

# James Irwin Miholick

## F-105 History

07-Aug-63

5228

The 4520 CCTW at Nellis AFB NV graduated 24 pilots in Class 64-B of F-105D Operational Training Course 111506E. The course started on 11 June 1963 and was assigned to the 4523 CCTS commanded by Lt Col Claude D. Phillips. "Following officers ... are awarded AFSC 1115E (pilot, Tac Ftr) and will be assigned F-105 Acft for one year from date of graduation .... Officers assume 3 year svc obligation...."

Name	Unit	Station
Lt Col Robert M. White	36 TFW	Bitburg AB
Maj James Lamar	421 TFS	George AFB
Capt Ralph L. Detwiler	80 TFS	Itazuke AB
Capt Robert E. Green	67 TFS	Kadena AB
Capt Thomas M. Heide	49 TFW	Spangdahlem AB
Capt Ronald E. Johnson	44 TFS	Kadena AB
Capt Bruce H. Klein	49 TFW	Spangdahlem AB
Capt Chan E. McInelly	80 TFS	Itazuke AB
Capt Arthur S. Mearns	80 TFS	Itazuke AB
Capt John E. Mount	49 TFW	Spangdahlem AB
Capt Randall L. Plumb	49 TFW	Spangdahlem AB
Capt Henry Shudinis	35 TFS	Itazuke AB
Capt Porter Thompson	36 TFW	Bitburg AB
1Lt Robert W. Becker	35 TFS	Itazuke AB
1Lt Melvin C. Boswell	80 TFS	Itazuke AB
1Lt William G. Donovan	35 TFS	Itazuke AB
1Lt Bobby L. Campbell	80 TFS	Itazuke AB
1Lt John C. Gordon	357 TFS	George AFB
1Lt Walter H. Jones	36 TFW	Bitburg AB
1Lt James I. Miholick	36 TFW	Bitburg AB
1Lt John C. Morrissey	67 TFS	Kadena AB
1Lt Martin W. Steen	36 TFW	Bitburg AB
1Lt Rainford Tiffin	80 TFS	Itazuke AB
1Lt Miller F. West	35 TFS	Itazuke AB

Lt Col Robert M. White was a test pilot from Edwards AFB where he flew the F-105B and the X-15. He was next assigned to the 36 TFW at Bitburg where he became the Ops Officer of the 22 TFS and then Commander of the 53 TFS .

1Lt William G. Donovan had been an F-100 pilot, starting in January 1962 in the 614 TFS, England AFB LA. On 15 Dec 1962, he began flying F-100s in the 35 TFS, 8 TFW, at Itazuke. Just before heading to F-105 training, he received a six-month Company Grade Officer Effectiveness Report (OER) (AF Form 77) that covered the period 15 Dec 62 - 14 Jun 63. He was evaluated as an F-100 pilot. His Flight Commander, Capt William D. Lockwood, was his rating official. The indorsing official was Lt Col Max T. Beall, the commander of the 35 TFS. His evaluator stated: "Very little time was needed to check out Lieutenant Donovan to combat ready status. ... His flying ability is very fine and he is [a] very capable pilot." At Nellis between 25 June and 5 August, he flew 20 F-105 sorties (29.1 hours) and six sorties (8.4 hours) in a T-39B that trained pilots in the F-105's radar navigation system. Donovan returned to the 35th at Itazuke after his F-105 checkout. His wife Terry recalled that when they left Nellis they drove to San Diego in their blue VW bug so she could live with her mother. "I and our two little ones joined him [at Itazuke] later. I had to wait to join him until our baby girl was 6 weeks old and could get a passport." He then flew commercial to the Republic Factory in NY to pick up an F-105D and fly it to Brookley AFB, Mobile AL, the Air Force depot (MOAMA) that installed the latest modifications not yet being incorporated in production. (Terry Donovan e-mails 4 and 21 Jan 2019 & Donovan's AF Forms 5, Pilot Individual Flight Record; AF Form 11, and DD Form 214.)

1Lt John C. Gordon had graduated from pilot training on 28 January 1960 and had gone to Luke

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and Nellis AFBs for F-100 training. After attending survival school at Stead AFB, he was assigned to the 80 TFS, 8 TFW, at Itazuke AB, Japan, in January 1961. He had "... 1200 hours in the F-100 and had been a PACAF Nuke Bomb Commander at Itazuke and Osan." In April 1963, he was assigned to the 355 TFW, the first F-100 pilot from Itazuke to be assigned to this wing being formed at George AFB, CA. "... All of the previous assignments to George from Itazuke were to the F-104 wing, the 479 TFW." At George, he was assigned to the 357 TFS.

1Lt John C. Morrissey was an F-100 pilot from Luke. "I was in [undergraduate] pilot training class 62-H at Laredo graduating in June of 1962 with a coveted F-100 assignment. I then went to Luke for nine months to attend F-100 'gun school' and received about 180 hours in the F-100, mostly the C variant. I received the only F-105 assignment and went to Nellis in the summer of 1963 where I received a 32 hour checkout in the F-105."

