

## 434<sup>th</sup> FIGHTER TRAINING SQUADRON



### MISSION

The squadron mission is to train USAF and Allied officers to fly "Fast Movers" (Fighter/Bomber track) as a component of the 47th Flying Training Wing.

### LINEAGE

434<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron constituted, 12 Oct 1943  
Activated, 15 Oct 1943  
Inactivated, 1 Dec 1945  
Redesignated 434<sup>th</sup> Fighter Bomber Squadron, 15 Oct 1952  
Activated, 1 Dec 1952  
Redesignated 434<sup>th</sup> Fighter Day Squadron, 15 Feb 1954  
Redesignated 434<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron, 1 Jul 1958  
Redesignated 434 Tactical Fighter Training Squadron on 1 Oct 1975  
Inactivated on 3 May 1991  
Redesignated 434 Fighter Training Squadron on 21 Jun 2007  
Activated on 19 Jul 2007

### STATIONS

Grand Central Air Terminal, CA, 15 Oct 1943  
**March Field, CA, 28 Oct 1943-7 Apr 1944**  
Lomita Flight Strip, CA, 6 Feb 1944  
Santa Maria AAFld, CA, 8-18 Apr 1944  
Wattisham, England, 15 May 1944-c. 23 Nov 1945  
Camp Kilmer, NJ, 29 Nov-1 Dec 1945

George AFB, CA, 1 Dec 1952-1 Jan 1977  
Holloman AFB, NM, 1 Jan 1977-3 May 1991  
Laughlin AFB, TX, 19 Jul 2007

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

479<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group, 15 Oct 1943-1 Dec 1945  
479<sup>th</sup> Fighter Bomber (later Fighter Day) Group, 1 Dec 1952  
479<sup>th</sup> Fighter Day (later Tactical Fighter) Wing, 8 Oct 1957  
35 Tactical Fighter Wing, 1 Oct 1971  
479 Tactical Training Wing, 1 Jan 1977-3 May 1991  
47 Operations Group, 19 Jul 2007

### **ATTACHMENTS**

49 Tactical Fighter Wing, 12 Aug-6 Oct 1972

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

P-38, 1943-1944  
P-38G  
P-38J  
P-51, 1944-1945  
P-51B  
P-51C  
P-51D  
P-51K  
P-47, 1945  
F-51, 199-1953  
F-86, 1953-1955  
F-100 1954-1959  
F-100A  
F-100C  
F-104, 1959-1961  
F-104, 1961-1962  
F-4, 1966-1976  
F-4D  
F-4E  
T-38, 1977-1991

### **COMMANDERS**

Unkn, 28 Oct 1943-Feb 1944  
LTC James M. Herren Jr., by Feb 1944  
LTC Arthur F. Jeffrey, 2 Nov 1944  
Maj Robin Olds, by 28 Feb 1945-unkn  
unkn, 31 Oct-1 Dec 1945  
Unkn, 1 Dec 1952-30 Jun 1953

Maj William J. Evans, 1 Jul 1953  
LTC William B. Harris, 28 Sep 1953  
Capt Charles L. Lind, 19 Jul 1954  
LTC William B. Harris, 20 Oct 1954  
Capt Charles L. Lind, 30 Apr 1955  
LTC Roy C. Sanders, 10 Sep 1957  
Maj Eusebio Arriaga, 24 Jun 1958  
LTC Roy C. Sanders, 14 Jul 1958  
LTC Charles W. Boedeker, 13 Aug 1958  
LTC John D. Rosenbaum, 4 Mar 1959  
Maj Magnus P. Johnson, Nov 1960-2 Jan 1962  
None (not manned), 3 Jan 1962-Oct 1966  
Col Daniel E. Farr III, Oct 1966  
Col Franklin A. Engelhardt, 1 Jul 1968  
LTC Ewald G. Kruggel, 18 Jul 1968  
LTC Frederick B. Hoenniger, 15 Jun 1970  
LTC Harlan D. Sutherland, 15 Jun 1972  
LTC William J. Follmer, by 1 Apr 1973  
LTC Anthony S. Cushenberry, 20 Jan 1975-31 Mar 1976  
None (not manned), 1 Apr-31 Dec 1976  
LTC Phillip E. Smith, 3 Jan 1977  
LTC Robert H. Boles, 8 Apr 1977  
LTC Howard H. Jones, 9 Apr 1979  
LTC Henry Eagle III, 13 Feb 1981  
LTC Garry H. Silence, 1 Apr 1983  
LTC Gerald E. Becker, 12 Apr 1985-unkn  
LTC Bentley B. Rayburn, 6 Jan 1988  
LTC R. Teliska, 8 Nov 1989

