

Harvey W. Prosser, Jr.

F-105 History

13-Aug-62

5370

Having been appointed Operations Officer of the 44 TFS on 1 August 1962, Maj Harvey W. Prosser, Jr. became the Assistant Operations Officer on 13 August, "... when Lt Col [Lawrence D.] Damewood arrived in the squadron and assumed the duties of Operations Officer."

Lt Col Toivo L. Akkola remained as squadron commander.

18 TFW history, Jul - Dec 62, USAF microfilm MO494, frame 1024.

28-May-63

5402

The 18 TFW, Kadena AB, Okinawa, completed its first periodic inspection on an F-105D. The inspection was performed as a carefully documented study on F-105D 61-0171. The study was directed by the Chief of Maintenance and led by Maj Harvey W. Prosser, Jr., Wing Standardization Officer. "The purpose of this study was to point out problem areas such as maintenance delays, inadequacy of facilities, tools and equipment, and to evaluate periodic dock crew effectiveness in the use of maintenance preplans, sequence charts, and card decks."

The inspection started on 8 May 1963 and required 14 days and two test flights. "... Standardization personnel continuously gave advice and/or recommendations to periodic maintenance supervisors as an aid in performing this and all future periodic inspections on F-105D aircraft. The experience gained by Periodic Maintenance supervisors during this inspection ... will result in more timely completion of future periodic inspections."

History of 18 TFW, 1 Jan - 30 Jun 1963, pg 96, and frames 0660 - 0667, USAF microfilm MO495.

04-Aug-64

F-105F 638297 44 TFS 18 TFW Kadena AB Operational loss. Engine fire. Crashed in the water 20 NM north of Kadena AB, Okinawa. 1Lt John C. Betz, Jr. 44 TFS front seat pilot ejected safely. Maj Harvey W. Prosser, Jr. 44 TFS rear seat pilot ejected safely. Call sign: "Beak 11". "... While on a nuclear bombing practice mission, ... (the crew) ... was forced to eject... . As they were pulling off from a radar laydown delivery, an explosion was felt followed by a warning light indicating that their aircraft was overheating. Their afterburner began to light intermittently; shortly thereafter, a fire warning light came on indicating additional difficulty. Both pilots elected to eject and landed in the sea. They were subsequently retrieved by helicopter -- neither sustained any injury."

History of Flight

"On 4 August 1964, at 0805I, F-105F-1RE, serial number 63-8297, belonging to the 18th Organizational Maintenance Squadron, Kadena AB, Okinawa, crashed approximately four (4) to six (6) nautical miles on a bearing of 200 degrees from Ie Shima Island (Range 178). The range is located twenty nautical miles north of Kadena AB. The aircraft was engaged in a scheduled refueling and Nuclear Weapons Delivery (NWD) training mission. Both pilots ejected successfully and were subsequently rescued. The aircraft could not be recovered due to lack of positive location and non-availability of support facilities for positive location and salvage. In the area of impact, the water depth varies between 180 feet and 1200 feet.

"The flight briefing began at 0535I at the 44th Tactical Fighter Squadron. First Lieutenant John C. Betz was to occupy the front seat and Major Harvey W. Prosser, Jr. was to occupy the rear seat. The briefing was conducted by Lt Betz and covered all phases of the scheduled flight including aircraft control transfer procedures and control in the event of emergencies. The mission was refueling training for Lt Betz on a KC-135 using boom refueling and NWD training for both pilots. An AF Form 1080 was filed at the 44 TFS Operations under the call sign "BEAK 11". The present and forecast weather was received from 18 DOC and entered as follows: 0600I Two thousand scattered, fifteen thousand scattered and forecast to remain the same. Both pilots arrived at their aircraft at 0620I for an 0650I start engine. Lt Betz and Maj Prosser made complete individual preflights of the aircraft and equipment and no discrepancies were noted. They started the engine on time and completed their after-start, taxi, arming, and runup checks uneventfully.

"Takeoff roll was started at 0715I; afterburner light was good and all engine instruments were normal. When the afterburner was disengaged, Major Prosser went under the hood and at 2,000 feet took control of the aircraft for an instrument climb out. Lt Betz contacted the 18th Wing Command Center, gave them their 'off time', and switched to refueling frequency. After checking 'Lanyard and Oxygen' at 5,000 feet, Lt Betz had visual contact at 15 nautical

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miles. At this time he took control of the aircraft and Major Prosser came out from under the hood. In order to effect a join-up approximately twenty (20) seconds of afterburner was used. Fuel in the internal tanks was below five thousand pounds. Normal pre-refueling checks were made. Lt Betz's hook-up was smooth and uneventful and they received an onload of three thousand pounds. Disconnect was accomplished by the boom operator, switches were returned to their normal positions, and a low power descent was started toward Range 178. During the descent the internal fuel read five thousand eight hundred pounds.

