

822 TACTICAL MISSILE SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

822 Bombardment Squadron (Medium) constituted, 29 Mar 1943

Activated, 20 Apr 1943

Inactivated, 12 Apr 1946

Redesignated 822 Bombardment Squadron, Light, 15 Nov 1952

Activated, 1 Jan 1953

Redesignated 822 Bombardment Squadron, Tactical, 1 Oct 1955

Redesignated 822 Tactical Missile Squadron, 18 Jun 1958

STATIONS

Australia, 20 Apr 1943

Port Moresby, New Guinea, 20 Jun 1943

Nadzab, New Guinea, 8 Mar 1944

Biak, 25 Aug 1944

Morotai, 6 Nov 1944

Lingayen, Luzon, 29 Jan 1945

Okinaway 24 Jul 1945

Itazuke, Japan, 22 Nov 1945-12 Apr 1946

Laon AB, France, 1 Jan 1953

Sembach AB, Germany, 18 Jun 1958

ASSIGNMENTS

38 Bombardment Group, 20 Apr 1943-12 Apr 1946

38 Bombardment Group, 1 Jan 1953

38 Bombardment Wing, 8 Dec 1957

587 Tactical Missile Group, 18 Jun 1958

38 Tactical Missile Wing, 25 Sep 1962

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-25, 1943-1946

B-26, 1953-1955

B-57, 1955-1958

Matador, 1958-1960

Mace, 1961

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

Air Offensive, Japan

China Defensive

New Guinea

Northern Solomon

Bismarck Archipelago

Western Pacific

Leyte

Luzon

Southern Philippines

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

New Britain, 24-26 Dec 1943

New Guinea, 16-17 Jun 1944

Leyte, 10 Nov 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Apr 1956-1 Mar 1958

1 Apr 1959-30 Jan 1961

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation

EMBLEM



822 Bombardment Squadron, Light emblem: On and over a sky blue disc, a black falcon, with red bells, perched on a black gloved fist issuant from base. (Approved, 17 Jun 1954)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Not manned prior to 20 Jun 1943; combat in Southwest and Western Pacific, 14 Oct 1943-13 Aug 1945.

As part of the new realignment, the historical missile squadrons that had pioneered the Matadors vanished. USAFE issued General Order 75 which inactivated the 11th Tactical Missile Squadron at Sembach Air Base, and activated the 822nd Tactical Missile Squadron in its place. The new 822nd was assigned to the 587th Tactical Missile Group in place of the inactivated 11th TMS. At the same time, the 1st TMS at Bitburg Air Base was inactivated and replaced by the 71st TMS, assigned to the 585th TMG at Bitburg, and the 69th TMS at Hahn Air base was inactivated and replaced by the 405th TMS, assigned to the 586th TMG at Hahn.

To further streamline the command and support structure of the 38th TMW, the wing Headquarters was moved from Hahn Air Base to Sembach Air Base on August 20, 1959, two weeks after the wing received its very first "A" Bird. The 38th TMW assumed the duties as host unit at Sembach, becoming the first U.S. Air Force host Missile Wing. The prior missile wings, including the 701st, had all been tenant units at locations hosted by aircraft wings or research and development organizations and their respective base commanders. Sembach Air Base was the first combat U.S. missile base in the U.S. Air Force.

The 38th Tactical Missile Wing had only been in operation for three months when, on October 23, 1958, USAFE issued General Order 143 for the reorganization of the new wing. The order stipulated the 38th TMW initiate plans for the compilation of an Organizational Table for the

new TM-76A weapons system. The phaseout of the TM-61C Matador was officially announced, and the new 822nd TMS, formerly the 11th TMS, was designated as the first unit in the 38th TMW to receive the new TM-76A Mace.

The morale of the newly renumbered 822nd TMS at Sembach faltered when they were told their participation in the 1958 Annual Missile Launch Operation had been canceled. The AMLO/AMRO cancellation announcement was made prior to the announcement of the arrival of the new Mace missile. The announcement of the unit being selected for the first Mace helped restore the unit morale somewhat, as did a commendation from the 38th TMW headquarters about the good condition of the first seven

The two newly created launch squadrons at Sembach, the 823rd TMS and the 887th TMS, joined the existing 822nd TMS, which allowed one squadron per launch site instead of the 822nd trying to supply crews to all three launch sites. The original 822nd was assigned to Combat Flight A, Site 1, at Mehlingen; the newly activated 823rd took on Combat Flight B, Site II, at Enkenbach; and the newly activated 887th assumed control at Griinstadt, Combat Flight C, later known as Site III.

