
The Combat
EDGE
July 2003

THIS ISSUE

General Hal M. Hornburg, Commander
Colonel Kevin W. Smith, Chief of Safety

The Combat Edge

Photo by MSgt Terry L. Blevins

Photo by SSgt Bennie J. Davis III

Photo by SSgt Derrick C. Goode

Departments

Volume 12 Issue 2,
ACC SP 91-1

Visit us on the web @ www2.acc.af.mil/combat-edge

MAJ REBECCA COLAW
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

MS. BARBARA TAYLOR
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

SSGT CARRIE ATWOOD
DESIGN & LAYOUT

The Combat Edge (ISSN 1063-8970) is published monthly by Air Combat Command, HQ ACC/SEM, 175 Sweeney Blvd, Langley AFB VA 23665-2700. Send address changes to the same address.

DISTRIBUTION: F. OPR: HQ ACC/SEM. Distribution is based on a ratio of one copy per 10 persons assigned. Air Force units should contact *The Combat Edge* staff to establish or change requirements.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS: Available to non-DoD readers for $51.00 ($71.40 outside the U.S.) from the Superintendent of Documents, PO Box 371954, Pittsburgh PA 15250-7954. All subscription service correspondence should be directed to the Superintendent, not HQ ACC/SEM.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Please send articles with name, rank, DSN phone number, e-mail and complete mailing address and comments to:

Executive Editor, *The Combat Edge*
HQ ACC/SEM
175 Sweeney Blvd
Langley AFB VA 23665-2700

Telephone: (757) 764-8868
DSN 574-8868
FAX: (757) 764-8975
e-mail:rebecca.colaw@langley.af.mil

The editors reserve the right to edit all manuscripts for readability and good taste.

Front Cover: *Amn Edmund Gibbons*

ACCent on Safety

DON'T BE A SUMMER CASUALTY!

Every summer we shower the field with messages, e-mails, and letters warning our command members of the increased dangers that accompany the summer season. For more than 20 years we've even christened the days from Memorial Day through Labor Day as the "101 Critical Days of Summer." These days are critical because many people die while enjoying summertime fun. Last summer, 30 Air Force members died while off duty. That's 30 airmen who are no longer available to defend their country and will never again enjoy time with their families, friends, and coworkers. These losses are unacceptable and preventable.

While we encourage care and safe practices, summer outdoor activities and injuries, both major and minor, still happen. The trick to being safe is to use Operational Risk Management (ORM) for ourselves, our family, and our fellow airmen to help reduce the odds of serious injury or death. We must also adjust our attitudes and behaviors and have the courage to identify and stop risky behavior. In this regard, I want all commanders to remind their airmen on the hazards of the four biggest summertime killers.

Drinking and driving. Nearly half of all highway fatalities are alcohol related. Stress the importance of designating a driver before attending a social function and offer a wide range of non-alcoholic beverages at unit social functions. Let your people know it's O.K. to take the keys from impaired airmen, friends, or family members.

Speeding. Speed is a factor in one-third of all highway fatalities (second only to alcohol as a factor in highway crashes). In 2001, speeding was a contributing factor in 30 percent of all fatal crashes and 12,850 lives were lost in speeding-related crashes.

Not wearing seat belts. Seat belts reduce the risk of a fatal or serious injury by 40-55 percent. Air bags are not a substitute. The combination of air bags and seat belts significantly improve your chances of surviving a serious accident. Make sure everyone, on and off base, and all passengers in the vehicle are buckled up.

Not using child restraints. Make sure all children are buckled up in a federally approved child safety seat according to weight, height, and age. Always place children in the back seat. Never place a rear facing child restraint in front of a passenger side air bag.

We must all step out and demonstrate our sincere concern for everyone's safety and security during this critical time. Our goal is to have 100 percent of our people back at work at the end of these 101 critical days. Please help us make this goal a reality.

General Hal M. Hornburg,
Air Combat Command, Commander

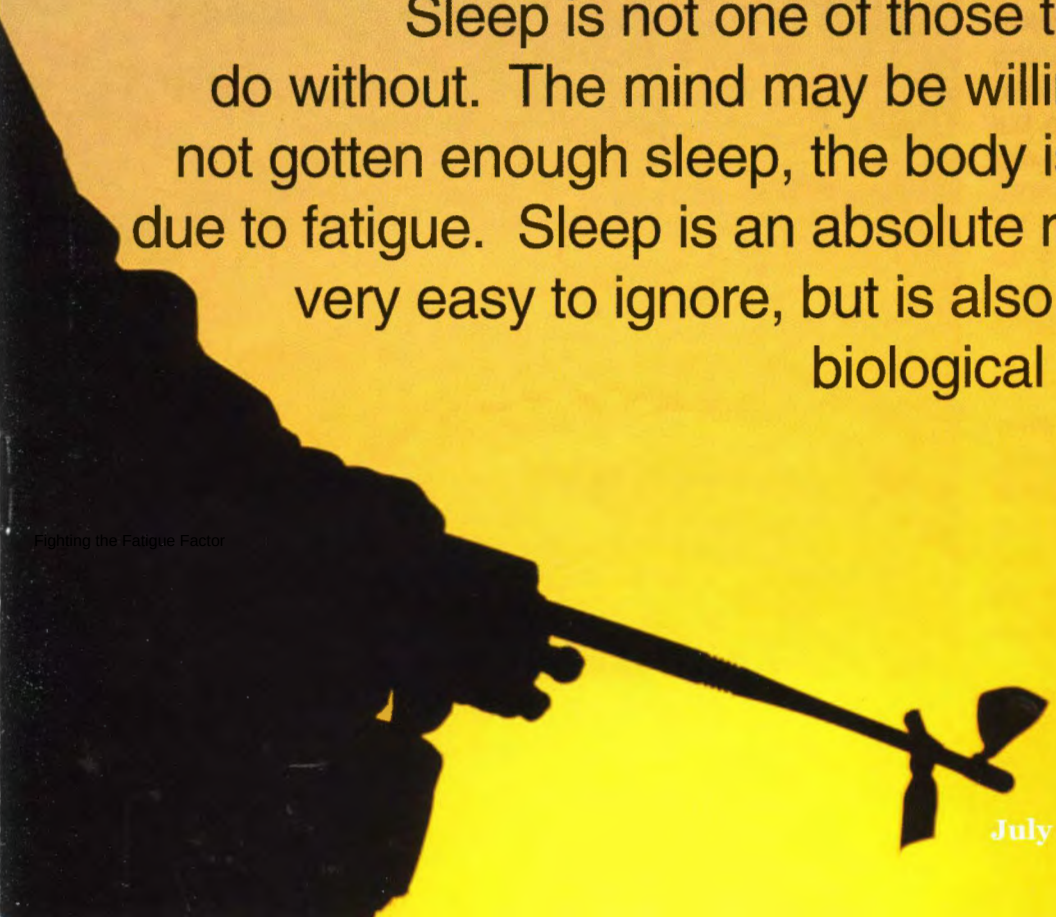
Photo by SSgt Bennie J. Davis IIII

Fighting the FATIGUE Factor

Maj Alex Bonner, Tyndall AFB, Fla.

In today's high-paced Air Force, adequate rest is vital to combat capability.

Sleep is not one of those things that you can do without. The mind may be willing, but if you have not gotten enough sleep, the body isn't always up to it due to fatigue. Sleep is an absolute necessity for life, is very easy to ignore, but is also one of the easiest biological needs to satisfy ...



Fighting the Fatigue Factor

The most common reason for fatigue is a lack of sleep. Sleep is a requirement for your body just like food and water. Most folks need 7-9 hours of sleep per night. If you suffer from drowsiness during the day, it is a good indicator that you may not be getting enough sleep at night. The solution, of course, is more sleep, which is often easier said than done.

To fight the fatigue battle there are several things you can do. You can be consistent, you can put off the caffeine, you can eat complex carbohydrates, and you can optimize your sleep environment.

Consistency is one of the key factors in battling fatigue. Getting to bed at close to the same time every day (this includes the weekends) is one of the most important things you can do to improve your quality of sleep. Regular meals and exercise are also beneficial in keeping the body's clock on time.

Push the caffeine back at least 3-5 hours before going to bed. Caffeine may not prevent you from falling asleep, but the sleep you do get is usually restless. Likewise, alcohol is often used to unwind in the evening. The warning flag goes up for excessive alcohol, as it disrupts some sleep patterns and can result in increasing fatigue.

Eat complex carbohydrates. Pastas, cereals, breads, rice, and foods rich in tryptophan (turkey, peanut butter, cottage cheese, milk, chicken) can promote sleep. Give warm milk or chicken soup a try before going to bed.

Optimize your sleep environment. Set the temperature

Lifestyle is a m

Photo by MSgt Terry L. Blevins

ajor factor in battling fatigue ...

where you like it. A quality, comfortable mattress is well worth its cost. Pillows propped up too high in some people can block the airway and cause awakenings. Light sleepers should try ear plugs for the neighbor's barking dogs. "White noise" makers, such as a humming fan can also help to block out sounds. Cloth light protectors over the eyes and/or room darkening shades may improve sleep, especially for the shift worker who is trying to sleep during the day.