*4520 CSG SO P-19 dated 22 Aug 63 & History of the 4520 CCTW, 1 Jul - 31 Dec 63, pg 47, AFHRA Call # K285.5435, IRIS # 0488615 & John Morrissey, e-mails 28 May and 6 Jun 09 & John Gordon, e-mails 25 and 28 Aug and 3 Sept 10.*

**05-Aug-64      05-Oct-64**

3020

F-105s from the 36 TFS were ordered to deploy from Yokota AB, Japan, to Korat RTAFB, Thailand, in response to the Gulf of Tonkin episode. This deployment was three months after their transfer from the 8 TFW, Itazuke AB, Japan, and their arrival in the 41 Air Division at Yokota.

Under "Operation One Buck Two", the 357 TFS deployed from the 355 TFW, McConnell AFB, KS to replace the 36 TFS at Yokota, and to assume the 36th's nuclear alert duties at Osan AB, Korea.

In orders published by Yokota's 441st Combat Support Group, 12 pilots and 31 enlisted men were ordered to "Clark AB, Philippines" on 6 August 1964 for 179 days TDY "for the purpose of performing an operational mission in support of 5 AF OPLAN 37-65". Lt Col Donovan L. McCance, the squadron commander, was the ranking person on the deployment orders. As a captain assigned to Hq TAC in 1956, McCance had worked on the early F-105 program.

Other pilots from the 36 TFS were: Capt John R. Layman, Capt Michael P. Cooper, Capt Michael F. McNamara, 1Lt Robert A. Jones, 1Lt William A. Becker, 1Lt Jerry L. Stamps, Capt Thomas W. Sima, Capt Paul H. Stoment, Capt James I. Miholick, and Capt Roderick G. Beckett.

Capt Douglas G. Lauck was another 36 TFS pilot on this deployment. (Doug Lauck, e-mail 27 Sep 2006.)

Another pilot deploying with the 36 TFS was Capt Jack R. Stresing.

1Lt Martin V. Case, Jr. from the 35 TFS also deployed with the 36 TFS. "I was at the morning briefing at the 35th and Maj. Fred Cherry (either Ops Officer or Asst. Ops, I can't remember which) asked for a volunteer for a classified TDY. He said he couldn't say where it was but it might involve some combat. How's that for understatement? He said the 36th needed one person as they were one volunteer short. Since I was a bachelor at that time (due to get married on 3 Oct.), I and a few others raised our hands. I was sitting in the front row and was closest to Fred so I guess that was why he picked me? I was told to go pack for a 30 day TDY and was to talk to NO ONE. They sent someone with me to make sure I didn't talk to anyone. I think it was Bob Tidwell [Capt Robert Leland Tidwell]. I left that afternoon on a C-130 (in the) IST (Initial Support Team ). We flew direct to Korat with a refueling stop (I think) at Clark AB. We arrived early the next day (6 Aug)."

F-105 pilot Capt Edward T. Rock was an Ops Planner in the 41 Air Division at Yokota and helped plan the deployment. "Not much to it except it was all very secret at the time. Not even my wife knew what was going on and there were lots of secret meetings. It was kind of unreal. ... The deployments were frequently made up of folks from more than one squadron and not just the designated squadron. For example, I know that when the 36th deployed they had at least a few pilots from the 35 TFS."

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The squadron returned to Yokota after they were relieved by the 35 TFS on 5 October 1964.

*441 CSG Special Order TB-1418, 5 Aug 1964 & e-mail, Marty Case, 10 Aug 2003 & Ed Rock, e-mail, 17 July 2005.*

**04-Mar-65**      **04-May-65**

95

The 36 TFS from Yokota AB, Japan, deployed F-105s to Takhli RTAFB, Thailand. "By 6 March 20 F-105 aircraft were in place at Takhli Air Base, Thailand. Local flying began on 7 March and the first 0-7 mission was flown on 9 March. The 36 TFS maintained 20 aircraft at Takhli until 20 March, at which time two were returned to Yokota to aid in SIOP commitments."

One of the deploying pilots was Capt Douglas G. Lauck who had been with the 36th since February 1964 when the squadron was with the 8 TFW at Itazuke AB, Japan. He had moved to Yokota on 24 May 1964 when the squadron transferred to the 41 Air Division. This was his second combat deployment with the 36th; his first was in August 1964 to Korat in response to the Gulf of Tonkin episode. (Doug Lauck, e-mails 25 and 27 Sep 06 & 348 CSG SO A-1019 dated 28 April 1964.)

Earlier, between November 1959 and May 1960, the CIA flew C-130s from Takhli dropping insurgents and supplies into Tibet. During World War II, Takhli was a Japanese fighter base.

