

Missions for America

*Semper vigilans!*  
*Semper volans!*



## The Coastwatcher

Newsletter of the Thames River Composite Squadron  
GON  
Connecticut Wing  
Civil Air Patrol

<http://capct075.web.officelive.com/default.aspx>

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### SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS

17 JAN-TRCS Meeting-AE Brief-Rocketto  
18 JAN-Wing Staff Meeting  
24 JAN-TRCS Meeting-Air Photos-Doucette  
31 JAN-TRCS Meeting-Sr.-Table Top SAREX  
Cadet-film at Poquonnock Bridge F. H.

04-05 FEB-Unit commander's Course Course  
07 FEB-TRCS Meeting-TRCS Commander's Call  
14 FEB-TRCS Meeting-Independent Work  
15 FEB-Wing Staff Meeting  
21 FEB-TRCS Meeting-Safety Down Day  
Dickinson/Hanke  
28 FEB-TRCS Meeting-Seniors/Table Top  
SAREX-Neilson  
Cadets/Movie at P. B. Fire House

10-11 MAR-Squadron Leader's Course  
21-22 APR-Corporate Leader's Course

### CADET MEETING MINUTES

10 January, 2012

by

C/Capt Brendan Flynn

In the opening ceremonies, the cadet NCOs conducted a uniform inspection.

C/Capt Flynn led a leadership discussion on supervision and discipline. In the class, cadets discussed why trust is essential to leadership, gaining respect, treating your followers fairly, why discipline is not synonymous with punishment, and constructive discipline.

Capt Wojtcuk held a character development session focused on capital punishment. Cadets then discussed their viewpoints on the issue.

Capt Wojtcuk reminded cadets that the National Cadet Special Activity online application (on eServices) deadline is January 15. Cadets were also informed that there will be no CTWG Basic Encampment this year, and the cadet ball will be held in August.

Cadets who have gone to encampment were reminded that Regional Cadet Leadership School is a requirement for the Eaker Award (C/LtCol). If any cadets wish to apply, an RCLS will be held in Pennsylvania Wing this summer concurrent with their encampment.

Capt Wojtcuk told cadets that they must have a CAP Form 31 for any out-of-state CAP activity. She also informed them of North East Region encampments they should consider applying for: Rhode Island Wing, April 15-21 (\$100), New York Wing, July 21-28 (\$220, apply immediately if you want to go), Massachusetts Wing, July 22-29 (\$200), Pennsylvania Wing, June 23-30 (\$200), New Hampshire and Vermont Wing, July 20-29 (\$250), New Jersey and Maine Wings, August.

In the closing ceremonies, C/AB Nathan Welch, C/AB Nicholas Brouillard, C/AB William Adcock, C/Amn Keith Trotochaud, C/Amn Matthew Johnstone, and C/Amn Trevor Sanders received certificates for their first orientation flights.



*Newly fledged cadets display certificates. O' Pilot Capt Farley is on far left and Maj Noniewicz stands in center.*

## **SENIOR MEETING MINUTES**

*10 January, 2012*

### *Commander's Call*

Maj Noniewicz reported the following information from Wing Squadron Commander's Call.

There will be no CTWG encampment in 2012. Cadets will be authorized to attend encampments in other states. Maj Chapman, Director of Cadet Activities is supplying information about dates and costs for states in the northeast.

Training money and orientation flight money has not been granted. A proposal for a self-funded SAREX fir 04 February was floated and is now under consideration.

The CTWG Conference will be held in the central part of the state in the fall. Col Palmer from Wing HQ will chair the event.

Uniform for Commander's Call will be Blues or CAP Corporate.

Lt Dickenson conducted a safety briefing on carburetor icing .

Capt Lintelmann presented a financial report. The fruit sale brought in about \$3,700 bringing our balance into the \$9,000 range. We will outlay approximately \$3,000 for the new heating and cooling system and the updated electrical system leaving a working balance of around \$6,000.

Capt Miller reported on the current logistics status.

Capt Farley led a discussion on training and the group examined the possibilities of a Table Top SAREX at the end of the month followed by a weekend flight SAREX.

Maj Rocketto stated that Professional Development letters will be sent by the end of the month. The letters will review the progress of each officer in the professional development track, specialty track, and note whether or note he has earned the Yeager award.

LtCol Doucette, who may be the only CTWG officer with National Emergency Services Academy training in aerial photography provided insight into his 24 January squadron briefing. Members contributed ideas about what training they might need to support aerial photography missions.

Col Kinch reviewed the status of the administrative files and informed each department as to what, according to regulations, must be kept in each folder.

