

GOMER QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Welcome to the Fall 2019 Aggressor Newsletter.

In this addition we will highlight the 57th Information Aggressor Squadron (IAS) and the 177th IAS. The commanders were kind enough to take time out of their busy schedule to answer my questions about the Cyber Aggressors. They gave an excellent perspective on their operations, though I'm sure there is much more that if they told us they would then have to shoot us.

I also included an email I received from Rick "Raoul" Benick relating his post Aggressor Life and how he was able to continue the mission after the 88-90 Aggressor Transition era.

The Nellis AFB Airshow, Aviation Nation, was held on November 15-17, 2019. The 64th Aggressors with some funding from your Aggressor Association hosted a Chalet for the Aggressor Nation. It was well attended and all had a great time. Though it was not quite the location we had initially imagined. We thank the 64th and the Adversary Tactics Group for hosting such and allowing your Aggressor Association to be part of the festivities. As a side note, there is consideration of having Aviation Nation be the official Airshow for the 75th Anniversary of the US Air Force in 2022. If all the stars align it would be pretty cool if our 50th and the AF 75th were celebrated together. We'll see!

Also, you should have received a notice of the 64th AS Christmas Party. We "Seasoned" Aggressors have been invited as well. Contact Jessie "Fonix" James at Jessie.james.1@us.af.mil to make a reservation. We can all sit at the "OI Gomers" table.

We are doing pretty well on our Membership, about 250 have signed up. But, now all of you that signed up for the Annual Membership, it may be time to renew again. Notices have gone out, so please renew. Also, you may consider updating to a Lifetime Membership so you don't have to get those pesky notices anymore....LOL! Remember all money (except Association expenses and my beer allowance) is earmarked for our 50th Reunion in 2022. We will need about \$50,000 seed money to have the celebration we expect and we ain't there yet!

Once again we find ourselves without an Editor for our Newsletter. Col Stan Duvall retired last month and has embarked on new schooling for his next career, so he had to bow out. If you would like to help out your Association please throw your name in the hat.

Check 6, and Be Humble

Mark “Dula” DuLaney

Dula737@aol.com

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Cyber Aggressors



In this Newsletter I wanted to get a perspective of the Cyber Aggressors.

So I asked LtCol Andrew Vanderziel the Commander of the 177 Information Aggressor Squadron (IAS) and LtCol Nikita “Rambler” Belikov, Commander of the 57 IAS to provide us with an update on the mission etc from these two Aggressor Squadrons. All pretty new to us older “Seasoned” Aggressors. One thing I found pretty interesting is that the 57 IAS is (as you would expect) based at Nellis AFB. However, the 177 IAS is a Kansas Air National Guard unit.

So I sent them a few questions to try to get a perspective of what they do. Mostly they spoof, listen, hack and try to disrupt Blue Operations. They also have a role in helping to develop US systems that prevent the “bad” guys from doing all the above. So, here goes.

1) What is the Mission of the 177 and 57 IAS?

a. The 57 IAS and 177 IAS mission is nested within the Adversary Tactics Group's broader "know, teach, and replicate" charter with specificity toward the cyber domain: "Know, teach, and replicate advanced, realistic, and credible adversary cyber and information operations to train USAF, Joint, and Coalition personnel and assess DoD weapon systems."

2) How do you select your squadron members?

a. The 57 IAS is comprised of officers, enlisted, and civilians from multiple AFSCs: Cyber Operations, Intelligence, Developmental Engineer, and Information Operations. Officer selection is dependent on AFPC's centralized officer assignment process with very little input from the squadron. The MAJCOM Enlisted Career Field Managers allow for substantially deeper squadron involvement and reach out to our Superintendent for input when candidates submit their records to them for assignment selection to the IAS

b. The 177 IAS hire to the position through a normal hiring process, applicants may not have all the experience up front – but they need passion and dedication to learn. For military positions, members would become part of the Kansas Air National Guard. Contractors and GS members vary based on the position.

3) How are they trained?

a. The 57 IAS Initial Qualification and Mission Qualification Training pipelines are all internally developed and executed, and tilt very heavily towards our narrow CONOPS for creating effects, minimizing risk, and achieving desired objectives in either test or exercise scenarios.

b. The 177 IAS uses an apprenticeship model. Our initial training teaches new members our worldview, our objectives, and how our tools function. Once they master those they become a basic team member. At that point they are paired with "mentors" or "trainers" who see where their technical skills stand and which training route is best. It usually takes 2-3 years from there before that member is considered senior (senior team member). We then nominate those who are truly qualified for further training (towards our technical lead position), and they are paired with a current technical lead. Best case scenario another year or two and they become qualified as a technical lead themselves. We also have other roles, which we also train to in-house.

