

Robin K. Nierste

F-105 History

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

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

Metro Flight

Flight Commander - Capt Robert D. Pielin
Capt Alan K. Rutherford
Capt Ralph D. Watkins
Capt Wayne D. Hauth
Capt Rainford "Ray" McMaster Tiffin - 80 TFS

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.

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25-May-66

4957

On Wednesday morning, twenty F-105Ds (18 aircraft and 2 spares) now assigned to the 34 TFS left the 6441 TFW at Yokota for Kadena on the first leg of their movement to the 388 TFW at Korat. The aircraft took off in flights of four using call signs "Yule". Each flight departed Yokota at half-hour intervals beginning at 0800. The deployment's flight line-up consisted of:

Pilot	Call Sign	Acft Tail No	Yokota TO Time	Kadena Arr Time	Acft Maint Status at Kadena
Lt Col Howard F. Hendricks	Yule 01	62-4361	0800	0955	Tacan/Doppler probs
Capt Robin K. Nierste	Yule 02	62-4288	0800	0955	O/R
Capt James I. Miholick	Yule 03	62-4336	0800	0955	O/R
Capt Wayne D. Hauth	Yule 04	62-4303	0800	0955	Gnd blower inop
Maj Wayne N. Whatley	Yule 11	62-4306	0830	1025	O/R
Capt Robert H. Jones	Yule 12	62-4318	0830	1025	O/R
Capt Robert R. Reed	Yule 13	62-4308	0830	1025	Autopilot
Capt Douglas G. Lauck	Yule 14	62-4358	0830	1025	O/R
Maj Kenneth T. Blank	Yule 21	62-4370	0901	1058	O/R
Capt Thomas H. Curtis	Yule 22	62-4380	0901	1058	O/R
Capt Carl L. Hamby	Yule 23	62-4364	0901	1058	O/R
1Lt Phillip J. Kelley	Yule 24	62-4277	0901	1058	O/R
Capt Alan K. Rutherford	Yule 31	62-4270	0930	1134	Autopilot
Capt Rex L. Dull	Yule 32	62-4312	0930	1134	O/R
Capt Ralph D. Watkins	Yule 33	62-4378	0930	1134	CIN
1Lt John B. Sullivan III	Yule 34	62-4356	0930	1134	Fire Ctrl/Elec
Capt James E. Hayes	Yule 41	62-4352	1000	1200	Fire Ctrl
Maj Jack R. Stresing	Yule 42	61-0132	1000	1200	O/R
Capt Lothar A. "Andy" Olman	Yule 43	62-4379	1000	1200	Fuel Leak
Capt Robert D. Reichart	Yule 44	62-4354	1000	1200	O/R

(History of the 6441 TFW, 1 Apr 65 to 15 Nov 66, Supporting Documents, Mobility Control Center Log, pg 6, in AFHRA folder K-WG-6441-HI, IRIS# 0462464.)

Capt Alan K. Rutherford was one of the pilots on the deployment. "I recall so well how we formed up with 16 Thuds and midst many tears (from wives) and go get um's from the troops we launched to the war. We were going to 'kill the Cong'. We intended to overnight at Kadena, and then launch the next day with the squadron to Korat. Needless to say it got drunk and rowdy that night ...". (Al Rutherford, e-mail, 21 Sep 2006.)

Capt Douglas G. Lauck was another of the 34 TFS pilots moving to Korat. "We packed our household goods [at Yokota] and sent them along with our cars back to the States. Our wives and dependents had flights booked back to the States." (Doug Lauck, e-mail 21 Sep 2006.)

The pilots from the 34 TFS were to join with pilots from the 13 TFS at Kadena on 25 May and deploy to Korat. Unfortunately, circumstances required the 34th pilots at Kadena to return to Yokota on 26 May.

In the 13 TFS, "the squadron was cocked to move as planned on the 25th of May, but a staying order was received, delaying departure for thirty days. Rumors were rife that perhaps the move would not be made at all. Unfortunately, on the basis of the rumors and the lack of further communications, after numerous inquires to higher headquarters on the subject, many members of the new squadron cancelled proceedings to return their dependents to the United States.