## **AEROSPACE CURRENT EVENTS**

### *USAF Procurement Woes*

The granting of Air Force contracts has had a tortured history recently. Awards for a combat search and rescue helicopter and the air tanker have all been challenged and led to long legal and bureaucratic wrangles which delayed decisions on

aircraft acquisition. The current struggle is over the Air Force choice of the Embraer Super Tucano over the Beech AT-6B.

The justification of a light attack aircraft is justified for two reasons. First, the adoption of a turboprop light attack aircraft will reduce sortie rates of the higher priced jet fighters currently used, decreasing costs and extending the life-time of the F-15E/F-16 fleet. Second, the simpler aircraft would be useful in that it could be offered as a low-cost alternative to allied nations whose economies could not support a more expensive vehicle.

After consideration, the Air Force decided that the Brazilian designed Embraer Super Tucano would best meet its needs. Hawker Beechcraft has challenged the decision in court claiming “a flaw in the acquisition process” and requesting an explanation of the process.



*Super Tucano displays rough field operation.*  
(Sierra Nevada Photo)

The failure to acquire the 355 million dollar contract will not only be a hard blow for Beech but for the Wichita area which has just been informed by Boeing that they will be closing their Wichita plant.



*Proposed Beech Light Attack Aircraft*  
(Hawker Beech Photo)

The Super Tucano has been modified by the U.S. Sierra Nevada Corporation and plans have been made to assemble it in Florida from parts exported from Brazil. The Beech aircraft's weapons and communications equipment have been integrated by Lockheed-Martin.

The last propeller driven attack aircraft used by the Air Force was the North American OV-10 Bronco, used in Vietnam and retired in 1995. Boeing, which now owns the rights to the aircraft, had proposed an up-graded version of the Bronco. Air Tractor, a Texas firm which builds agricultural aircraft has also entered the light attack sweepstakes with an armed version of its AT-802 which it displayed at the Paris Air Show.



*North American OV-10D in USMC Livery*

At last report, the USAF has currently put a hold on the acquisition process.

### **TRCS MEMBERS FEATURED IN WINTER EDITION OF CAP'S AE NEWSLETTER**

Maj Rocketto is the subject of “AEO Spotlight” feature in the winter, 2012 edition of CAP's *Aerospace Education Newsletter*. The article highlight's Maj Rocketto's background and CAP AE activities. Photographs of Cadets Paquin, Schultz, Chartier, and Cathcart are included. The article may be found on the web at:

[http://members.gocivilairpatrol.com/aerospace\\_education/stay\\_informed/index.cfm](http://members.gocivilairpatrol.com/aerospace_education/stay_informed/index.cfm)

**AEROSPACE HISTORY**  
**AEROSPACE HISTORY ARTICLE OF THE**  
**MONTH**

**OPERATION BOLO**

**The Wolfpack Takes on the 921<sup>st</sup> Fighter  
Regiment  
02 January, 1967**

***Part I***  
***The Problem and the Planned Solution***

*The Thuds Get Hammered*

In the last six months of 1966, the air war between US attack aircraft and the North Vietnamese defenses intensified. The brunt of the early USAF bombing effort against North Vietnam was carried by the Republic F-105D Thunderchief, familiarly know as "The Thud." The F-105 was a supersonic fighter bomber which was equipped with a bomb bay. Originally designed to carry a nuclear weapon internally, the aircraft was modified with a bomb bay fuel tank and carry 750 or 1000 pound bombs on centerline and wing pylons and used as a conventional strike aircraft. They were generally escorted by McDonnell F-4C Phantom IIs.



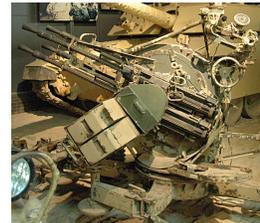
*F-105D at Dyess AFB*

The Vietnamese deployed one of the most concentrated anti-aircraft systems in history. The mainstay of these defenses were large quantities of guns from light machine guns to heavy anti aircraft cannons. At low altitude, small arms and light machines guns covered the first 2,000 ft.

Above 2,000 ft, 23mm, 37mm and 57mm rapid fire cannons were employed. Some of these guns were radar guided. At higher altitudes, the SA-2 Guideline missile became the primary threat. All of these anti-aircraft batteries were highly mobile so they could be shifted quickly.

