

Robert L. Martin

F-105 History

17-Mar-67

231

The ninth F-105 RTU Class 67GR graduated at McConnell AFB KS with 20 students. The class started on 25 Oct 66 with 22 pilots. It was named "The Thai-Grrrs" and consisted of 7 Maj's, 11 Capt's, and two 1Lt's.

On 21 Dec 66, Capt Charles R. Curry became the third 23 TFW RTU fatality when he was killed in the crash of F-105D 61-0066 during a training mission at the Smokey Hill Range.

The class deployed 22 F-105s for conventional weapons delivery training to George AFB CA between 17 Feb - 9 Mar 67 with the 561 TFS. The squadron commander was Lt Col Lawrence E. McKenney.

Capt Phillip M. Drew was the first RTU pilot to win all three awards in his class: Outstanding Pilot, Top Gun, and Top Academics. He was assigned to the 357 TFS at Takhli.

Other pilots in the class and their SEA assignments (where known) were:

Maj Elmo C. Baker - 357 TFS	Capt Frederick O. Hawkins - 354 TFS
Maj David S. Baugh	Capt Joseph C. Howard - 13 TFS
Maj Winford L. Bazzell - 469 TFS	Capt Peter B. Lane - 469 TFS
Maj William A. Fredlund - 357 TFS	Capt Robert L. Martin - 34 TFS
Maj Louis L. Levy - 469 TFS	Capt James H. Mirehouse - 13 TFS
Maj Turnage R. "Bob" Lindsey - 354 TFS	Capt John F. Piowaty - 354 TFS
Maj Keith R. Peterson	Capt Donald W. Schalk - 333 TFS
Capt Earl M. Drew - 357 TFS	Capt Bruce D. Stocks - 333 TFS
Capt Chester W. Griffin, Jr. - 355 TFW	1Lt Crissman R. Lawrence - 354 TFS
	1Lt John C. Leech - 357 TFS

23 TFW History, Jul - Dec 66, USAF microfilm MO554.

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. McNerney, 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

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 McNerney 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'.

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"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

#1 - Maj Roderick G. Giffin
#2 - Capt Robert L. Martin

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#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.

31-May-67

760

F-105s from the 388 TFW flew more hours during the month of May 1967 "... than any USAF Fighter unit has ever done". The wing flew "... 5,219 hours of which 4,950 were in combat strikes over North Vietnam. Major targets struck by the 388th during May (were) the Hoa Loc MiG Airfield, Bac Giang Railroad Highway bridge (JCS 18.23) and vital lines of communications." Col William E. Fish, Director of Materiel said, "The primary reason for this total ... figure is the work ... by our maintenance personnel on the line..."

The history of the 34 TFS reported that the squadron flew 418 combat sorties during May 1967, 402 in North Vietnam and 16 in Southern Laos, for a total of 1066:20 combat hours. "A change was noted in enemy fighter tactics. MiG-17s are now being deployed in the target area at very low altitudes (100 - 500 feet AGL) in an attempt to strike the F-105s as they pull off the target. This change in tactics was probably due to the presence of F-4C flights ingressing the target area with the strike force.

Three pilots from the 34 TFS completed their 100th combat mission over North Vietnam during May 1967. They were Maj William C. Eagle, Lt Col Robert W. Johnson, and Capt William W. Kennedy.

Lt Col Johnson's 100th mission was his last flight in the F-105. He had accumulated 352.9 hours in the airplane. (F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.)

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The squadron had 22 line pilots that included the commander, executive officer and operations officer as well as four attached pilots from the 388 TFW staff. They gained four new pilots to offset the three losses of the pilots who completed their tours. The inputs during May 1967 were Maj George G. Clausen, Maj Robert G. Miner, Capt Robert L. Martin, and Capt Nickolas J. Donelson (a Ryan's Raider pilot who had arrived in April.)

34 TFS history, 1 - 31 May 67, USAF microfilm NO584, frame 0072 & Sawadee Weekly, Saturday, June 10, 1967, pg 6 & 34 TFS web site on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us.34tfs/scarf.htm>.