4) What is the daily routine of a Cyber Aggressor?

a. For the 57 IAS Red Flags create an "all-hands" effect, so the whole squadron is aligned to that event in execution. When we're not fully in execution of that mission, we're broken out into much smaller teams and usually occupy a temporal slot somewhere along the operational PBED continuum on a staggered orientation for either smaller exercises or test events.

b. The 177 IAS is physically separate from Red Flag operations, so we focus on CCMD support through the DOT&E Cyber Assessment Program and adversarial assessments (AA) through AFOTEC. AAs are part of Operational Testing, and our focus is on cyber

effects we can impact on new or existing Weapon Systems. We want to provide decision makers the data necessary for good risk decision making as they field or upgrade these systems.

5) What exercises or "Flags" do ya'll participate in?

a. the 57 IAS has settled into an intense but predictable annual battle rhythm of supporting the Nellis enterprise--RED FLAG and WSINT, conducting 3-5 Adversarial Assessments for weapon systems in operational test phases of the acquisition cycle, providing OPFOR effects for cyber in-domain exercises like 24 AF's BLACK DEMON and USCYBERCOM's CYBER FLAG, and have supported Combatant Command Tier-1 exercises with OPFOR effects 1-2 times a year. Our RED FLAG threat replication profile is prioritized on multi-domain integration, while other events have a much narrower focus on cyber effects for either training or test outcomes.

b. The 177 IAS support around 10 different CCMD exercises annually, and another 15-20 Assessments annually. So there's always an event or two in work year-round, as well as the occasional high-vis request for on-the-spot support.

AGGRESSOR AFTERLIFE STORY

By Rick "Raoul" Benik

Fellow Gomers,

The following is an email sent to me by Rick "Raoul" Benick after our last Aggressor Newsletter. I thought his story was pretty cool and appropriate for our community to understand how important our Aggressor Mission was over the years. As a quick background understanding, Raoul was one of the 474th TFW Pilots that came to the Aggressors when we initially converted to F-16As within the 430th TFS. That group of folks went through the Aggressor F-16 Validation Course, and then were a core group that helped us (non-Viper) guys get more comfortable in the jet. All very talented pilots and became outstanding Aggressors. Thanks Raoul for sharing and I hope everyone enjoys.

Raoul here! Great articles on the recent Aggressor articles from our transition era. I think you know when I left the 64th in Dec 89, I headed to Deci in Jan 90, a few months after the announcement the Aggressors would be reduced to Red Flag Adversaries. After a couple of months deciding who I was going to be attached to, since the Deci assignment had been a flying staff tour as the Permanent Party Aggressor, "Shooter" Summers, 613 FS CC, saw my name at Torrejon Stand-up and took me as an attached flyer. I knew Shooter from his TAC IG days when he flew with the 428 FS at Nellis during any OREs. Shooter's squadron was headed to Deci for a deployment and called me if they could also shoot the Dart (I was the POC for monitoring this civilian contract). He mentioned seeing my name at stand-up and would attach me to Brock Strom's flight, a former 428th pilot, whom I knew well. Since I didn't need any Bomb Squares..., AND wasn't "qualified" to drop bombs in a C-Model (our Aggressor C-Model checkout, my first exposure to a C, only included Air-to-Air systems... ;-), I convinced Shooter I was only qualified in a C Model for Air-to-Air sorties!

So-o-o, I called myself "The One Man Aggressor Band" and began providing units all over USAFE with Russian formations out of our Aggressor playbook, using wingmen in the squadrons who invited me to come fly, or during their Deci visits, to include Weapons School work-ups for candidates getting ready for Nellis.

Shortly thereafter, with the unification of Germany, Mig 29s deployed to Deci to fly against Spang's F-16s in 1v1s. I met a few of the former E German MiG 29 pilots, though they weren't allowed to fly in Deci's airspace due to the lack of compatible Nav Aids (the weather had to be VFR), and their English was a little rough. Italian Deci Staff were worried a former E German pilot would get lost trying to find his way back and unable to communicate properly!