The 36 TFS was the first squadron to operate F-105s from Takhli. They replaced the 428 TFS, an F-100 squadron of the 474 TFW from Cannon AFB NM. The 428 TFS had moved into Takhli from Da Nang on 3 January 1965. The Cannon wing had been rotating its F-100 squadrons to Takhli since 1962. When they were relieved at Takhli, the 428 TFS transferred its damaged F-100s to PACAF and flew its 13 remaining F-100Ds and F-100Fs back to Cannon. (Corona Harvest Chronology of Significant Airpower Events in Southeast Asia, 1954 - 1967, pg 57.)

The pilots deploying with the 36 TFS were:

Col Max T. Beall - 41 AD	Capt John O. Rollins II
Lt Col Donovan L. McCance - 36 TFS commander	Capt Vernon D. Hesterman
Capt Stanley S. Rynear	Capt James I. Miholick
1Lt William A. Becker	Capt Jerry L. Stamps
Capt Robert H. Schuler, Jr.	Capt Onofino J. Andrews
Capt Dwight P. Bowles	1Lt Dan R. McKinney
1Lt Robert H. Jones	Capt Wayne D. Hauth
Capt Michael P. Cooper	Capt Lester W. Sundt
Capt Douglas G. Lauck	Capt Bruce G. Seeber
Capt David S. Graben	Capt Roderick G. Beckett
Capt Bernard G. Lyons	Maj Robert A. Farnsworth, Jr.
1Lt Benjamin D. Ulrich	Capt Edward S. Johnson - 41 AD

"During the deployment, the greatest problems encountered were in the areas of support and communications. Facilities at Takhli were poor and communications with other headquarters were often totally unreliable. The airlift of maintenance personnel and equipment was likewise difficult and delays all too common. The formation of the 6441 TFW on 1 April aided somewhat in relieving these problems; however, they continued as a source of irritation for several weeks to come. In fact it was not until the 6441 TFW had completed its organization at Yokota that the communication and airlift problems began to improve. Maintenance and operations personnel pulled together as they never had before and in spite of the grim living and working conditions, morale became high and stayed high. The base support personnel, many of whom were not from the 41 AD or the 6441 TFW did not share in this feeling of cohesiveness and the result was that separation in purpose occurred. This, in turn, led to conflicts between the support and tactical complexes that could have been avoided if all would have been members of the same command under a common leader." (6441 TFW history)

*6441 TFW History, Apr - Jun 65, USAF microfilm PO231 & History of the 355 TFW, USAF microfilm NO460 & "Secret Mission to Tibet", Air & Space Magazine, Jan 98, Pgs 62 - 71 & 441 Cbt Sup Gp SO TB-463 dated 2 March 1965.*

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26-Aug-65      28-Oct-65

309

In a continuing series of TDY combat rotations by the three squadrons of the 6441 TFW at Yokota AB, Japan, the 36 TFS deployed for their third combat tour. Their first was to Korat in August 1964. This was their second deployment to Takhli RTAFB, Thailand, to replace the 80 TFS. The 36 TFS commander was Lt Col Howard F. "Red Dog" Hendricks.

Capt Douglas G. Lauck was one of the 36 TFS pilots on this deployment. This was his third 60-day TDY deployment with the 36th to Thailand and his second one to Takhli. During this deployment, he raised his total North Vietnam combat missions to about 48.

Other pilots on the deployment were:

Col Chester L. Van Etten, the 6441 TFW Commander  
Maj Dean A. Pogreba, the 36 TFS Operations Officer  
Capt John O. Rollins II  
Maj Richard P. Fitzgerald  
Capt Lester W. Sundt  
Capt John R. Layman  
Capt Rex L. Dull  
Capt Clarence E. Fox  
Capt Jerry L. Stamps  
Capt William A. Becker  
Maj Wayne N. Whatley  
Capt Fredrick William Shattuck, Jr.  
Capt David L. Hatten  
Capt Bernard G. Lyons  
Capt James I. Miholick  
Lt Col William L. Janssen from the 6441 TFW Staff  
Capt Michael F. McNamara from the 6441 TFW Staff  
Capt Jack R. Stresing from the 41 AD Staff

Capt Robert H. Jones  
Capt Vernon D. Hesterman  
Capt Thomas W. Sima  
Capt Onofiro J. Andrews  
Capt Roderick G. Beckett  
Capt Donnie R. Duplissey  
Capt Robert H. Schuler, Jr.  
1Lt Delbert F. Miller  
Capt Bruce G. Seeber  
Capt Paul H. Storment  
Capt Wayne D. Hauth  
Capt David S. Graben  
Capt Stanley S. Rynear  
1Lt Benjamin D. Ulrich  
1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue

*6441 TFW History, Jul - Dec 65, USAF microfilm PO232 & Doug Lauck, e-mail 25 Sep 2006 & 441 Cmbt Spt Gp Special Order TA-424 dated 5 Aug 65.*

18-Apr-66

5176

The 6441 TFW selected the pilots for the squadron that became the 34 TFS to deploy to Korat. Most would come from the 36 TFS; consequently, the 36 TFS was slated to disband.

