

24 FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

19 Aero Squadron organized, Jun 1917
Redesignated 24 Aero Squadron, 14 Jun 1917
Demobilized, 1 Oct 1919

24 Squadron authorized, 30 Aug 1921
Organized, 1 Oct 1921
Redesignated 24 Pursuit Squadron, 25 Jan 1923

24 Aero Squadron reconstituted and consolidated with 24 Pursuit Squadron, 1924

Redesignated 24 Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor), 6 Dec 1939
Redesignated 24 Fighter Squadron, 15 May 1942
Inactivated, 15 Oct 1946
Activated, 25 Oct 2019

STATIONS

San Antonio, TX, Jun-28 Dec 1917
Wye, England, 31 Jan 1918 (flights at Sedgeford and Wyton; flight at London Colney to 7 Mar 1918 and thereafter at Croyden)
Norborough, England, 1 May-11 Jul 1918
St Maixent, France, 22 Jul 1918

Ourches, France, 6 Aug 1918;
Gondreville-sur-Moselle, France, 22 Aug 1918
Vavincourt, France, 22 Sep 1918 (detachment operated from Souilly, 9-18 Oct 1918, 27 Oct-6
Nov 1918)
Weissenthurm, Germany, 7 May-14 Jul 1919
Mitchel Field, NY, 2 Aug 1919
Park Field, Tenn, Aug-1 Oct 1919
Mitchel Field, NY, 1 Oct 1921-22 Apr 1922
France Field, CZ, 30 Apr 1922
Albrook Field, CZ, 26 Oct 1932
La Joya, Panama, 15 Mar 1942
Albrook Field, CZ, Sep 1942
La Joya, Panama, 10Jan 1943
Albrook, Field, CZ, 28 May 1943
Howard Field, CZ, 9 Jun 1943
Madden Field, Panama, 8 Mar 1944
France Field, CZ, 15 Aug 1944-15 Oct 1946
Fort Worth Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, TX, 25 Oct 2019

ASSIGNMENTS

Unkn, Jun 1917-Sep 1918
First Army Observation Group, Sep 1918-Apr 1919
Unkn, Apr-1 Oct 1919
Second Corps Area, 1 Oct 1921
Panama Canal Department, 30 Apr 1922
6 Observation (later Composite) Group, assigned on 27 May 1922, and attached, 8 May 1929
20 Pursuit Group (attached to 6 Composite Group), 15 Nov 1930
3 Attack Wing (attached to 6 Composite Group), 16 Jun 1932
16 Pursuit (later Fighter) Group, 1 Dec 1932
XXVI Fighter Command, 1 Nov 1943
6 Fighter Wing, 25 Aug-15 Oct 1946
495 Fighter Group (Active Associate), 25 Oct 2019

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Salmson 2, 1918-1919
DH-4, 1918-1919
Spad XIII, 1919
Fokker D-VII 1921-1922
DH-4
SE-5
MB-3
PW-9, 1922-1930
P-12, 1930-1939
P-26, 1938-1939

P-36, 1936-1942
P-39, 1942
P-70, 1942-1943
P-40, 1943-1944
P-38, 1945-1946
P-47, 1946
F-16

COMMANDERS

1st Lt Maury Hill
Capt Harry M. Smith, 1 Oct 1921
Capt Truman W. Allen, 5 Nov 1921
Capt Arthur E. Simonin, 17 Dec 1921
Capt William E. Farthing, 25 Mar 1922
1st Lt Walter H. Reid, 13 Apr 1925
Capt Thomas S. Voss, 7 May 1925
1st Lt James T. Curry, Jr., 4 Jul 1926
1st Lt Roderick N. Ott, 10 Nov 1926
Capt Oliver W. Broberg, 14 Dec 1926
Capt Arthur E. Simonin, 9 Aug 1927
Maj Paul T. Bock, 13 Sep 1928
Capt Albert M. Guidera, 1 Aug 1929
Capt Alvan C. Kincaid, 19 Aug 1931
1st Lt Charles E. Cabell, 1 Sep 1932
Maj Allison M. Dixon, 1 Jun 1933
Maj Donald P. Muse, 30 Apr 1935
Maj Guy B. Henderson, 26 Sep 1935
1st Lt Leo W. DeRosier, 29 Oct 1936
1st Lt Edward H. Underhill, 21 Jul 1937
Capt John J. O' Hara, 15 Jul 1938
1st Lt Von R. Shores, Jr., 2 Jun 1939
Capt Roger J. Browne, Apr 1940
Unknown, Jan 1941
Lt Col Paul G. Batish, Jun 2020
Maj Ryan Busbey, 26 Jun 2020

HONORS

Service Streamers

American Theater

Campaign Streamers

Lorraine
St Mihiel
Meuse-Argonne

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

The 24 Aero Squadron emblem: An American eagle pouncing upon the German dachshund which is running away with its tail between its legs.



The 24 Pursuit Squadron emblem: A leaping tiger in the proper colors. (Approved, 15 Feb 1924)



Approved, 30 Oct 2019

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

This unit was originally formed 1 May 1917 as Company F, Provisional Aviation School Squadron at Kelly Field, Texas. It then became the 19 Provisional Aviation School Squadron on 14 June 1917 and the 24 Aero Squadron (Observation) 23 July 1917. The unit deployed to England on 9 January 1918, and from there moved on to France after a training period in the UK, on 18 July 1918, positioned first at St. Maxient and later at Ourches (Meuse).