Fatigue is a major factor in many of the aviation and ground mishaps the Air Force experiences every year. Fatigue's effects can be insidious and hard to recognize, but can have catastrophic results. Some fatigue dangers include microsleep — that 1 second nap you take behind the wheel at 60 mph eats up 88 feet of asphalt! Without sleep, you have slowed reaction times and are irritable to your coworkers. Add to that long hours, shift work, and crossing time zones and you can have a negative impact on your job performance. Many believe that a person who goes 36 hours without sleep has the same reaction times and makes the same decisions as a legally intoxicated person. Actually, the ACC surgeon general states that the intoxication reaction effect occurs following a much shorter sleepless schedule. After 17 hours of no sleep, some aspects of your performance are degraded to the same extent as being intoxicated with a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) of 0.05 percent. After being awake for 24 hours, your performance is decreased to that observed with a BAC of 0.10 percent . So don't make the mistake of not getting enough sleep. Your life and the lives of others are counting on your ability to properly count sheep!

Pit & Go Hell

By Maj Jon Wilkinson, Hill AFB, Utah

Photo by SSgt Matthew Hannen

Pit & Go Hell By Maj Jon Wilkinson, Hill AFB, Utah

"Tail 419, you are cleared onto hot pit number two," called the hot pit supervisor.

"Tail 419," I responded, acknowledging the clearance.

It was another beautiful winter day in the Mighty Viper as I skillfully taxied into hot pit number two. I had just completed my first sortie of a two sortie *pit and go.* Bringing the jet to a stop, I wish my performance in the air had been just as impressive as my taxi to a full stop. Eating a Snickers bar, drinking a Coke, and watching the fuel gauge slowly climb towards full, I was suddenly back in flight, replaying my last sortie in my mind.

"Rogue 3, 30 seconds," my flight lead called for time to bomb release.

Then I thought: *O.K. center up steering with the flight path marker on the bomb fall line.* I recalled that my GBU-12s need to have simultaneous impacts with my flight lead's bombs. *Look in the Multi-Function Display (MFD) for the time until ballistic release ...1:14 ...1:14 ... that doesn't make sense?*

I cross-checked my formation ... *I'm out of position, aft of line abreast. Light the burner, descend ... how far down do I need to go to make up the time ... let's see, 45 seconds behind, 2 seconds per 1,000 feet ... I need to descend over 20,000 feet ... this doesn't make any sense.*

"Rogue 3, 15 seconds," called my flight lead.

The mission called for a four-ship conducting simultaneous bombing runs. *Look in the MFD ... 55 seconds to release. Why am I so far behind? Am I on the correct side of the Designated Mean Point of Impact (DMPI)? Did I confuse the attack sequence again?* I quickly ran the prebrief over in my mind.

The mission had involved a lot of swapping of targets and attack profiles. On the second attack, we swapped DMPIs between elements with Rogue 1 and 2 hitting Rogue 3 and 4's DMPI. On the third, Rogue 3 and 4 then hit Rogue 1 and 2's DMPI with a right check for the laze leg instead of left. When I looked at the target photos, for the third attack, I also realized we'd be hitting the next target set as depicted with Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM's).

"Rogue 3, 3..2..1...pickle," my flight lead called.

Still 30 seconds till release, what did I do wrong; there is no way to make this attack have simultaneous impacts.

"Rogue 4, is no drop," I called when I did not drop my bomb.

O.K. lead should be checking left for the laze leg or was this one a right check? Make sure I am deconflicted from lead! After my accelerating descent he should be high and a little aft ... *where is he ... I should have cross-checked his position more ...*

"Rogue 4 is blind, knock-it-off," I called because now I lost my flight lead and my situational awareness.

That mission was confusing, I did not get my bomb off, I lost sight of lead, and had no situational awareness!

Pit & go missions involve flying two different missions wrapped around a hot pit fueling operation. You brief for the two missions before the first flight and do not debrief again until all missions are completed. Anything that goes wrong in the first mission must wait until the second mission is over to be fully debriefed. However, despite the confusion that can sometimes occur, pit & go operations can be an effective way to optimize available aircraft. You can maximize sortie generation with a limited number of bodies, but if you do a pit & go, it needs to be done smartly because there is risk involved, especially with young wingmen.

Operational Risk Management (ORM) risk mitigating methodology we use every day can also be used to maximize training while minimizing the risks of pit & go operations. When conducting these type of operations, we as fighter pilots should look closely at six primary areas:

- What ranges are scheduled?
- What is the pilot experience and proficiency of the flight?
- What type of attacks are planned?
- What type of weapons will be used?
- Nutrition/hydration before and between the sorties
- Physiological limitations during the second sortie

ORM starts long before we show up for mission planning. Scheduling the same range for both sorties allows the flight lead to plan for a single mission using a single set of target photos and attack plans. An experienced flight lead will more successfully digest the information for numerous attacks with different weapons than a young wingman. For the new pilot this stack of information can be confusing in-flight, detract from training, and increase risks during a seemingly benign peacetime sortie.

With this in mind, planning an attack against a single set of targets with a single weapon allows the flight to concentrate on the execution of the primary attack. Flight leads should also brief contingency attacks without overwhelming flight members who have relatively low levels of experience or proficiency.

It's also important to consider what pilots eat and drink before and between sorties, especially if the sortie consists of high-G loads or demanding tasks. The fabled fighter pilot meal of a Coke and a candy bar just doesn't cut it.

Pit & go missions involve flying two different missions sa


Photo by A1C Nichole Adamowicz

You brief two missions before the first fligh

Medical data shows that an energy spike occurs 30 to 60 minutes after eating sugar. Following the spike, the energy level rapidly decreases and reaches a low point barely 2 hours after eating. This makes the energy level lower than the level prior to eating any sugar. A Coke and candy bar on the way to the hot pits may give you increased energy and awareness just prior to takeoff, but on the second sortie there will be an exaggerated energy "low" toward the end of the sortie and during Return to Base.

More important than nutrition is hydration, especially when flying back-to-back Basic Fighter Maneuver (BFM) sorties. Dehydration drastically reduces G-tolerance and must be combated before each sortie. Hydration starts hours before the first sortie and continues during the pit & go sequence. Drinking a quart of water at step time does little more than require an extra piddle-pack prior to takeoff. If scheduled for pit & go sorties, start getting well hydrated the night before. A hydration "top-off" prior to briefing the next day is then an easy task.

Let's not consider the second set of sorties as just a repeat of the first with the same sequence of high-G events.

A perch BFM sortie typically consists of 9,000-foot sets followed by 6,000-foot sets and ends up with 3,000-foot sets once the gas gets low. However, a smarter sequence from a G-tolerance standpoint is to intersperse 3,000-foot sets between the 9,000-foot and 6,000-foot sets. Plan the sortie to accomplish training and at the same time allow the body to recover. Planning to pull 9-Gs until you don't have enough gas left for a 6,000-foot set certainly makes you respect the mighty General Electric motor, but it also increases the risk of G-Induced Loss of Consciousness.

High aspect attacks should only be flown on the first sortie when the body is most able to withstand sustained heavy Gs. The decision to fly the last high aspect set, when the fuel state is approaching joker and the jet can accelerate at high speeds must be based on the G-tolerance the pilots are experiencing that day. If your G-tolerance is low or you are simply worn-out, then it's time to practice those 3,000-foot sets.

Plan the sequence of events so that the highest Gs are experienced when the body is most able to handle them. There is nothing wrong with flying high aspect BFM on the first sortie and a few perch BFM sets on the second sortie followed by tactical intercepts.

All in all, it's important to consider all the ORM aspects of conducting pit & go operations. The risks associated with a single sortie can be multiplied when it comes to consecutive flight operations. Many times the risks of pit & go operations may seem somewhat hidden — but they are very real. As the layers of decision-making are peeled back, you can identify and mitigate the increased risks associated with pit & go operations to allow both missions to be flown safely and effectively.

ndwiched around a hot pit fueling operation.

Photo by TSgt Polly Bennett

Photo by A1C Nichole Adamowicz

t and do not debrief again until both missions are completed.

NOCTURNAL Tiger Sharks

By Lt Col Russ Smith and Capt Eric Smith, Pope AFB, N.C.

It was a standard moonless night at Bagram Air Base in northern Afghanistan. Those of you who have been there or to similar Forward Operating Locations (FOLs) know exactly what we're talking about. It was dark. How dark you ask?

You wouldn't see General Franks if he walked 2 feet in front of you, in fact, you wouldn't have known anyone was there. Marching orders from the Army brass were crystal clear: flightline operations would be conducted under blacked-out conditions. Consequently, the 75th Fighter Squadron Tiger Sharks faced a dilemma; tell the leadership they could not fly at night due to lack of blacked-out operational training or alternatively, develop a safe, logically-developed Operational Risk Management (ORM) plan to provide the Combined Force Air Component Commander with the A-10's one-of-a-kind strike capability 24 hours a day. That decision was easy. The road ahead would require a total team effort from the squadron.