Bob Pielin from the 36 TFS, who had already flown 87 combat missions during temporary duty tours to Korat and Takhli, remembered how he helped select the pilots for the new squadron. "Fitz [Maj Richard P. Fitzgerald, the squadron's Operations Officer] and I initially made out a list of 25 pilots from the Wing resources to go as 34th members. The list was bounced back from HHQ as being too overloaded in pilots with over 50 missions. They recommended 6 guys in the 0 to 20 mission category, 6 in the 21 to 40, 6 in the 41 to 60, 6 in the 61 to 80, and anyone with over 80 to go TDY."

This distribution was to spread out their eventual departures from Korat as each pilot completed his 100-mission tour. Capt Pielin and Maj Fitzgerald reworked the list "... with some pronounced disapproval from those that were removed from the [original]. ... A 1.5 aircrew/aircraft ratio was authorized for 27 pilots plus Commander and Operations Officer. ... Bob Jones [Capt Robert H. Jones] was removed from the first list since he had his papers in to be discharged. When he found out about the 34th going PCS to Korat, he volunteered to go with [them] and get 100 missions before he got out. Red Dog [Lt Col Howard F. 'Red Dog' Hendricks the squadron commander] worked a 'deal', and he went TDY." (Bob Pielin e-mails, 23 Sep 2006 and 7 April 2007.)

The following list contains the positions and names of the initial twenty-nine pilots assigned to the 34 TFS. This is the revised list after Capt Pielin and Maj Fitzgerald reworked their original to provide a broader base of experience. One of the pilots, Gordon Walcott, annotated his copy of the

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printed list, dated 18 April 1966, with this comment: "This was the original 34th TFS crew roster when formed as an all-volunteer squadron from the 35 TFS, 36 TFS, and 80 TFS (Yokota AB, Japan)"

Commander - Lt Col Howard F. "Red Dog" Hendricks who had been commander of the 36 TFS.  
Operations Officer - Maj Richard P. Fitzgerald

India Flight  
Flight Commander - Maj Wayne N. Whatley  
Capt Robin K. Nierste  
Capt James I. Miholick  
Capt Douglas G. Lauck  
Capt Robert H. Jones  
Capt Robert R. Reed

Lima Flight  
Flight Commander - Capt James E. Hayes  
Capt Merrill R. Lewis, Jr.  
Capt Gordon M. Walcott  
Capt Stanley S. Gunnensen  
1Lt John Bernard Sullivan III

Juliet Flight  
Flight Commander - Maj Kenneth T. Blank  
Capt Carl L. Hamby  
Capt Thomas H. Curtis  
Capt David H. Groark  
1Lt Phillip J. Kelley

Metro Flight  
Flight Commander - Capt Robert D. Pielin  
Capt Alan K. Rutherford  
Capt Ralph D. Watkins  
Capt Wayne D. Hauth  
Capt Rainford "Ray" McMaster Tiffin - 80 TFS

Kilo Flight  
Flight Commander - Maj Jack R. Stresing  
Capt William O. Lessard  
Capt John R. Layman  
Capt Rex L. Dull  
Capt Clarence E. Fox  
1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue

*E-mail from Monty Pharmed, 22 Sep 2006 forwarding letter to him from Lt Col (Ret) Gordon Walcott dated, 29 July 1988, which included a roster of 36 TFS pilots, dated 18 April 1966.*

### 25-May-66

4957

On Wednesday morning, twenty F-105Ds (18 aircraft and 2 spares) now assigned to the 34 TFS left the 6441 TFW at Yokota for Kadena on the first leg of their movement to the 388 TFW at Korat. The aircraft took off in flights of four using call signs "Yule". Each flight departed Yokota at half-hour intervals beginning at 0800. The deployment's flight line-up consisted of:

Pilot	Call Sign	Acft Tail No	Yokota TO Time	Kadena Arr Time	Acft Maint Status at Kadena
Lt Col Howard F. Hendricks	Yule 01	62-4361	0800	0955	Tacan/Doppler probs
Capt Robin K. Nierste	Yule 02	62-4288	0800	0955	O/R
Capt James I. Miholick	Yule 03	62-4336	0800	0955	O/R
Capt Wayne D. Hauth	Yule 04	62-4303	0800	0955	Gnd blower inop
Maj Wayne N. Whatley	Yule 11	62-4306	0830	1025	O/R
Capt Robert H. Jones	Yule 12	62-4318	0830	1025	O/R
Capt Robert R. Reed	Yule 13	62-4308	0830	1025	Autopilot
Capt Douglas G. Lauck	Yule 14	62-4358	0830	1025	O/R
Maj Kenneth T. Blank	Yule 21	62-4370	0901	1058	O/R
Capt Thomas H. Curtis	Yule 22	62-4380	0901	1058	O/R
Capt Carl L. Hamby	Yule 23	62-4364	0901	1058	O/R
1Lt Phillip J. Kelley	Yule 24	62-4277	0901	1058	O/R
Capt Alan K. Rutherford	Yule 31	62-4270	0930	1134	Autopilot

