

46th FIGHTER TRAINING SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

46th Pursuit Squadron (Fighter) constituted, 22 Nov 1940
Activated, 1 Dec 1940
Redesignated 46th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor), 12 Feb 1942
Redesignated 46th Fighter Squadron, 15 May 1942
Inactivated, 10 Oct 1946
Redesignated 46th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 11 Sep 1952
Activated, 1 Nov 1952
Inactivated, 1 Jul 1958
Redesignated 46th Tactical Fighter Squadron, and activated, 17 Apr 1962
Organized, 1 Jul 1962
inactivated 1 Jul 1971
Activated 1 Oct 1973
inactivated 1 Apr 1978
Redesignated 46th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron and activated, 1 Oct 1983
Redesignated 46th Fighter Training Squadron, 1 Feb 1992
Inactivated, 1 Oct 1993

STATIONS

Wheeler Field, TH, 1 Dec 1940
Hickam Field, TH, 6 Feb 1942
Mokuleia Field, TH, 22 May 1942
Hilo Field, TH, 16 Dec 1942-19 Mar 1943
Canton, 27 Mar 1943
Makin, 18 Dec 1943

Wheeler Field, TH, 17 Feb 1944
Mokuleia Field, TH 13 Oct 1944
Iwo Jima, 26 Mar 1945
Isley Field, Saipan, 5 Dec 1945
Northwest Field. Guam, 17 Apr-10 Oct 1946
Dover AFB. DE, 1 Nov 1952-1 Jul 1958
MacDill AFB, FL, 1 Jul 1962
Grissom AFB, IN 1973-1978
Barksdale AFB, LA 1983-1993

ASSIGNMENTS

15th Pursuit (later Fighter) Group, 1 Dec 1940
21st Fighter Group, 15 Jun 1944-10 Oct 1946
4710th Defense (later Air Defense) Wing, 1 Nov 1952
4709th Air Defense Wing, 1 Mar 1956
4621st Air Defense Wing (later New York Air Defense Sector), 1 Oct 1956
4728th Air Defense Group, 8 Feb 1957-1 Jul 1958
Tactical Air Command, 17 Apr 1962
15th Tactical Fighter Wing, 1 Jul 1962-1 Oct 1970
1 Tactical Fighter Wing 1 Oct 1970-1 Jul 1971.
931st Tactical Fighter Group 1 Oct 1973-1 Jul 1975
434th Tactical Fighter Wing 1 Jul 1975-1 Jul 1978
917th Tactical Fighter Group 30 Sep 1983-1 Aug 1992
917th Operations Group

ATTACHMENTS

405th Fighter Wing May 1965-Aug 1965

WEAPON SYSTEMS

OA-9 1940
A-12, 1940
P-36, 1940-1941
P-36A
P-39, 1941-1944
P-40, 1941-1943
P-40B
P-40C
P-38, 1944-1945
P-38J
P-51, 1944-1946
P-51D
P-47, 1946
P-47N
F-94B, 1952

F-94C
F-84, 1962-1964
F-4, 1964-1971
A-37, 1973-1978
A-10, 1983-1993

COMMANDERS



LTC William F. Haney (USAF photo)

LTC Earl G. Depner, #1956
LTC D. H. Frost, #1965

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

Central Pacific
Air Offensive, Japan
Eastern Mandates
Air Combat, Asiatic-Pacific Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Japan, 7 Apr 1945

EMBLE



On a blue disc a black sabre-tooth tiger passant in front of a horizontal bank of white clouds.
(Approved, 11 Mar 1942)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Patrols over the Pacific, 7 Dec 1941-Mar 1943. Combat in Central Pacific, 18 Dec 1943-7 Feb 1944 and in Western Pacific, 28 Mar-14 Aug 1945.

The 46th Fighter Squadron was first activated on the 1st of December 1940 at Wheeler Field, Territory of Hawaii. During the period 12 May through 24 May 1941 the squadron participated in its first large scale Hawaiian Department maneuvers. Following these maneuvers the squadron was engaged in a total of fourteen movements necessitated by the need for gunnery training.