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
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

Robert L. Martin

F-105 History

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.

06-Jul-67

1341

F-105s from the 388 TFW struck the Vu Chua railroad yard (ART 1084).

"Two B-52 bombers were lost in the South China Sea as a result of a mid-air collision over the northern part of RVN."

Capt Jack A. Phillips from the 34 TFS flew his 83rd mission into North Vietnam. "Flight lead ..."

Other pilots in his flight were:

Capt Robert L. Martin

Maj Raymond F. Jauregui

Capt Charles E. Irwin

388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frame 1756 & Chronology of Seventh Air Force 1 July 1967 - 30 June 1968, pg 8 & 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. ..."

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.

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.

Maj Charles E. Bishop

Maj William M. Blakeslee

Maj George G. Clausen

Maj James E. Daniel, Jr.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr.

Maj Clyde L. Falls, Jr.

Maj Roderick G. Giffin

Maj David D. Igelman

Maj William J. L. King

Maj Kenneth W. Mays

Capt Douglas A. Beyer

Capt Robert M. Crane

Capt Hugh W. Davis

Capt Nicholas J. Donelson

Capt Robert M. Elliot

Capt George W. Hamlin IV

Capt Lawrence G. Hoppe

Capt Lawrence R. Klinestiver

Capt Irving R. LeVine

Capt Robert L. Martin

Capt Robert B. Middleton

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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.

01-Oct-67

848

On 1 October, 388 TFW aircraft destroyed two of four missiles visible in a SAM site near Hanoi. Black smoke rose to 500 feet from the site, 20 miles east-northeast of the capital city. The pilots also reported destroying an electronics support van and seeing their ordnance heavily damage the radar support equipment within the site.

"Another 388 TFW strike force cut both approaches and heavily damaged the center support of the Dap Cau railroad and highway bridge (JCS 16), 20 miles northeast of Hanoi. Capts Robert L. Martin and Lawrence G. Hoppe, 34 TFS, were members of the strike force. Approaches were also cut to a nearby bypass railroad bridge, one mile south of the main bridge.

"Near the DMZ, the 388th joined [F-4C] aircraft from the 366 TFW in a strike against an artillery site 42 miles southeast of Dong Hoi. Secondary explosions resulted. Also struck was the Lang Thip railroad siding 118 miles northwest of Hanoi. Five secondary explosions resulted."

Also on 1 October 1967, the "... 388 TFW F-105s struck the Kep airfield (JCS 9.1). Smoke and dust covered the area. Other 388th aircraft struck an army barracks area 24 miles northwest of Dong Hoi destroying seven buildings. Maj. Donald S. Aunapu, 469 TFS and Capt Hal P. Henning, 44 TFS, were on the Kep airfield mission."

1Lt Earl J. Henderson, 469 TFS, was another 388 TFW pilot who struck Kep Airfield. It was his 18th combat mission into North Vietnam.

"Target: Kep airfield 32 miles NNE of Hanoi
"Armament: 4x750 .025 2x750 TD

"Water route in. Not one MiG call. At least 4 SAMs launched at us. Bright orange clouds. First 85s real close. Lead flipped over. Three took a hit. Good bombing by all. Four aircraft total hit. None lost. What a way to spend a lazy Sunday afternoon!"

Lt Henderson received his first of eight Distinguished Flying Crosses for this mission. "... Lieutenant Henderson was a member of the lead flight of F-105s assigned to attack Kep Airfield. Flying through intense anti-aircraft fire he delivered his bombs precisely on target, heavily damaging this vital airfield. ..."

Under 7 AF SO G2384 dated 30 December 1967, Capt George H. Teas, also from the 469 TFS, received the DFC (3rd OLC) for extraordinary achievement in attacking Kep airfield. "... Captain Teas successfully attacked a vital airfield in North Vietnam. In spite of intense hostile fire over the target and SA-2 missiles launched at him, Captain Teas accurately bombed the runway, helping to render it unserviceable. ..."

Sawadee Flyer, Friday, October 13, 1967, pg 3 & Earl Henderson, combat diary and award citation.