*ZPU-4*

*A quad barreled 14.5 mm  
anti-aircraft gun very  
effective at low altitudes.*



The Guideline was viewed as the major threat to the F-105s so, in 1966, the Thunderchiefs were equipped with an electronics counter measure pod, the QRC-160, which disrupted the radar guidance of the missiles and as a bonus, also impaired the radars used to train the anti-aircraft guns. The North Vietnamese countered by increasing the use of interceptor aircraft to defend their facilities.



*SA-2 Guideline, sometimes described by US pilots  
as looking like a "flying telephone pole,"*

The primary interceptor aircraft of the North Vietnamese People's Air Force (VPAF) were the MiG-17 Fresco and the MiG-21 Fishbed. The Fresco was a 1950s designed subsonic swept wing fighter armed with two 23mm cannons and a single 37mm cannon and could launch Atoll air-to-air missiles. The MiG-21 was, at that time, a modern delta wing point interceptor with a very short range. It carried a 30mm cannon and two Atoll missiles. The Soviet sponsors of the North Vietnamese trained the pilots and as the Fishbed entered the VPAF inventory, they were assigned to its premier 921st Fighter Regiment.



*Atoll Armed MiG-21F of the VPAF*

The Fishbed was about half the size of its Phantom adversary and hard to see. Its speed was comparable, it had a high rate of acceleration and it could turn tighter. The Phantom's large size made it easier to spot and it was even more visible due to its smoky exhaust trail. However, its two powerful engines gave it a great rate of climb so it had the advantage in vertical maneuvering. The F-4C model flown by the Air Force had no internal gun and relied on the AIM-7E Sparrow, a radar guided missile, and the AIM-9B Sidewinder, an infrared heat seeker.



*This is the actual F-4C flown by Col. Olds in which he shot down two MiG-17s in one day. The plane is shown armed with Mark 117 750 lb.*

*Bombs which were not carried on the Bolo mission. Two Sidewinders are visible above the three bombs on the left wing. A Sparrow may be seen in its semi-recessed housing just under the two red stars.*

In late 1966, the Vietnam air defense interceptor tactics used information supplied by ground control radar officers to slip in behind the Thunderchief formations, fire an Atoll heat seeking missile, and immediately break off to avoid air-to-air combat with the escorting Phantoms. Even if the MiGs failed to score a kill, the threat from six o'clock frequently forced the

attackers to jettison their bombs which counted as a success for the defense.

Ironically, the highly effective Atoll was a clone of the US AIM-9 Sidewinder, a heat seeking missile originally developed by the US Navy. In 1958, Nationalist and Red Chinese air forces were dueling over the Taiwan Straits. A Sidewinder fired by a Nationalist F-86 Sabre struck a Communist Chinese MiG-17, failed to explode, and lodged in place! When the aircraft landed in mainland China, the missile was removed and ultimately reverse engineered by Soviet technicians. A Swedish officer, in the employ of the Soviets may have also leaked details of the Sidewinder to the USSR. The end result was the AA-2 Atoll missile.



*AA-2 Atoll*

The combination of the modern Fishbed and Atoll was deadly. In December of 1966 as the Thunderchief losses increased so did the frustration level of US fighter pilots who were stymied in their attempts to counter the hit-and-run tactics of the VPAF. Rules of engagement did not even allow the the USAF and USN aircraft to attack the airfields. A plan was needed to counter this new threat.

### *The Plan is Devised*

At about this time, Col. Robin Olds was assigned as the commander of the 8<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing, at Ubon Royal Thai Air Base in Thailand. Olds was the epitome of a fighter pilot: aggressive, mission motivated, and clear thinking. He was the son of Major General Robert Olds, a disciple of Billy Mitchell, advocate of strategic bombing, and one of the men instrumental in the adoption of the

B-17 Flying Fortress. At West Point, Robin Olds played football and was named an All-American and opted for the Army Air Force.

In World War II, he became a double ace, having scored twelve victories flying P-38s and P-51s with “the Wolfpack,” the 56<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group commanded by Hub Zemke, an effective leader who served as a model for the young Olds.

By the age of 22, Olds commanded a squadron. As a commander, he led from the front and was not only respected but admired by his subordinates. His career however was not helped by his iconoclastic attitude and lack of respect for self-advancing officers, especially those who did not share his philosophy of combat, which resulted in on-going friction with some of his superiors. At that time, the USAF was led by generals who had made their bones in bombardment and now headed the Strategic Air Command, dedicated to the nuclear mission. Tactical air, Old's area of expertise, was reduced to Cinderella status and barely survived as an independent command. Olds was especially critical of what he considered unrealistic training and what he believed, rightfully so, the premature reliance on missiles instead of guns in fighters.

