

Denis D. O'Donoghue

F-105 History

08-Apr-65

6525

F-105D Operational Training Course (F-105) 111506E graduated seven pilots in Class 65-F at the 4520 CCTW, Nellis AFB, NV. The course was six months long. "Officers have acquired three years active dy svc commitment from date of crs completion."

The pilots were:

Capt Robert J. Straubinger - 334 TFS, 4 TFW, Seymour Johnson AFB, NC
1Lt Thomas R. Allen - 36 TFW Bitburg AB, Germany
1Lt John R. Haack - 49 TFW Spangdahlem AB, Germany
1Lt James T. Hannam - 49 TFW Spangdahlem AB, Germany
1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue - 36 TFS Yokota AB, Japan
1Lt Randolph S. Reynolds - 35 TFS Yokota AB, Japan
1Lt James P. Tate - 560 TFS, 23 TFW McConnell AFB, KS

Hq 4520th Combat Support Group Special Order P-170, dated 24 May 1965 provided by Jim Hannam via e-mail, 5 April 2010.

26-Aug-65

28-Oct-65

309

In a continuing series of TDY combat rotations by the three squadrons of the 6441 TFW at Yokota AB, Japan, the 36 TFS deployed for their third combat tour. Their first was to Korat in August 1964. This was their second deployment to Takhli RTAFB, Thailand, to replace the 80 TFS. The 36 TFS commander was Lt Col Howard F. "Red Dog" Hendricks.

Capt Douglas G. Lauck was one of the 36 TFS pilots on this deployment. This was his third 60-day TDY deployment with the 36th to Thailand and his second one to Takhli. During this deployment, he raised his total North Vietnam combat missions to about 48.

Other pilots on the deployment were:

Col Chester L. Van Etten, the 6441 TFW Commander
Maj Dean A. Pogreba, the 36 TFS Operations Officer
Capt John O. Rollins II
Maj Richard P. Fitzgerald
Capt Lester W. Sundt
Capt John R. Layman
Capt Rex L. Dull
Capt Clarence E. Fox
Capt Jerry L. Stamps
Capt William A. Becker
Maj Wayne N. Whatley
Capt Fredrick William Shattuck, Jr.
Capt David L. Hatten
Capt Bernard G. Lyons
Capt James I. Miholick
Lt Col William L. Janssen from the 6441 TFW Staff
Capt Michael F. McNamara from the 6441 TFW Staff
Capt Jack R. Stresing from the 41 AD Staff

Capt Robert H. Jones
Capt Vernon D. Hesterman
Capt Thomas W. Sima
Capt Onofiro J. Andrews
Capt Roderick G. Beckett
Capt Donnie R. Duplissey
Capt Robert H. Schuler, Jr.
1Lt Delbert F. Miller
Capt Bruce G. Seeber
Capt Paul H. Storment
Capt Wayne D. Hauth
Capt David S. Graben
Capt Stanley S. Rynear
1Lt Benjamin D. Ulrich
1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue

6441 TFW History, Jul - Dec 65, USAF microfilm PO232 & Doug Lauck, e-mail 25 Sep 2006 & 441 Cmbt Spt Gp Special Order TA-424 dated 5 Aug 65.

18-Oct-65

6527

1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue, on TDY to Korat with the 36 TFS, flew a mission for which he received the Distinguished Flying Cross. "First Lieutenant Denis D. O'Donoghue distinguished himself by

Denis D. O'Donoghue

F-105 History

extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as an F-105D pilot on 18 October 1965. On that date Lieutenant O'Donoghue was assigned a bomb mission deep in hostile territory. En route to the target, the flight encountered several thunderstorms, through which they flew to rendezvous with and refuel from the waiting tanker aircraft. Despite the excess and poor inflight visibility, Lieutenant O'Donoghue refueled and continued to the target, encountering intensive Anti-Aircraft Artillery which inflicted damage to his aircraft. Without regard to his personal safety, he pressed on the attack, assisting in inflicting major damage to the Surface to Air Missile Site. After this attack, while assessing damages to his aircraft, he observed several armed boats. With the desire to inflict as much damage as possible to the hostile forces, he attacked the boats with 20MM ammunition, completely silencing their guns, and damaging several crafts. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant O'Donoghue reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force."

Award Citation provided by Denis O'Donoghue via e-mail 6 April 2010.

18-Apr-66

5176

The 6441 TFW selected the pilots for the squadron that became the 34 TFS to deploy to Korat. Most would come from the 36 TFS; consequently, the 36 TFS was slated to disband.

Bob Pielin from the 36 TFS, who had already flown 87 combat missions during temporary duty tours to Korat and Takhli, remembered how he helped select the pilots for the new squadron. "Fitz [Maj Richard P. Fitzgerald, the squadron's Operations Officer] and I initially made out a list of 25 pilots from the Wing resources to go as 34th members. The list was bounced back from HHQ as being too overloaded in pilots with over 50 missions. They recommended 6 guys in the 0 to 20 mission category, 6 in the 21 to 40, 6 in the 41 to 60, 6 in the 61 to 80, and anyone with over 80 to go TDY." This distribution was to spread out their eventual departures from Korat as each pilot completed his 100-mission tour. Capt Pielin and Maj Fitzgerald reworked the list "... with some pronounced disapproval from those that were removed from the [original]. ... A 1.5 aircrew/aircraft ratio was authorized for 27 pilots plus Commander and Operations Officer. ... Bob Jones [Capt Robert H. Jones] was removed from the first list since he had his papers in to be discharged. When he found out about the 34th going PCS to Korat, he volunteered to go with [them] and get 100 missions before he got out. Red Dog [Lt Col Howard F. 'Red Dog' Hendricks the squadron commander] worked a 'deal', and he went TDY." (Bob Pielin e-mails, 23 Sep 2006 and 7 April 2007.)