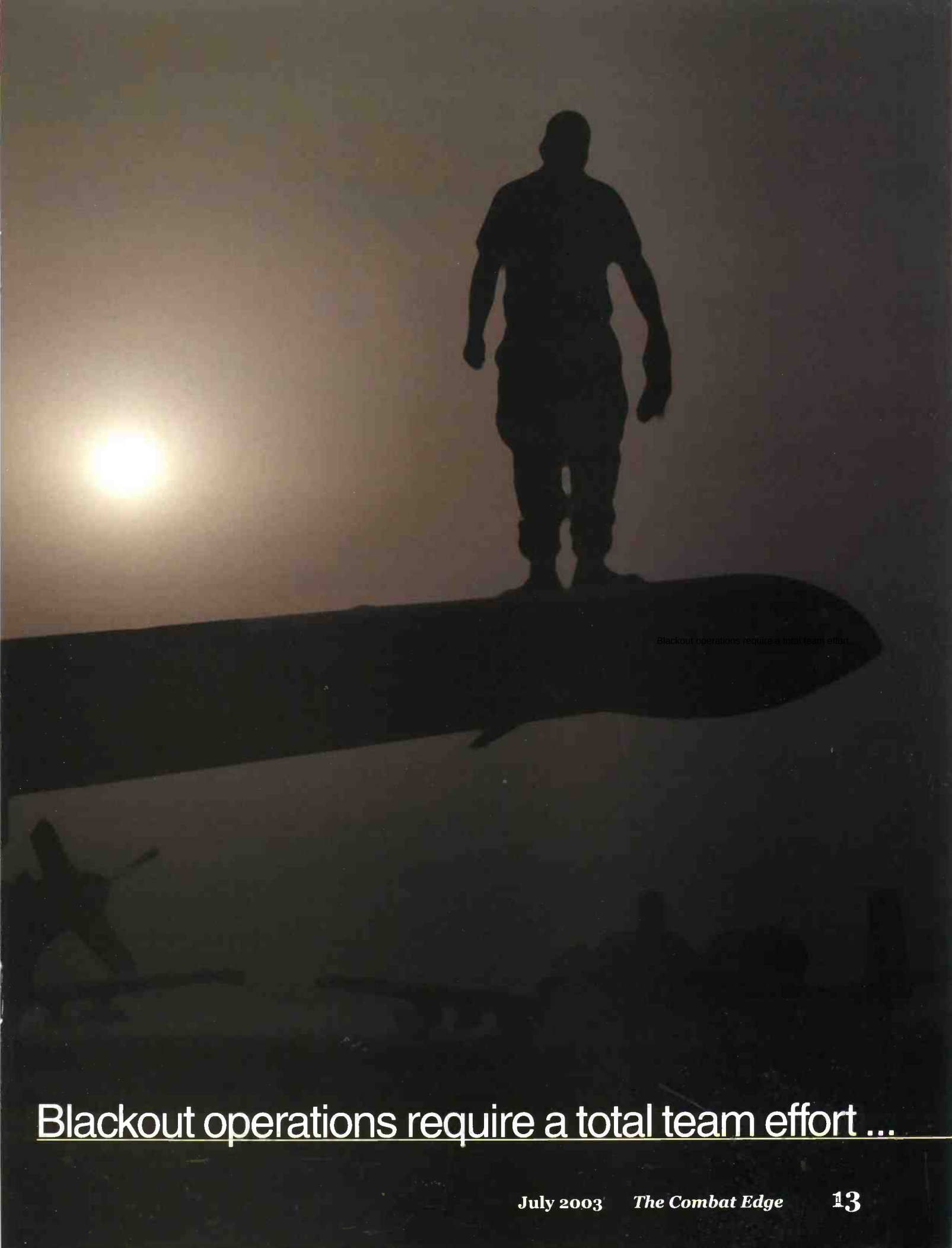
First Things First

The first obstacle facing the Tiger Sharks was the stark fact that no one in the squadron had ever completed a Night-Vision Goggle (NVG) takeoff or landing. Pilots completed initial ground training, consisting of reviewing both the *Fighter NVG Quick-Look Test Report* and the 422 Test Evaluation Squadron's (TES) *Evaluation of NVG Taxi, Takeoff, and Landing Operations*. Additionally, the 422 TES provided platform instruction and techniques at Pope AFB immediately prior to the Tiger Sharks' departure to their Area of Responsibility (AOR). Once in theater, the Tiger Sharks handpicked their most experienced NVG Instructor Pilots (IPs) to develop Bagram-specific NVG takeoff and landing procedures. Pilots flew their initial night sortie at Bagram with an NVG IP, utilizing a building block approach: upgrading pilots would fly their first-ever NVG approach to a low approach, then make a full-stop landing on their second attempt. After several weeks of training, the entire squadron became NVG takeoff and landing capable.

Blacked-Out Environment

Bagram nighttime operations forced the Tiger Sharks to face numerous wartime challenges never experienced in day-to-day training. For instance, prior to the pilot's arrival, maintenance troops, weapons loaders, and crew chiefs had to prepare the A-10s using illumination from only blue chemsticks and red-lensed miniature flashlights. Accustomed to working under massive "football stadium" floodlights at Pope, crews quickly and safely adapted their procedures to the unfriendly nighttime environment. The prevention of Foreign Object Damage (FOD) became a huge priority. Items that were normally double-checked on a daily basis were now triple- or

Photo by SrA JoAnn S. Makimano



Blackout operations require a total team effort ...

Photo by SrA JoAnn S. Makinano

weapons fashioned red lense covers for their jammers .

even quadruple-checked for accountability. Marshallers replaced their flashlight wands and instead used blue chem-sticks to convey their taxi instructions to pilots. As an extra safety precaution, expeditors became designated safety observers for launch and recovery. Equipped with a set of NVGs, expeditors made certain that combat operations were conducted in a safe manner.

To minimize nighttime maintenance, aircraft were rotated based on each day's tasking; however, eliminating nighttime maintenance altogether was not an option. Weapons troops fashioned red lenses for jammers and other support vehicles from cardboard, duct tape, and red plastic. Spotters were used to transport munitions and stores from storage areas to the flightline when equipment could not be pre-positioned prior to sunset. Spotters walked in front of tow vehicles and ensured the path ahead was clear.

"Cleared to Taxi"

Tiger Shark pilots required blacked-out transportation from the Air Force compound at Bagram to the flightline and this task fell to the 75th Fighter Squadron Life Support shop. Driving at night is difficult. Driving at night at Bagram in the dusty, overcrowded, cramped flightline environment proved to be an insurance agent's worst nightmare. Demonstrating American ingenuity at its best, life support personnel rigged up a set of spare NVGs and attached them to a mounting bracket — this somewhat crudely fashioned rig provided life support troops the wherewithal to complete more than 600 runs over a 4-month period, all without a single incident. Eventually, the life support shop received their own monocular NVGs which provided them with a more user-friendly NVG capability. The initial cadre of life support personnel ensured continued success by training follow-on troops in their self-taught art of blacked-out flightline driving.

Transporting Pilots

Upon arrival at the jets, walk-arounds and flight control checks had to be accomplished in near pitch-black conditions. As aircraft prepared to taxi, every available body on the flightline placed IR chem-lights

on the edges of the taxiway to aid the pilot in maneuvering his aircraft from the cramped parking area. Using these chem-sticks and the A-10's IR taxi light, pilots taxied along the narrow taxiways to the arming area. It was vitally important to stay on the taxiway, if for no other reason than the close proximity of Soviet-laid minefields! Once pilots made it safely to the arming area, weapons troops located and pulled over 30 armament pins, ensuring that each weapon would function properly.

"Cleared for Takeoff"

After a final safety check, pilots taxied their armed A-10s into takeoff position on a 180-foot wide slab of pocked concrete they referred to as a runway. Unfortunately, only 90 feet of the runway width was usable ("usable" = the roughest ride you'd ever want to experience in a fighter aircraft). Once cleared for takeoff, pilots used their NVGs to clear for obstructions and enemy activity as they raced down the runway toward the blackness beyond the IR runway lights. It was dark even with the NVGs on; it was even darker without them. The use of NVGs at Bagram made takeoffs at night safer and more importantly made landings at night possible.

After flying a combat mission and landing safely, the Tiger Shark team reversed the launch sequence and made sure aircraft made it safely back to parking. As life support drivers picked up pilots, maintenance troops began preparing aircraft for their next mission. As the sky above the mountains east of Bagram began to glow with the coming of a new dawn, the nocturnal Tiger Sharks put away their NVGs and returned to their tents, secure in the knowledge that they had saved countless American and coalition lives.