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As a result, when the order to deploy on 23 June was received with a week's advance notice, many dependents were left to arrange their own moves. Much help was rendered by friends and Wing personnel, of course, to facilitate these peoples' departure. On 23 June, support personnel departed for Korat via C-130. Aircrews departed the following day."

388 TFW History, Jul - Dec 66, USAF microfilm NO583 frame 1742 & 44 TFS history, 1 Jan 65 - 30 June 1967, pp 4 - 5.

30-Jun-66

866

"Oil depots near Hanoi were struck for the second straight day. USAF F-105s hit the Nguyen Khe depot 7 1/2 miles from the city. Another flight of F-105s struck the Viet Tri POL storage area 28 miles northwest of the city. Navy aircraft hit the Bac Giang POL dump (JCS 51.11) 25 miles northeast of Hanoi."

"Over the next two days, U.S. pilots returned to hit the remaining key POL installations. General Moore dispatched two separate missions, each consisting of twelve F-105 strike and support aircraft, against the POL storage areas at Nguyen Khe (JCS 51) and Viet Tri (JCS 51.14), seven miles north and twenty-eight miles northwest of Hanoi. The pilots rained sixty-two 750-pound bombs on the first and thirty-two on the second, with supporting aircraft plastering antiaircraft positions in each area with CBU-24 cluster bombs. Only one Thunderchief was damaged and the pilot, who ejected, was recovered safely. The dual mission proved only marginally successful, however, destroying only 20 percent of the target area at Nguyen Khe and 15 percent at Viet Tri."

Capt Carl L. Hamby from the 34 TFS flew against a POL target. "On June 30, 1966 we were fragg'd to bomb the POL across the river from Hanoi near the NE railroad. The operations officer, Richard Fitzgerald, was lead, I was #2, Tom Curtis was #3 and Dave Groark was #4. #1 and #2 had 2 - 450 gallon fuel tanks and 8 - 750 lb. bombs, #3 and #4 had 2- 450 gallon fuel tanks and 8 - CBU-24.

"Taxi, take off, & join up with the tanker were normal. Fitz asked the tanker to take us as far North as he could since we are going so far North. Fitz refueled and I refueled and Tom was on the tanker when we passed over Sam Nuea, then Dave refueled. We left the tanker and Fitz did not reduce power but started a slow descent. We passed 4 or 5 flights that were above us and when we crossed the Black River, Fitz turned right, descending between the 2 mountains on each side of the river and called the flight to jettison the fuel tanks. We still had 500 lbs. of fuel in each tank when they were jettisoned. As we were descending, Fitz lit the afterburner. When my afterburner lit, the main air line overheat light on the master caution panel came on, indicating a severe problem that if it were true could cause the airplane to burn up. I quickly analyzed the situation and knew if this were the case, I would bail out and walk home. When the light came on, I didn't feel anything, I didn't hear anything and I didn't smell anything, so hopefully for me it would only be a bad sensor and not a broken air line which would cause a fire.

"Fitz had plenty to worry about without me adding to his problem, so I did not say anything. The Delta was flooded and the airplane wanted to tuck, so I applied back trim and looked at the airspeed/mach meter which read .97 mach. The F-105 at speed in humid air created a condensation streamer around the canopy. So I was looking to my right through the windshield quarter panel and saw something to my left. It was Son Tay and I was level with the windows, so I pulled up to go over it at .97 mach in afterburner. It sure must have surprised them because you could not hear an F-105 coming at that speed. Fitz called us to take it up because of ground fire. The Delta was flooded so I thought it was flashback from the old Gougenheim he drank the night before. We popped up over the lake NW of Hanoi (where John McCain landed a year later). There I was at 12,000' on my back over downtown Hanoi, so rolled-in to put my bombs on the target. I came off the bomb run supersonic and when I came out of afterburner to join with Fitz, the main air line overheat light went out -- good. Fitz still had 6 x 750s on his centerline rack, so he jettisoned them over Thud Ridge, then on to the tanker. Refueling and cruise home were normal.

