

## 50<sup>th</sup> FLYING TRAINING SQUADRON



### MISSION

### LINEAGE

50<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron (Fighter) constituted, 20 Nov 1940

Activated, 15 Jan 1941

Redesignated 50<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron (Twin Engine), 15 May 1942

Redesignated 50<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, Two Engine, 28 Feb 1944

Disbanded, 9 Aug 1944

Reconstituted and redesignated 50<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron (All Weather), 23 May 1947

Activated in the Reserve, 12 Jun 1947

Inactivated, 27 Jun 1949

Redesignated, 50<sup>th</sup> Flying Training Squadron, 22 Mar 1972

Activated, 1 Jun 1972

### STATIONS

Hamilton Field, CA, 15 Jan 1941

March Field, CA, 10 Jun 1941

Oakland, CA, 8 Feb 1942

Hamilton Field, CA, 9 May–16 Jul 1942

Atcham, England, 18 Aug 1942 (operated in Iceland, 18 Aug–14 Nov 1942)

Iceland, 14 Nov 1942

Nuthampstead, England, Feb 1944

Cheddington, England, 15 Mar 1944

Watton, England, 12 Apr–9 Aug 1944

Offutt Field (later, AFB), NE, 12 Jun 1947–27 Jun 1949

Columbus AFB, MS, 1 Jun 1972

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

14<sup>th</sup> Pursuit (later, 14th Fighter) Group, 15 Jan 1941  
342<sup>nd</sup> Composite Group, 14 Nov 1942  
Eighth Air Force, Feb–9 Aug 1944  
Second Air Force, 12 Jun 1947  
381<sup>st</sup> Bombardment Group, 30 Sep 1947–27 Jun 1949  
14<sup>th</sup> Flying Training Wing, 1 Jun 1972  
14<sup>th</sup> Operations Group, 15 Dec 1991

### **ATTACHMENTS**

8<sup>th</sup> [later, 802<sup>nd</sup>] Reconnaissance Group [Prov], Mar–9 Aug 1944

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

P-40, 1941–1942  
P-40G  
P-38, 1942–1944  
P-38E  
P-38F  
AT-6, 1947–1949  
T-38, 1972

### **COMMANDERS**

2Lt Gilbert T. Mullins, 15 Jan 1941  
Maj Frank B. James, 30 Apr 1941  
1Lt Hugh H. Bozarth, 18 Jun 1942  
Cpt George O. Doherty, 1 Aug 1942  
LTC Woodrow W. Korges, 1942  
Maj Harry E. Caldwell, May 1943  
Maj George O. Doherty, Jan 1944-1944  
Unkn, 1947-1949  
LTC Palmer, Jul 1972  
LTC Richard J. Stricker, Jan 1973  
LTC Richard E. Smith, Jan 1975  
LTC William R. O'Rourke, Jul 1976  
LTC Chester W. Griffin, Jan 1978  
LTC Gurney D. White, 30 Jun 1979  
LTC David W. Saunders, 30 Jun 1980  
LTC Paul O. Dokken, 17 Jun 1981  
LTC Jimmie C. Davis, 14 Jul 1982  
LTC Simon G. Price, 17 Nov 1983  
LTC David R. Lloyd, 17 Sep 1984  
LTC Clarence E. Uptegraph Jr., 8 Apr 1985

LTC Michael P. Welsh, 5 May 1987  
LTC Danny R. Fowler, 9 Dec 1988  
LTC Wilfred D. Merkel, 3 Jul 1990  
LTC Richard W. Peterson, 18 Sep 1992  
LTC Lawrence Stutzriem, 3 Aug 1993  
LTC Michael N. Beard, 28 Jun 1995  
LTC James A. Jimenez, 16 Aug 1997  
LTC George Daniels, 1 Jul 1999  
LTC Benjamin Cleveland, 15 Jun 2001  
L Dan Clark, 20 May 2003  
LTC Frank J. Rossi, 12 Jul 2004

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

None

### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II

Air Offensive, Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

None

### **Decorations**

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jan 1974–31 Dec 1974

1 Apr 1985–31 Mar 1987

1 Jul 1992–30 Jun 1994

1 Jul 1997–30 Jun 1999

1 Jul 1999–30 Jun 2001

1 Jul 2001–30 Jun 2002

1 Jul 2002–30 Jun 2004

1 Jul 2004–30 Jun 2006

## **EMBLEM**



Azure, a cloud Argent supporting a rattlesnake coiled Or marked Sable, mouth, tongue and eye Gules, winged of the like, garnished of the second; from its open mouth four flight symbols ascending bendwise in bend each per chevron Red and Yellow; all within a diminished bordure of the third. (Approved, 1 Apr 1942)

#### **MOTTO**

#### **NICKNAME**

#### **OPERATIONS**

Patrols on the west coast, Feb–Jun 1942. Air defense of Iceland, Aug 1942–Feb 1944. Not operational, Feb–Aug 1944. Undergraduate pilot training, 1 Jun 1972.