Thoughts

The challenges of NVG operations in a blacked-out bare-base would mean many firsts for the Tiger Sharks and the Air Force. In fact, prior to operations at Bagram Air Base, NVG takeoffs and landings in an A-10 had only been accomplished 7 years previous by the 422 TES, and then only under ideal testing conditions. The 75th Fighter Squadron experience at Bagram demonstrated that ORM is a force enabler. The Tiger Sharks found a way to perform an extremely difficult combat task smartly with a safe building-block approach. While recognizing the inherent hazards of NVG operations on a bare-base, personnel mitigated the risks around them by learning to walk before they ran.

Ground troops in the surrounding areas depended on the Tiger Sharks to make the Close Air Support (CAS) mission happen. To say the Tiger Sharks performed admirably is an understatement of grand magnitude: in theater for more than 100 days, the Tiger Sharks did not miss a single tasking and flew 760 combat sorties while maintaining a 90.1 percent mission capable rate. Applying common-sense ORM kept Bagram operations as covert and safe as possible while providing real-time CAS airpower to ground forces in danger's way.


Photo by SrA JoAnn S. Makinano


Photo by SrA JoAnn S. Makinano


Photo by SrA JoAnn S. Makinano


Photo by SSgt Bennie J. Davis III

Holloman AFB, N.M.

Lineage

Established:
49th Fighter Wing on
August 10, 1948
Activated:
August 18, 1948

Redesignated:
- 49th Fighter-Bomber Wing, on February 1, 1950
- 49th Tactical Fighter Wing, on July 8, 1958
- 49th Fighter Wing, on October 1, 1991

49th Fighter Wi

49th fighter wing

General Characteristics:

Primary Function: Fighter/Attack **Contractor:** Lockheed Aero
Length: 63 feet, 9 inches **Height:** 12 feet, 9.5 inches **Weight**
Armament: Internal weapons carriage **Unit Cost:** $45 millio

Photo of F-117 Fighter Aircraft

Photo by SSgt Derrick C. Goode

utical Systems Co. **Power Plant:** Two General Electric F404 non-afterburning engines
2,500 pounds **Wingspan:** 43 feet, 4 inches **Speed:** High subsonic **Range:** Unlimited with air refueling
Crew: one **Date Deployed:** 1982 **Inventory:** Active force, 55; ANG, 0; Reserve, 0

Pilot Safety

Award of Distinction

1Lt Mayfield was Mongol 2 as the wingman on an F-16 Mission Qualification Training sortie. It was 1Lt Mayfield's third sortie at Hill AFB after arriving from the RTU at Luke AFB. Preflight, ground ops, taxi, and takeoff were all normal. While repositioning for a follow-on Basic Flight Maneuver (BFM) engagement, 1Lt Mayfield smelled a strange odor and noticed some smoke in the cockpit. He immediately selected 100 percent oxygen and called for termination to investigate the problem. After informing his flight lead, 1Lt Mayfield took the lead and began a turn towards the nearest divert field. During the climb towards Michael AAF, 1Lt Mayfield got a master caution light and an indication of low engine oil quantity. Realizing the severity of this engine malfunction, 1Lt Mayfield continued the climb to get to a 1:1 glide ratio at Michael AAF. 1Lt Mayfield ran all the associated checklists and began an immediate descent for a potential flameout landing. The oil pressure indicated between 5 and 10 pounds per square inch (psi), well below the acceptable limits. During the descent to the runway, 1Lt Mayfield entered the weather at approximately 17,000' MSL and broke out at 13,000' MSL. Once clear of the weather and with the runway now in sight, 1Lt Mayfield got a warning light for the extremely low oil pressure. Realizing that the engine might quit at any point now, he displayed outstanding airmanship by bleeding off excess energy and lowering the landing gear on short final. With a safe landing gear indication, 1Lt Mayfield executed a textbook alternate entry flameout landing, putting the aircraft safely on the deck about 1,500' down the runway. The aircraft was safely stopped on the runway with 4,000' remaining and was then shut down in accordance with the checklist guidance. Maintenance analysis revealed that the engine was on the verge of failing at any moment due to the excessive loss of oil. 1Lt Mayfield displayed superior situational awareness and phenomenal airmanship in dealing with this extremely serious emergency. His quick analysis and actions prevented further damage or loss of a valuable Air Force asset and possibly the loss of life.

1Lt Ernest G. Mayfield, 421st Fighter Sqn., 388th Fighter Wing, Hill AFB, Utah

Aircrew Safety

Award of Distinction

Maj Edward Presley, 1Lt Brian Ranaudo, Capt Robert Olson, and Capt Michael Gerney, call sign "Tiger 41," were lead of a two-ship B-1 continuation training mission performing simulated interdiction missions for the 37th Bomb Squadron in the Powder River Military Operations Area (MOA). During air refueling, the crew noted decreasing hydraulic fluid quantity on hydraulic system number four. The wingman was asked if they saw any trailing fluid, with a negative response. Shortly thereafter, the number four hydraulic system failed from fluid loss. A disconnect was initiated from the tanker, and the crew elected to return to Ellsworth AFB for recovery of a relatively minor emergency. During the subsequent Return to Base (RTB), there was an electrical transient that caused most cockpit instrumentation to momentarily fall off line. The number four generator failed, causing the System Integration Panel (SIP) to trip bus tie number two and the number four load contactor. The SIP should have closed bus tie number two after the generator was taken off line, but failed to do so. This resulted in a loss of power to AC electrical buses three and four, and a loss of about half of the AC-powered equipment on the aircraft. Per the checklist, flaps and anti-skid braking should have worked; however, when an attempt was made to lower the flaps for landing, two of the three flap channels failed and the remaining flap channel by itself could not extend the flaps. The anti-skid system was also found to be inoperative although it was apparently unrelated to the other malfunctions. The crew elected to dump 70,000 lbs of fuel over the designated weapons jettison area, approximately 30 miles north of the base. A no-flap approach was flown with a 220,000 lb gross weight, flying at 198 knots indicated airspeed. Due to the inoperative anti-skid system, braking was applied and released several times during rollout to prevent brakes from locking up, and to keep the tires rolling. The aircraft stopped with 1,000' remaining on the runway with no hot brakes or blown tires. The aircrew's superior airmanship, astounding systems knowledge, and strong situational awareness exhibited throughout this in-flight emergency helped in safely recovering a $280 million Air Force asset and the lives of everyone on board.

Maj Edward R. Presley, Capts Robert N. Olson, Michael S. Gerney, and 1Lt Brian M. Ranaudo, 28th Bomb Wing, Ellsworth AFB, South Dakota

Weapons Safety

Award of Distinction

This consummate professional's positive attitude has had a profound effect on the success of ACC's premier Air-to-Ground Weapon System Evaluation Program (A/G WSEP). He is personally responsible for the safe execution of weapons loading conducted during all A/G WSEP assessments. TSgt Nightingale has astounded senior leadership by showcasing his vast technical knowledge of precision-guided munitions (PGM). During an intricate weapons post-load inspection of the recently fielded Wind Corrected Munitions Dispenser (WCMD) TSgt Nightingale noticed weapons load crew checklist fuse setting procedures did not match basic technical order (TO) guidance. Realizing procedures from the TO were the governing directive, he immediately halted all loading operations and contacted MAJCOM munitions managers and WCMD special programs office directors for further guidance. All parties concurred on his findings and immediately issued an Urgent Interim Operational Supplement amending all loading checklists Air Force wide. This serious oversight would have had catastrophic results if not identified. In a separate instance, his sheer attention to detail prevented yet another disastrous situation when he discovered several fin retaining bolts untorqued on two BDU-56 full-scale munitions. Again, he stopped the task, directed appropriate corrective actions, and ensured training deficiencies were not the cause of the incident. TSgt Nightingale's talents extend far beyond his PGM knowledge. His rare inquisitive nature led to an assessment of all programmable ground radios used by WSEP and evaluated transient personnel. This extensive review revealed nonexistent ground emergency frequencies. These frequencies are an Air Force requirement for anyone working on the flight line, especially deployed maintainers not familiar with Eglin AFB's diverse environment. His discovery fixed an essential link between emergency responders and participating maintainers. His actions also prompted mandatory quarterly inspections for all communication equipment. TSgt Nightingale's unparalleled approach to all aspects of performance and impeccable safety-first attitude are paramount in the 86 FWS' sustained superior safety record.