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Capt Rex L. Dull	Yule 32	62-4312	0930	1134	O/R
Capt Ralph D. Watkins	Yule 33	62-4378	0930	1134	CIN
1Lt John B. Sullivan III	Yule 34	62-4356	0930	1134	Fire Ctrl/Elec
Capt James E. Hayes	Yule 41	62-4352	1000	1200	Fire Ctrl
Maj Jack R. Stresing	Yule 42	61-0132	1000	1200	O/R
Capt Lothar A. "Andy" Olman	Yule 43	62-4379	1000	1200	Fuel Leak
Capt Robert D. Reichart	Yule 44	62-4354	1000	1200	O/R

(History of the 6441 TFW, 1 Apr 65 to 15 Nov 66, Supporting Documents, Mobility Control Center Log, pg 6, in AFHRA folder K-WG-6441-HI, IRIS# 0462464.)

Capt Alan K. Rutherford was one of the pilots on the deployment. "I recall so well how we formed up with 16 Thuds and midst many tears (from wives) and go get um's from the troops we launched to the war. We were going to 'kill the Cong'. We intended to overnight at Kadena, and then launch the next day with the squadron to Korat. Needless to say it got drunk and rowdy that night ...". (Al Rutherford, e-mail, 21 Sep 2006.)

Capt Douglas G. Lauck was another of the 34 TFS pilots moving to Korat. "We packed our household goods [at Yokota] and sent them along with our cars back to the States. Our wives and dependents had flights booked back to the States." (Doug Lauck, e-mail 21 Sep 2006.)

The pilots from the 34 TFS were to join with pilots from the 13 TFS at Kadena on 26 May and deploy to Korat. Unfortunately, circumstances required the 34th pilots at Kadena to return to Yokota on 26 May.

In the 13 TFS, "the squadron was cocked to move as planned on the 25th of May, but a staying order was received, delaying departure for thirty days. Rumors were rife that perhaps the move would not be made at all. Unfortunately, on the basis of the rumors and the lack of further communications, after numerous inquires to higher headquarters on the subject, many members of the new squadron cancelled proceedings to return their dependents to the United States. As a result, when the order to deploy on 23 June was received with a week's advance notice, many dependents were left to arrange their own moves. Much help was rendered by friends and Wing personnel, of course, to facilitate these peoples' departure. On 23 June, support personnel departed for Korat via C-130. Aircrews departed the following day."

*388 TFW History, Jul - Dec 66, USAF microfilm NO583 frame 1742 & 44 TFS history, 1 Jan 65 - 30 June 1967, pp 4 - 5.*

### 01-Jul-66

5205

[Approximate date.] Shortly after their arrival at Korat, the 34 TFS began escorting electronic intelligence gathering aircraft orbiting over the Gulf of Tonkin. Capt Jim Miholick flew some of these missions and recalled that, "One of the more 'boring' missions we were fragged for was a Queen-Bee/Box-Top escort mission over the northern end of the Gulf. We would go to Danang at 0-dark thirty in the morning and upload AIM-9's, then fly (with the EC-123 or EC-130, call sign Ethan Allen) over the Gulf for two hours, go refuel off the coast of Danang, and go back until they told us we could leave. Nothing but 4 - 6 hours of race-track flying to 'protect' the trash-hauler from MiGs, which never showed up. The worse part was unless we flew over RP 1 on the way home, it wouldn't even be a counter. Needless to say, we hated those, but fortunately didn't have but a couple of them before the F-4s based in South Vietnam took over the job."

*Jim Miholick, e-mail 4 Apr 07.*

### 10-Jul-66

5207

[Approximate date.] Capt James I. Miholick flew one of the early 34 TFS missions shortly after the squadron had arrived at Korat. "The target was the Yen Bai barracks area on the northwest railroad between Hanoi and China. I was number 3 in the first flight to strike the target. It was the first flight of the day at first light in the morning, and nobody was 'on the air' -- no Firecan radars, no

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Fansong radars, no SAMS, no MiGs, nothing. I figured we either caught the bad guys still asleep or doing their morning thing, because they apparently didn't know we were coming. For a real change, nobody was shooting at us.

"I rolled in at about 15,000' at 450 KIAS, started down the slide, when suddenly all hell broke loose. All I remember seeing was a bright flash, hearing a loud bang, lots of positive and negative G's, and seeing dark green jungle, then gray sky, then dark green jungle again through the windshield. I was being thrown around the cockpit so severely I couldn't find the handles on the seat to punch out. Apparently the very first shot fired (probably a 37-57mm) hit my airplane right where the 450-gal tank joined the wing. Talk about the Golden BB!

