

Roderick Gene Giffin

F-105 History

02-Jun-61

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The second F-105D operational training Class 61K, Course 111506E, graduated 19 pilots at Nellis AFB NV. The class began training on 3 April 1961 and included 11 pilots from the 36 TFW. The class was attached to the 4526 CCTS in the 4520 CCTW at Nellis, commanded by Lt Col James Ellis Bean.

The pilots and the organizations from which they came were:

Lt Col William H. Nelson - 22 TFS Commander	1Lt Robert H. Braden - 36 TFW
Maj Frank C. Buzze - Hq TAC	1Lt David Burnett Hatcher - 36 TFW
Maj Willard R. Haines - Hq USAFE	1Lt Albert L. Logan - Cannon AFB
Capt Jack Cummings - Nellis AFB	1Lt Larry G. Mason - 36 TFW
Capt Richard Allen Dutton - 36 TFW	1Lt Francis L. "Frank" Mosler - 36 TFW
Capt Roderick Gene Giffin - 36 TFW	1Lt Richard W. Simons - 36 TFW
Capt John S. Haisty - England AFB	1Lt Donald E. Straley - 36 TFW
Capt Dale Alonzo Johnson - 36 TFW	
Capt Richard E. Moore - 36 TFW	
Capt Robert H. Pargin - Hq TAC (21 days only)	
Capt Harold W. Rademacher - George AFB	
Capt Donald E. Staber - Myrtle Beach AFB	

Three F-105Ds flown by pilots in Class 61K destined for the 22 TFS did not make the "high flight" directly to Bitburg. On 9 June 1961, Capt Richard Dutton could not get his external tanks to refuel so he and his wingman landed at Bermuda. Then on 15 June 1961, Capt Rod Giffin was unable to get his external tanks to feed after takeoff from Brookley, so he returned to the depot.

4520 CCTW History, Jan - Jun 61, USAF microfilm MO2195, Special Order A-18.

26-Jun-61

1525

Capt Roderick Giffin landed the 25th and last F-105D that was delivered from production to the 22 TFS, 36 TFW, Bitburg AB, Germany.

History of 36th Tactical Fighter Wing 1 Jan - 30 Jun 1961, USAF microfilm MO627 frame 0875.

01-Jul-61

1539

As of 1 July 1961, the 22 TFS, 36 TFW, Bitburg AB, Germany, had the following key personnel:

Lt Col William H. Nelson, Commander;
Maj Richard O. Ransbottom, Operations Officer;
Capt Billy J. Ellis, Asst Operations Officer;
Capt Hugh H. Bowden, Intelligence Officer;
Capt Myron Ulrich, Maintenance Officer;
Capt Roderick Giffin, Special Weapons Officer;
Capt Dalton McCullar, "A" Flight Commander;
Capt Richard A. Dutton, "B" Flight Commander;
Capt William P. Robinson, "C" Flight Commander;
Capt John Haisty, "D" Flight Commander.

For part of July, the "Big 22" temporarily operated from Ramstein AB, due to runway construction at Bitburg.

History of 36 TFW, 1 July - 31 Dec 1961, USAF microfilm MO627, frame 0998.

15-Sep-62 22-Sep-62

143

F-105s participated for the first time in the "William Tell" gunnery competition hosted by the 4520

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CCTW at Nellis AFB, Nevada. Initially, only F-100 units were going to fly in the competition. "Finally, after months of indecision, all tactical wings were directed to enter a team. ... " In Europe, on 29 June 1962, 17 AF notified the 36 TFW and 49 TFW of their participation in the meet. The Hq USAF sponsored and directed competition also involved F-100s and F-104s as well as RF-101s. It was conducted under Operation Order 27-62.

The three F-105 units in "William Tell 62" were the 4 TFW from Seymour Johnson AFB NC, the 36 TFW from Bitburg AB, Germany, and the 49 TFW from Spangdahlem AB, Germany. Events included "... Attacking two target complexes containing simulated ground-to-air defense capabilities ..." using napalm, LAU-3 rockets and 20 mm cannon; air-to-air gunnery against a DART tow target; and firing a GAM-83A missile." Two nuclear events were unique to the F-105. They were the Blind Target Identification Point (PTIP) and Blind Identification Point (BIP)

The 335 TFS represented the 4 TFW with squadron commander, Lt Col Paul P. Hoza as project officer with Capt Anthony Gardecki the primary pilot and 1Lt James Craig as alternate. Capt Gardecki won the Gen John L. Mitchel trophy by placing first in the F-105D Radar Nuclear Delivery event. Since all squadron F-105s were grounded for "Operation Look Alike", the 4 TFW pilots picked up three new F-105Ds from the Republic Aviation plant and flew them to Nellis. While at Nellis, the three aircraft flew 142 sorties and 180:05 hours.

From the 36 TFW the primary pilot was Capt John S. Ruffo from the 22 TFS. The alternate was Capt Phillip O. Bradley from the 53 TFS. "Since the rules stated that the primary pilot would fly all the missions, Capt Bradley did not fly in the competition." After the late notification, the wing selected three pilots from each of their three F-105 squadrons and two from Stan Eval and sent them to Wheelus to practice for the meet. After Capt Ruffo was selected as primary pilot and Capt Bradley edged Capt Edward P. Larson for the alternate position, the pilots returned to Bitburg to complete paperwork for the operation. On 1 August, Capt Ruffo and Capt Bradley flew back to Wheelus to resume practice. Capt Roderick Giffin, who had placed fourth in the Wing's practice competition at Wheelus, was appointed as Operations and Maintenance officer to support the team. "In nine flying days (at Wheelus) the team flew 37 sorties with two aircraft; however, both aircraft had bad toss bomb computers, and one didn't have a complete MN-1A internal carriage. Therefore, concrete results from this diligent practice was hard to evaluate."