Bitburg had a different problem than the two "A" bird bases at Hahn and Sembach. The two remaining underground launch sites at Newel and Heidweiler were canceled before construction started, leaving the 71st TMS with only two launch sites, Site VII at Rittersdorf and Site VIII at Idenheim. There was no need to increase the number of launch crews at Bitburg with the unexpected cancellation of Sites 9 and 10.

The alert crisis for the 38th Tactical Missile Wing came into critical focus less than 24 hours after Kennedy's speech, when on October 23, 1962, contractors building weather shelters for the additional four QRA TM-76A Mace missiles at the 822nd Tactical Missile Squadron at Mehlingen, inadvertently "cut and grounded the power cable for both the operational complexes." The resulting fire in the transformer on Complex 2 burned out diodes in the Power Distribution and Control Unit (PDCU) of Complex 1, and started another fire in a power relay in the generator building. Both complexes of nuclear armed, Quick Reaction Alert missiles, eight in all, were shutdown!

NATO lost coverage of 8 DGZ targets in one event, the day after the Joint Chiefs of Staff ordered the Strategic Air Command to DEFCON 2. At the time, the status of the event was not known to be an accident and USAFE immediately became even tauter than before. Was this an accident, or was it the first wave of sabotage before the start of the war? No other events took place within the 38th TMW to impact the status of any other QRA or VA weapons, but that did not relieve the tension of the combat crews involved. Mehlingen was returned to alert status by emergency 60 KW generators rushed from Sembach and connected directly to the PDCU at each complex. In addition to the power crisis, "communication cables were cut several times during this period which required the use of SAT vehicle, which provided a radio link to Combat Operations Center and field wire and EE-8 telephones from the block house to the SCC."

Armed Forces Day At Rhine Main AB, Germany included a Canberra from the 822nd Bomb Squadron, 38th Bomb Group. This is the often pictured 52-1577 "M" when photographed in 1957

On 1 September 1959, Sembach became USAFE's primary missile base when the 38th TMW moved in from Hahn AB. The wing underwent a fundamental reorganization on 25 September 1962 when it took control of the 822d TMS from the intermediate 587th TMG which inactivated the same day. Concurrently, two additional squadrons, the 823d and 887th TMSs were activated.

Meanwhile, the Matador missile had been replaced with the superior Mace. On 1 July 1964, the activation of the 7th ACS marked the return of a USAF flying unit. Meanwhile, Army liaison aircraft and helicopters had become regular users. The 38th TMW and its subordinate units were discontinued on 25 September 1966 and the 603d ABW took over. On 1 July 1968, the 601st TCW replaced the 603d ABW as host unit.

The 601st TCW relocated to Wiesbaden AB on 1 July 1973 to make room for HQ Seventeenth Air Force which moved in from Ramstein on 5 October. After the 601st TCW had left, the 7400th ABG took over as host unit. The pending transfer of Wiesbaden AB to the Army led to the 601st TCW's return on 1 January 1976. The wing's 20th TASS flew OV-10A aircraft while the 601st TASS operated CH-53C helicopters. On 4 July 1976, the 704th TASS activated as a second OV-10 squadron.

An A-10 forward operating location was established when Det 1, 81st TFW activated on 1 September 1978. Revetments and a dozen hardened aircraft shelters were built and A-10 operations began in May 1979. The 601st TCW began to draw down its flying activities when the OV-10s of the 20th and 704th TASS returned to the U.S. in summer 1984 and both squadrons inactivated effective 30 September. Meanwhile, the CH-53s of the 601st TASS were retained until March 1988. Sembach gained an electronic combat mission when the 65th AD and the subordinate 66th ECW stood up on 1 June 1985. The 43d ECS activated under the 66th ECW on 1 October 1986 with EC-130H Compass Call aircraft for which a high-security facility and special maintenance hangars were built in the eastern dispersal loop. Following the withdrawal of their aircraft after Desert Storm, the 43d ECS inactivated on 31 July 1991.

Concurrently, A-10 deployments ceased and Det 1, 81st TFW was phased out on 31 August 1991. After the inactivation of the 66th ECW on 31 March 1992, the 601st Support Wing (as the 601st TCW had been redesignated) resumed host unit duties but closed down three years later when the flightline returned to German control. At the time of writing, the administrative portion was still under USAFE control as Sembach Annex. This site has been managed by the 86th AW since the inactivation of Seventeenth Air Force on 30 September 1996.

Air Force Lineage and Honors

Created: 29 Jul 2020

Updated:

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.