

GOMER QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Howdy folks and welcome to our Summer Aggressor Newsletter!

This Quarter we are highlighting the Aggressor Transition Period from 1988-1990. This was an instrumental period in our Aggressor History and we have compiled as complete of history as our memories can recall. Please read at your leisure and we hope you enjoy.

Stan "Spackle" Duvall is taking over our Newsletter editing job for this Newsletter, Wheels Wieland is taking a little time off to hopefully give him some time to improve his health. We look forward to Wheels providing some articles for us in the future and thank him for his dedication to the Aggressors.

Our membership is improving but please keep talking to your Buds to become a member and update their contact information.

Check 6 and, as always, Be Humble,

Mark "Dula" Dulaney

Dula737@aol.com

JOIN THE ASSOCIATION

Visit the new website and complete your application: www.gomersrule.com

There are several levels of dues:

Gomer Annual (Lifetime)
\$ 25.00 a year (\$250 one time)

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Current Gomer Dope

The 65th Aggressor Squadron, which last flew in 2014, is being reactivated as an F-35 squadron at Nellis. The 65th was inactivated in September 2014 due budget constraints in the fiscal 2015 budget.

Nine non-combat capable Lightning IIs will move from Eglin, to Nellis, but not until replacement aircraft arrive in early 2022. In addition, two F-35A aircraft from Edwards, will join the 24th Tactical Air Support Squadron at Nellis. The 24th TASS, an F-16 Fighting Falcon squadron, conducts close-air support training. The aircraft from Edwards will allow additional training for the F-35As as close-air support assets.

Gen. Mike Holmes, the head of ACC commander, recommended the moves to augment fighter tactics and close-air support training for the Air Force's fifth-generation stealth fighters. The new 65th AS will complement the fourth-generation aircraft now being used in the aggressor role.

"Aggressor squadrons have been honing the skills of Air Force pilots since the early 1970s," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David L. Goldfein in the release. "They provide a dose of realism in air exercises and their training value is crucial. These F-35 aggressor aircraft will keep us ahead of adversaries for years to come."

[Vision from Gen Welsh](#)

Aggressor Transition (1988-1990)

By Mark "Dula: Dulaney

As you may recall the first series of Newsletters covered the start-up of the Aggressor Squadrons at Nellis AFB, Clark AB and RAF Alconbury. This Quarter will focus on the Aggressor Transition that occurred from January 1988 to October 1990. This was my time in the Aggressors. I arrived at the 65th AS in May 1987 and had the great fortune of being a part of the transition era, ending my Aggressor tour in November 1993. Here is our story.

In January of 1988 there were four Aggressor Squadrons in the US Air Force, plus the Red Eagles. Ninety-six F-5E aircraft were being flown by amazing Fighter Pilots and controlled by the best GCI controllers anywhere. Maintenance was excellent, morale was high and times were good. Now consider that from that January until October 5, 1990, the Aggressor force went from ninety-six F-5Es to six F-16Cs working out of the Red Flag Building. It was one helluva ride! There was excitement in getting a new jet and developing the F-16 Aggressor Force, and there was pain and turmoil with all the issues that come with downsizing. Dream assignments changed or cut short in a heartbeat, as you will see in some of the personal accounts. Then the final announcement that the

Aggressor Program (as we knew it) would close for good.

In preparation for this Newsletter I asked the leadership at the time to give their accounts of the transition period. I was unable to contact Bill Finnochio, the 26th AS Commander, but Mike "Spike" Jones gave me his insight to the 26th transition. Doug "Zipgun" Melson was the Adversary Tactics Group Commander at Nellis in charge of the 64th, 65th, and the 4477th. He will start off with how the discussions went at the O-6 and above level starting in 1988. Mike "Scotty" Scott was the 4477th Commander at the time and then became the 64th Commander--he was in the middle of everything at the start of the Transition. His account is an excellent record of events as they occurred. We will then get the "other side of the story" as we read the account from Mike "Korn" Koerner in charge of closing the 65th AS. We will feel the pain and frustration of seeing our beloved F-5s departing and losing many great pilots to the Guard, Reserves, airlines or other assignments. We will then go to Aggressor Transition Part 2 with Roger "Buck" Taylor in command of the 64th and subsequent deactivation of the 64th and activation of the 414th CTS / Adversary Tactics Division. Then will follow up with Jim "Wiz" Wisdom's account of the 527th transition process, and a quick blurb about the 26th transition. All great reads.