As in the 4 TFW, the F-105s at Bitburg were undergoing the "Look Alike" modifications and so "... Captains Giffin, Ruffo, and Bradley arrived at Nellis on 27 August 62 with three new F-105-20REs. The new aircraft had to be bore-sighted, the platforms had to be leveled, missing parts of the TBC replaced, broken pylons and wing wiring had to be redone, and Doppler problems were worked on. For two weeks the crew worked day and night trying to make the new airplanes acceptable. The pre-meet practice went very well, and when the competition started all systems were 'go'."

"There were six nuclear and five conventional events. Capt Ruffo flew all the missions without an abort and had the distinction of having the best nuclear and the best conventional sortie of any participant. His overall point total was low, because of navigation and intelligence problems. His Doppler didn't work on any mission, the HSI was out on two sorties, and on one mission the wrong target coordinates were given."

The 49 TFW's pilots were Capt Michael S. Muskat from the 9 TFS, primary (who placed sixth overall), and Capt Lawrence R. Brehm, alternate. The Weapons Meet Project Officer at Nellis was Col John Groom.

Hanger space for F-105s was a problem during the competition. "All Nellis hangar space for F-105 aircraft was saturated with 'Look Alike' aircraft. The competing F-105 aircraft were all new aircraft and required extensive peaking of weapons systems. The F-105 requires precision power supply and this was only available in F-105 hangars."

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Capt Bill T. Spencer, an F-100 pilot from the 8 TFW, Itazuke Air Base, Japan, died in an accident on the close support range near Indian Springs.

The High Overall Winner of the meet was Capt Charles E. Tofferi, an F-104C pilot from the 479 TFW at George AFB, California.

4 TFW History, Jul - Dec 62, USAF microfilm MO290 & 4520 CCTW History, Jan - Dec 62, USAF microfilms M2197 & M2198 & 36 TFW history, Jul - Dec 62, USAF microfilm MO627 frames 1275 - 1277.

15-Apr-63

6808

(Approximate date) Capt Roderick G. Giffin was reassigned from the 22 TFS, 36 TFW at Bitburg AB, Germany, to the AFPRO at Republic Aviation, Farmingdale LI, NY as an acceptance test pilot. "When the F-105 contract ran out, he moved on to Crestview, FL, as the only blue suiter there." Republic had an F-105 overhaul depot at Crestview.

River Rats Album 2, pg 104.

15-Apr-67

1292

In RP-1 along Route 101, Air Force planes destroyed a temporary bridge at 17-38-00N and 106-23-00E.

"A 30-foot bridge was put out of commission when pilots of two F-105s from the 388 TFW at Korat ... struck 109 miles west-northwest of Vinh. The pilots also reported cutting several roads in the area of Vinh."

"Three secondary explosions resulted when two F-105 Thunderchief pilots from the 13 TFS destroyed five enemy barges 31 miles north-northwest of Dong Hoi A 500-foot fireball soared into the air when the target was hit."

Capt Jack A. Phillips from the 34 TFS flew his 38th combat mission into NVN.

(Approximate date) Maj Roderick G. Giffin arrived at Korat and was assigned to the 34 TFS.

PACAF Rolling Thunder briefing to CINCPAC for the period 3 - 23 Apr 1967 & 388 TFW History, Jan - Dec 67, USAF microfilm NO583, frames 1467 and 1468 & Jack Phillips Mission Log via e-mail 18 Mar 11.

22-May-67

1327

On this day, the 388 TFW also struck the Kep railroad yard (ART1270) and returned to the Ha Dong army barracks and supply depot (JCS 31) that they had previously hit on 5, 12, and 14 May.

Pilots from the 469 TFS were in the Ha Dong barracks raid. "Phantoms were flying cover for ... (the) pilots ... who struck the Army barracks Strikes were carried out in the morning and afternoon. Flights which hit the target reported great volumes of smoke came from the center of the compound where all their ordnance was on target. Smoke hampered bomb damage assessment by the flights making their runs over the area."

A Wild Weasel crew from the 13 TFS led an Iron Hand flight in support of the strike against the Ha Dong barracks. The flight lineup was:

- #1 - Lt Col James E. McInerney, Jr. (WW # 295) and EWO Capt Fred W. Shannon (WW # 301)
- #2 - Maj Frank L. Yow, Jr., the 388 TFW Weapons Officer assigned to the 469 TFS flying an F-105D
- #3 - Maj Howard K. White (WW # 171) and EWO Maj Fredrick J. Bell (WW # 70)
- #4 - Maj Earl L. Thornton from the 469 TFS flying an F-105D

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In 1986, Maj Yow told why this was his "most memorable" combat mission. "I was ... number two in a 4-ship Iron Hand or Wild Weasel mission. Lt Col Jim McInerney was the leader in an 'F', and I was in a 'D', Major H. K. White was No. 3 in an 'F' and Capt Lee Thornton (died last year of cancer) was No. 4 in another 'D'.

