

868 TACTICAL MISSILE TRAINING SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

868 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 30 Nov 1943
Activated, 1 Jan 1944
Inactivated, 18 Dec 1945
Redesignated 868 Tactical Missile Squadron, 17 Jun 1958
Activated, 8 Jul 1958
Discontinued and inactivated, 25 Mar 1962
Redesignated 868 Tactical Missile Training Squadron, 1 Jul 1981
Inactivated, 1990

STATIONS

Munda, New Georgia, 1 Jan 1944
Los Negros, 20 Mar 1944
Noemfoor, 29 Aug 1944
Morotai, 22 Mar 1945
Leyte, 3 Jul 1945
Okinawa, 29 Jul-29 Nov 1945
Ft Lewis, Wash, 17-18 Dec 1945
Tainan Air Station, Taiwan, 8 Jul 1958-25 Mar 1962
Davis Monthan AFB, AZ, 1 Jul 1981

ASSIGNMENTS

Thirteenth Air Force, 1 Jan 1944
Far East Air Service Command, 8 Oct 1945
Seventh Air Force, 29 Oct 1945

VII Bomber Command, 1-18 Dec 1945
Thirteenth Air Force, 8 Jul 1958
6214 Air Base (later Tactical) Group, 18 Aug 1958-25 Mar 1962

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-24, 1944-1945
Matador, 1958-1962
BGM-109G 1981-1990

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Air Offensive, Japan
New Guinea
Northern Solomons
Bismarck Archipelago
Eastern Mandates
Western Pacific
Leyte
Southern Philippines
China Offensive

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Java, 7 May 1945

EMBLEM



On a white dart-shaped area, its apex pointing upward, a black dart-like area issuing from base; three stripes issuing from the black area in dexter base, and diminishing to a vanishing point in chief, blue, white, and red, between in dexter, nine Air Force blue stars diminishing in size to chief and three guided missiles in flight to chief leaving trails, Air Force blue, to the center of an atomic symbol of three red orbits in sinister base. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The emblem is symbolic of the squadron and its mission. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The stars and stripes in our national colors indicate the unit's American heritage and the patriotism of its members. The guided missiles and atomic symbol represent the squadron's mission of launching and controlling guided missiles through the use of modern techniques and equipment. The over-all plan of this emblem (in which all design elements move upwards) and the unit's motto indicate the unit's high goals of achievement. (Approved, 4 Oct 1960) This emblem was designed by unit member 1st Lt Frederick J. Stroop III.

868th Tactical Missile Training Squadron emblem: On a yellow dart-shaped area, its apex pointing upward, a black dart-like area issuing from base; three stripes issuing from the black area in sinister and diminishing to a vanishing point of blue, red and yellow between in sinister nine Air Force blue stars diminishing in size. Four guided missiles in flight to chief leaving trails, Air Force blue, from the center of an atomic symbol of three red orbits. Motto: On a white scroll edged and inscribed in black, MISSILE MASTERS. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The overall theme of the emblem is based on unity of the weapon system and the training mission of the squadron. The color forest green represents the mobility of the weapon system. The blue stripe and stars rising to the apex represent excellence in training. The red stripe rising to the apex and the red atomic symbol represent the capabilities of the weapon system. The base of the dart is sinister black. Approved: 6 December 1982.



On a blue disc edged with a narrow black border, a triangle in perspective, base black, sinister half yellow bearing a red atomic symbol in the sinister base corner from which issue four blue vapor trails conjoined and arced palewise each terminating below a blue missile in staggered vertical ascent; the dexter half consisting of four triangular stripes yellow with ten blue five-pointed stars diminishing in size, the next stripe blue, followed by yellow and red. Attached above the disc a blank white scroll edged black. Attached below the disc a white scroll edged black and inscribed

"MISSILE MASTERS" in black letters.

MOTTO

MISSILE MASTERS

OPERATIONS

Combat in the South, Southwest, and Western Pacific, 4 Jan 1944-13 Aug 1945; used airborne radar for many low-level attacks at night, and for pathfinder operations.

868 Tactical Missile Training Squadron was activated for the third time in its history on July 1, 1981, at Davis-Monthan AFB. The first time was during World War II when it flew B-24 bombers in the Pacific. After the war it was inactivated, but called back into service in 1958, this time armed with Matador Missiles. After playing a significant role in the defense of Formosa, it was again inactivated in 1962 until reactivated for its current mission.

By then the TM-61C Matadors of the 868th and 310th Tactical Missile Squadrons had served their purpose and had been removed two years earlier. The last operational Matadors of the 868th TMS were shut down and their nuclear warheads were removed in June 1962, while the Matadors of the 310th TMS at Osan were inactivated earlier, on March 25, 1962.

USAF Unit Histories

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Sources

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

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

868 Tactical Missile Maintenance Squadron, Parting Shot, Mission Complete. 31 May 1990.