"When the rear cockpit had radar control both radar scopes were unusable but when the front cockpit had control both scopes were good. Under these circumstances, Lt Betz would have to make the weapons deliveries from the front seat. He retained control of the aircraft and took all the control transfer buttons. He contacted the Range Officer at Range 178 for clearance during the descent. The letdown was completed at one thousand feet northeast of the range where he turned final for a 230-degree heading visual laydown. He was cleared, but the pass was dry due to the Bomb Bay Button in the rear cockpit being depressed resulting in an ineffective weapons control transfer. Another pattern was made for a visual laydown on a 050-degree heading with the discrepancy corrected. The next pattern, a 230 Radar Laydown, was also good.

"BEAK 11 pulled up, retarded the throttle to an estimated 85 - 92% and turned right for a crosswind leg. On crosswind, wings level and still climbing, a thump, or bump, was felt followed in one to two seconds by the Aft Overheat Warning Light. Stores were jettisoned, a call was made to the range requesting verification of the fire and a turn initiated toward Kadena. Lt Betz left the throttle at its present setting. This was 'minimum practical thrust' considering their present position and distance from Kadena and/ or Ie Shima Island Runways. The Overheat Light was followed almost immediately by the Fire Light. The decision was made to land at Ie Shima Island due to both Warning Lights and the proximity of an adequate runway.

"The Range Officer stated, 'I do not have you in sight. Jettison stores and head for home.' They informed the range that they would land at Ie Shima. As they were turning into a wide base leg at approximately five thousand feet and 350 KCAS, Major Prosser noticed that the Fuel Inlet Pressure Light was on and saw the RPM unwind very rapidly. Immediately following this, they felt the afterburner engage although throttles were inboard. There was a definite increase in thrust which terminated in 10 - 15 seconds. Lt Betz stated that the EGT was about 500 degrees centigrade and that other instruments were normal although a thorough gauge by gauge reading is not remembered by either pilot. As they were turning toward the island, the afterburner disengaged; there was a definite loss of thrust. A large cloud was noted between the aircraft and the runway. Forward and Aft Boost Pump Lights, Stab Aug Light, and several more undetermined lights were now on. To go around the cloud would have put them out of position for landing. In order to land on this approach, they would have to penetrate the cloud or dive under it. This, combined with the cockpit indications and thrust reduction, determined that ejection was required. Both pilots agreed. Lt Betz hit the Bailout Light Switch, confirmed it verbally, and went to Emergency on the IFF/ SIF. Major Prosser ejected, followed immediately by Lt Betz. The entire sequence consumed three to four minutes. Lt Betz had a complete loss of memory from the time he initiated the ejection until he recovered at Camp Kue Army Hospital. The crew of the USAF HH-19 which rescued him stated that he appeared to be in a high state of shock and that on the first two attempts to hoist him into the aircraft, he fell out of the sling. The HH-19 crew chief entered the water with him and secured him to the sling. From this point his rescue was uneventful."

History of the 18 TFW, Jul - Dec 1964, USAF microfilm MO496 & AF Form 711 USAF Accident/ Incident Report 64-8-4-1, dated 21 Aug 1964, signed by Capt Donald L. Totten, Investigating Officer.

02-Oct-68

2102

Lt Col Harvey W. Prosser, Jr. replaced Lt Col Robert J. Klingensmith, Jr. as commander of the 34 TFS, serving with the 388 TFW at Korat RTAFB, Thailand. The 34 TFS reported to the 347 TFW at Yokota AB, Japan.

Lt Col Klingensmith was reassigned to the office of the 388 TFS Deputy Commander for Operations.

As a major on 4 August 1964, Lt Col Prosser, then with the 44 TFS, ejected from F-105F 63-8297 when its engine caught fire 20 NM north of Kadena AB, Okinawa.

E-mail, 26 Feb 2002, from Lt Col Donald T. Bolling, 34 FS Commander, Hill AFB & 388 TFW history, Oct - Dec 68, USAF microfilm NO585, frames 1159 and 1756.

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09-May-69

410

The 34 TFS flew its last F-105 mission before it converted to F-4Es at the 388 TFW, Korat RTAFB, Thailand.

The F-4Es were delivered on 11 May 1969 by the 40 TFS from Eglin AFB FL. The 40th changed its designation to the 34 TFS when it arrived at Korat. "...They were met with cold beer, a lei, a parade of smoke bombs, water hoses, and welcomed through most of the streets of Korat ...". The 40th designation returned to Eglin.

The final 34 TFS squadron commander with F-105s was Lt Col Harvey W. Prosser, Jr. When the squadron converted to F-4Es, he was replaced by Lt Col Joseph M. Potts. Col Prosser was reassigned to Kirtland AFB, NM where he flew the F-4 and F-104.

On 10 May 1969, Capt Clayton Bane Lyle III was one of the F-105 pilots who transferred from the 34th to the 44 TFS. (Bane Lyle, e-mail 20 Aug 2010.)