"The strike force target was a barracks area just west of Hanoi. It was a beautiful day with little puffy 'popcorn' cumulus clouds around. The pre-strike refueling over Laos was uneventful and we went into the target area ahead of the main gaggle to troll for SAMs. I discovered I couldn't hear anything but static and, apparently, nobody could receive my transmissions. Oh well, I just hung in there as #2 in combat formation. We were circling Hoa Lac, a new airfield WSW of Hanoi, at four to five thousand feet. I couldn't believe nobody was shooting at us. I usually had a 'Three-Ringer' at 6 o'clock (indication of a SAM radar tracking us with a strong signal), but that was common in that area and when we'd turn toward it, it would shut down. We also got a lot of launch lights, but that was also routine in those parts. Still no visible flak was coming toward us. We saw the strike force (four flights of four) hit the target with very little flak activity and no SAMs or MiGs. Piece of cake!

"This was one of Jim's first Package 6 missions and he was the commander of the 13th. [NOTE: He became commander on 1 June 1967.] He really wanted to get a SAM site. So, after the main force left, we continued to troll. All of a sudden my plane was jolted. I heard a 'whoosh', and saw an SA-2 with the sustainer still going off to my right about 90 degrees. It was fast!!! The proximity fuze obviously malfunctioned. While I was trying to assess that, another one came from behind and went by my right at several hundred feet. It went by Jim and blew up right in front of him, but, as it was going away from him, did very little damage. We were in evasive maneuvers and I remember gritting my teeth and thinking, 'I know they've got me. I just hope it doesn't hurt.' There were other SAMs that came through the flight. I lost count, but in debriefing, it was generally agreed by the others that there were a total of six.

"I saw dust coming from the launch site at the edge of the foothills west of Hoa Lac. It was a site we didn't have charted. Although my Shrike was armed in the 'loft' mode, I aimed directly at the site and fired my 'Shrike' anti-radiation missile. I continued on that pass and dropped my six 500-lb MK-82 bombs on the site. Other flight members hit it with their ordnance. We re-joined and egressed. Over the Black River, we got more launch indications and took it down by doing a split-S, but we didn't see any missiles.

"When we switched to post-strike frequency, I found my radio worked normally. Everything looked good. I had almost 5000 lbs of fuel -- plenty to get home without refueling. I selected my bomb-bay tank fuel, which always fed. Always except today!! It didn't feed at all. So now I only had about 1300 - 1500 lbs of fuel, not even enough to get me back to Thailand. [After being instructed by the flight lead], I punched my pylons and racks off and started climbing. Jim gave me the lead and declared an emergency with our GCI site. They were no help. I got to 36,000 feet and was prepared to glide as far as it would go before ejecting. I looked down and saw a single tanker (KC-135) with one 105 hooked up heading north. (We were southbound by now). I switched to 'guard channel' and transmitted, 'Tanker with single Thud headed north. I'd sure be beholden to you if you could make a 180.' He turned!!! Throttle to idle and dive for the tanker. The boomer caught me just as I got into position and I started getting gas with none showing on my quantity gauge. As dry as my throat was, I still thought that fuel was better than water." (Frank L. Yow letter dated September 1, 1986 to Bauke Jan Douma & Jim McInerney e-mail 16 Dec 10)

"Maj Maurice E. Seaver, Jr., who led one of the morning raids, said 'We had numerous secondaries. Fires were sending smoke to about 2,000 feet as we pulled away from the area.' Afternoon flights were harassed by MiGs and anti-aircraft fire while making their bomb runs."

"Gigolo" flight from the 34 TFS struck the Ha Dong Barracks. The flight lineup was

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- #1 - Maj Roderick G. Giffin
- #2 - Capt Robert L. Martin
- #3 - Maj Paul F. Koeltzow
- #4 - Maj Clarence Kough, Jr.

"Ordnance selected for the strike was 6 x 750-pound bombs per aircraft. All ordnance was delivered on the target despite extremely heavy barrages of AAA fire and surface-to-air missiles that exploded in close proximity to the flight." (34 TFS history, 1 - 31 May 67, USAF microfilm NO584, frame 0073.)

After this strike, " ... 107 buildings were destroyed or damaged and up to 35% of the target was left unserviceable." (CHECO). The target was moved off PACAF's primary target list.

"Additional 388th F-105s struck North Vietnamese coastal artillery positions, 12 miles north-northwest of Dong Hoi, triggering two large secondary explosions in a munitions area that sent smoke to 2,000 feet according to reports by pilots."

Also in the afternoon, four F-105Ds from the 13 TFS in "Kansas" flight struck a target in RP-1. Each plane carried four CBU-24s. The flight left Korat at 16:10 and reached their target an hour later. The flight lineup was:

- #1 - Capt Kenneth J. Gurry flying 60-0497
- #2 - Maj William T. "Ted" Twinting flying 61-0078
- #3 - Capt David H. Coats flying 61-0152
- #4 - Major Marlin R. Blake flying 60-0422 on his 97th combat mission.
- Spare - Capt Charles F. "Fred" Wilhelm in 62-4316

"Refueled and went to RP-1. Dropped on a coastal gun site. Small fire started. Gurry, Twinting, Coats, Me."