"I do know I lost about 12,500' and 250 KIAS during whatever happened to the airplane. I think Doug Lauck was number four behind me, and later said that he'd never seen a Thud 'tumble' like that before. All I know is that I was suddenly below the ridgelines on both sides of the Red River at about 200 KIAS, and now they were shooting at us like crazy. I managed to light the burner and get over the ridge to the west into relative safety, and started to check out the airplane. The right leading edge flap was pretty badly damaged and protruding up over the wing, blanking out most of the airflow, so I selected full LE flaps, which got it back down to almost level. The right drop tank was bent outward at 90 degrees, and part of the wingtip was gone. I punched off everything, and because of the out-of-trim, I could get about 280 KIAS at about 5,000'. Doug was on my wing with his power back at about 90 percent with a full MER and tanks, and having no problem staying with me. But no warning lights on the panic panel were lit, and everything else seemed to be working OK. Doug did manage to tell me that the airplane looked 'pretty beat up' but there wasn't any fire that he could see (yet).

"We immediately called for the Jolly Green and told him to start heading north, as I expected to have to jump out somewhere over Laos. We headed southwest from peak to peak and eventually made it all the way back to Udorn, where I declared an emergency and landed (Doug pressed on back to Korat). After getting out of the jet, I noticed a fairly large hole in the wing, a piece of the pylon the tank was on was still attached to the wing, the leading edge flap was toast, and the rest of the airplane had a bunch of extra holes that weren't there when I took off. At that point, I just waited for the Klong, and hitched a ride back to Korat.

"A funny afterthought to the whole thing is that I really couldn't write up any aircraft system; from the cockpit everything worked fine. I just wrote up that the airframe suffered some battle damage and would probably need to be fixed before the next flight.

"... The BDA showed that the rest of the guys hit the target, and my bombs would just have made the craters a little bigger."

*Jim Miholick, e-mail 4 Apr 07.*

**25-Jul-66**

5208

[Approximate date] Maj Richard P. Fitzgerald, Operations Officer of the 34 TFS from the 388 TFW, Korat, led a flight against a target in RP-6A, North Vietnam. Capt James I. Miholick was his wingman and recalled that, "... Fitz was leading a 4-ship strike flight, and we missed the target, which we called 'Ho Chi Minh's sand and gravel works'. It was actually the Thai Nguyen POL storage area, about 25-30 miles north of Hanoi on the east side of Thud ridge. We'd hit the stupid thing for the previous 3-4 days, and there was nothing left of it but bomb craters, but we were fragged to go hit it again.

"Anyway, due to pretty bad weather, we wound up at the southern end of Thud ridge, I was on Fitz's wing in a loose fighting wing position, when he decided to head back north to see if we could find the target. We were going like a bandit on the deck to avoid the SAMs and MiGs, and probably doing about 600+ KCAS. We ... [called] this 'leaving rooster tails off the (rice) paddies' because that's what it looked like. As we turned to the left back toward the north, I was low enough to almost hit a SA-2 still on its launcher with my left wing. I remember instinctively rolling out for a

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moment to miss it, then cranking back to the left to try to catch everyone else. We finally climbed back up, found the target through a hole in the clouds, bombed it (again), and went home none the worse for wear."

*Jim Miholick, e-mail 4 Apr 07.*

**17-Aug-66**

5209

Four F-105 pilots from the 34 TFS from Korat formed "Anvil" flight that was part of a large 388 TFW strike force targeted against the Nguyen Khe POL storage area (JCS 51) in Route Pack 6 north of Hanoi. The line up for Anvil flight was:

"Anvil 01" - Maj Wayne N. Whatley  
"Anvil 02" - Capt Douglas G. Lauck  
"Anvil 03" - Capt Robert R. Reed  
"Anvil 04" - Capt James J. Miholick

It was the 87th combat mission for Capt Lauck and he remembered it as, "... probably one of the more exciting missions I flew." The route to the target was across Laos and South Vietnam below the DMZ with refueling in the Brown Anchor track over the Gulf of Tonkin. The strike force then headed north with intentions of turning west at the "Wart on the Elephant's Ear", an island landmark below China, to approach the target from the north.

Shortly after taking on fuel from the KC-135 tankers, the four F-105Ds in Anvil flight broke off from the rest of the strike force and headed northwest dropping down into RP 3 for a high-speed low-level approach to the target from the south. As the flight crossed into North Vietnam, Anvil 4 lost his radio and aborted the mission. Anvil 3 accompanied him back to Korat while Anvil 1 and 2 continued north with their loads of six 750-pound bombs.

When the two planes entered Pack 6 using low-level terrain masking, they found clear but hazy weather allowing 5 miles visibility. As they skirted Hanoi to the east, they met heavy AAA and got warnings of SAM launches on their RHAW gear. Doug Lauck recalled, "... stuff began flying every which way." The two pilots didn't realize until later that the strike force had aborted at their turning point when they ran into thunderstorms that blocked their route to the target. The force turned south and, accompanied by EB-66s with their standoff jammers and other support aircraft, headed home. Anvil 1 and 2 became the only planes in the area and the North Vietnamese defenses, primed for a large strike force, opened up on them.