The sudden outbreak of hostilities in the Pacific found the 46th Fighter Squadron among the first such units to absorb the shock of the Japanese onslaught against the Hawaiian Islands. At approximately 07:55 on December 7th, 1941, Wheeler Field was attacked by an undetermined number of Japanese bomber type aircraft. The following members of the 46th Pursuit Squadron took off from Wheeler Field about 0850 and were ordered by the Controller at the Information Center to proceed to the vicinity of Diamond Head at 8000 feet:

1st Lieut. L. M. Sanders

2d Lieut. J. M. THACKER

2d Lieut. G. STERLING

2d Lieut. P. RASMUSSEN

They proceeded to the vicinity of Bellows Field and there attacked a formation of nine Japanese two-seater airplanes with retractable landing gears. Lieut. Sanders and Lieut. Rasmussen each shot down a Japanese airplane and Lieut. Sterling was shot down by the enemy. Lt Sanders reports that the Japanese two-seater airplanes could out-climb the P-36 airplanes used by the 46th Pursuit Squadron. By about 0920, 1st Lieut. M. A. Moore and 2d Lieut. O. Norris of the 46th Pursuit Squadron got into the air. Lt. Moore fired at a Japanese airplane without result.

On the 24th of December 1941, a commendation, signed by the Commanding General of the Seventh Interceptor Command, was presented to each officer and enlisted man that had been at Wheeler Field at the time of the attack. It was at this time that the squadron received its nickname of "Skyriders"—a name that followed it through its many months of active duty in the Pacific Theatre of Operations.

In December 1942 the squadron was moved to Hilo on the Island of Hawaii where it was deployed until March 1943 when orders came to proceed to Canton Island.

The nine long months on Canton Island, popularly called "the Isle of Atonement", proved to be the 46th's real Baptism of Fire because those months were to be filled with alarms, excursions, and deprivations. Despite the numerous attempts made by the Japanese to bomb out the squadron on Canton Island, the obscurity of the island coupled with the concentrated ack-ack fire thrown at them, resulted in very few successful missions for the Nipponese pilots.

Word came early in December 1943 that the squadron was to leave the isle of atonement for more active duty in the central Pacific combat area. The squadron arrived at its new station, Butaritari Island, Makin Atoll, on 18 December 1943, just twenty seven days after the invasion of the Gilbert Islands. During their two month stay, the squadron was actively engaged in providing fighter support in bombing missions over Mille Island in order to render that island useless to the enemy and to pave the way for the American Invasion of Kwajalein Atoll on the 31st of January 1944. While at Butaritari, the 46th participated in more than 400 sorties, bombing and strafing all major objectives in the Marshalls', escorting medium and heavy bombers and flying in rescue and reconnaissance missions. The "Skyriders" employed the first intruder tactics used in the Pacific, intercepting enemy bombers upon their return from bombing the fighters' base.

In February 1944 the squadron returned to the Hawaiian Islands to their Home Base at Wheeler Field. The squadron was subsequently transferred to the newly activated 21st Fighter Group. The months back at Wheeler were spent in rehabilitating the base, ironing out supply problems, and keeping the squadron on alert status for possible movements to advanced posts in the Pacific area. The month of February 1945 was occupied with preparations for shipment to Iwo Jima where the men of the 46th arrived the 25th March 1945. On Iwo Jima the unit experienced actual ground warfare in resisting Japanese sniper infiltrations, which on at least one occasion reached the proportions of open battle.

By the end of March, the aircraft of the 46th were engaged in combat missions over nearby Chichi Jima and Haba Jima. The 46th gave admirable support to the devastating bombing missions over the home island of Japan during the spring and summer of 1945 which virtually brought that nation to its knees by destroying its war potential.

With the end of hostilities, the 46th Fighter Squadron was inactivated on the 10th of October 1946.

After several years of inactive status the 46th was reactivated as the 46th Fighter Interceptor on the 1st of November 1952. The squadron was reactivated as a front line unit of the Air Defense Command to provide aircraft and crews for the protection of the eastern seaboard against possible attack. It was reactivated at a strategically located base at Dover, Delaware. The base's proximity to major industrial cities as well as the nation's capitol, was the reason for the squadron's location. The squadron was equipped with new sleek jet aircraft to carry out its mission of Air Defense. The Jets, F-94B's, were equipped with radar for all-weather interception as well as its .50 calibre machine-guns.