388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frames 1488 and 1755 & 100 Mission Log of Maj. Marlin R. Blake & Project CHECO, Rolling Thunder 17 November 1967, pg 19.

06-Jun-67

1494

In a mission designated RT-56A-0033, "Thunderchief pilots from the 388 TFW strung bombs down the middle of the tracks at the Mo Trang railroad yard, 38 miles north-northeast of Hanoi, causing multiple rail cuts and extensive damage. The pilots estimated between 25 and 50 pieces of rolling stock were destroyed or damaged by their attack." The coordinates of the yard were 21-30-30N and 106-07-50E.

F-105D pilots striking the Mo Trang yard included Maj Richard E. Moser from the 44 TFS flying 61-0069, and Maj Randall R. Renken from the 469 TFS flying 60-0422. F-105D 61-0219 was also involved in the strike on the yard.

Capt Jack A. Phillips from the 34 TFS flew his 64th mission to North Vietnam. "Pack 6; railroad." (Jack Phillips Mission Summary via e-mail 18 Mar 11.)

Under Hq 7 AF Special Order # G-1413, Capt Steven J. Savonen, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, received the Air Medal (Twelfth OLC) for meritorious achievement for bombing the yard.

"... Captain Savonen was assigned to destroy the Mo Trang Railroad Classification yard and the Thai Nguyen Iron and Steel Works. While under fire from defending flak sites, Captain Savonen attacked and destroyed the rail yard. ..."

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Maj Randall R. Renken received the AM (13th OLC) for his mission today.

Two other 469 TFS pilots received Air Medals for missions today under the same Hq 7th Air Force order. (Award Citation approved by Hq 7 AF Special Order # G-1413 dated 11 September 1967.)

Maj Earl L. Thornton (2nd OLC)
Capt Aquilla F. Britt (1st OLC)

"One mile away, other 388th pilots hit the Mo Trang railroad bridge causing considerable damage. Multiple rail cuts near the bridge also rendered a 15,000 foot segment of the tracks unserviceable." A pilot from the 34 TFS involved in the bridge strike was Maj Roderick G. Giffin flying F-105D 61-0124,

"Bombs were reported impacting throughout the target area when 388th pilots struck the Bac Giang railroad yard, 50 miles northeast of Hanoi. Pilots estimated eight to 10 pieces of rolling stock were in the southern end of the yard before the attack, but dense smoke prevented any damage assessment. Several fires were left burning in the yard by the striking aircraft and an 85-mm AAA site just west of the yard was destroyed." Capt Larry David Wiggins from the 44 TFS, flying F-105D 62-4316, struck the Bac Giang yard at coordinates 21-16-35N and 106-11-40E.

F-105 pilots from the 388 TFW also struck the nearby Bac Giang railroad and highway bridge (JCS 18.23) at coordinates 21-16-30N and 106-11-18E. Two F-105D pilots on this strike were Capt David C. Carter from the 34 TFS flying 61-0068 and Capt Francis D. Leonard, Jr. from the 13 TFS flying 61-0124. Capt Carter's strike camera film showed a good hit on the bridge. The 34 TFS pilots dropped five 3,000-pound bombs on the bridge's choke points. (Video, "F-105 Missions Over North Vietnam", 1967, Film Report FR-816, Produced by the Aerospace Audio Visual Service.)

Three pilots from the 355 TFW received Distinguished Flying Crosses for extraordinary achievement for missions they flew this day. They were Capt John Gary McGukin and Capt Joseph L. Ritter, Jr. from the 354 TFS and Capt William J. Schaff from the 357 TFS. (7th AF Special Order G-1730 dated 15 October 1967.) Capt Schaff's citation read, in part "... supporting a force of sixteen F-105s, Captain Schaff successfully attacked and destroyed a hostile surface-to-air missile control unit. During his attack he disregarded heavy flak and threats from several hostile surface-to-air missile sites in order to reach a perfect launch position for his radar homing missile."

388 TFW history Apr - Dec 67, USAF microfilm NO 583 frame 1496 & NARA records "Air Strike Films, Vietnam, archive control number NWDNM(m)-342-USAF-41720D.

01-Jul-67

1305

Maj George G. Clausen replaced Maj Earl Johnston as commander of the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, Korat RTAFB, Thailand. Maj Clausen had accumulated about 1,500 hours flying F-105s.

Maj Roderick G. Giffin was the squadron's Ops Officer. "Together, Rod Giffin and I had more hours in the F-105 than all the pilots in the squadron combined."

388 TFW history Apr - Dec 67, USAF microfilm NO 583 frame 1728 & George Clausen, phone interview, 5 April 2010.

03-Jul-67

6536

Capt Jack A. Phillips from the 34 TFS flew his 80th mission to North Vietnam. "Pack 6; battle damage to aircraft; Mo Trang Railroad Yard. ..." Other pilots in his flight were:

Maj Roderick G. Giffin
Capt Hugh W. Davis

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Capt Robert L. Martin

"I wrote home: 'Had heavy flak and some shrapnel hit my bird and put a hole in the aft section. Was just as I was dive bombing and it knocked my cooling turbine all apart and filled the cockpit with smoke.'" (Jack Phillips e-mail 21 Mar 11)

Capt Phillips received the Silver Star (2 OLC) for gallantry on this mission. "... Captain Phillips attacked and destroyed a firing antiaircraft battery that had already damaged his F-105 Thunderchief. Despite marginal weather and intense ground fire, Captain Phillips completely disregarded his own personal safety to successfully complete the attack. This greatly reduced the volume of antiaircraft fire encountered by following flights and measurably contributed to the overall mission's success."