TSgt Paul S. Nightingale, 86th Fighter Weapons Sqn., 53rd Wing, Eglin AFB, Florida

Unit Safety

Award of Distinction

The 23rd Maintenance Squadron (MXS) Aircraft Inspection Section averted catastrophic damage and possible injury, resulting from improper maintenance actions accomplished by Depot on A-10 aircraft, 78-0674. During the "initial look" phase inspection, a 23 MXS phase crew identified over 90 discrepancies needing repair — the average amount of discrepancies typically found on an aircraft during a phase inspection is 25. One of the more notable discrepancies occurred due to improperly installed aluminum slat actuator mount brackets. TCTO 1269 specifically requires replacement of all aluminum brackets; steel and aluminum may not be mixed. 23 MXS Phase also recommended the replacement of aluminum nose and main landing gear up-lock brackets with steel ones. A faulty bracket could have caused the landing gear to remain up and locked if jammed. 23 MXS also noticed that slat actuator mount brackets contained unauthorized hardware on all four mounts, in violation of T.O. 1A-10A-3-1; improper hardware could have led to faulty slat and slat actuator operations during flight. Additionally, the right flight control roll crank rod was not properly secured; this could have caused uncommanded roll inputs and conceivable loss of aircraft control. Further inspection by the 43 MXS Fuel Shop revealed a leaking fuel boost pump and loose wing root attach bolts from weapons stations 5, 6, and 7. Also noted were hydraulic lines going to the left landing gear brake which were chaffing on the wheel pod bracket. Lastly, multiple foreign objects were found throughout the wing: line caps, castellated nuts, washers, and cotter pins. The 23 MXS-Phase section put in 96 hours of fuel maintenance and 48 hours of follow-on maintenance to make this aircraft airworthy again. The results of this inspection were quickly up-channeled from 23 FG QA and 23 FG Safety to Depot, where repair procedures were reviewed and revised to prevent future mishaps with A-10 aircraft.

23rd Maintenance Sqn., 23rd Fighter Group, Pope AFB, North Carolina

Ground Safety

Award of Distinction

TSgt Daniels distinguished herself during this period as the 820 RHS, Chief of Safety. She has taken every opportunity to increase safety compliance by 393 personnel within a diverse squadron consisting of four flights and a total of 32 facilities. TSgt Daniels reestablished the squadron's Lock-out/Tag-out Program, the Confined Space Program, and the 820 RHS Operating Instructions. TSgt Daniels established the 820 RHS safety database that tracks a myriad of information crucial to administering a strong and viable program. After realizing the possibility of deploying to an area that may not have Base Fire Department support for Confined Space Rescue, TSgt Daniels instituted an Organizational Confined Space Rescue Team. She also identified additional training and equipment requirements needed to ensure Red Horse personnel were protected from possible exposure to injuries. She performed inspections of all facilities in the squadron within a 5-month time frame to get a better understanding of the functions of each flight. She aggressively oriented newly assigned squadron personnel during the monthly in-processing briefing with topics ranging from mishap reporting procedures, DUI, motorcycle safety awareness, and identification of hazard reporting requirements, in addition to area supervisor responsibilities. She produced and distributed numerous safety briefings electronically to all squadron personnel to ensure the widest dissemination of safety information. She reestablished the Deployment Safety Plan ensuring that squadron personnel maintain the same safety standards, whether in-garrison or deployed. Due to her attention to detail, 820 RHS received an "Excellent" rating from HQ ACC/SE Program Management Evaluation with no safety discrepancies and was identified as the ACC Safety "Top Performer." The 12 AF/CV identified TSgt Daniels' safety program as a model to emulate in 12 AF. TSgt Daniels is the epitome of an Air Force safety professional and is truly deserving of this honor.

TSgt Cathy A. Daniels, 820th Red Horse Sqn., Nellis AFB, Nevada

ACC Safety Salutes Superior Performance

136th Airlift Wing 150,000 mishap-free hours

In April of 2003 the 136th Airlift Wing based at Carswell Field, Texas, surpassed the milestone of flying over 150,000 hours of mishap-free flying. The achievement of reaching 150,000 hours of Class A free flying is a tribute to the professionalism and dedication of over two generations of aircrews and maintenance personnel. They have remained focused on safety as the number one priority as they very successfully completed numerous deployments in support of major contingencies, AEFs, and exercises. Their attention to CRM and ORM issues have been repaid by reaching this milestone. The unit has been guided by over 10 wing commanders during this mishap-free period of more than 38 years. Each commander has been committed to providing time and assets to ensure safety prevailed as the prevalent culture within the Wing.

142nd Fighter Wing surpases safety milestone

The Oregon Air National Guard's 142nd Fighter Wing has surpassed an F-15 flight safety milestone. Oregon's "Red Hawks" became the first Air National Guard F-15 flying unit to record more than 60,000 mishap-free flight hours. The safety record was recorded while Oregon aircrews were conducting Dissimilar Aircraft Training with the US Navy and Marines at Miramar Naval Air Station near San Diego, Calif., Feb. 1-14. "This safety milestone is a testament to the amount of flying we do," said Col Garry Dean, 142nd Fighter Wing Commander. "It's also a tribute to the professionalism and passion our people have for their military mission in Portland."

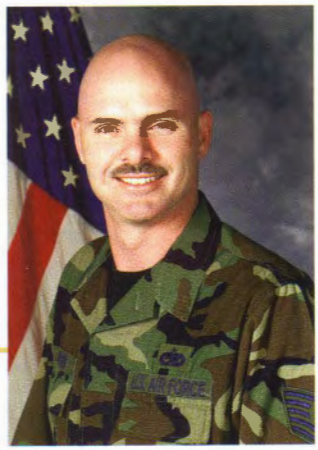
MSgt Gene W. Isaacson
Fuels Superintendent
347th Logistics Readiness Sqn.
347th Rescue Wing
Moody AFB, Georgia

MSgt Kevin J. Johnson
NCOIC, Ground Safety
HQ Air Warfare Center
Nellis AFB, Nevada

QUARTERLY AWARD WINNERS

Weapons Safety
Award of the Quarter

TSgt Marter made crucial site planning contributions that are pivotal to Nellis Air Force Base's continued efforts to comply with Department of Defense Explosives Safety Board mandates for complete explosives re-siting being accomplished no later than December 2003. Never satisfied with the status quo, TSgt Marter aggressively seeks out explosives safety areas needing improvement. He volunteered to spearhead the lead on exploratory siting of the Predator MQ-1 bed down plans for the munitions storage area. He provided crucial site planning guidance during the ACC F-35 Site Survey meeting and ensured planned construction of two new earth covered igloos met stringent explosives safety standards. He also expeditiously re-sited the Indian Springs Air Force Auxiliary Field supporting the Predator buildup. The explosives site plans graphically highlighted new construction Quantity-Distance (QD) violations to civil engineers. His feedback saved $200,000 in proposed construction costs. A persuasive and succinct briefer, TSgt Marter provides highly informative risk assessment briefings to senior leadership on various ORM options based on graduated levels of risk and mission capability. He received positive feedback when he displayed his impressive depth of knowledge while personally briefing the AWFC/CC on options to mitigate public transportation route (PTR) violations with Hollywood Road traffic passing by the Live Ordnance Loading Area. His subject matter expertise was evident when he briefed the 99 ABW/CC on three effective options to fix the PTR violation within the 5-year waiver time frame. His extensive knowledge of explosives operations was instrumental in preparing the newest Nellis AFB Supplement to AFMAN 91-201, *Explosives Safety Standards*. A true explosives safety mentorship advocate, TSgt Marter volunteers his personal time to conduct Additional Duty Weapons Safety Officer training for outside agencies, and he conducted the first-ever explosives safety program management training for the Remote Listening Facility at the Department of Energy.



TSgt Charles D. Marter, HQ Air Warfare Center, Nellis AFB, Nevada

Ground Safety
Award of the Quarter

TSgt Folias' Ground Safety Inspection and Program Management Assessments have been rated "Outstanding." He was recently commended by the ACC/PME inspection team for providing the best supervisor and unit safety programs to date. For a high mobility unit routinely performing hazardous operations at austere deployed locations, his training is a lifesaver. He individually verified, documented, and ensured newly assigned members had proper training, resulting in zero reportable mishaps on and off duty. His written, visual, and verbal instructions are enhanced with performance and demonstration techniques to reinforce and validate understanding. Mock-ups, samples of Personal Protective Equipment, and other visual aids complement his training. He has developed and implemented superb training plans for work activities such as proper lifting procedures, fall protection, Lock-out/Tag-out measures, traffic safety, ladder safety, power hand tools, hazardous material, and communication programs to support the mandatory items identified on the Job Safety Training Outline and AF Form 55. His HAZCOM binder was selected by the squadron Chief of Safety as a benchmark for other squadron safety representatives. TSgt Folias worked diligently with unit and wing safety to rejuvenate existing programs and ensured 100 percent compliance for training implementation. To enhance the programs a variety of safety videos, checklists, and tests have been obtained to allow workers to openly discuss any areas of concern about each program. He also established four safety training guides for the four common structures tasking Red Horse performs: Concrete Masonry Unit, Pre-engineered Building, K-Span Operations, and Tilt-Up Construction. He used the six-step ORM process to create a comprehensive plan for each task. His risk management/safety plans received laudable comments from the inspection team as the benchmark for the command. As a direct result of his leadership and motivation, the squadron safety program received the highest rating of "Excellent" during the 2003 Air Combat Command Program Management Evaluation. He was also the inspection team's unanimous choice as the ACC Safety "Top Performer."

TSgt John T. Folias, 820th Red Horse Sqn., Nellis AFB, Nevada

Don't Become Co

When I first joined the Air Force and decided to become an Aircraft Armament Systems Specialist, I thought the most dangerous part of the job would be working with the explosives that we load on a day-to-day basis. It has been more than 20 years since I made that naïve assumption.

