capt Robert L. Wilbanks	44 TFS	19 Apr 69
1Lt Robert J. Zukowski	469 TFS	12 Jun 69

Hq 388th Combat Support Group (PACAF) APO San Francisco 96288 Special Order P-94 dated 14 Nov 1968.

25-Jan-69

04-Mar-69

344

The runway at Korat RTAFB was closed for repairs. During the last months of 1968, "preliminary surveys showed [the need for] replacement for approximately 64 top slabs of the eight-inch overlay, replacement for some 50 bottom slabs, repair of 220 slabs with broken corners, repair of some 500 spalled (chipped) areas on the runway and probable repair to some of the foundation structure." Significant runway deterioration had been noticed since March 1966. Some of the runway concrete "was initially laid down during the Imperial Japanese forces occupation in World War II."

Fighter squadrons of the 388 TFW deployed to and operated from two other bases during the period. Forty-four F-105s and 1,068 personnel of the 34 TFS and 44 TFS operated from Takhli RTAFB, Thailand, while the F-4Es of the 469 TFS deployed to Ubon RTAFB, Thailand. The 388 TFW retained operational control over their deployed squadrons and maintained their level of combat sorties from the deployed locations. The 388 TFW's F-105s "enjoyed a higher mission effectiveness" while TDY to Takhli. The F-105s flew 901 sorties, of which 848 were combat missions with an operationally ready rate of 78.4 percent.

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Lt Col Jack Sherrill was the commander of the 44 TFS when the squadron operated from Takhli. "Excellent flight line facilities but hooches and O Club were not nearly up to par as Korat. Such perks assumed more importance than justified when we were no longer 'at war' after the Nov 1 halt."

The 56 pilots and EWOs from the 44 TFS who flew from Takhli included Maj William H. Talley, Maj Ronald L. Shepard, Lt Col Richard A. "Dick" Haggren, Maj Richard P. Cisco, Capt Thomas P. Doubek, Maj Thomas J. Phelan, Jr., EWO Maj Robert G. Denison.

Thirty-four pilots from the 34 TFS deployed to Takhli. They were: Lt Col Harvey W. Prosser, Jr., Lt Col Isaac M. Glass, Maj David J. Carroll, Maj Paul F. Swanson, Maj Manford C. Holly, Jr., Maj Sheldon H. Cooper, Maj Harold Kahler, Maj William R. McDaniel, Maj Guy E. Pulliam, Capt Oral L. Bell, Capt James V. Barr, Capt Darrell J. Ahrens, Capt Robert M. Howard, Jr., Capt Richard E. Tracey, Capt Ralph E. Durnbaugh, Capt Douglas R. Young, Capt Kenneth G. Lindell, Capt Charles J. Ferrari, Capt Clayton B. Lyle III, Capt Eugene G. Lamothe, Capt John F. Schell, Capt Eben D. Jones, 1Lt David S. Hartman, Jr., 1Lt Ronald A. Hoffmeyer, 1Lt Marshall D. Tilley, 1Lt Ronald D. Stafford, 1Lt Robert E. Bryan, 1Lt Robert J. Zukowski, 1Lt David T. Dinan, 1Lt John W. Crotty, 1Lt Alan B. Reiter, 1Lt Daniel P. Seals, 1Lt Joseph W. Widhalm, and 1Lt Edward L. Sykes,

The runway repairs at Korat required 2,416 cubic meters of concrete and was done under contract to Gerson and Sons from Bangkok who employed 600 Thai workers. The work was completed on time despite a 100-percent increase in the amount of repair required.

388 TFW History, Oct - Dec 68, USAF microfilm NO585, frame 1106 and Jan - Mar 69 & Jack Sherril, e-mail, 14 May 2003 & Hq 388 Cmbt Spt Gp SO TA-375 dated 22 Jan 69 from Al Reiter, e-mail 19 Feb 15

10-Feb-69

01-Mar-69

7439

To support operating from Takhli during runway maintenance at RTAFB, Thailand, between 25 Jan - 4 Mar 69, the 388 TFW directed 10 pilots from the 34 TFS "... to proceed from Korat to Takhli AB, Thailand, performing 5 round trips during the period 12 February 1969 to 1 March 1969, both dates inclusive, on TDY to comply with Operational Requirements." The pilots were:

Capt Darrell J. Ahrens
Capt Clayton B. Lyle III
Capt Eugene G. Lamothe
Capt John F. Schell
Capt James D. Cottingham
1Lt Ronald A. Hoffmeyer
1Lt John W. Crotty
1Lt Alan B. Reiter
1Lt Daniel P. Seals
1Lt Joseph W. Widhalm

Authority: AFM 36-11 and 388 OPLAN 69-1A & B.

388th Combat Support Group, Special Order TA-923 dated 10 Feb 1969 from Al Reiter, e-mail 21 Feb 15.

01-Mar-69

8254

Capt Darrell J. Ahrens from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew the F-105 for the last time. Since his first flight in the aircraft on 1 September 1967, he had accumulated 502 hours in the Thunderchief .

F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.