Charles E. Irwin, 34 TFS, participated in the rescue of Capt Dale M. Pichard from the 44 TFS who had been shot down in Mu Gia Pass the afternoon of 2 July 1967. "One of our wing pilots was shot down in Pk 1 in the afternoon of July 2. My flight was scheduled for the strike force for the next morning, but at about midnight, we were called out and diverted to ResCap. We met the tankers at first light and took up a holding pattern in Pk1 waiting to be directed in. We finally were called in to bomb the bad guys climbing the hill to get our guy and then we returned to strafe.

"That was the greatest 4th of July fireworks show I have ever seen. There must have been eight to ten flights bombing and strafing, then the Sandys dropping Willie Petes for the helicopters. Tremendous show."

Capt Pichard was rescued and returned to Korat. The HH-3E pilot and the pilot of a supporting A-1E were awarded the Air Force Cross for their actions.

Jack Phillips Mission Summary and citation via e-mails 18 Mar & 20 Mar 11 & Chuck Irwin e-mail 6 Apr 10.

05-Jul-67

1340

F-105s from the 388 TFW struck the Ban Dat railroad yard (ART 5371).

Also, attacks on the Lang Lau railroad bridge on the Kep/Thai Nguyen rail line destroyed two spans of the main bridge.

Capt Jack A. Phillips from the 34 TFS flew his 82nd mission to North Vietnam. "Pack 6; rough; railroad bridge ...". Other members of his flight were:

Maj George G. Clausen, 34th commander

Maj Roderick G. Giffin

Capt Robert L. Martin

388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frame 1756 & PACAF Rolling Thunder briefing to CINCPAC for period 8 - 23 Jul 67 & Jack Phillips Mission Summary via e-mail 18 Mar 11.

11-Jul-67

5541

Pilots from the 388 TFW struck the Ha Gia highway bridge (JCS 18.36) at location 21-19-40N and 105-52-28E.

Maj Aquilla F. Britt from the 469 TFS was one of the pilots supporting this strike. He was awarded the Air Medal (8 OLC). "... Maj Britt was a member of a flight of F-105 Thunderchiefs assigned to support a strike on the Ha Gia highway bridge by suppressing or destroying any surface to air missile sites or radar controlled guns threatening the strike force. The flight attacked an occupied surface to air missile site inflicting damage to revetments, support equipment, and causing one secondary explosion. ..."

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Capt Jack A. Phillips from the 34 TFS flew his 87th mission into North Vietnam. "Pack 6; ammo dump just a little west of Thai Nguyen. ..." Others in his flight were:

Maj Roderick G. Giffin
Capt Robert L. Martin
Maj Dwight Everett Sullivan

Citation to accompany the Award of the Air Medal (Eighth Oak Leaf Cluster) to Aquilla F. Britt provided by his son Bryan Britt & Jack Phillips Mission Summary via e-mail 18 Mar 11.

22-Jul-67

4329

Having arrived in the 388 TFW at Korat on 15 July 1967, F-105 pilot Maj Kenneth W. Mays from the 34 TFS flew his first combat mission. "After lengthy in-country briefings, I flew my first mission on 22 July 1967 with George Clausen [Maj George G. Clausen, the 34 TFS commander] against a nothing target in RP 1. The remainder of my orientation was flown with Rod Giffin [Maj Roderick G. Giffin] and Sam Morgan [Capt Sam P. Morgan].

Col Ken Mays, USAF (Ret), unpublished memoir, "Tour At Korat -- July 67 to Feb 68", dated 15 Dec 2003.

31-Jul-67

3824

The 34 TFS history for July 1967 did not describe specific combat missions for the month but did acknowledge that "... medium altitude run-in techniques were utilized in conjunction with QRC-160 ECM pod formation. ... Limited use was being made of the AGM-12 missile against point targets." During the month, the squadron flew 345 combat missions, 342 into North Vietnam and 3 in Laos. "A slight decrease in the intensity of enemy AAA fire was noted during the month and no MiG encounters were reported."

"Combat pilot strength stood at 21 line pilots [up from 19 pilots reported in June's history].

"During the month of July, six squadron pilots completed their tour of 100 missions over North Vietnam. Those completing were: Majors Raymond F. Jauregui, Earl Johnston, James N. McClelland, John R. Whaley, and Captains Donald O. Austin and Jackie R. Youngblood. [Not listed in the unit history for completing 100 missions this month was Maj Charles E. Irwin who left Korat in early August 1967.] No losses were suffered during this month and six replacements were received during this period of time."

His 100th mission was the last flight in the F-105 for Maj Jauregui. Since starting his RTU class at McConnell in June 1966, he accumulated 351 hours in the airplane.

Maj McClelland's 100th mission on 22 July was also his last in the F-105. He had accumulated 340.6 hours in the airplane.

His 100th mission on 25 July was the last F-105 flight for Maj Whaley. He had accumulated 333.8 hours in the airplane. (F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.)

The incoming PCS pilots in July were: Maj Robert T. Campbell, Capt Irving E. LeVine, and Maj Clyde L. Falls, Jr.