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

None

### **Campaign Streamers**

Air Offensive, Europe

Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

None

## **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citation  
ETO, 18 Aug, 5 and 26 Sep 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards  
10 Oct 1966-31 Mar 1967  
2 Feb 1976-10 Jan 1977  
1 May 1981-30 Apr 1983

French Croix de Guerre with Palm

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm  
27 Jul-6 Oct 1972

## **EMBLEM**



434<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron emblem: On a pastel green disc, border black, piped white, twin red devils with red capes flowing to rear, diving toward dexter over large white cloud formation in base, each grasping a white pitchfork, shafted black, all emitting white speed lines to rear. (Approved, 7 Ju1 1944)



434<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron emblem

434<sup>th</sup> Fighter Training Squadron emblem: On a disc Azure, issuant from base a stylized cloud Argent, garnished of the first, overall two “devils” each grasping a pitchfork Gules, eyes, horns, and teeth of the second detailed and fimbriated Sable, charging bend sinisterwise, all within a narrow border Scarlet. Attached below the disc, a Yellow scroll edged with a narrow Scarlet border and inscribed “434TH FIGHTER TRAINING SQ” in Scarlet letters. Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The devils represent aircraft flown in formation to deliver punishment to the enemy while providing support to each other. Their pitchforks are the weapons employed against the adversary, whether in the sky or on the earth’s surface. The grimace and flashes represent the determination and speed used for inflicting damage.

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

Red Devils

## **OPERATIONS**

Conducted air defense prior to overseas duty. Combat in European Theater of Operations, 26 May 1944-25 Apr 1945. Received Distinguished Unit Citation (DUC) for performance in aerial conflicts against the enemy on 18 Aug, 5 and 26 Sep 1944. The squadron was activated at Grand Central Air Terminal, California and it came under control of the 479th Fighter Group. Initial manning consisted of 6 officers, 1 warrant officer and 16 enlisted men. Equipped with the Lockheed P-38 Lightning, pilots trained for combat. (Incidentally, the German's called the P-38 the "Gabelschwanzteufel," translated as the fork-tailed or twin-tailed devil. That could be the reason the squadron has two devils on its emblem.) In mid-April 1944 they departed California for their base in England and arrived almost a month later.

On 25 May 1944, eleven days after the squadron's arrival in England, pilots flew their first combat

mission. In the early hours of 6 June, D-Day, over 120,000 Allied troops neared the French coast. To provide support, over 12,000 aircraft flew cover, interdiction or other support missions. Included in these numbers were 434th pilots, some who flew three missions, returning to base long enough to refuel and rearm. Not until 29 July 1944 did the 434 FS down its first aircraft (and the first kill for the group), when 1 Lt Arthur F. Jeffrey, one of the original six pilots assigned to the squadron, bagged an Me-163 Komet, a rocket-propelled interceptor. Over the next nine months squadron members flew bomber escort missions, attacked air fields and flew other missions as required, including support of beleaguered ground forces around Bastogne, Belgium, better known as the Battle of the Bulge. On 25 April 1945, pilots flew their last combat mission and 1 Lt Hilton O. Thomas shot down the last aircraft credited to an Eighth Air Force pilot - an Arado 234 Blitz, a jet-powered bomber. Of the four aces the 479 FG produced, three came from the 434th Fighter Squadron - Arthur F. Jeffery, Robin Olds and George W. Gleason. As was the US' standard practice following a war, rapid demobilization took place and by 1 December 1945 the squadron had returned to the United States and inactivated.

Because of the Korean War and increased tensions with the Soviet Union, the US started building its armed forces back up. Thus, seven years to the day after the 434th inactivated the squadron reactivated, this time as the 434th Fighter-Bomber Squadron. Equipped with the F 51 Mustang, pilots trained for the interdiction and close air support missions. By July 1953 the squadron became an all-jet unit and flew the F-86F Sabre, and went supersonic in January 1955 when it started operating the F 100A Super Sabre. The squadron participated in Exercise SAFE BRUSH, at the time the largest joint exercise since the end of World War II, and trained to deliver conventional and nuclear weapons. Four years after the introduction of the F-100A, the 434th received the Lockheed F-104C Starfighter, a Mach 2 fighter dubbed "The missile with a man in it." At this time pilots started rotating to Spain, where they augmented NATO forces countering the Warsaw Pact and assisted Air Defense Command by sitting alert in the US. In 1961, while deployed to Spain, the squadron moved to Bitburg, Germany, during the Berlin Crisis. Shortly after their return to the US in December 1961, all squadron personnel, except two, went to other units.