Throughout my career, I have seen or heard about a lot of situations that now make me realize — it's not the weapons that are dangerous in the loading world — it's complacency. Why is it so easy for loaders to fall into this dangerous realm? I believe it's because most of the tasks we perform on a daily basis are repetitive.

We all have checklists that we follow, and we're suppose to erase them when we're done and fill them out again each time we load a new aircraft. *Yeah right! There are 40 steps, and I have 10 jets to load with the same configuration. Just to cover myself, I'll at least change the tail numbers in case quality assurance shows up or God forbid something goes wrong.* Well, more often than not, we end up dealing with the latter. Here are just a couple of examples of how complacency leads to something going wrong.

While stationed at Torrejon AB, Spain, I was an F-16 lead crewmember. A guy I'll call Wallace was the load standardization crew team chief. He was a very good loader and was meticulous when it came to evaluating loading procedures. He always said, *"If a load crew messed up, it better not have been because of the training they received from us."*

The one thing that amazed me was when we would watch the LSC load, Wally was smooth. *So what, he's the LSC — man!*

One day I had to ask Wally what happened to his hip. He told me that his crew was loading six

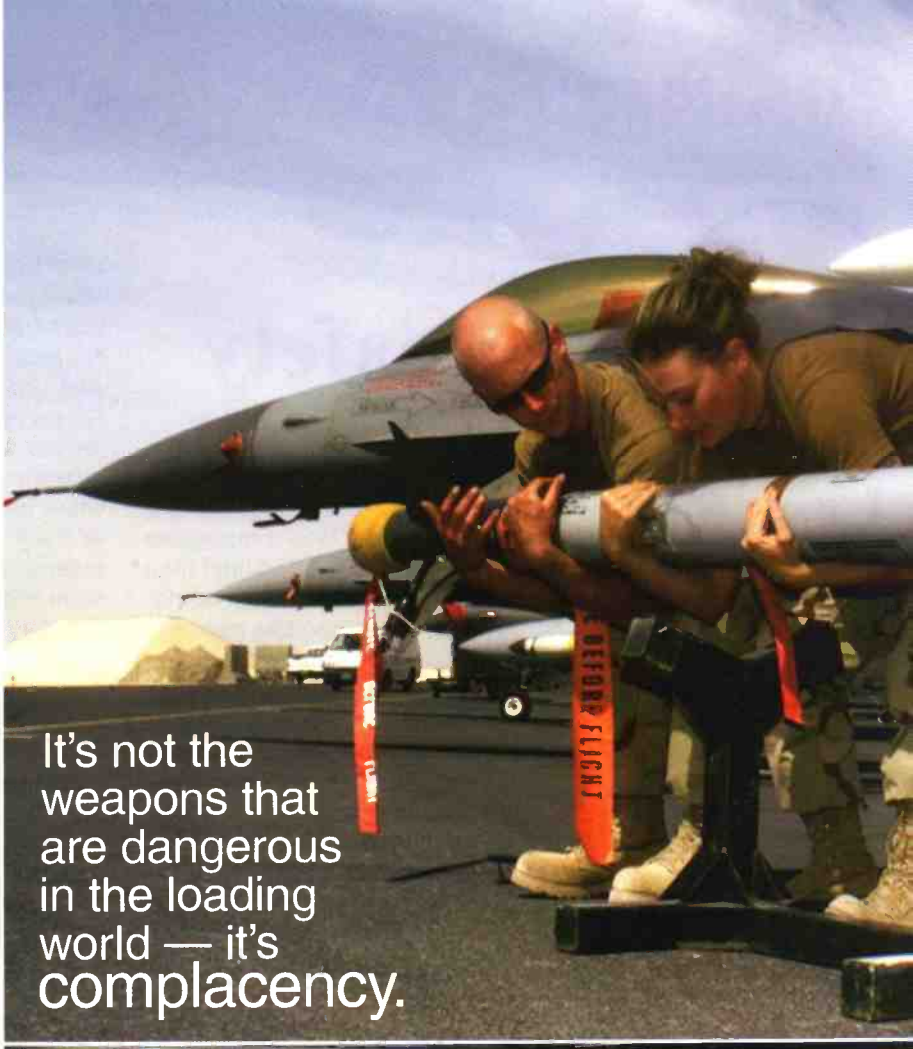


Photo by TSgt Dave Ahlschwede

Photo by MSgt Terry L. Blevins

Photo by SMSgt Edward E. Snyder

MPLACENT

By MSgt Kenneth Gantt, Nellis AFB, Nev.

MK-82s off MHU-110 trailers onto five aircraft, and that on the third plane he attached the extension arms without inspecting them for serviceability. When he pulled the bomb towards him, the arms snapped at the welds and the bomb fell on him crushing his hip. Complacency? I have always wondered if that was why he was so strict when it came to us training load crews.

Then there was Steven, an energetic young 3-man who liked to show off his skills. If given a task, he'd always want to be the first one done.

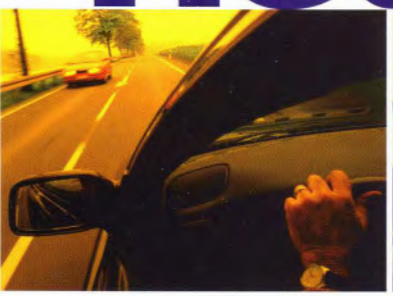
One day his crew was tasked to remove and replace chaff and flare modules between the first and second go. After the first jet, he told his crew chief that he would go and finish the rest of the jets while the crew chief finished up the forms.

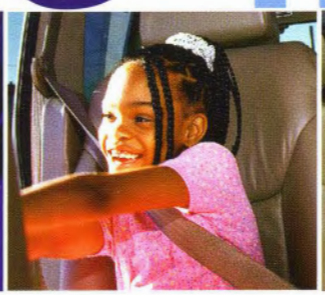
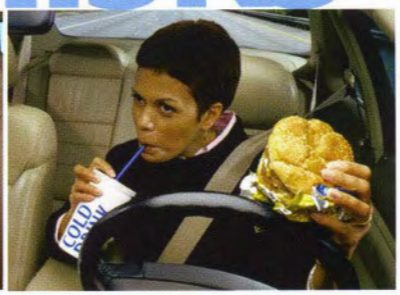
After loading the chaff, Steve went around to the other side to load the flare. If he had checked the forms, he would have noticed that the jet came down code 2 for a chaff and flare malfunction. He also probably would have noticed there was a specialist in the cockpit troubleshooting the system.

Steve told me that while screwing in the flare module, all he heard was click, click, click, click, and said to himself: *"OH! NO!"* But it was too late. Steve ended up laying butt-naked on the ramp with melted sun glasses and combat boots! He had third degree burns from his nose to his shins. I have listened to him tell the story to some of the new airmen in the armament shop and he is the first one to tell you, *"That was a stupid thing to do. I knew better. That's what happens when you get complacent!"*

From some of the expressions I see on their faces, I don't think they will ever forget what can happen if you become complacent in the loading world. Don't let this syndrome impact your career or your life. Do things by the book every time.

Reduce your Risks



By Mr. P. J. Adams, Barksdale AFB, La.

Too many times our loved ones or coworkers believe that safety rules or markings are "only for the other guy." They aren't. They identify the risks to everyone's safety and they are pretty clear: Failure to do so (i.e., wear a seat belt, wear a motorcycle helmet, obey caution and warning markings) can result in serious injury or death. There are no exclusions. Serious injury or death can and will happen to anyone who chooses to not use the proper tools or equipment (including safety gear) or to not follow instructions or guidance. This is true no matter the gender or age and is especially true when alcohol or distracted driving is involved.

While alcohol is a legal recreational beverage, there are laws in every state that prohibit its use when operating machinery, including motor vehicles, watercraft, and aircraft. People apparently still do not recognize the dangers associated with ignoring these laws and continue to abuse alcohol both on and off the job. Whether someone is drinking on the job or just suffering from last night's drinking binge, they are not 100 percent and are hazardous to your operations. Supervisors and coworkers must identify such behavior and take immediate corrective action. It really is the only way to help. When people are allowed to continue or rationalize their drinking habits, countless numbers of innocent people are hurt, maimed, and killed annually.

Those who realize the problems associated with alcohol use might not see the dangers of distracted driving. Drinking coffee or soda, smoking, eating, or talking on the cell phone are basic tasks we perform every day, but when they are done while driving a vehicle, the risks increase to unacceptable levels. Even at 2 miles per hour, reacting to a distraction inside your car (i.e., hot coffee or cigarette ashes spilled on a lap) will increase your chances of having an accident. All it takes is that second you are distracted to drive in front of a train or run a red light.

The following information from the Air Force Safety Center shows just how important risk reduction is to your good health and well-being:

Fiscal Year 2002 was one of the worst years in recent history for off-duty safety in the Air Force. There was a 38 percent increase in Air Force fatalities.