Capt Lawrence G. Hoppe, Capt Rodney A. Skoglund and 1Lt Morris R. Schulmister arrived prior to 12 July 1967 on TDY from the 18 TFW at Kadena. By the end of July 1967, Capt Hoppe had flown 9 combat missions with the 34 TFS bringing his total counters to 31. (Larry Hoppe, AF Form 5.)

The squadron commander was Maj George G. Clausen. Maj Roderick G. Giffin was the Operations Officer.

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F-105 History

388 TFW history, Apr Dec 67, Vol II, 34 TFS history, July 67, microfilm NO584, frame 0078 & 34 TFS web site on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us.34tfs/scarf.htm> & Chuck Irwin e-mail 6 Apr 10.

31-Aug-67

3825

The 34 TFS history for the month of August 1967, reported that, "... numerous targets were struck by pilots of the squadron in the Chicom Buffer Zone and within the Hanoi restricted area. A marked increase was noted in all modes of defense (AAA, SAMs, MiGs) due primarily to the sensitivity of the targets." Squadron pilots flew 411 combat missions during the month, 407 to North Vietnam and 4 to Laos for a total combat time of 1063:20 hours.

"Combat pilot strength stood at 36 line pilots. During the month of August, four squadron pilots completed their tour of 100 missions over North Vietnam. Those completing were: Maj Harry Pawlik, Maj Donald F. Fryauf, Capt Jack A. Phillips [on 2 Aug] , and Capt David C. Carter. [Not listed in the squadron history for completing his 100th mission this month was Maj John O. Rollins II.] No losses were suffered during this month and 13 replacements arrived during this period of time. Two officers, Captains Skoglund and Shulmister, that had been on temporary duty with the squadron from Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, returned to their home station."

The 13 pilots arriving in the 34th in August were: Maj William M. Blakeslee, Maj Kenneth W. Mays, Maj Donald Eugene "Digger" Odell, Maj James L. Taylor, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr., Maj William J. King, Maj Raymond Walter Vissotzky, Capt Robert M. Elliot, Capt Robert B. Middleton, Capt Lawrence R. Klinestiver, Capt Douglas A. Boyer, and 1Lt Lee E. Hollingsworth.

The Squadron Commander was Maj George G. Clausen. Maj Roderick Gene Giffin was the Operations Officer and Maj William M. Blakeslee the Executive Officer.

388 TFW history, Apr Dec 67, Vol II, 34 TFS history, 1 - 31 Aug 1967, microfilm NO584, frame 0080.

20-Sep-67

6562

In a published order, Maj George G. Clausen, 34 TFS commander, designated six squadron pilots as qualified Mission Commanders. They were:

Maj George G. Clausen
Maj Roderick G. Giffin
Maj Dwight E. Sullivan
Maj Charles E. Bishop
Capt Lawrence G. Hoppe, who by this time had flown 64 combat missions.
Capt Hugh W. Davis

34 TFS Special Order 47 dated 20 September 1967 provided by Larry Hoppe, May 2010.

21-Sep-67

6563

In a published order, Maj George G. Clausen, 34 TFS commander, designated 29 squadron pilots as Combat Ready in the F-105. The same pilots were listed in a separate order as qualified to be Flight/Element Leaders in F-105s. The pilots were:

Maj Almer L. Barner, Jr.	Capt Douglas A. Beyer
Maj Charles E. Bishop	Capt Robert M. Crane
Maj William M. Blakeslee	Capt Hugh W. Davis
Maj George G. Clausen	Capt Nicholas J. Donelson
Maj James E. Daniel, Jr.	Capt Robert M. Elliot
Maj David C. Dickson, Jr.	Capt George W. Hamlin IV
Maj Clyde L. Falls, Jr.	Capt Lawrence G. Hoppe
Maj Roderick G. Giffin	Capt Lawrence R. Klinestiver
Maj David D. Igelman	Capt Irving R. LeVine

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Maj William J. L. King	Capt Robert L. Martin
Maj Kenneth W. Mays	Capt Robert B. Middleton
Maj Donald E. Odell	Capt Sam P. Morgan
Maj Dwight E. Sullivan	Capt Harry G. Paddon III
Maj James L. Taylor	1Lt Lee E. Hollingsworth
Maj Raymond W. Vissotzky	

34 TFS Special Orders 45 and 46 dated 21 September 1967 provided by Larry Hoppe, May 2010.

13-Oct-67

4831

Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong, 34 TFS from Korat, flew his fifth combat mission into North Vietnam.

Mission 5. F-105D 58-1170. Call Sign: "Fresno". Take Off: 1500. Mission Length: 1+30. Flight Lineup:

1 - Rod Giffin [Maj Roderick Gene Giffin].

#2 - Me

"2-ship flight fragged both primary and secondary against a target in South Laos [Steel Tiger]. The target was a natural ford over a stream. We had to circumnavigate some thunderstorms to get to the area. Once there we had two A-1Es mark the road they wanted cut. Rod hit his mark and caused 40 yards of dirt slide along the road. I was slow and low when I finally had my target worked and consequently had poor dive angle. My bombs overshot the road by 200 feet and hit the stream. My bombing problem was compounded by my attack heading which was downslope of the hillside which was the same as my dive angle, 30-degrees. Since we had no tanker and our fuel was low, the armed reconnaissance of Package I, 100 miles to the north, was accomplished "tongue in cheek" for a counter."

Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pg 2.

30-Nov-67

5161

Two pilots assigned to the 34 TFS at Korat completed flying 100 missions during November 1967. They were:

Capt Robert L. Martin
Maj Roderick Gene Giffin

They were the 61st and 62nd F-105 pilots in the 34th to complete 100 missions.

It was Capt Martin's last flight in an F-105. He had accumulated 352.5 hours in the airplane.

Maj Giffin was "... assigned to the RTU business..." in the 562 TFS, 23 TFW, McConnell AFB KS.

34 TFS web site on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us.34tfs/scarf.htm> & River Rats Album 2 pg 104 & F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.

29-Jan-70

4350

Lt Col Kenneth G. Frank, the squadron operations officer, took over as acting commander of the 562 TFS at McConnell AFB, Kansas, when Lt Col Roderick G. Giffin was grounded for an extended length of time after suffering a collapsed lung. Maj Joe R. Steen became the acting operations officer.

23 TFW History, Jan - Mar 70, USAF microfilm MO555, frames 1267 - 1268.

15-Apr-70

207

Roderick Gene Giffin

F-105 History

F-105 RTU class 70DRM graduated two weeks early the 12 students in course 111106B at the 23 TFW, McConnell AFB KS. The class, assigned to the 562 TFS, started on 18 August 1969 with 16 students. The student pilots were:

Lt Col William H. Lewis	Maj Grover C. Poole
Lt Col Clarence H. "Gus" Sonderman	Capt Bruce B. Epperly
Lt Col Robert B. Coburn	Capt Vernon Handel
Maj Russell H. Bartlett	Capt Donald Joy
Maj John T. Halley	Capt James R. Spurger
Maj Edward G. Pekowski	Lt Col Robert McCutchen
Maj Robert G. Jerman	Lt Col Edwin S. Phillips

Maj Richard A. Wold was dropped on 26 August 1969 "... as a result of the personnel cutback. "Two of the students, Lt Col Robert McCutchen and Lt Col Edwin S. Phillips, were dropped from training when they received non-flying end assignments.

The squadron deployed 20 F-105s to George AFB CA between 2 - 19 December 1969 for ACM training. "No major problem areas were encountered during the deployment. The student landings at George were improved over past classes. With the deployment coming much earlier in the course, the unfamiliar field landings are usually a problem area. Only two minor incidents occurred with one student making a no-flaps landing and another landing in the overrun. ... The air-to-air phase was highly successful. All students fired the AGM-12 and seven of the fifteen fired the AIM-9B. Four students qualified on the dart with two hits and only two students did not hit it at all. The deployment mission went well with the exception of only one tanker being available. The 562 TFS deployed all 18 possessed aircraft without any aborts. Two borrowed aircraft were also used, also with no aborts. Since only one tanker was available, four aircraft had to land en route to George. The redeployment mission went very well. One abort occurred at George but the aircraft was repaired and returned the same day."

On 15 December 1969 at George, student Maj Michael J. Howard was killed in the crash of F-105D 62-4272.

The graduating class consisted of 3 Lt Cols, 5 Majors and 4 Captains. This class's training was stretched from 6 months to 8 months to even out the 23 TFW's RTU student flow. However, this extra time resulted in the students flying only twice a week and there was concern that this level of training would not provide for a high degree of proficiency. "However, no major problem is foreseen since the training program provides for maximum supervision by IPs."

The 562 TFS was headed by Lt Col Kenneth G. Frank, acting commander during the medical recovery from a collapsed lung of Lt Col Roderick G. Giffin. The Outstanding Student was Maj. Robert G. Jerman.

All graduating students received F-105 assignments to SEA. Four students first went to Nellis AFB for Wild Weasel School and the other 8 went directly to SEA as strike pilots.

There were six graduates of this RTU class who received Wild Weasel training or assignments:

Maj John T. Halley (WW# 896), Maj Robert G. Jerman (WW# 897), and Maj Grover C. Poole (WW# 898) all attended WW Class 71-AWW between 25 May 1970 and 13 July 1970.

Lt Col Clarence H. Sonderman (WW# 978) was assigned to the 44 TFS at Takhli on 23 June 1970.

Maj Russell H. Bartlett (WW# 1432) was assigned to the 44 TFS at Takhli in June 1970.

Roderick Gene Giffin

F-105 History

Capt James R. Spurger received WW# 1523.

23 TFW History, Apr - Jun 70, USAF microfilm MO555, frames 0696, 0714, 0754, 1011, and 1276 - 1277.

28-Aug-70

209

F-105 RTU class 71BRM graduated 13 students in course 111106B at the 23 TFW, McConnell AFB KS. The class started on 2 March 1970 assigned to the 561 TFS but was re-assigned to the 562 TFS on 15 April 1970 when the 561 TFS dropped its RTU roll and converted to F-105Gs.

The class deployed 19 F-105s to George AFB CA between 18 - 28 May 70. The graduating class consisted of 6 Majors, 4 Captains, and 3 1Lts. The Outstanding Graduate was Capt John G. J. Patterson. The 562 TFS was commanded by Lt Col Roderick G. Giffin who resumed command on 27 April 1970 after recovering from a collapsed lung.

