PACIFIC AIR FORCES DEMONSTRATION TEAM

PACAF

F-16 Demo Team

MEDIA KIT

PACAF F-16 Demonstration Team Fact Sheet

Mission

The Pacific Air Forces F-16 Demonstration Team exemplifies the caliber of Airmen and combat air power the U.S. Air Force provides in the Indo-Pacific region by demonstrating the capabilities of the F-16 Fighting Falcon to the delight of aviation enthusiasts everywhere. The team's primary mission is to inspire goodwill and promote positive relations between the U.S. and partner nations across the Western Pacific by exhibiting an exciting display of aerial maneuverability and dedication to the U.S. Air Force core values.

Background

The PACAF F-16 Demonstration Team is the premier U.S. aerial demonstration team in the Indo-Pacific region. The team has operated out of the 35th Fighter Wing, Misawa Air Base, Japan, since its inception in 1995 when it became the first demonstration team to fly the block 50 version of the F-16 Fighting Falcon.

The PACAF F-16 Demo Team roster includes a pilot/commander, pilot safety officers, maintainers, and public affairs personnel from several units across the 35th Fighter Wing who dedicate themselves to performing a seamless DEMO! Routine, experiencing the culture of the airshow locations and spending time interacting with fans, aviation enthusiasts, the local communities, and media during airshows.

F-16 Fighting Falcon Fact Sheet

Mission

The F-16 Fighting Falcon is a compact, multi-role fighter aircraft. It is highly maneuverable and has proven itself in air-to-air combat and air-to-surface attack. It provides a relatively low-cost, high-performance weapon system for the United States and allied nations.

Features

In an air combat role, the F-16's maneuverability and combat radius (distance it can fly to enter air combat, stay, fight and return) exceed that of all potential threat fighter aircraft. It can locate targets in all weather conditions and detect low flying aircraft in radar ground clutter. In an air-to-surface role, the F-16 can fly more than 500 miles (860 kilometers), deliver its weapons with superior accuracy, defend itself against enemy aircraft, and return to its starting point. An all-weather capability allows it to accurately deliver ordnance during non-visual bombing conditions.

In designing the F-16, advanced aerospace science and proven reliable systems from other aircraft such as the F-15 and F-111 were selected. These were combined to simplify the airplane and reduce its size, purchase price, maintenance costs and weight. The light weight of the fuselage is achieved without reducing its strength. With a full load of internal fuel, the F-16 can withstand up to nine G's -- nine times the force of gravity -- which exceeds the capability of other current fighter aircraft.

The cockpit and its bubble canopy give the pilot unobstructed forward and upward vision, and greatly improved vision over the side and to the rear. The seat-back angle was expanded from the usual 13 degrees to 30 degrees, increasing pilot comfort and gravity force tolerance. The pilot has excellent flight control of the F-16 through its "fly-by-wire" system. Electrical wires relay commands, replacing the usual cables and linkage controls. For easy and accurate control of the aircraft during high G-force combat maneuvers, a side stick controller is used instead of the conventional center-mounted stick. Hand pressure on the side stick controller sends electrical signals to actuators of flight control surfaces such as ailerons and rudder.

Avionics systems include a highly accurate enhanced global positioning and inertial navigation systems, or EGI, in which computers provide steering information to the pilot. The plane has UHF and VHF radios plus an instrument landing system. It also has a warning system and modular countermeasure pods to be used against airborne or surface electronic threats. The fuselage has space for additional avionics systems.

Background

The F-16A, a single-seat model, first flew in December 1976. The first operational F-16A was delivered in January 1979 to the 388th Tactical Fighter Wing at Hill Air Force Base, Utah.

The F-16B, a two-seat model, has tandem cockpits that are about the same size as the one in the A model. Its bubble canopy extends to cover the second cockpit. To make room for the second cockpit, the forward fuselage fuel tank and avionics growth space were reduced. During training, the forward cockpit is used by a student pilot with an instructor pilot in the rear cockpit.

All F-16s delivered since November 1981 have built-in structural and wiring provisions and systems architecture that permit expansion of the multirole flexibility to perform precision strike, night attack and beyond-visual-range interception missions. This improvement program led to the F-16C and F-16D aircraft, which are the single- and two-place counterparts to the F-16A/B, and incorporate the latest cockpit control and display technology. All active units and many Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve units have converted to the F-16C/D.

The F-16 was built under an unusual agreement creating a consortium between the United States and four NATO countries: Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway. These countries jointly produced with the United States an initial 348 F-16s for their air forces. Final airframe assembly lines were located in Belgium and the Netherlands. The consortium's F-16s are assembled from components manufactured in all five countries. Belgium also provides final assembly of the F100 engine used in the European F-16s. Recently, Portugal joined the consortium. The long-term benefits of this program will be technology transfer among the nations producing the F-16, and a common-use aircraft for NATO nations. This program increases the supply and availability of repair parts in Europe and improves the F-16's combat readiness.