"My F-105 felt so good clean, that I did a couple of aileron rolls. The Crew chief asked if I had been going fast because the fiber glass around the edge of the canopy was frayed." ("First Combat F-105s in SEA - Carl Hamby" in Thunder Falcon e-mail newsletter, Issue Number 27, May 2013.)

Maj Wayne N. Whatley, 34 TFS, 388 TFW, was a strike pilot flying against one of the POL sites. He was awarded the

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Air Force Cross for his "extraordinary heroism". " ... Major Whatley led a flight of four F-105 aircraft against an extremely heavily defended petroleum, oil, and lubricant storage complex in North Vietnam. By exhibiting extraordinary flying ability, leadership qualities, and personal bravery in the face of intense hostile fire, Major Whatley successfully struck the assigned target, thus contributing greatly to the objectives of his country. Although sustaining hits on his aircraft, Major Whatley, disregarding his personal safety, stayed with his downed wingman and directed a successful rescue operation ... ". The downed wingman was Capt Robin K. Nierste.

Also on this day the Navy bombed the Bac Giang POL dump (JCS 51.11) near the Viet Tri area. (Corona Harvest Chronology of Significant Airpower Events in Southeast Asia, 1954 - 1967, pg 119.)

Seventh Air Force Chronology 1 July 65 - 30 June 1966 CHECO 66-0044 & "Gradual Failure: The Air War over North Vietnam: 1965 - 1966", pg 292 & extract from "For Extraordinary Heroism - The Air Force Cross" by Maj Jeffery B. Floyd, provided by Ron Thurlow.

30-Jun-66

F-105D 624224 34 TFS 388 TFW Korat Hit by 37/57-mm AAA near the Nguyen Khe POL storage area (JCS 51) in RP-6A, North Vietnam. Crashed in Laos. 18-57N 103-13E Capt Robin K. Nierste 34 TFS pilot ejected and was rescued by a USAF helicopter. He was awarded the Silver Star. Call sign: "Savannah 02". (100th F-105 lost to combat in SEA). "The weather was bad that day and our flight of four F-105s was late getting over target. By the time we got there, the planes flying cover for the mission had already left the area. The flak was really bad -- the worst I've seen, before or since. My flight leader was hit three times and No. 3 aircraft had an emergency not caused by enemy fire.' But the pilots pressed the attack, unloaded their bombs on target and headed for home. 'About 10 miles out of Hanoi I had a flameout, got it restarted and experienced four more flameouts before I knew I'd have to leave the plane.' He bailed out in heavy weather over hostile territory and, except for a determined lead man and the helicopter, the story might have ended there. 'They are the real heroes. ... I broke out of the clouds as I drifted down into forest about halfway up a 9,000 foot mountain. I landed in a tree. It bent a little, the chute broke a little and I landed on the ground.' Despite damage to his own plane, Nierste's leader searched him out in the dense jungle and flew cover for the downed pilot for three and one half hours while the helicopters searched for a way to fish him off the mountain. The actual rescue was made with a 'jungle penetrator', a metal seat attached to a cable which is lowered through the trees from a hoist in the copter. The way back to the copter is a 200 foot trip straight up through the trees and vines, dangling at the end of the cable."

The crew of Jolly Green 56 rescued Capt Nierste. The following is the rescue narrative from the rescue crew commander, Capt Charles P. Rush. It was rescue mission 2-3-82 and the rescue coordinates were 18-13N and 103-59E.