On August 22nd the squadron moved to Gondreville, Dept. Muerthe et Moselle, becoming part of the 1st Army Observation Group, commanded by Major John N. Reynolds. At this place Salmson 2A2 airplanes and other supplies were secured necessary for field service and pilots and observers were assigned. On September 1st, 1st Lieut. Maury Hill took command of the Squadron and 12 days afterward on the morning of September 12th, which was incidentally the first day of the St. Mihiel drive, 1st Lieut. Maury Hill as pilot and 1st Lieut. John W. Cousins, operations Officer as observer made the first service flight over the enemy lines.

During the ten days following the first service flight, the days during which the First Army was completing the St. Mihiel operation, straightening its lines and repelling hostile counter attacks, the squadron made a total of 13 Service flights, some of them in formations of the 91st Aero Squadron, but most of them 24 formations. On September 15th, in the course of one of these flights, 2nd Lt. Roe E. Wells, pilot and 2nd Lt. Albert W. Swinebread, Observer, had the distinction of bringing down in combat the first enemy plane with which the squadron is officially credited. It was during these days, too, that the squadron experienced its first losses, 1Lt John J. Goodfellow, pilot, and 1Lt Elliot M. Durand, Jr., observer, being reported missing after combat with enemy chasse on Sept. 14th, and 1Lt William L. Bradfield, pilot and 1Lt Arthur L. Clark, observer, missed on Sept. 17th and some weeks later discovered to be prisoners in Germany. As a whole, however, this period was invaluable to the squadron, giving both pilots and observers experience in meeting actual conditions over the lines and as well laying foundations for the necessary team work between pilots and their observers and between the pilots in the various flights. It was at this time that permanent flight organizations were effected, the Squadron being divided into three flights, A, B, C, with 1Lt Raymond P. Dillon, 2nd Lt. Roe E. Wells, and 1Lt Walter J. Smith, respectively, in command as flight leaders.

During its WW1 campaign, the 24 Aero was attached to the Fourth (American) Corps Observation Group (from August 1918) flying Salmson 2A2's but was later transferred to the First Army Observation Group. Its first combat mission came on 12 September 1918, and 13 more missions were flown during the preceding 10 days. The unit's first confirmed combat victory came on 15 September 1918 when 2LT Roe E. Wells (Pilot) and 2LT Albert W. Swinebread (Observer) shot down a German aircraft. The unit also lost three aircraft during the same period, and of the crews from these aircraft, two men became POW's.

The unit went on to fly 155 missions from Gondreville and Vincourt from 22 September 1918 and claimed 11 confirmed aerial victories. Of these missions, 22 were termed "special combat missions" in which they were sent out by Army Headquarters to obtain information most urgently needed to support ground operations, all of which were conducted at "extremely low altitude." For these special duties, teams were detached from the Squadron and sent to Army

Headquarters at Souilly between 9 and 18 October. On one such mission, 1LT Raymond P. Dillon (Pilot) and 2LT John B. Lee III engaged nine enemy aircraft and claimed three of them.

Before the Armistice it had carried out more than 80 reconnaissances, fought 54 combats and received official confirmation for 12 victories. The squadron suffered 7 casualties, consisting of 1 killed, 1 wounded, 3 prisoners and 2 missing. On April 10, 1919, it was assigned for further duty to the Army of Occupation.

Organized on 1 October 1921 at Mitchel Field, NY. Ground elements departed 30 April 1922 from the port of New York on the U.S.A.T. Somme en route to the Canal Zone. Air elements concurrently departed Mitchel Field and arrived several days later at France Field, CZ.

Participated in the "Goodwill Flights" to Guatemala 7-12 February 1938.

On 15 October 1942, CPT Abbott led eight of the P-39Ks on a mission near Rio Hato to illustrate the effectiveness of the cannon-armed fighter as a ground-attack aircraft. The pilots attacked a column of derelict trucks positioned there and all but five of the 115 vehicles had been completely destroyed.

On 24 May 1943, 12 P-39Ks, led by CPT Herron, flew in a simulated dive-bombing and strafing attack on two Navy Destroyers 10 miles south east of Taborquilla Island. The pilots, who claimed sinking of the two destroyers, reported that the smoke screen laid down by the destroyers actually aided their attack.

On 28 August 1943, flying their P-40Ns, "A" and "B" Flights flew down the Atlantic side of the Isthmus of Panama - completely undetected - and made a simulated surprise attack on Gatun Locks. "B" Flight made three dive-bombing attacks from 10,000 feet while "A" Flight made four strafing passes. Defending interceptors didn't show up until the attack was completely over.

24 Fighter Squadrons assigned to the 301 FW participated in Counter Fast Inshore Attack Craft training exercises over Possum Kingdom Lake, TX. The two week training exercise over the north Texas skies was an extremely rare opportunity and provided the Squadrons to hone a very unique capability to Combatant Commands not traditionally practiced or inherent within U.S. Air Force F16 mission sets. 3-10 Aug 2020

USAF UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 24 May 2011

Updated: 12 Sep 2023

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.