- Young airmen (ages 18 to 25) accounted for 70 percent of fatalities
- Alcohol was involved in 40 percent of the fatal traffic mishaps
- Motorcycle mishaps resulted in 20 deaths, 11 more than last year

Good judgment can prevent most fatal mishaps and includes:

- Maintaining self-discipline
- Remaining alert
- Controlling distractions
- Avoiding complacency

Commanders, supervisors, and peers must focus on identifying and acting to change risky behaviors like:

- Taking unnecessary risks
- Speeding
- Driving under the influence of alcohol
- Failing to use proper safety equipment, like helmets and seat belts

Perform a risk self-assessment. Are you using self-discipline to refrain from destructive habits, which may affect your alertness to the task at hand? Do you get distracted while involved in tasks that could result in injury or death? Do you take short cuts at work or other activities that may result in injury to yourself or others? Risks are all around us, but we have both the tools and the knowledge to reduce their impact on our lives. Good judgment and self-discipline will help all of us do just that both on and off the job!

Shallow water Death

By Maj James Law, Hickam AFB, Hawaii

A fatal drowning by a Pacific Air Forces staff sergeant last summer underscores the need for education on a phenomenon called "shallow-water blackout."

According to the Naval Safety Center, shallow-water drowning is caused by oxygen starvation brought on by hyperventilation combined with underwater breath holding.

The Eielson sergeant was on vacation with his family at a popular California lake. While swimming in shallow-water, the NCO was entertaining several children by alternately holding his breath under water, then jumping up out of the water.

The children eventually got tired of watching and went to play on another side of the island they were playing by. When the sergeant didn't follow them after a short period of time, the children came back looking for him, and upon not being able to locate him, yelled at their grandfather for help who then called 911. A diver later found the staff sergeant's body in 8 feet of water that evening.

Officials believe he was a victim of shallow-water blackout.

During the process of jumping up and down in the water and holding his breath, the sergeant may have inadvertently breathed in a manner similar to hyperventilating, causing a low carbon dioxide level in his blood. Then, as he went under for the final time, he stayed under too long because he did not get the normal sensation to breathe until it was too late.

According to Naval Safety Center publications, shallow-water blackout occurs because hyperventilation lowers the amount of CO_2 in the blood and fools the body into believing it doesn't need to breathe even if available oxygen is nearing depletion. Someone who is exercising in the water compounds the problem by increasing the rate of oxygen consumption. The low oxygen levels in the blood stream can cause loss of consciousness.

Swimmers in this unconscious state often will fool observers because they don't appear to be in danger and appear to make coordinated movements, but at that point, brain damage from a lack of oxygen is only minutes away.

Some tips to avoid shallow-water blackout include:

- Don't hyperventilate while swimming
- Recognize that any strenuous exercise done under water will drastically limit the time one can stay underwater, and people should head to the surface much sooner
- Include shallow-water blackout as a topic prior to all training for water activities
- Explain to children at a young age what shallow-water blackout is and why they should never practice breath-hold diving
- Aquatics managers and life guards should prohibit swimmers from engaging in this activity

Don't let your vacation turn tragic playing a simple children's game in shallow water. Know the risks of shallow-water blackout. For more information about shallow-water blackout safety, people should contact their base safety office.




No Bull... I'm Hurt

By 2Lt Diana Black, Vandenberg AFB, Calif.

Each of us needs to focus our attention on extreme sports safety to ensure our personnel are educated and trained before they engage in this type of high-risk activity. This is an entire team effort, required not just from commanders, but from all personnel to protect ourselves, our fellow airmen, and our families.

While attending the Aerospace Basic Course (ABC) in Alabama, I became aware of a gap in the safety program: the hazards of riding a mechanical bull.

One of my classmates who was addicted to line dancing but didn't have a car asked me to take her some place where she could get a "fix." We found a nice bar off base — called True Country, or something similarly unoriginal — one Wednesday night.

I knew the night would be short because I usually prefer sleeping to dancing and drinking. Noticing an inactive mechanical bull in the corner, I said, "I bet some of the guys would bring you here this weekend if you tell them there's a mechanical bull." She agreed this was a good plan, and we returned to base shortly thereafter.

In case you don't know, Air Force training bases require temporary-duty students who engage in high-risk activities to undergo a briefing. There is a list of specific high-risk activities, such as skydiving, downhill skiing, and motorcross racing, and anything not on the list, by default, isn't considered high risk. Riding mechanical bulls wasn't on that list when we attended ABC, which seems surprising.

The Monday morning after our trip to the bar, I was greeted with the question, "Did you hear about James?" This 32-year-old, prior-service butterbar had ridden the mechanical bull.

Everyone else had been thrown off. James was doing well, though, and, as he got better, the operator turned up the skill level — just to make sure James didn't get bored or fall asleep. At one point, the bull went up and right, and James, being skilled, counterbalanced by throwing his weight up and left. Unfortunately, his right foot became trapped momentarily between the bull and its pedestal. He heard two distinct snaps and realized these weren't good sounds. After uttering a choice word or two, he released the rope and slithered as gently as possible to the padded floor.

James said he didn't immediately feel anything, but he knew something wasn't right. Meanwhile, the gang rushed over laughing; they assumed the bull had just bucked him off until he said, "I think I hurt my foot."

One of the students said, "Oh, you just twisted your ankle." He immediately grabbed James' shoelace and started tightening it to prevent swelling.

Extreme sports like scuba diving, extreme skiing, snow boarding, bungee jumping, and bull riding are now all part of ACC members' off-duty recreation, and all have significant inherent risks.

James quickly stopped him. He saw something jutting out oddly on the inside of his leg and calmly said, "I think I need to go to the emergency room."

The students picked James up, put him in a car, and

Photo by SSgt Derrick C. Goode

After being trampled by the bull he was attempting to ride, a service member is carried off by emergency personnel at the Professional Armed Forces Rodeo Association's World Finals. Extreme Sports require extra attention to safety. A moment's fun can lead to living with an injury for a lifetime.

drove him (moaning) to the nearest hospital, where a nurse showed him an X-ray of his leg. She explained the tibia wasn't supposed to be sticking out against his skin like a tent. She also said the fibula wasn't supposed to be lined up with the butt-end of the tibia like it was, nor was part of his heel supposed to be free-floating. This information, coupled with the fact the shock was wearing off, nauseated James, so the nurse gave him a continuous morphine drip, and he was very "happy" — when he was conscious.

James underwent emergency-reconstructive surgery about 0700 Sunday morning and emerged with a 6-inch metal plate and seven screws in his ankle. Extra bags of morphine kept him in a painkiller stupor for 5 days, and he missed the final week of class. He also spent several weeks on convalescent leave.

What could have been done to prevent this mishap, other than not getting on that bull in the first place? More appropriate clothing — boots, instead of the tennis shoes he was wearing — may have helped, but no one knows for sure. He also could have remembered and had more respect for his advancing years and physical condition. There are many things you can't do that you did 10 years ago.

Some might wonder if alcohol was involved, since this incident happened in a bar. James, however, was drinking responsibly. He had consumed only one-and-a-half beers on a full stomach. It's important for all of us to remember that mechanical bulls may look harmless, but, as James learned, they're a rough way to have fun.

Reprinted Courtesy of Approach Magazine.

TWICE SAVED by a seat belt

By TSgt Matthew W. Gilreath, Holloman AFB, N.M.

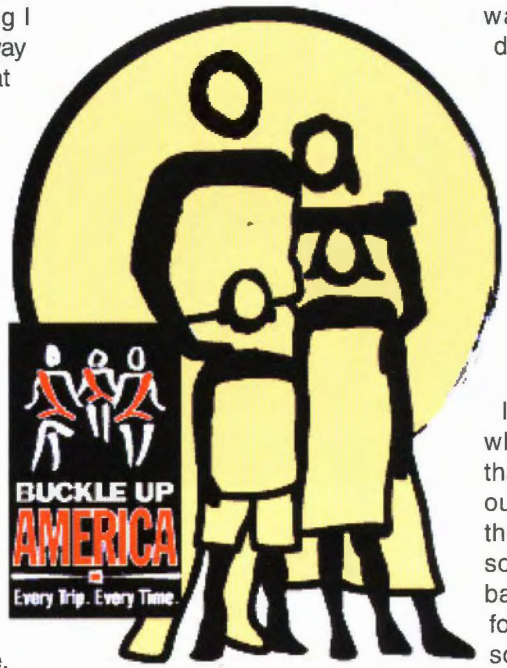
I learned a valuable lesson when I was 16 years old: seat belts save lives. My seat belt saved my life when a 1969 Torino hit my 1975 Volkswagon Rabbit in a classic David and Goliath confrontation. I was driving down a road, trying to catch up with a friend. All of my concentration was on the road ahead of me. The next thing I know, I'm in an ambulance on my way to the hospital. When I asked what had happened, the ambulance person told me I was in a car wreck. I was in disbelief. I didn't know what had happened or what kind of shape I was in. I just knew I was alive.