In the most recent years, the squadron has changed from the F-94B's to the newer and faster F-94C's. With the newer aircraft the squadron is capable of scrambling its aircraft to 40,000 feet and fire air-to-air rockets in minutes at an enemy aircraft.

The 46th has participated in many air-to-air rocketry meets as well as firing on 4he ranges set-up by the Air Defense Command to keep its crews in top combat proficiency.

The 46th FIS would fly the F-94Bs they took over until May 1953 when the majority of them were transferred to the 438th FIS that was activating at Kinross (Later Kinchloe) AFB, MI. The 46th FIS then obtained F-94Cs and flew them until July 1958 when they were deactivated. Half of their Starfires went to Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ for disposal while the remainder were transferred to other squadrons that were still flying F-94s.

On October 1, 1983, the 46th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron was activated as part of the 917th TFG. The 46th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron became the 46th Fighter Training Squadron on June 1, 1992. The 46th FTS inactivated on October 1, 1993 and was replaced by the 93rd Bomb Squadron flying B-52Hs, passing the training of Reserve Warthog pilots the 355th Wing at Davis-Monthan AFB.

During the spring of 1995 the 303rd Fighter Squadron, 442nd Fighter Wing from Whiteman AFB, Missouri, and the 46th Fighter Squadron, 917th Wing, Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, were operating from Aviano AB during one of their scheduled Operation Deny Flight deployments. On June 2, three weeks into the 917th's deployment, a USAF F-16C from the "Triple Nickel" (555th Fighter Squadron, 31st Fighter Wing) at Aviano AB was shot down by a Serb SAM while on a mission over Bosnia-Herzegovina. The A-10s flew search missions searching for the downed pilot, Captain Scott O'Grady. They also were put on short-notice alert to assist in rescue efforts, should it become necessary. On June 8, two 917th A-10s escorted the Marine Corps CH-53 helicopters which had rescued Capt. O'Grady. The two A-10 covered the last portion of the egress out of Bosnia, through Croatia to the Adriatic Sea. On June 13th, the aircraft of the 442nd and 917th left Aviano AB for home.



46 FIS F-94 (USAF photo)



46 FIS F-94 (USAF photo)



46 FIS T-33 (USAF photo)



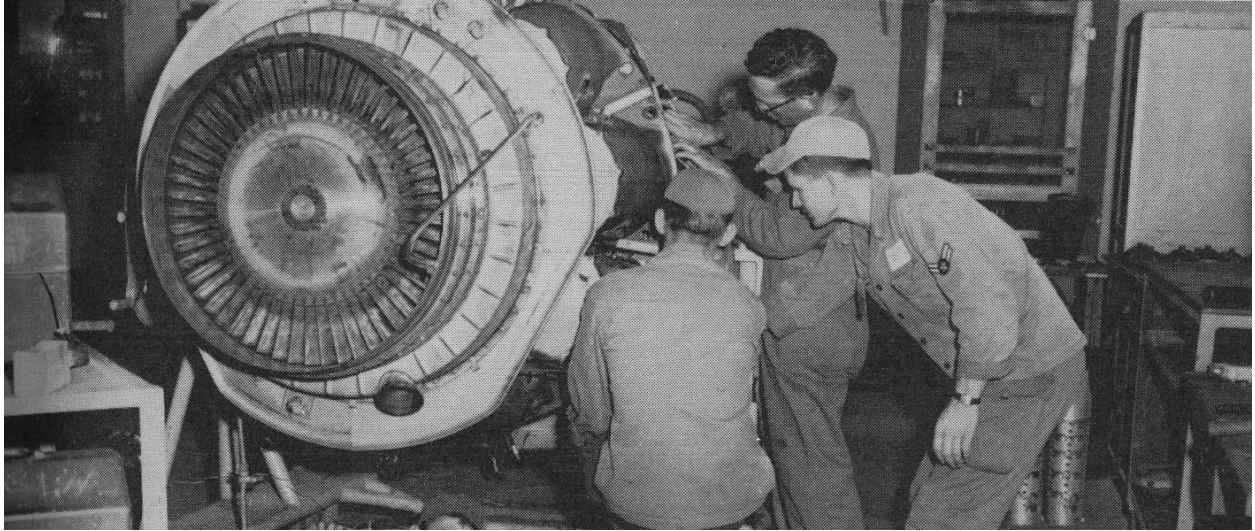
46 FIS F-94 (USAF photo)