"We were standing strip alert at Lima Site 98 with Jolly Green 56 as low bird and Jolly Green 55 as high bird. At 1430L we heard a call on the HF radio that Savannah 2, an F-105, had received battle damage and was headed in our direction, and to be prepared for a scramble. After two air starts, Savannah 2's engine flamed out for the third time. The third airstart attempt was unsuccessful and we received word that he was bailing out. We scrambled immediately, contacted Crown 61, and they gave us he bailout position as 17 miles on the 130-degree radial of Channel 79. The position was later revised to 23 miles on the 111-degree radial. The cloud coverage of the entire area was very thick, with clouds down in the narrow valleys and completely covering most of the mountains and hills. Some of the buildups extended over 15,000 feet, and the 9,246' mountain peak was completely hidden. Upon arriving in the area of the downed pilot, we were advised that a Continental Porter, 'Butterfly 44', had voice contact with the downed pilot, but could not pin-point the survivor's location due to the thick cloud coverage. We established voice contact with the survivor but could not get a compass swing on his exact position due to the high cloud buildup directly over his position, extending all the way down onto the mountain. We found a 'small sucker hole' in the overcast and let down with the visibility about 1/4 miles and ceiling from 0 to 150 feet. We worked our way up the valley in his direction at about 30 knots airspeed, with barely enough room for an 180-degree turn to get out. The survivor Savannah 2, could hear our 'chopper' and kept telling us were west of him. We kept working our way up the narrow valley and homed on his Beeper for about two miles, but ran into a dead-end cloud bank. The hole appeared to be closing in so we were forced to make a 180-degree turn and pull out. We told the survivor of our problem and he agreed to contact us in 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, the hole in the cloud had moved some distance northeast of the first position and we again established contact with the pilot. After about 30 minutes of unsuccessful attempts to re-locate him, we asked him to

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give us another call after 30 minutes and to try to work his way east down the valley to a small clear area. After about 10 minutes, Jolly Green 55, the high bird, saw a small break in the clouds approximately over the downed pilot's position. The survivor saw the Jolly Green and activated his beeper. After getting a UHF-DF compass swing on him for the first time in two hours, we were able to pin-point his position. We then saw him fire a flare and reestablished voice contact with him.

"The MSL altitude of his position was 5,000 feet. He was on side of a 9,246' mountain at the end of a narrow valley with tall trees and very thick jungle growth surrounding him. For our helicopter, Jolly Green 56, to hover at this high altitude, we would have to jettison the tip tanks and dump fuel. We jettisoned the tips and dumped fuel for about 5 minutes, all of the time making a very tight turn due to the high mountain slopes on both sides. We dumped fuel until we could safely maintain a hover out of ground effect at our gross weight, increased our topping adjustment one revolution, and then set up our approach for the pick up. The pilot set off a red smoke flare and shot a pencil flare barely missing our helicopter, his last one. The hole was closing up and we set up a hover about twenty yards downhill from the pilot due to the tall trees directly over him. SSgt Berry, our PJ, could see him working his way down to the tree penetrator which SSgt Youngblood, our flight mechanic let down through the thick underbrush. We had to extend all 250 feet to reach the ground. After he was seated on the tree penetrator, SSgt Youngblood raised him slowly up through the thick jungle growth and trees to minimize the pilot's injuries. After about 15 minutes hovering time, we had the pilot on board. He was in very good condition with only a few bruises and abrasions. We then worked our way out of the valley and returned to Lima Site 98 where Jolly Greens 05 and 51 were ready to take him back to Udorn. The total time logged for the mission was 3 hours and 10 minutes.

"I would like to commend my crew on performing their duties in an extremely professional manner and especially SSgt Youngblood in the difficult task of working the tree penetrator up through the trees without injury to the pilot. Also I would like to commend Jolly Green 55 for helping locate the pilot when the small break in the overcast became visible. We appreciated Sandys' A-1E cover, however, it was impossible for them to do much searching due to the thick cloud coverage down on the mountains and the very tight turning radius once the hole was found.

"The only detriment to the rescue effort were too much talking on primary SAR frequency 364.2; then on Guard frequency by Butterfly 44, and too many aircraft at one time in the small valley trying to locate the pilot."

Crewmembers of the HH-3 rescuing Capt Nierste were Capt Charles P. Rush, pilot; Capt Hendrickson, copilot; SSgt Theodore Youngblood, flight engineer; and PJ SSgt Robert L. Berry. SSgt Berry was also the PJ in the rescue crew that picked up F-105D pilot 1Lt Gordon L. Clouser from the 333 TFS at Takhli on 10 May 1966.

On 18 July, SSgt Berry was evacuated to the hospital at Clark AB due to contracting Black Water Fever in Laos. He died from the disease on 23 July 1966. His fellow PJ, SSgt Aaron Farris based at NKP remembered him in his diary entry for 24 July. "Sgt Monty called me up from Udorn this morning and told me we got a TWX in that Berry died yesterday. It's funny how a guy risks his life and gets shot at only to die from a disease. He'll be greatly missed by all that knew him. He was one of the better ones."