On 11 May 1969, the 34th distributed its F-105s to the 355 TFW at Takhli, RTAFB and to the 44 TFS, the only unit still flying F-105s at Korat. The 44 TFS possessed 23 F-105s. Its squadron commander was Lt Col Herbert L. Sherrill who had replaced Lt Col Guy J. Sherrill on 12 March 1969.

F-4E pilots of the 388 TFW called the F-105 "Thud" ("... cause that's the sound it makes when it crashes!") while Korat F-105 pilots referred to the F-4E as the "Thumb" (Two-Hole-Ugly-Mini-Bug). (388 TFW history)

Harvey Prosser commented on the attitude of the F-4 pilots. "They were not a happy bunch. I could have as many F-4 guys switch to 105s as I wanted. All the 34th young guys and the old F-4 pilot Gibs much preferred the Thud. We put up a big sign at the entrance to the O Club stating 'Tiny Tim flies F-4s'. The new F-4 guys refused to take it down and it stayed up for at least a month when the Wing Commander commanded the 34th pilots to remove it because it hurt the F-4 pilots' feelings. Also, the nickname for the F-4 at Korat at that time was Mini-Buff. Again, at the Wing Commander's order, we desisted." (Harvey Prosser, e-mail 2 Feb 10)

During the time the 34th flew F-105s, the squadron received three Outstanding Unit Awards and a Presidential Unit Citation. After it began flying F-4Es, the squadron received its fourth Outstanding Unit Award for the period 1 July 1968 to 15 September 1969 as well as the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross With Palm for the period 15 May 1966 to 29 January 1973. (James Geer, "The Republic F-105 Thunderchief Wing and Squadron Histories", Schiffer, 2002, pg 241.)

However, in its 3 years of flying the F-105, the 34 TFS paid a high price. Pilots assigned or attached to the squadron lost 39 planes to combat and accidents -- 37 "D" models and two "F" models -- enough to equip the squadron more than twice over. Thirteen squadron pilots died in combat (KIA), three more in accidents. Four pilots survived accidental crashes, ten were rescued, and 11 more became POWs, one of whom died in captivity. The following recaps each of the squadron's 39 losses, the pilots involved, and their fate:

	Date	F-105	Last Name	Fate
1.	03 Jun 66	58-1171	Pielin	Rescued
2.	15 Jun 66	62-4377	Kelley	Rescued
3.	21 Jun 66	62-4358	Sullivan	KIA
4.	30 Jun 66	62-4224	Nierste	Rescued
5.	15 Jul 66	59-1761	Hamby	Rescued
6.	20 Jul 66	62-4308	Lewis	KIA
7.	21 Jul 66	62-4227	Tiffin	KIA
8.	06 Aug 66	62-4315	Rutherford	Rescued
9.	17 Sep 66	61-0191	Rutherford	Rescued
10.	10 Oct 66	62-4300	Bullock	Died
11.	10 Jan 67	62-4265	Gauley	KIA
12.	19 Mar 67	61-0123	Austin	KIA

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13.	05 Apr 67	62-4395	Youngblood	Survived
14.	12 May 67	63-8269 (F)	Stewart	KIA
			Pitman	KIA
15.	15 May 67	62-4429 (F)	Heiliger	POW
			Pollard	POW
16.	02 Jun 67	61-0190	Smith	POW
17.	04 Jun 67	61-0148	Kough	Rescued
18.	15 Jun 67	61-0213	Swanson	KIA
19.	17 Oct 67	61-0205	Andrews	POW
20.	17 Oct 67	62-4326	Odell	POW
21.	17 Oct 67	60-0425	Sullivan	POW
22.	27 Oct 67	62-4231	Flynn	POW
23.	28 Oct 67	62-4356	Waldrop	Survived
24.	19 Nov 67	58-1170	Vissotzky	POW
25.	04 Feb 68	60-5384	Lasiter	POW
26.	14 Feb 68	60-0418	Elliot	KIA
27.	15 Apr 68	61-0206	Metz	POW Died
28.	25 Apr 68	60-0436	Givens	Died
29.	14 May 68	61-0132	Bass	Died
30.	28 May 68	61-0194	Ingvalson	POW
31.	31 May 68	60-0409	Beresik	KIA
32.	08 Jun 68	61-0055	Light	Rescued
33.	13 Jul 68	60-0453	Confer	Survived
34.	01 Sep 68	60-0512	Thaete	Rescued
35.	17 Nov 68	61-0092	Dinan	Survived
36.	11 Feb 69	62-4256	Zukowski	KIA
37.	17 Mar 69	61-0104	Dinan	KIA
38.	29 Mar 69	62-4270	Stafford	Rescued
39.	03 Apr 69	62-4269	Christianson	KIA

388 TFW History, Apr - Jun 69, USAF microfilm NO586