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RCS: HAF-CHO(AR) 7101

HISTORY OF THE 8TH TACTICAL FIGHTING WING

1 OCTOBER THROUGH 31 DECEMBER 1972

Stationed at:

USON ROYAL THAI AIR FORCE BASE, TAIWAN

Assigned to:

~~13th Air Force~~

13th AIR FORCE

PACIFIC AIR FORCES

VOLUME I

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Event</u>
19 Dec 72		8th TFW aircraft attacked the Hanoi Radcom Transmitter 2, destroyed several building and caused heavy damage to the control building.
20 & 26 Dec 72		Nine flights of aircraft from the wing struck the Hanoi Transformer Station at Dong Anh, destroying many power line stanchions and causing moderate damage to support structures.
21 Dec 72		Spectre 17, AC-130A, downed by AAA fire in Steel Tiger. Two crewmembers recovered, 14 MIA.
21 Dec 72		8th TFW aircraft attacked and destroyed Hanoi AM Radio Transmitter at Me Tri with LGBs.
21 Dec 72		8th TFW F-4s inflicted heavy damage to the Hanoi railroad classification yard and shops.
21 Dec 72		8th TFW F-4s attacked the Hanoi Thermal Power Plant with LGBs and scored several direct hits, inflicting heavy damage to the boiler house.
27 Dec 72		8th TFW aircraft again attacked and destroyed the Hanoi AM Radio Transmitter at Me Tri.
27 Dec 72		8th TFW aircraft again attacked the Hanoi Radcom Transmitter 2 and caused additional moderate damage to support buildings.



	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Total</u>
Boats destroyed	26	24	6	56
damaged	18	23	6	47
KBA	76	162	74	312

Aircraft Losses

41

(S) The following aircraft losses occurred during the quarter:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Call sign</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Cause</u>	<u>Crew Status</u>
5 Oct	Yucca 01	F-4D	MIG-21	MIA
5 Oct	Wolf 06	F-4E	Suspected AAA	MIA
6 Oct	Walnut 04	F-4E	Suspected AAA	MIA
17 Oct	Owl 09	F-4D	Altimeter failure	Recovered
27 Oct	Wolf 01	F-4E	Possible AAA	Recovered
21 Dec	Spectre 17	AC-130A	AAA	2 Recovered 14 MIA

(S) Out of the 24 crewmembers that were shot down during the quarter, only 4 were recovered. The remaining 20 are listed as missing in action. One F-4D aircraft was lost off the end of the Ubon runway as a result of an altimeter failure; both crewmembers were recovered in good condition. The causes for two of the aircraft losses (both F-4Es) are unknown; however, AAA is suspected. One F-4D was lost to a MIG-21 ATOLL missile while over NVN and one F-4E was lost to AAA while working as a Wolf fast FAC in RP-1.

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(S) The most tragic aircraft loss occurred 21 December when Spectre 17 was hit by AAA fire while on an armed reconnaissance mission in Steel Tiger sectors VR 5 and VR 6. Five 37mm shells apparently pierced the fuselage and left wing of the AC-130 gunship. Immediately when hit, the pilot turned the aircraft toward Ubon and

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checked with the crewmembers for injuries. Although all four engines were still operating, the hydraulic system was lost and hydraulic fluid and fuel covered the floor of the cargo bay. Possibly because the interphone was operating intermittently, the flight deck and booth personnel did not appear to recognize the seriousness of their situation. Consequently, no bailout preparation signal was sounded and many of the crewmembers remained in their positions, unaware of the approaching danger. Approximately 10 minutes after the hit, the left wing failed, causing an explosion, and the AC-130 spiraled into the ground.⁴³

Quickly, Search and Rescue (SAR) operations were begun. In two hours, two crewmen were rescued and on their way to Nakhon Phanom Air Base.⁴⁴ Apparently, due to poor communication on their part, the remaining crewmen did not escape the burning aircraft before impact.⁴⁵ These 14 crewmen are listed as MIA.⁴⁶

TDY Squadrons

Two TDY fighter squadrons continued to support the 8th TFW in its mission in SEA. The 334th Tactical Fighter Squadron (TFS) remained at Ubon throughout the entire quarter while the 335th TFS rotated and was replaced by the 308th TFS. The 334th and 335th were TDY from the 4th Tactical Fighter Wing based at Seymour-Johnson AFB, North Carolina.⁴⁷ The 308th TFS is TDY from Homestead AFB, Florida.

These squadrons served the wing in all phases of combat operations during the quarter. During Linebacker operations, they provided the critical chaff corridors for strike aircraft in the most heavily defended areas of NVN. During the counter logistics phase,

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