On 4 May 1967, at McConnell AFB KS, Maj Nierste was presented the Silver Star by Maj Gen Royal N. Baker, 12th Air Force vice commander for his actions in attacking the POL storage area.

23 TFW History, Jan - Jun 67, USAF microfilm MO554 & "PJs in Vietnam", by Bob LaPointe, pgs 422 and 409.

30-Jun-66

5203

Capt Robert D. Pielin from the 34 TFS flew a combat mission against a railroad yard in RP 5. Over the last 10 days, he had had one mission cancelled, one mission that aborted, and had flown one non-counting mission to Laos. "I was scheduled for three flights to Pak #6, but one was cancelled for weather before we launched. Another was aborted when the clouds were too low to get to the target, and a FAC directed us to a storage barn in Laos. On the 30th, four of us hit the railroad yard at Yen Bay. Probably the 10th time I had done that. I actually think it was a diversion for the POL raids. Of a 3+20 mission, I logged one hour for ResCap, but it wasn't for Nierste." (Bob Pielin, e-mail 7 April 2007.)

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Since Capt Robin K. Nierste, who was rescued, was the only pilot shot down over North Vietnam on 30 June, Capt Pielin's rescap was probably for Capt Murphy Neal Jones from the 333 TFS at Takhli who had been shot down and captured the day before.

CNA Loss/Damage Database, USAF losses 315 (Jones) and 317 (Nierste), pg F19.

08-Aug-66

2220

Capt Richard E. Smith, on TDY from the 12 TFS, flew his 26th combat mission with the 357 TFS at Takhli.

"Kangaroo" flight.

Kangaroo 1 - Capt John C. Blevins

Kangaroo 2 - Capt Richard E. Smith. Logged 2 hours 35 minutes flying time.

Kangaroo 3 - Mason

Kangaroo 4 - 1Lt Vernon V. Sisney

"Four 1,000-pound bombs to POL storage area (1512). Lots of bad weather (CBs) over RP-5 on way to target. Broke out over the Red (River). Made a 360-degree turn while #4 checked aircraft and then went to target. All other flights cancelled or diverted to rescap. Couldn't see target well but dropped in general area. Recovered at Udorn due to low fuel."

A 34 TFS pilot from Korat, Capt Douglas G. Lauck, received a Distinguished Flying Cross (1st OLC) for an extraordinary achievement for the mission he flew this day. "... Capt Lauck assumed command of his flight after the lead aircraft lost all navigational aids, and successfully led the attack on a vital military target. Although his own aircraft was damaged, he disregarded his personal safety to help two other aircraft in the flight that were experiencing emergencies."

Another 34 TFS pilot, Capt Robin K. Nierste from Korat, was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism on a mission he flew this day. (7 AF SO G-970 8 July 67)

Capt Richard E. Smith, combat diary, June 66 - Aug 66.

30-Nov-66

5153

Six pilots assigned to the 34 TFS at Korat completed flying 100 missions during November 1966. They were:

Capt Ralph D. Watkins

Maj Kenneth T. Blank

Capt William O. Lessard

Capt Robin K. Nierste

Capt Eddward L. Jones - On TDY from the 67 TFS

Capt Duane H. Zieg - On TDY from the 67 TFS

Capt Jones' remained at Kadena until January 1967. He last flew the F-105 in February 1967 and had accumulated 905.8 hours in the airplane. His next assignment was with the 4532nd CCTS, England AFB, LA until May 1968. From "... May 68 to Jun 70 he was with the 327th Air Division Taipei Air Station, and Jun 70 to Nov 72 he was with the 427th Sp Op Trng Sq (TAC) at England AFB."

34 TFS web site on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us.34tfs/scarf.htm> & Dave Jones e-mail 4 Jan 2013 & F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.