The students were:

Maj Ronald L. Cone	Capt John G. J. Patterson, Jr.
Maj Edward J. Krick	Capt Kevin G. Stogsdill
Maj Burton S. J. Rathert, Jr.	1Lt John R. Baker
Maj Merlyn Duane "Huck" Smith	1Lt Daniel W. Breckenridge
Maj Charles R. Stoltz	1Lt Richard S. "Rick" Silz
Capt Ernest M. Brown	Maj Kenneth W. Lyon
Capt Jimmy L. Boyd	

This was the 562 TFS's last RTU class before converting from a Replacement Training Unit back to a combat squadron. It had been an RTU since 1 January 1966. None of the last graduates was assigned directly to F-105 flying in SEA. Instead, most were assigned to the 561, 562, and 563 TFS as combat aircrews in the 23 TFW at McConnell and to a Wild Weasel class at Nellis.

Maj Kenneth W. Lyon was assigned to the Wild Weasel class at Nellis.

23 TFW History, Apr - Jun 70, USAF microfilm MO555.

10-Sep-70

22-Sep-70

212

The 562 TFS, 23 TFW, deployed to Myrtle Beach AFB SC to participate in "Brass Strike VII". Squadron commander, Lt Col Roderick G. Giffin, led the deployment of six F-105s from McConnell AFB KS.

Other squadron pilots on the deployment were:

Lt Col Kenneth G. Frank
Maj James C. Wilson
Maj Ronald L. Cone
Maj Dean A. Elmer
Capt William D. Scott
Capt Steven J. Savonen
Capt Thomas W. Gallagher, Jr.

During the deployment, they flew 26 sorties, dropped 60 M-117 bombs, and fired 6 AGM-12B missiles.

23 TFW History, Jul - Sep 70, USAF microfilm MO555.

11-Dec-70

348

The 562 TFS, 23 TFW at McConnell AFB KS was declared C-2. This was the first F-105 squadron

Roderick Gene Giffin

F-105 History

in the Tactical Air Command to be combat ready since December 1965. The factor limiting a C-1 rating was the lack of maintenance personnel and load crews. The squadron was commanded by Lt Col Roderick G. Giffin.

23 TFW History, Oct - Dec 70, USAF microfilm MO556.

13-Feb-71

20-Feb-71

353

Eight F-105s and ten pilots from the 562 TFS and 90 support personnel deployed from McConnell AFB KS to Eielson AFB AK for "Punch Card XIII", an Alaskan Air Command exercise. The F-105s provided live-fire close air support with MK 82 low drag bombs and the 20-mm gun in the Ft. Wainwright artillery impact area. They successfully flew all eight aircraft in temperatures as low as minus 39 degrees F. They achieved a 94% in-commission rate by using two BT-400 heaters per aircraft to warm critical areas before launch. The detachment was led by Lt Col Roderick Gene Giffin, 562 TFS commander. The squadron flight surgeon, Capt Ronald J. Richeson, deployed with the detachment.

The 562 TFS pilots were:

Lt Col Walter L. "Bud" Catron	Capt David S. Mettler
Lt Col Dean A. Elmer	Capt Robert L. Roark
Maj Ronald L. Cone	Capt William D. Scott
Maj John D. Fail	1Lt Thomas O. Zorn, Jr.
Maj James L. Wilson	1Lt James M. Pieczako
Maj Thomas W. Gallagher, Jr.	
Capt Gordon L. Clouser	
Capt Lloyd E. DeJong	

After this deployment, Lt Col Giffin was assigned to Hq 12th Air Force. He last flew the F-105 in October 1971 by which time he had accumulated 1891.1 hours in the plane. "A year later [he was assigned] to Selfridge AFB as advisor to the Michigan ANG. In 1974 he was sent to England AFB, LA, as Deputy Base Commander. Nine months later he reported for his final active duty assignment as Base Commander, Eglin AFB, FL."

He retired as a colonel in April 1977.

23 TFW History, Jan - Mar 71, USAF microfilm MO556 & River Rats Album 2, pg 104 & F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.

12-Aug-95

6809

Col (Ret) Roderick Gene Giffin died in Fort Walton Beach, Florida. He was born 1 September 1930 in Greeley, Colorado to parents Grace and Carl Giffin. He was twice married and divorced, to Jackie Skee in 1956 with whom he had three daughters, and to Doris Strand in 1964 with whom he had one daughter. "He and his wife and daughter retired on a boat in 1977 and cruised the waters off Florida for a couple of years."

"He entered pilot training Class 52-H at Hondo, TX and six months later [was] off to Williams AFB. Graduating in December 1952, he entered the 'Every Man A Tiger' program at Nellis AFB in the F-86 Pipeline to Korea.

"Arriving at Kimpo a couple of months before the end of the war, he got to sit around doing nothing with dozens of other brown bars. Six months after the truce, while flying Recce escort over the Yellow Sea, he shot down the first MiG-15 in peacetime operations.

"Back to the States in March 1954, he did a tour in SAC fighters at Great Falls, MT, then an assignment to England AFB, LA. May 1957 brought him back to TAC and F-100s. After three

Roderick Gene Giffin

F-105 History

years of mostly TDY to Europe, he was assigned to Bitburg, Germany, and the first F-105Ds."

<http://news.rootsweb.com/th/read/REDUS/1999-05/0926569666> accessed 7 April 2011 & River Rats Album 2, pg 104.