Strangely, the flak stopped just before Anvil 1 popped up to 12,000 feet, rolled in to drop his six bombs on the POL storage site, then pulled out at 3,000 feet. A minute later, as Capt Lauck pulled up from his bomb run, he spotted a silver MiG-17 with Chinese markings flying at 5,000 feet heading toward his flight lead. The MiG was firing his nose guns and Lauck could see shells bursting. He called, "Anvil 1 break -- you have a MiG closing." Maj Whatley punched off his tanks and racks, hit afterburner, and headed for the deck in a 4.5-G turn. The MiG pilot cut into his turn and continued to close on Anvil 1 then fired again when he was 4,000 feet away. The MiG closed to 1,500 feet still firing. Anvil 1 took it lower -- so low "he had to pull up to avoid rice paddy dikes."

Capt Lauck began chasing the MiG-17 that was still pursuing his flight lead. The three planes headed toward China and may have crossed the border during the battle. Lauck tried to set up his gun sight for air-to-air firing but didn't have time to properly reset the five cockpit switches in his F-105 to get his sight out of air-to-ground mode. He maneuvered to put the MiG in the center of his windscreen and began firing his 20-mm cannon. Anvil 1 crossed in front of the MiG and Lauck let off the trigger after firing 600 rounds. His slugs missed their target and to avoid an overshoot, he barrel rolled up and over the MiG. Both F-105 pilots turned south, went supersonic, and outran the MiG-17, which gave up the chase.

Their ordeal was not yet over since they still had to get out of North Vietnam; and Anvil 1 was running short of fuel. During his approach to the target, he had mistakenly used gas from his bomb-



# James Irwin Miholick

## F-105 History

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bay tank instead of his external tanks and, when he punched off his wing tanks, had depleted much of his remaining fuel. To make matters worse, most of the airborne tankers had left their orbits and weren't in position to hook up with the two F-105s. Calling on a discrete frequency, the two pilots finally reached a tanker willing to fly into Laos to meet them. With only 800 pounds of fuel, Anvil 1 connected with the KC-135 over the Plain of Jars in northern Laos and took on enough gas for both F-105s to land safely at Korat.

The Fighter Weapons Center history described this event this way. "Anvil flight, four F-105s, were attacking a target in the vicinity of 21-10N and 105-54E. As Anvil 1 pulled off the target, Anvil four called a MiG-17 at Anvil 1's seven o'clock position, closing at 5,000 feet AGL. Anvil 1 lit AB, jettisoned tanks, and began a 400 K, 4.5 G left turn. The MiG stayed inside the turn, closing rapidly, and firing bursts from ranges of 4,000 ft down to 1,500 ft. Anvil 1 dove to ground level and the MiG followed, still firing. During this time, Anvil 4 had come off the target, engaged AB and had closed on the engagement at 600 K plus. Anvil 4 closed on the MiG (about 65 K overtake in firing range) and began firing at 1,500 ft range. Anvil 4 had not repositioned all necessary switches and, consequently, did not have computing gunsight. Anvil 4 fired 75 rounds of 20-mm at MiG and then ceased fire because Anvil 1 had jinked into the line of his fire in front of the MiG. Anvil 1 and 4 accelerated away from the MiG and departed the area."

The two pilots later learned from reconnaissance photos that their bombs had failed to damage their POL target. However, their harrowing experience wasn't a total waste. Capt Lauck briefed other pilots in the wing on how he had simply centered the MiG in his windscreen when he didn't have time to reset his gun sight. The next day, 18 August 1966, Maj Kenneth T. Blank, also from the 34 TFS flying as "Honda 02", used the briefed technique to shoot down a MiG-17 under similar circumstances.

*Doug Lauck, e-mails 11 and 14 April 2007 & Red Baron I Vol II, Event II-33 pp 125 - 126 & USAF Tactical Fighter Weapons Center Deputy For Combat Analysis Bulletin 7, AFHRA Call # K417.316 IRIS # 503560, pg 7.*

### 30-Sep-66

5151

Seven pilots assigned to the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, at Korat, completed flying 100 missions during September 1966. The pilots were in the original group who arrived at Korat in May and June 1966, They were:

Capt Clarence E. Fox  
Capt James I. Miholick  
Capt Gordon M. Walcott  
1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue  
Capt Carl L. Hamby  
Capt Douglas G. Lauck  
Capt Rex L. Dull

When he left Korat, Lt O'Donoghue was assigned to an F-5 squadron at Williams AF, AZ. He "... delivered an F-5 to Bien Hoa AB during the Tet Offensive and hung around long enough to fly some F-37 missions with an old Willy F-5 instructor." In 1968, he joined the New Jersey ANG at McGuire AFB "... and flew Thud Bs and Ds for another 10 years."