The 434th remained unmanned until November 1966, at which time it gained the F-4C Phantom II and trained combat crews, both US and foreign. The squadron became operational again in 1969, and in late 1972 crews, without aircraft, deployed to Southeast Asia and flew combat missions over North and South Vietnam. In 1975 the squadron again reverted to an F-4 training squadron, and from April-December 1976 once more had all personnel removed.

In January 1977, the now-434th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron moved to Holloman AFB, New Mexico, gained pilots and performed the lead-in fighter training mission, similar to today's introduction to fighter fundamentals. Squadron personnel trained US and foreign pilots, along with weapon system operators, bound for fighter and attack aircraft and also acted as aggressor forces for students in the A-10 flying training unit. As today, the squadron utilized the T-38 Talon. On 3 May 1991, the squadron inactivated, before coming back to life today as the 434th Fighter Training Squadron. As before, 434th pilots stand ready to train tomorrow's combat aviators and Air Force leaders.

7/19/2007 - LAUGHLIN AFB, Texas - A 22-minute ceremony marked the stand-up of the 434th Fighter Training Squadron and new horizons for Laughlin to pursue. The name alone marks a significant departure, as the other training squadrons in the 47th Operations Group are named flying training squadrons, the 434th is called a fighter training squadron, signifying the 34-person unit's unique mission.

Laughlin's previous mission had the wing growing pilots from the ground up to the point where they receive their wings. The addition of the 434th FTS has the wing grooming fighter pilots, helping them take the next step after Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training. "The 434th FTS will help mold a new generation of fighter pilots," said Lt. Col. Gregory Johnson, 434th FTS commander. Not only does Lieutenant Colonel Johnson's boss agree, but he sees it as a new innovation for Air Force training. It's a great new step in developing a training continuum," said Col. David Petersen, 47th Operations Group commander. "In the past, flying training was broken into different steps at different bases but now, there will be a flow of training here at Laughlin." "It will strengthen our pilot training here simply by the cross flow of information between different squadrons. With everything located here, it will be a training continuum and our base will be able to turn out even better pilots."

The unit is expected to graduate 80 pilots a year, who will be qualified to take the controls of F-15C, F-15E, F-16, A-10 and F-22. The ceremony began at 9 a.m. on the flight line in front of base operations. Thirteen minutes later, the sheath was being taken off the 434th's guidon and being passed from Master Sgt. George Koffler, 47th OG's first sergeant to Colonel Petersen, who officially activated the squadron by handing the flag to their new commander, Lieutenant Colonel Johnson. The squadron landing in Laughlin marks a new era in the unit's storied history that is older than the Air Force itself. The unit stood up in California in October, 1943. Seven months later, it was flying combat missions out of England. The squadron has been activated and inactivated a number of times since, and has produced several aces. About half of the unit's members come from Moody, where the unit's mission was moved from during the recent round of cuts under the Base Realignment and Closure recommendations. "It's a great day for the Air Force, for Laughlin and for the men and women of the 434th FTS," said Lieutenant Colonel Johnson.

Using planning cost factors for direct and indirect payroll, the base's payroll will increase more than \$11 million per year. At this time, it's too early to calculate the non-payroll related economic impact, but last year Laughlin's economic impact was valued at about \$227.9 million to the local area.

Officials with the 47th Flying Training Wing at Laughlin AFB, Tex., inactivated the 84th Flying Training Squadron and designated the 434th FTS to take its place conducting specialized pilot undergraduate training with the T-6 Texan II. This move resulted from the consolidation of the Air Force's Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals course at JBSA-Randolph, Tex., that left the 434th FTS without a mission. "Instead of inactivating the 434th FTS, it was decided to [in]activate the 84th FTS and allow the 434th FTS to assume its mission," said Jack Waid, 47th FTW historian. At the Aug. 24 inactivation ceremony, Col. Andrew Brabson, 47th Operations Group commander,

paid tribute to the 84th FTS. "Over the course of 70 years, the 84th Panthers have exceeded all expectations in combat, self-defense and training," he said.

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Air Force Order of Battle

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#### Sources

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