31-Dec-66

678

One year after the start of their RTU mission, the 23 TFW at McConnell AFB KS, had trained a total of 105 pilots to fly the F-105. The wing had 30 F-105 instructor pilots who had completed at least 100 missions in South East Asia. The 560 TFS and 561 TFS each had 7 pilots, the 562 TFS had 12, and the 563 TFS had 4. Five additional 100-mission pilots were attached to the 23 TFW. 1Lt Leonard C. Ekman, assigned to the 561 TFS, had completed 185 missions in SEA, the most of any Air Force pilot.

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The 100-mission instructor pilots in the 560 TFS were:

Maj Eleas Casillas	Capt Jack L. Graber
Maj Robert E. Phillips	Capt William S. Koenitzer
Capt Marion M. Angel	1Lt William E. Ardern
Capt Rex L. Dull	

The 100-mission instructor pilots in the 561 TFS were:

Maj Fred T. Coleman	Capt Robert Kieth Hannah, Jr.
Maj John C. Shay	1Lt Roger A. Ayres
Capt Ralph J. Beardsley	1 Lt Leonard C. "Lucky" Ekman
Capt Roderick G. Beckett	

The 100-mission instructor pilots in the 562 TFS were:

Lt Col James A. Young	Capt Wayne D. Hauth
Maj Phillip O. Bradley	Capt Robert L. "Bob the Wedge" Keller
Maj Robert D. Pielin	Capt Douglas G. Lauck (SEFE)
Capt Arthur L. Brattkus	Capt Robin K. Nierste
Capt Teddy Gay	Capt William S. Secker, Jr.
Capt Stanley S. Gunnerson	Capt Joseph R. Steen

The 100-mission instructor pilots in the 563 TFS were:

Maj Kenneth G. Frank
Capt Robert V. "Boris" Baird
Capt James I. Miholick
1Lt John C. Russell

23 TFW attached 100-mission pilots were:

Capt Clarence E. Cox
Capt John R. Layman
Capt Charles Loucks
Capt Clifford H. "Ted" Rees, Jr.
Capt Robert L. Chastain

23 TFW History, 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1966, USAF microfilm MO554.

25-May-67

5234

Capt Douglas G. Lauck, an F-105 instructor pilot in the 562 TFS at McConnell, "... has been selected as a Tactical Air Command Pilot of Distinction.

"Shortly after takeoff in an F-105F on a night proficiency flight [for Maj Robin K. Nierste], Capt Lauck found his Doppler navigation system malfunctioning. He also found the intercom and Tacan were failing. When he tried to notify Air Traffic Control of his difficulties, he found his radio dead. This was followed shortly by failure of the utility hydraulic system and then complete electrical failure.

"With darkness approaching, Captain Lauck dead-reckoned his position to be near a large city and started an immediate descent through the 8000-foot-thick cloud layer using only altimeter, airspeed, and magnetic compass. He located the city [Indianapolis, IN] and an airport and started an approach for landing. Normal wheel brakes, anti-skid, leading and trailing edge flaps, speed brakes, afterburner, and thrust decay were not available to him because of the system failures. His drop tanks were half full, but he could not jettison them. He touched down at 235 knots, stopcocked the throttle, used aerodynamic braking, and delayed his drag chute until he was below 200 knots. With careful use of the emergency brakes, he was able to turn off the runway 1000 feet from the end and stop on a taxiway.

"Captain Lauck's skilled airmanship, professional knowledge, and calm reactions during severe stress, readily qualify

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him as a Tactical Air Command Pilot of Distinction."

Capt Lauck also received a letter of appreciation dated 27 November 1967, from Gen Gabriel P. Disosway, the Commander of TAC. "Through skilled airmanship and calm reaction to these conditions, a strange field emergency landing was safely accomplished thus preventing property damage and possible loss of life."

Article in "TAC Attack" & Doug Lauck e-mail 13 May 2007.

15-Jul-70

6962

(Approximate date) Maj John R. Stell from the 333 TFS flew the F-105 for the last time. He had accumulated 1437.6 hours in the airplane.

On 14 July 1970, Lt Col Paul M. Koeltzow flew the F-105 for the last time. He had accumulated 1407.1 hours in the aircraft since November 1962.

Also, on 17 July 1970, Maj Robin K. Nierste made his last flight in the F-105. Since his first flight in December 1964, he had flown 1287.3 hours in the airplane.

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