Carl Hamby last flew the F-105 in March 1968. He had accumulated 738.5 hours in the airplane. (F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.)

As a replacement pilot, Maj Edward C. Jones was assigned to the 34 TFS in September 1966. He had qualified in the F-105 while stationed with the 36 TFW at Bitburg in 1962. He had left Bitburg in 1964 and spent a year in Hq TAC in the F-105 maintenance shop. He was then assigned to Shaw AFB where he flew Functional Check Flights in RF-4Cs. While at Shaw he volunteered for SEA expecting to fly RF-4s but instead received orders as an F-105 pilot. He went to Nellis AFB for F-105 requalification training, to Fairchild AFB for USAF Survival School, then to PACAF Jungle Survival School at Clark AB, Phillipines, before arriving at Korat. (Ed Jones, phone interviews 26

# James Irwin Miholick

## F-105 History

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and 28 April 10 and e-mail 26 Apr 10.)

After landing from his 100th mission, Jim Miholick donned a World War II flying helmet and goggles with a white scarf around his neck. "I got the scarf, WWII flying helmet, goggles, and O2 mask from a B-57 driver at Clark AB; I can't remember the details. I do remember that I 'donated' the scarf to the squadron which later became the 100 Mission scarf. I had the O2 mask 'modified' by Life Support so I could talk to Ground Control during the taxi back to the chocks, so all the enlisted guys knew what I was planning." (Jim Miholick e-mail to Jake Shuler July 12, 2014.)

*34 TFS web site on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us.34tfs/scarf.htm> & Denis O'Donoghue, e-mail 7 Apr 10.*

### 31-Dec-66

678

One year after the start of their RTU mission, the 23 TFW at McConnell AFB KS, had trained a total of 105 pilots to fly the F-105. The wing had 30 F-105 instructor pilots who had completed at least 100 missions in South East Asia. The 560 TFS and 561 TFS each had 7 pilots, the 562 TFS had 12, and the 563 TFS had 4. Five additional 100-mission pilots were attached to the 23 TFW. 1Lt Leonard C. Ekman, assigned to the 561 TFS, had completed 185 missions in SEA, the most of any Air Force pilot.

The 100-mission instructor pilots in the 560 TFS were:

Maj Eleas Casillas	Capt Jack L. Graber
Maj Robert E. Phillips	Capt William S. Koenitzer
Capt Marion M. Angel	1Lt William E. Ardern
Capt Rex L. Dull	

The 100-mission instructor pilots in the 561 TFS were:

Maj Fred T. Coleman	Capt Robert Kieth Hannah, Jr.
Maj John C. Shay	1Lt Roger A. Ayres
Capt Ralph J. Beardsley	1 Lt Leonard C. "Lucky" Ekman
Capt Roderick G. Beckett	

The 100-mission instructor pilots in the 562 TFS were:

Lt Col James A. Young	Capt Wayne D. Hauth
Maj Phillip O. Bradley	Capt Robert L. "Bob the Wedge" Keller
Maj Robert D. Pielin	Capt Douglas G. Lauck (SEFE)
Capt Arthur L. Brattkus	Capt Robin K. Nierste
Capt Teddy Gay	Capt William S. Secker, Jr.
Capt Stanley S. Gunnerson	Capt Joseph R. Steen

The 100-mission instructor pilots in the 563 TFS were:

Maj Kenneth G. Frank  
Capt Robert V. "Boris" Baird  
Capt James I. Miholick  
1Lt John C. Russell

23 TFW attached 100-mission pilots were:

Capt Clarence E. Cox  
Capt John R. Layman  
Capt Charles Loucks  
Capt Clifford H. "Ted" Rees, Jr. (chief of tactical operations, 835th Air Division)  
Capt Robert L. Chastain

*23 TFW History, 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1966, USAF microfilm MO554.*

### 04-Jul-18

7991

Lt Col (Ret) James Irwin Miholick died.

# James Irwin Miholick

## F-105 History

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James was born on July 8, 1936 and passed away on Wednesday, July 4, 2018.  
James was a resident of Redlands, California at the time of passing.  
(<http://www.tributes.com/obituary/show/James-Irwin-Miholick-106236661>)

Guys,

I called Jim's number to get his current email address and talked with Valdean "Val". She said that Jim passed away on 4 July 2018, and that he requested no obituary or memorial service. Had a nice, brief conversation with her during which she offered that Jim graduated from the USAF Academy [Class of 1959], and flew a second 100 missions in F-4's, she did not know what base or squadron.

I told her about our Memorial Journal and that Jim's name would be added. Also told her about our Website and that his date of passing would be added to his F-105 History.

Take care,

Jake

*Jack Shuler e-mail 25 Nov 18 & Pamela Swantek (daughter) e-mail to Jack Phillips.*