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BOARD T-38C, S/N 68-8199 COLUMBUS AIR FORCE BASE, MISSISSIPPI 18 JANUARY 2007 On 18 January 2007, T-38C tail number 68-8199 assigned to the 50th Flying Training Squadron, 14th Flying Training Wing, Columbus Air Force Base, MS, crashed

after impacting multiple Mallard ducks. The crash occurred at 13:30 CST in an unoccupied rice field approximately 10 miles WNW of Batesville, MS. The mishap pilot (MP) and mishap instructor pilot (MIP) ejected without injury and the mishap aircraft (MA) was destroyed. The mishap occurred on a 2-ship formation low-level navigation training mission. Approximately 13 minutes into the low-level route, the MA struck multiple Mallard ducks. Both the MA's engines experienced compressor stalls, resulting in an immediate thrust deficient condition. The MIP attempted to correct the condition and recover the engines in accordance with all applicable procedures. When the engines did not recover, the MIP commanded ejection as the aircraft descended through the recommended minimum ejection altitude. The MIP and MP ejected safely without injury. The MA was destroyed upon impact at a loss valued at \$6.0M. Property damage was limited to ground scarring and fuel and hydraulic contamination. Clear and convincing evidence establishes the cause of the mishap as multiple Mallard duck strikes on the front cockpit canopy of the aircraft, resulting in canopy penetration. The canopy pieces were ingested into the engines causing failure of both engines. This led to an unrecoverable condition at low altitude and proper decision by the crew to eject.

On 23 April 2008, at approximately 1226 Central Standard Time, the Mishap Aircraft (MA), a T-38C, S/N 65-10372, with an experienced instructor and student pilot on board, crashed during initial takeoff at Columbus AFB, MS. The MA was assigned to the 50th Flying Training Squadron. After a comprehensive investigation into this mishap, the Board President found that, by clear and convincing evidence, the right aileron of the MA failed in the full down position prior to takeoff. This condition resulted in an uncommanded left roll as the aircraft was rotating for takeoff. Initial correction was made momentarily reducing the left bank. However, as airspeed continued to increase, the left roll continued until the MA was completely inverted. Given the mechanical failure and the critical phase of flight, the pilots were unable to maintain control of the aircraft. The MA became inverted within 3 to 4 seconds and struck the ground, sliding off the runway and bursting into flames, destroying the aircraft. Collateral damage was limited to ground scarring adjacent to the runway. Neither pilot was able to successfully eject and both were killed due to ground impact.

On 11 February 2011, at 2017 Central Standard Time, Mishap Aircraft (MA), a T-38C, serial number 65-0337, sustained damage during an attempted landing on Runway 22 at Ellington Field, Houston, Texas. The MA and Mishap Pilot (MP) were assigned to the 14th Flying Training Wing, Columbus Air Force Base (AFB), Mississippi. The MP suffered minor injuries. The MA sustained damage to the landing gear, engines, right wing, and tail section totaling \$2,139,672. The impact caused minor damage to the runway, but no damage to private property.

The MP was flying his fourth sortie of the day as a night solo continuation training sortie into Ellington Field on a squadron cross-country mission. The MP requested a visual approach to runway 17 Right. He did not sufficiently monitor his position and became geographically misoriented. As a result, when he was three miles from the airfield, the MP misidentified runway 22 as runway 17 Right. Due to Channelized Attention on the mismatch between what he was seeing outside and what his instruments indicated, he allowed his airspeed to decrease well below a safe airspeed and descended at an insufficient rate, placing him well above a normal glidepath. In an attempt to fix his glidepath, he developed an excessive sink rate. He did

not detect his slow airspeed or excessive sink rate in time to prevent a runway impact of sufficient force to cause catastrophic damage to the MA's landing gear and right wing.

The MP was unable to prevent the MA from departing the runway, incurring further damage. The MA came to rest 2,500 feet from the point of impact. The MP accomplished a safe ground egress. The 50th Flying Training Squadron Commander originally approved the MP's cross-country plan to remain overnight at Charleston, South Carolina, to support a Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) event he had organized for The Citadel. One week prior to the mishap, the commander changed his policy to require all cross-country pilots to remain overnight at Ellington. The commander informed the MP of the new policy; the MP could still support the Citadel event if his plan allowed him to stay at Ellington. The commander did not consider cancelling the MP's ROTC event. The MP still wanted to support the ROTC event and believed that his planned timeline, while aggressive, would allow him to safely arrive at Ellington.

This policy change, combined with the MP's ROTC commitment, led to the MP flying a high-risk mission of a fourth sortie, solo, single-ship, for his first night arrival to Ellington. The Accident Investigation Board (AIB) President found by clear and convincing evidence this accident was caused by the following: (1) Geographic Misorientation of the MP in relation to the landing runway, which led to a series of perception and performance errors that ultimately resulted in the runway impact; (2) the authorization and execution of a mission profile having an unnecessarily high level of risk relative to the real benefits. Operational Risk Management (ORM) was inadequate on three fronts: inadequate risk analysis of the overall cross-country weekend plan as well as the MP's individual plan, an inadequate

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Air Force Order of Battle

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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.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

USAF Accident Investigation Board Reports.

Unit yearbook. *10<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Wing and 45<sup>th</sup> Air Base. USAAC Hamilton Field, CA. 1941*