This Newsletter is long if you read everything, and I encourage you to do so. It is as accurate account of what actually happened as is possible to recreate from memories of 30 years ago.

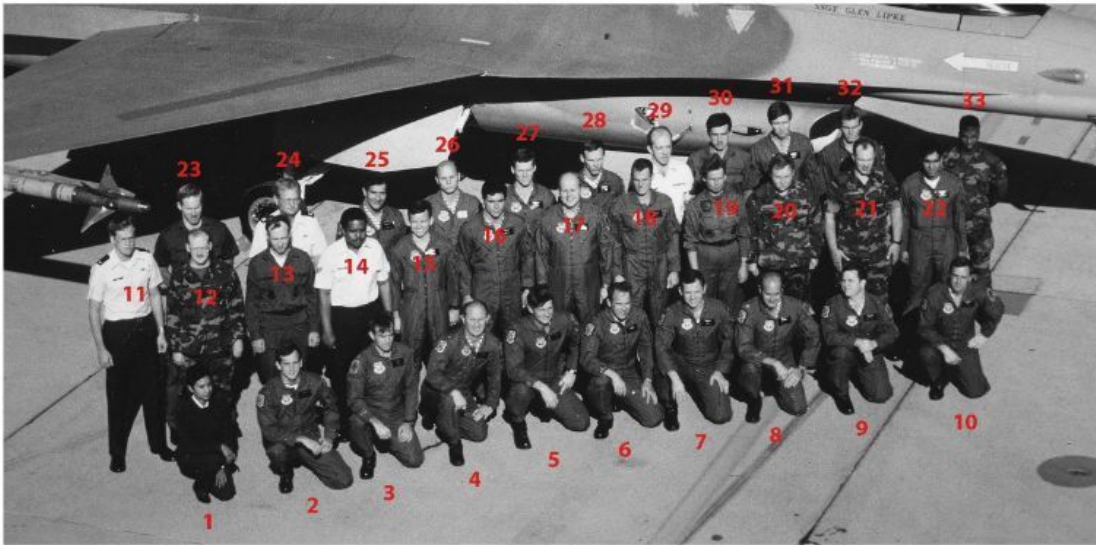
We start with Zipgun Melson's account of being the Nellis ATG Commander and getting the initial word of the "storm" coming to the Aggressor Program.

MELSON LETTER

Now we move to Mile "Scotty" Scott. This is a great account of the transition from Nov '87 to Nov '89. At the end will be the Squadron Photo of the 430th Aggressor Squadron and the 64th Aggressor Squadron under Scotty.

SCOTT LETTER

430th Aggressor Squadron



1. SrA Ligaya M. Lagmay
2. Cpt Neal R. Carbaugh
3. Maj Robert B. Iverson
4. Maj Perry Mize
5. LTC Roger E. Taylor
6. LTC Michael R. Scott
7. Maj Ricardo M. Cazessus
8. Maj Mark A. DuLaney
9. Cpt. Randy A. Roebuck
10. Cpt Kevin Pierce
11. 1Lt Eugene Lee
12. Cpt Kent Bennett
13. Sgt Robert W. Melland
14. SSgt Clarence L. Jones
15. Cpt Paul E. Smith
16. Cpt Rick E. Benik
17. Maj John G. Baker
18. Cpt Christopher S. Cepelcha
19. SSgt Sheri Bernard
20. SSgt Ulysses Marschall
21. SSgt Stephen H. Readman
22. Cpt Robert J. Alvarez
23. Cpt Warren Hudson
24. Cpt Terry L. Weight
25. Cpt Jimmie L. Yawn, Jr.
26. Cpt Brian Neeves
27. Cpt James D. Dodson
28. Cpt Michael Frahm
29. SSgt Ronald S. Fox
30. Sgt Robin L. Maslow
31. Cpt Thomas M. Sykes
32. Cpt Dillon McFarland
33. Sgt Michael Garrett