After 3 days in the hospital, I was released. The accident had happened on my parent's anniversary and my mom said my survival was the best present she had ever received. The guy who hit me had not been wearing his seat belt and suffered a spinal injury.

After I was released from the hospital, my dad took me to see what was left of my car. They had tried to describe it to me, but seeing was believing. I hardly recognized it. I was hit on the driver's side, and it was crushed. The impact was so intense that it cracked the engine block, ripped the seat bolts out of the floor board, caused the top of the car to cave in, and knocked both of my shoes off (one of them was still in the car). The junkyard guy said the only thing worth salvaging was the passenger door.

I was reminded again 11 years later of the importance of seat belts. It was October 1996, and I was stationed at Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan. My boss asked if I wanted to go to Guam to help with Operation PACIFIC HAVEN to provide refuge for the Kurds fleeing from Saddam Hussein's reign of terror in Iraq.

After a month in Guam, everything was going great. It was time for a well-earned dinner out. Four of us decided to go downtown. It was about 10:00 p.m., and a light drizzle had started.



I was sitting in the front passenger side seat of a Honda Accord. As luck would have it, the rain had knocked out the streetlights so it was pretty dark. About a mile up the road there was a small hill. We were doing about 45 miles per hour when we topped that hill and saw a 2-ton truck 30 feet in front of us. There was no time to react and barely enough time to scream.

Before impact, I remember saying to myself, "Don't close your eyes." I thought if I did, I would never open them again. Well, I did keep my eyes open. I locked them on the radio — to this day, I still remember the station number. Then everything went silent.

The first thing I remember was hearing a moan from the driver. Then I remember people all around the car. I was the only one conscious and coherent. I was having trouble breathing. I asked another person if the device that laid the seat back still worked. It did, and I was able to get out of the car.

I was sleepy, but the rain kept me awake. I thought of my wife and twin daughters back home. I thanked God that I would see them again. That's when I overheard someone say that they had gotten all three of us out. I immediately told them that there had been four of us in the car so they went to look again. In the back, crunched on the floor, they found the fourth person. This person had not worn a seat belt.

While all of us survived the accident that night, our fourth member had to be put on a respirator and go through some intense rehab. I only got three stitches and a broken rib out of the deal.

I hope I have gotten your attention and that each of you will remember to buckle up. When you don't know what's down the road or over the next hill, it is best to be prepared for the worse. Seat belts save lives every day. You never know when it will be your turn.

The impact was so intense that it cracked the engine block ..


Fleagle
SAME THING EVERY SPRING. MOVE THIS. CLEAN THAT.
WHY CAN'T STUFF STAY IN ONE PLACE?
GREAT... TH' LIGHT'S SHOT.
HARRISON
ZAPPP!!
SPIT!!
SNAP!!
FLEAGLE, WHERE DO YOU WANT THIS STUFF? FLEAGLE?
TH' BOY LOOKS A BIT OVERHEATED.
AF STUFF
© STAN HARRISON, 2003

The ACC Lost Squadron

Injuries to Date **350**

Deaths to Date **28**

Official List of American Military killed in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, As of May 27, 2003

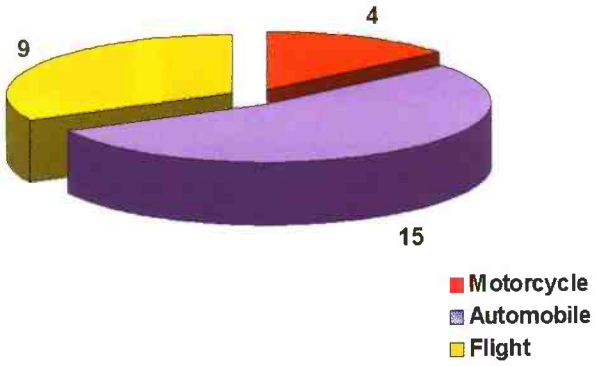
ACC Deaths as of June 2, 2003

161 Dead

102 In Combat
59 due to mishaps
26 in vehicle accidents
21 in helicopter crashes
8 accidental weapons discharges
2 unexploded ordnance
1 from fire
1 from drowning

1 in 3 dead from mishaps

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM



A Few of the Mishaps

April 11, 2003: An active duty airman was fatally injured while riding as a passenger in a four-wheel private motor vehicle, operated by a non-AF civilian who was involved in a **head-on collision with a 40 passenger bus.**

April 27, 2003: A MSgt and a non-AF civilian female passenger were traveling northbound on U.S. Highway 65 approximately 1 mile north of Preston, Missouri, when their **motorcycle was struck head-on** by an automobile that crossed the centerline/medium. The 42-year-old MSgt and his passenger were both pronounced dead at the scene due to injuries. Personal protective equipment was worn.

May 23, 2003: Three active duty AF members and two non-AF civilians were traveling southbound on U.S. Highway 99, 30 miles south of Fresno, California, in a 2001 Explorer. The active duty AF driver was changing lanes and swerved to avoid another vehicle. The vehicle crossed the median and overturned, slid into northbound traffic, and was struck by an oncoming vehicle. Non-AF civilian passenger was thrown from the vehicle and fatally injured. All active duty AF members attended the mandatory Wing Commander Safety Briefing on May 23, 2003. The group was going to Las Vegas, **taking turns driving all night.** The driver was not the owner of the vehicle and had never driven it prior to the mishap. The driver and front seat passenger were **not wearing seat belts.** The rear seat passengers wore seat belts.

May 23, 2003: A SSgt was traveling westbound on I-10 just outside New Orleans, Louisiana, when another vehicle traveling eastbound **crossed the grass median and struck his vehicle on the driver's side** resulting in fatal injuries. The member attended an AETC-directed 4-hour safety briefing on May 22, 2003, and departed Keesler en route to Davis Monthan AFB on May 23rd. He was wearing his seat belt at the time of the mishap and alcohol is not suspected.

June 1, 2003: A 21-year-old, male, SrA, was killed in a single-vehicle motorcycle mishap approximately 20 miles south of Dyess AFB, Texas. The member was driving a new 2003 Honda 600 motorcycle, purchased after his return on Wednesday from a deployment to Guam. The individual did attend the commander-directed post-deployment safety briefing on Thursday, at which motorcycle safety was discussed. The airman's first level supervisor spoke to him the day prior about safe operation of the motorcycle. **Speed was a factor with an excess of 100 miles per hour in a 70 mile per hour zone.** Protective equipment was worn.

Don't become a member of the "Lost Squadron"

FY03 Aircraft

As of May 31, 2003

	Fatal	Aircraft Destroyed
8 AF		
9 AF		HH-60
12 AF		
AWFC		* RQ-1 * RQ-1
ANG (ACC-gained)		
AFRC (ACC-gained)		

FY03 Ground

As of May 31, 2003

	Fatal	Class A	Class B
8 AF		5	2
9 AF		4	1
12 AF		9	0
DRU's		3	0

FY03 Weapons

As of May 31, 2003

	Class A	Class B
8 AF	0	0
9 AF	0	0
12 AF	0	0
AWFC	0	2

Aircraft Notes

Congrats on another month with no rate producing Class A mishaps! This makes 2 months straight that we have been able to protect our assets and keep our equipment and people better prepared for combat. The only Class A Air Combat Command had was a non-rate producing QF-4C that was destroyed by the range safety officer when the aircraft last linked with its ground station. That investigation continues. As we enter the summer months we need to take the time to enjoy what summer has to offer. However, we must keep focused on what we have scheduled in the future. Playing volleyball all day Saturday and Sunday in the summer sun sounds like a great time. I bet it won't be too great if you have a mild sunburn and a 0800 Monday takeoff time for BFM. Even a mild sunburn can make you dehydrated by the time you crank the first engine on a hot day and the pain will keep you from performing to your maximum potential. Enjoy the summer, but make sure you are ready for the demanding environment you are tasked to fly in.

Ground Notes

As of 31 May 2003, there have been 21 Class A mishaps resulting in 19 deaths, two permanent total disabilities, and one property damage mishap. All but one involved private motor vehicles--16 PMV 4 and 4 PMV 2. Several mishaps are still under investigation; individual judgment, speed, alcohol, and lack of seat belt usage were common factors in most of these mishaps.

Weapons Notes

No change from the last update and that's good news. Continue to be vigilant and ensure we're performing explosive operations IAW prescribed procedures. Using tech data and ORM will ensure weapons mishaps are few and far between. Keep up the good work!

Legend

Class A - Permanent Total Disability; Property Damage $1,000,000 or more
Class B - Permanent Partial Disability; Property Damage between $200,000 and $1,000,000
Class C - Lost Workday; Property Damage between $20,000 and $200,000
* Non-rate Producing

Symbols for Mishap Aircraft

Photo by MSgt Terry L. Blevins

Lock on Safety

A crew chief drags a hose to refuel an A-10 Thunderbolt II. This was the first A-10 "hot" refuel in Iraq, and the first time the R-14 fuel hydrant system was used in the hot-refuel process.

The Combat EDGE