Pulling up to F-94C (USAF photo)

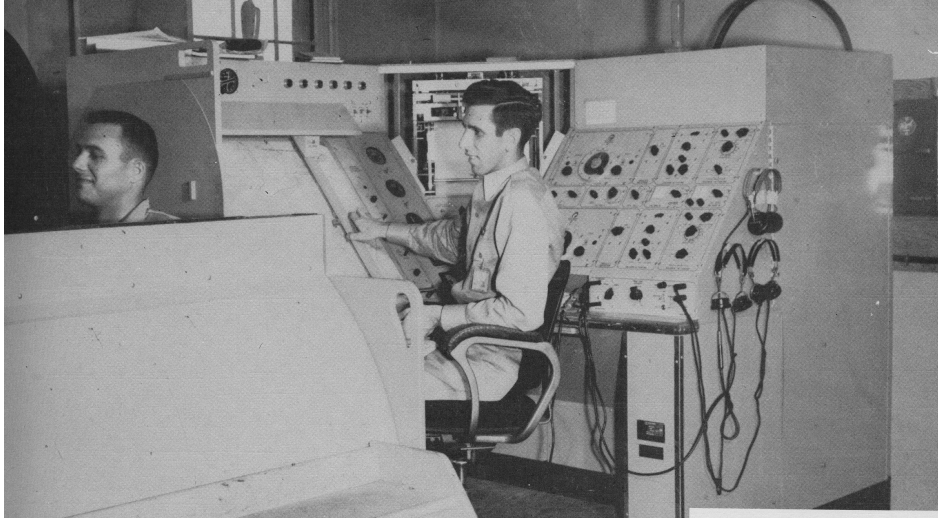


Refueling F-94C (USAF photo)

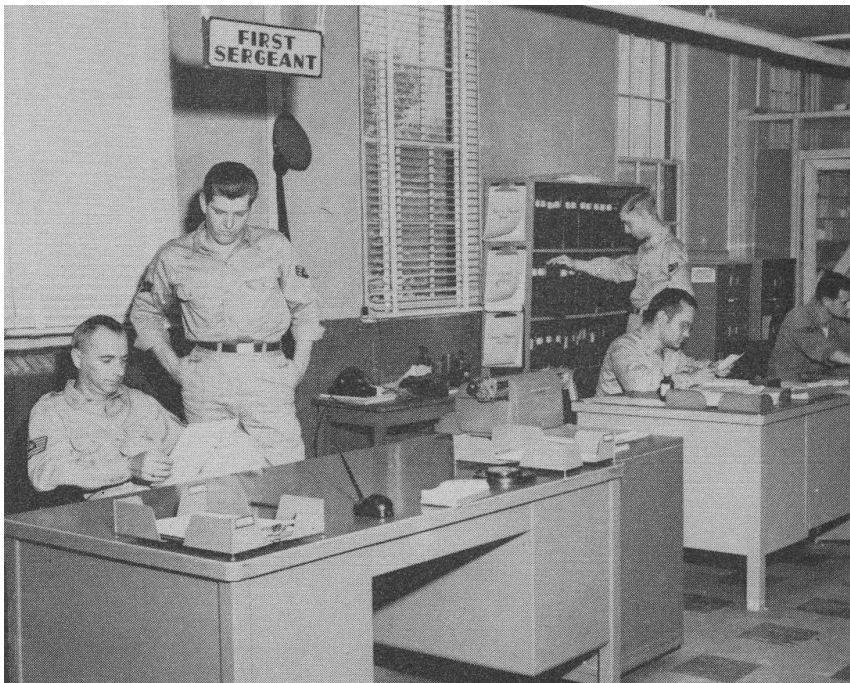


Engine overhaul (USAF photo)





Link trainer (USAF photo)



46 FIS orderly room (USAF photo)

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 21 Feb 2011

Updated: 17 Jul 2016

Sources

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

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

Unit yearbook. *26th Air Division, Defense. 1956.*

Unit yearbook. *MacDill AFB, FL. 1965.*

Unit yearbook. *4710th Defense Wing.* Taylor Publication Co. Dallas, TX. Nd.