The following list contains the positions and names of the initial twenty-nine pilots assigned to the 34 TFS. This is the revised list after Capt Pielin and Maj Fitzgerald reworked their original to provide a broader base of experience. One of the pilots, Gordon Walcott, annotated his copy of the printed list, dated 18 April 1966, with this comment: "This was the original 34th TFS crew roster when formed as an all-volunteer squadron from the 35 TFS, 36 TFS, and 80 TFS (Yokota AB, Japan)"

Commander - Lt Col Howard F. "Red Dog" Hendricks who had been commander of the 36 TFS.
Operations Officer - Maj Richard P. Fitzgerald

India Flight
Flight Commander - Maj Wayne N. Whatley
Capt Robin K. Nierste
Capt James I. Miholick
Capt Douglas G. Lauck
Capt Robert H. Jones
Capt Robert R. Reed

Lima Flight
Flight Commander - Capt James E. Hayes
Capt Merrill R. Lewis, Jr.
Capt Gordon M. Walcott
Capt Stanley S. Gunnersen
1Lt John Bernard Sullivan III

Juliet Flight

Metro Flight

Denis D. O'Donoghue

F-105 History

Flight Commander - Maj Kenneth T. Blank
Capt Carl L. Hamby
Capt Thomas H. Curtis
Capt David H. Groark
1Lt Phillip J. Kelley

Flight Commander - Capt Robert D. Pielin
Capt Alan K. Rutherford
Capt Ralph D. Watkins
Capt Wayne D. Hauth
Capt Rainford "Ray" McMaster Tiffin

Kilo Flight
Flight Commander - Maj Jack R. Stresing
Capt William O. Lessard
Capt John R. Layman
Capt Rex L. Dull
Capt Clarence E. Fox
1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue

E-mail from Monty Pharmer, 22 Sep 2006 forwarding letter to him from Lt Col (Ret) Gordon Walcott dated, 29 July 1988, which included a roster of 36 TFS pilots, dated 18 April 1966.

20-Jul-66

6528

1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue from the 34 TFS received the Air Medal (8th OLC) for the mission he flew as "Crab 04" when his flight lead was shot down and KIA. The members of Crab flight were:

#1 - Capt Merrill Raymond Lewis, Jr.
#2 - Capt Gordon M. Walcott
#3 - Capt Stanley S. Gunnensen
#4 - 1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue

Their target was the Vu Chua RR bridge (JCS 18.74) in RP-6A.

"First Lieutenant Denis D. O'Donoghue distinguished himself by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight as an F-105 pilot over Southeast Asia on 20 July 1966. On that date, as a member of a flight of four F-105s bombing a heavily defended railroad bridge, Lieutenant O'Donoghue continued to press his attack through intense flak which had downed his lead. After finding he could not strike the bridge because of adverse weather conditions, he continued still deeper into hostile territory to search out and bomb a main highway. The professional skill and airmanship displayed by Lieutenant O'Donoghue reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force."

Award Citation provided by Denis O'Donoghue via e-mail 6 April 2010.

13-Sep-66

6529

1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue, 34 TFS, was awarded the Air Medal (1st thru 7th OLC) for missions he flew during the period 7 October 1965 when he was TDY to Takhli with the 36 TFS to 13 September 1966 when he completed his combat tour with the 34th.

Hq 7th AF SO G-843 dated 12 Oct 1966 provided by Denis O'Donoghue via e-mail 6 April 2010.

30-Sep-66

5151

Seven pilots assigned to the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, at Korat, completed flying 100 missions during September 1966. The pilots were in the original group who arrived at Korat in May and June 1966, They were:

Capt Clarence E. Fox
Capt James I. Miholick
Capt Gordon M. Walcott
1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue
Capt Carl L. Hamby

Denis D. O'Donoghue

F-105 History

Capt Douglas G. Lauck
Capt Rex L. Dull

When he left Korat, Lt O'Donoghue was assigned to an F-5 squadron at Williams AF, AZ. He "... delivered an F-5 to Bien Hoa AB during the Tet Offensive and hung around long enough to fly some F-37 missions with an old Willy F-5 instructor." In 1968, he joined the New Jersey ANG at McGuire AFB "... and flew Thud Bs and Ds for another 10 years."

Maj Edward C. Jones was assigned to the 34 TFS in September 1966. He had qualified in the F-105 while stationed with the 36 TFW at Bitburg in 1962. He had left Bitburg in 1964 and spent a year in Hq TAC in the F-105 maintenance shop. He was then assigned to Shaw AFB where he flew Functional Check Flights in RF-4Cs. While at Shaw he volunteered for SEA expecting to fly RF-4s but instead received orders as an F-105 pilot. He went to Nellis AFB for F-105 requalification training, to Fairchild AFB for USAF Survival School, then to PACAF Jungle Survival School at Clark AB, Phillipines, before arriving at Korat. (Ed Jones, phone interviews 26 and 28 April 10 and e-mail 26 Apr 10.)

34 TFS web site on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us.34tfs/scarf.htm> & Denis O'Donoghue, e-mail 7 Apr 10.