U.S. Air Force F-16 multirole fighters were deployed to the Persian Gulf in 1991 in support of Operation Desert Storm, where more sorties were flown than with any other aircraft. These fighters were used to attack airfields, military production facilities, Scud missiles sites and a variety of other targets.

During Operation Allied Force, U.S. Air Force F-16 multirole fighters flew a variety of missions to include suppression of enemy air defense, offensive counter air, defensive counter air, close air support and forward air controller missions. Mission results were outstanding as these fighters destroyed radar sites, vehicles, tanks, MiGs and buildings.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, the F-16 has been a major component of the combat forces committed to the war on terrorism flying thousands of sorties in support of operations Noble Eagle (Homeland Defense), Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Iraqi Freedom.

General Characteristics

- Primary Function: multirole fighter
- Contractor: Lockheed Martin Corp.
- Thrust: F-16C/D, 27,000 pounds
- Wingspan: 32 feet, 8 inches (9.8 meters)
- Length: 49 feet, 5 inches (14.8 meters)
- Height: 16 feet (4.8 meters)
- Weight: 19,700 pounds without fuel (8,936 kilograms)
- Maximum Takeoff Weight: 37,500 pounds (16,875 kilograms)
- Fuel Capacity: 7,000 pounds internal (3,175 kilograms); typical capacity, 12,000 pounds with two external tanks (5443 kilograms)

- **Payload: Two 2,000-pound bombs, two AIM-9, two AIM-120 and two 2400-pound external fuel tanks**
- **Speed: 1,500 mph (Mach 2 at altitude)**
- **Range: More than 2,002 miles ferry range (1,740 nautical miles)**
- **Ceiling: Above 50,000 feet (15 kilometers)**
- **Armament: One M-61A1 20mm multibarrel cannon with 500 rounds; external stations can carry up to six air-to-air missiles, conventional air-to-air and air-to-surface munitions and electronic countermeasure pods**
- **Unit Cost: F-16A/B , $14.6 million (fiscal 98 constant dollars); F-16C/D,$18.8 million (fiscal 98 constant dollars)**

The 35th Fighter Wing

The 35th Fighter Wing is the host unit at Misawa Air Base -- the northernmost U.S. installation in Japan and the only bilateral, joint-service, civilian-use air base in the Pacific. Misawa Air Base is located on the shores of Lake Ogawara in Misawa City in the Aomori Prefecture.

Mission

PROTECT American national security interest,

DEFEND Japan and American Allies/Partners;

DETER **Global Aggression... AND if called upon - fight and WIN!**

History

Activated at Johnson Air Base, Japan on August 10, 1948, the 35th Fighter Wing carries the bestowed honor of the Army Air Force's 35th Fighter Group, established on December 22, 1939. During the course of World War II, the 35th Fighter Group fought through the Pacific from Australia to Japan. Richard I. Bong, the Air Force's all-time, top scoring ace, scored his first aerial victories while temporarily attached to the group. However, the 35th Fighter Group and 35th Fighter Wing's all-time top ace was Thomas J. Lynch, who scored 20 aerial victories before being shot down over New Guinea. Following World War II, the group began occupation and air defense duties on mainland Japan. In 1948, the 35th Fighter Wing assumed operational command of the 35th Fighter Group and continued the group's mission set from Johnson Air Base.

In 1950, the 35th Fighter Wing was one of the first units to respond to the crisis in Korea by flying missions from mainland Japan to support the Pusan Perimeter. In July, the 35th Fighter Wing's operations group and two fighter squadrons deployed to Korea for combat; however, the wing -- with one assigned and one attached squadron -- flew air defense and photographic reconnaissance missions in Japan. In December, the wing headquarters moved without personnel or equipment to South Korea and assumed the resources of the 6150th Tactical Support Wing. From Korea, the 35th Fighter Wing flew F-51 Mustang aircraft in combat operations, including armed reconnaissance, bomber escort, interdiction, and ground support. After suffering heavy causalities, the unit returned to Japan in May 1951 where it remained until its inactivation in October 1957.

In 1966, the Air Force reactivated the 35th Fighter Wing for combat operations at Da Nang Air Base in Vietnam. The wing remained at Da Nang for five months where it scored four aerial victories. These victories made the 35th Fighter Wing one of the few wings in the U.S. Air Force to have attained aerial victories in World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. In October 1966, the 35th Fighter Wing relocated to Phan Rang Air Base where it flew vided air support of ground forces, interdiction, visual and armed reconnaissance, strike assessment photography, escort, close and direct air support and rapid reaction alert missions. The wing continued operations from Phan Rang until 1971 when the unit inactivated with the gradual drawdown of U.S. forces in Vietnam.