Having been the back-up briefer for the MiG 29 during my 64 AS days, during that Deci tour, I was like a kid in a candy store, sitting in a Mig 29, asking all kinds of questions to a new West German pilot who recently got checked out in the jet. USAFE Eagles also started flying against the German Mig 29s over Germany with several classified Intel reports highlighting the results of those sorties. When Sadaam invaded Kuwait in Aug 90, many of the USAFE units were gearing up for deployment. Since Iraq had a few Mig 29s, I used the Intel Reports previously mentioned, the debriefs from the Deci 1v1s, and my knowledge of the Mig 29 to prep the TJ units for any possible engagements against a Mig and what to possibly expect. Overall, Deci wasn't a follow-on Aggressor Tour I said, "YES! YES!" When "Bovie" Bovenizer offered it to me, thanks to those great years at Nellis with you and our gang at the 64th, I made the best of it, trying in my own little way of carrying on the Aggressor tradition.

I'm sure you'll agree, Dula, I felt my time at the 64th was the best assignment I ever had, proud to share the knowledge learned from that experience. Thanks for all you do, Dula, in keeping the Aggressor spirit alive and well.

Rick "Raoul" Benik

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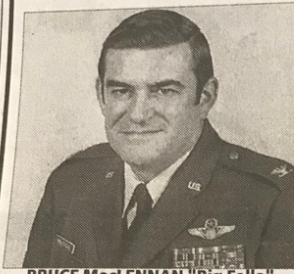
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DEATH NOTICE

MacLENNAN



BRUCE MacLENNAN "Big Fella"
Colonel USAF (Retired)



EILEEN CRAWLEY MacLENNAN

Colonel (USAF, retired) Bruce "Big Fella" MacLennan, 84, of Alexandria, VA, passed away on September 10, 2019, after battling cancer for four years. He was preceded in death by his wife of 53 years, Eileen Crawley MacLennan, 83, who passed away on August 17, 2019, of arteriosclerosis and complications.

Bruce, born in Quincy, MA to Alger and Virginia MacLennan in 1935, graduated from Braintree (MA) High School, Thayer Academy, and The University of New Hampshire. He joined The Air Force through ROTC in April, 1959, and began a 30-year career, fulfilling his childhood ambition of flying high-performance fighter aircraft, culminating in command of USAF's first F-5 Fighter Aggressor Squadron. He served three tours in Southeast Asia in the 1960s, including two tours in The F-4 Phantom, earning two Distinguished Flying Crosses. Colonel MacLennan retired from The Weapons and Plans Division at The Pentagon in 1989. He was predeceased by his brother, Everett, and is survived by his brother, John, and five nephews and nieces.

Eileen Fern Crawley, born in Pittsburgh to Patrick and Cecelia Crawley in 1936, grew up in Southern California. She began her career as a dance instructor at Arthur Murray and as a professional model. In 1958, she was accepted into The American Airlines Flight Attendant program and quickly advanced to become one of the youngest Stewardess Supervisors at American Airlines. Bruce and Eileen married in July 1966. She successfully balanced two careers for 23 years as a Supervisor at American and as an Air Force Officer's wife. She continued to fly as The Senior Attendant in the Washington-National area, retiring in 2003 after 45 years of service. In retirement, Eileen took her love of Lhasa Apso dogs, which she had bred and shown for many years as Benji-Lin Kennels, to the next phase—stewarding and judging, becoming one of the more active judges in The Non-Sporting Group. Eileen remained active in the dog show world until a stroke in November 2017. She was predeceased by her brother, Donald, and is survived by her brother, William, and two nephews and one niece.

Plans for interment and commitment services at Arlington National Cemetery are yet to be finalized. In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Bruce may be directed to the Air Force Aid Society, 1550 Crystal Drive, Suite 809, Arlington, VA 22202; afas.org. In memory of Eileen, donations may be made to Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA), 4101 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304; alexandrianimals.org.

Aggressors,

It was brought to our attention that the founding commander of the 527th Aggressor Squadron at Alconbury, UK, Bruce "Big Fella" MacLennan, passed away Sept 10, 2019. We have no details other than what is in his obit, but will pass along if we hear any other news.

Godspeed "Big Fella", Blue Skies forever!

Dula

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Gomers | USAF Aggressor Association | gomersrule@gmail.com

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