05-Oct-67

4827

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

Robert L. Martin

F-105 History

Mission 1. F-105D 60-0464. Call Sign: "Waco". Take Off: 1450. Mission length: 1 + 50. Flight Lineup:

#1 - Bob Martin. [Capt Robert L. Martin, 34 TFS]

#2 - Me

"2-ship flight Route Package 1. Fragged against highway bridge on NVN Route #1 about 10 miles north of DMZ. Diverted in flight to F-100 FAC who picked out 2 trucks in trees next to dirt road south of Quang Che. Bomb Damage Assessment (BDA) was 50% bombs on target, one truck damaged. Ordnance - 6 x 750 # GP bombs. No pre or post-strike refueling. No hostile fire sighted."

Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pg 1.

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.

15-Feb-68

2354

(Approximate date) "At a special presentation ceremony last month at McConnell Air Force Base in Kansas, 55 Thunderchief pilots were awarded special certificates by Republic for completing 100 missions over North Vietnam."

"Air Force Cross Awarded To Thunderchief Pilot -- The Air Force's highest award for heroism was recently awarded to Lieutenant Colonel Harry Schurr, a 100-mission F-105 pilot who is now stationed at McConnell Air Force Base. The decoration was presented to the pilot by Lieutenant General Albert P. Clark, vice commander of the Tactical Air Command. Lt Col Schurr was cited for extraordinary heroism while leading a strike force of 20 Thunderchiefs over North Vietnam. Although his aircraft had been heavily damaged by enemy anti-aircraft fire, Schurr successfully destroyed a key railroad and highway bridge. He is now assigned to the Kansas base as commander of the 4519th Combat Crew Training Squadron." He previously commanded the 469 TFS at Korat. He was one of three F-105 pilots and one Wild Weasel EWO, along with F-4C pilot Col Robin Olds, who received the Air Force Cross for the successful attack on Hanoi's Paul Doumer Bridge on 11 August 1967.

Capt Bruce J. Lotzbire, an F-105 instructor pilot at McConnell, was among those who received Republic Aviation's 100-mission certificates. He had flown 100 missions while assigned to the 357 TFS at Takhli between April and October 1967. He remained as an instructor pilot at McConnell until December 1971. After 33 years in the Air Force, he retired as a Major General on 1 June 1995.

Capt Howard L. Bodenhamer, also assigned to McConnell, was one of the pilots who received a certificate. He had completed 100 missions in August 1967 while flying with the 354 TFS at Takhli.

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Lt Col Gerald F. "Jerry" Fitzgerald, was one of the 55 pilots who received his 100-mission certificate. Previously he had commanded the 13 TFS at Korat, RTAFB, Thailand.

Capt Donald O. Austin was one of the pilots who received a 100-mission certificate. He was a former 34 TFS pilot who had flown from Korat but was now assigned to the 561 TFS as an F-105 RTU instructor pilot.

Maj Edward C. Jones, who had flown with the 34 TFS, received a 100-mission certificate.

Capt Steven J. Savonen, an instructor pilot in the 562 TFS, also received his 100-mission certificate. He had been assigned to the 469 TFS at Korat.

Capt Richard L. O'Connor was one of the pilots receiving a 100-mission certificate.

Lt Col William E. Augsburg was a former 34 TFS pilot who received a 100-mission certificate.

Maj Bobby L. Martin, the first Wild Weasel pilot to have flown 100 missions, received a 100-mission certificate. He had been assigned to the 354 TFS at Takhli but had flown missions with the 13 TFS from Korat.

Capt Jack A. Phillips, an IP with the 560 TFS, flew his 100th mission with the 34 TFS on 2 August 1967.

Capt Robert L. Martin, who flew his 100th with the 34 TFS, received his Republic 100-mission Certificate at McConnell.

Maj Paul F. Koeltzow received his 100-mission certificate.

Capt Jackie R. Youngblood was a former 34 TFS pilot who received his Republic 100-mission Certificate at McConnell.

Thunderchief World Wide Report, Vol III, No 7, March, 1968 & Gen Lotzbire's biography on www.af.mil/news/biographies/lotzbire_bj.html.