When Olds arrived at Ubon, he noted the lack of initiative, low morale, and mediocre record of his new command. He immediately placed himself on the flight manifest and assigned himself as a wingman in the lowliest position in a formation and told his squadron that since they knew more about the nuances of the current air war than he did, he would learn from them. He challenged them to “teach me good...and teach me fast” because he planned to surpass them in knowledge and take mission leads. Olds became involved in all aspects of wing operations and brought in a trusted friend, Chappie James as his Deputy Commander for Operations.

He sought out the doers in the Wing and soon found Capt. J. B. Stone, recognized as the wing tactician, who had been working with a small group of other officers, studying the tactics of the VPAF with the intent of improving mission effectiveness. This cadre became Olds's “brain trust.” He gained the respect and trust of his subordinates by flying mission after mission so that they were unafraid to speak frankly during their debriefings. They felt free to admit mistakes, criticize each other, and suggest new tactics. The inability to protect the F-105s from the VPAF was galling pilots assigned to escort duties but Capt. Stone believed that he had a solution. He conferred with Olds who brought a rough outline of the plan to Lt. Gen. Momyer, commander of the 7th Air Force and after some discussion, gained approval to develop operational details.

Olds gathered the “brain trust:” Stone, Maj. J.D.Covington, and Lts. Wetterhahn and Hicks. The basic problem was that the hit and run tactics used by the MiGs, coached by their ground controllers to avoid the Phantoms, did not allow for a high probability of intercepting any one of them and even if a successful intercept were to be successful, only one enemy aircraft would be destroyed. The solution was a clever ruse.



*Colonel Olds and Captain Stone*  
(USAF Photo)

Enemy defensive tactics were based upon the very predictable consistent tactics of the F-105 attackers which the North Vietnamese knew thoroughly. The F-105 formations generally approached from the same directions at the same altitudes and the same airspeeds using the same call signs. The Wolfpack plan was simple in concept. Replace the F-105s with F-4C Phantoms, armed for aerial combat, but utilize the F-105 modes of operation to fool the Vietnamese air defense into thinking that it was just another raid being conducted in the same predictable manner.

Air Force Intelligence supplied information on the VPAF tactics, also predictable because they were based on the F-105s customary attack profile. When an in-borne strike was detected, interceptors were launched about 15 minutes before the anticipated arrival time of the bombers. The MiGs were vectored to two intercept points. One was northeast of "Thud Ridge" near the town of Thai Nguyen. "Thud Ridge" is a 5,000 foot high mountain range about 50 mile long and running in a northwest to southeast direction with the Phuc Yen airbase located near its southeast end. Hanoi is a further 30 miles southeast of Phuc Yen. A second muster point for the MiGs was on the southwest side of the Red River near Phu Tho.

The success of the plan depended on making the Vietnamese believe that the attack force were the F-105 bombers. Radar was easy to fool. Radar could not distinguish the aircraft type and radio intercept would be fooled by the use of Thunderchief call signs. But Vietnamese ground observers presented another problem so the plan required some cloud cover to prevent visual identification of the aircraft types.

The mission planners worked for two weeks. Department of Defense intelligence assets supplied details about the North Vietnamese radar, locations and sweep rates. Assuming the roles of enemy intercept officers, the planners estimated the

reaction time of the radar observers and the time necessary to pass actionable information to the aircraft dispatchers.

They also used intelligence data to assess how long the MiGs could stay aloft and how long they could engage in combat. Furthermore, they determined which airfields would be most likely used after disengagement and what routes might be followed if refuge was sought in China. All of this information was used to establish the size of the force needed to spring the trap and the timing of the flights.

For added verisimilitude, a final touch was the decision to allow the F-4s to carry the QRC-160 Electronic Counter Measure Pods usually carried by the F-105s. Their jamming signals would be a convincing factor to the North Vietnamese defenses that the incoming aircraft were the usual bomber strike force. But the ECM pods presented a number of problems. They needed to be adapted to the F-4s which had never carried them. Parts had to be shipped in from the States and wing pylons had to be modified locally. Engineering and maintenance personnel performed heroically, working long hours, to complete the work. This was in addition to the extra time which they put in preparing and arming the aircraft for the mission.

The mission was code-named *Bolo*, a machete-like knife used to cut cane in the Philippines whose agricultural usage concealed its utility as a weapon. Execution was scheduled for New Year's Day, 1967.

### ***End of Part I***

*The next edition of The Coastwatcher will print the details of the plan's execution and results.*



*Thunderchiefs in Formation*