64th Aggressor Squadron



- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1. SSgt. Jim Craft | 16. Capt. Paul Smith (GCI Student) | 31. Capt. Kent Bennett |
| 2. Capt. Warren Hudson | 17. Capt. Greg O'Connor (Pilot Student) | 32. Capt. Frank Brady |
| 3. Maj. Rick Benik | 18. Lt. Aaron Hagmier (GCI Student) | 33. SSgt. Steve Readman |
| 4. Maj. Tom Sykes | 19. Capt. Ivan Mieth (Pilot Student) | 34. Capt. John Komora |
| 5. Lt. Klesa Christian | 20. Ms. Cindy Jackson (Secretary) | 35. Capt. Mark Yakobe |
| 6. Maj. Rick Cazessus | 21. Capt. Ted Brewer (Pilot Student) | 36. Capt. Mike Meyer |
| 7. LTC Mike Scott | 22. Capt. Ken Gurley (Pilot Student) | 37. Capt. Bob Branyon |
| 8. Maj. Mark DuLaney | 23. SrA. Tim Nockema | 38. Capt. Kyle Skalisky |
| 9. Col. Doug Melson | 24. Capt. Chris Ceplecha | 39. Capt. Dave Dodson |
| 10. Capt. Jimmie Yawn | 25. Capt. Jimmie Yawn | 40. Capt. Brian Neeves |
| 11. Capt. Kurt Tek | 26. Sgt. Mike Garrett | 41. Sgt. Rick Felix |
| 12. Capt. Mike Frahm | 27. Capt. Paul Smith | 42. Capt. Terry Fornof |
| 13. SSgt. Clarence Jones | 28. Capt. Randy Morris | 43. Capt. Al Weggemann |
| 14. Capt. Mike Brown | 29. SSgt. Dave Harnoen | 44. Capt. Dillon McFarland |
| 15. Lt. Simonson (GCI) | 30. Capt. Al Hines | 45. Capt. Tom McDonald |

As we move into Korn Koerner's account of the 65th deactivation process you can feel the frustration and turmoil of the downsizing process and all of its issues that were present.

KOERNER LETTER

Buck Taylor was the 2nd F-16 64th AS Commander and the 1st 414 CTS / Adversary Tactics Commander. Here is his story compiled with inputs from Dula DuLaney. Note the impact of the Aggressor final deployment to Eglin AFB in August 1990.

TAYLOR LETTER



I will fill in for the 26th AS transition with the input I received from Spike Jones. PACAF had moved the 26th to Kadena and the Aggressor pilots were flying F-15s while awaiting their F-16s. My vague memory is they may have also been using Kunsan F-16s as well. The word came down that the Aggressor Program was being discontinued and the squadron pretty much disbanded at that point before they could get established. I welcome more information from any Gomer that was part of the 26th transition process.



Finally, We end with Jim “Wiz” Wisdom’s account from USAFE’s 527th AS.

WISDOM LETTER

A final comment, it was an amazing era and it was such an honor for me to be associated with the outstanding people who makeup the Aggressors. A philosophy of Excellence and Humility with a “can-do” attitude in every undertaking, truly a special group of people. There were a lot of moving parts in those 33 months and it was all done with skill, hard work, long hours, and always with a “can-do” attitude of excellence. In short, “Aggressor Standard”!

Get your Gomer gear!

**For patches, lanyards and zaps:
[https://www.aviatorgear.com/search.aspx?
searchterm=aggressor&sortby=Price:ASC](https://www.aviatorgear.com/search.aspx?searchterm=aggressor&sortby=Price:ASC)**

For t-shirts, coins, and other items, call Mr. Jan Ransom at the 64th at (702) 652-2052

IN MEMORIAM



**In memoriam
of those
who've flown
West**

**Dan "Dawg"
Delane**

Fighter Pilot
Aug 1952 - Jun 2019

Godspeed



Gomers | USAF Aggressor Association | gomersrule@gmail.com

STAY CONNECTED