The 35th Fighter Wing reactivated the same year at George Air Force Base where it began its long association with the Wild Weasel mission. Initially, the wing provided exercise, test, and training for F-4 aircrew and maintenance personnel. However, in July 1973, the wing began training replacement aircrews for the F-105G, Wild Weasel III aircraft. The Wild Weasel mission is the suppression and destruction of enemy air defenses and the protection of other aircraft from enemy surface-to-air missile systems. In 1975, the wing began similar training for the F-4C, Wild Weasel IV, aircrews.

While assigned to George Air Force Base, the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing (Provisional) activated at Shaikh Isa Air Base in Bahrain in support of Operation DESERT SHIELD in 1990. In the first days of Operation DESERT STORM, the invasion of Iraq, Wild Weasel aircrews of the wing led and protected waves of fighter-bombers in hostile Iraqi airspace. Throughout the conflict, the wing provided Wild Weasel support, and by the end of the war, the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing (Provisional) had destroyed 254 radar sites, effectively shutting down the entire Iraqi air defense system. The wing played an essential role in the successful air campaign and completed 3,072 combat sorties totaling more than 10,000 flight hours. Meanwhile, A Base Realignment and Closure commission selected George Air Force Base for closure, and the wing began phasing down and inactivated in December 1992.

In an effort to protect its legacy, the Air Force instituted a heritage scoring system to ensure units with distinguished histories remained active. Out of more than 200 units, the 35th Fighter Wing ranked third, ensuring its place among active units. As a result, the Air Force activated the 35th Wing at Naval Air Station Keflavik, Iceland, on May 31, 1993, flying air defense missions in the F-15C Eagle. Sixteen months later the 35th Fighter Wing inactivated at Keflavik and activated the same day at Misawa Air Base, Japan. At Misawa AB, the wing resumed Wild Weasel operations. After achieving initial operational capability on F-16CJ aircraft in 1996, the 13th and 14th Fighter Squadrons and Airmen of the 35th Fighter Wing have repeatedly deployed in support of Operations SOUTHERN, NORTHERN WATCH, IRAQI FREEDOM, NEW DAWN, and ENDURING FREEDOM in Southwest Asia.

Captain Ethan "Bantam" Smith

Demonstration Team Commander/Pilot

Capt. Ethan J. Smith is the Pacific Air Forces F-16 Demonstration Team commander and Demonstration Pilot. In this position, he leads a team of pilot safety officers, maintainers, and public affairs personnel in demonstrating the aerial capabilities of the F-16 Fighting Falcon at airshows across the Pacific area of responsibility. Capt. Smith oversees live performances in front of more than one million spectators annually, supporting U.S. Air Force strategic engagement efforts in the region. He also serves as an F-16 pilot assigned to the 13th Fighter Squadron, Misawa Air Base, Japan.

Capt. Smith commissioned in the Air Force through the Officer Training School program in June 2018. He completed Undergraduate Pilot Training at Vance Air Force Base in August 2019 and graduated Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals at Randolph Air Force Base in December 2019. He then went on to graduate from F-16 B-Course at Holloman Air Force Base. Smith is assigned to the 13th FS, Misawa AB, where he has held many positions in the squadron prior to his current assignment.

EDUCATION:

2016 Bachelor of Science, Aeronautics, University of Central Missouri

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **April 2018 - June 2018, Cadet, Officer Training School, Maxwell AFB, Alabama**
2. **June 2018 - Aug 2019, Student Pilot, Undergraduate Pilot Training, Vance AFB, Oklahoma**
3. **Aug 2019 - Dec 2019, Student Pilot, Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals, Randolph AFB, Texas**
4. **Dec 2019 - Nov 2020, Student Pilot, F-16 B-Course, Holloman AFM, New Mexico**
5. **Jan 2021 - Present, F-16 Pilot, 13th Fighter Squadron, Misawa AB, Japan**
6. **May 2023 - Present, PACAF F-16 Demonstration Team commander/pilot**

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

Air Force Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters
National Defense Service Medal
Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION:

First Lieutenant June 2020
Captain June 2022

PACAF F-16 Demonstration Team

MSgt Bradley Pippin
Superintendent

TSgt Kyle "West" Gove
Assistant Superintendent

SSgt Lucas "Bru" Haas
Lead crew chief

SSgt Caleb "Thrust" Butler
Propulsion Specialist

SSgt Maisen "RAZzz" Morigeau
Crew Chief

SrA Matthew "Bonzai" Flores
E&E Specialist

SrA Sara "Silver" MacGowan
Avionics Specialist

SSgt Peter "Turn" Reft
Public Affairs

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Social Media Pages

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For specific questions or further information regarding the media kit, please contact the team Public Affairs Representative, Staff Sgt Peter Reft at (315)226-3075 or email 35fw.dt.pacafviperdemo@us.af.mil.

Pacific Air Forces F-16 Demonstration Team members pose for a photo with the Japan Air Self-Defense Force Blue Impulse Demonstration Team at Matsushima Air Base, Japan, Aug. 27, 2023.