

58 FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

The 58 FS "Mighty Gorillas" are authorized to operate 24 assigned F-35A aircraft, planning and executing a training curriculum in support of Air Force and international partner pilot training requirements.

LINEAGE

58 Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) constituted, 20 Nov 1940
Activated, 15 Jan 1941
Redesignated 58 Fighter Squadron, 15 May 1942
Redesignated 58 Fighter Squadron, Two Engine, 8 Feb 1945
Inactivated, 8 Dec 1945
Redesignated 58 Fighter Squadron, Single-Engine, 17 Jul 1946
Activated, 20 Aug 1946
Redesignated 58 Fighter Squadron, Jet, 14 Jun 1948
Redesignated 58 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 20 Jan 1950
Discontinued and inactivated, 25 Dec 1960
Redesignated 58 Tactical Fighter Squadron, 16 Mar 1970
Activated, 1 Sep 1970
Redesignated 58 Fighter Squadron, 1 Nov 1991

STATIONS

Mitchel Field, NY, 15 Jan 1941 (operated from Farmingdale, NY, 7–14 Dec 1941)
Philadelphia, PA, 13 Dec 1941
Norfolk, VA, 16 Jan 1942 (operated from San Francisco, CA, May–Jun 1942)
Langley Field, VA, 22 Sep–14 Oct 1942

Port Lyautey, French Morocco, 10 Nov 1942
Thelepte, Tunisia, 12 Dec 1943
Telergma, Algeria, 7 Feb 1943
Berteaux, Algeria, 2 Mar 1943
Ebba Ksour, Tunisia, 13 Apr 1943
Menzel Temime, Tunisia, 15 May 1943
Pantelleria, 28 Jun 1943
Licata, Sicily, 18 Jul 1943
Paestum, Italy, 14 Sep 1943
Santa Maria, Italy, 18 Nov 1943
Cercola, Italy, 1 Jan–6 Feb 1944
Karachi, India, 18 Feb 1944
Pungchacheng, China, c. 30 Apr 1944
Moran, India, 31 Aug 1944
Sahmaw, Burma, 26 Dec 1944
Dudhkundi, India, c. 15 May–15 Nov 1945
Camp Shanks, NY, 7–8 Dec 1945
Neubiberg, Germany, 20 Aug 1946
Bad Kissingen, Germany, Jul–25 Aug 1947
Andrews Field, MD, 25 Aug 1947
Roswell AAFld (later, Walker AFB), NM, 16 Sep 1947
Otis AFB, MA, 16 Nov 1948
Walker AFB, NM, 2 Aug 1959–25 Dec 1960
Eglin AFB, FL, 1 Sep 1970

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Udorn RTAFB, Thailand, 29 Apr–18 Oct 1972 and 1 Jun–14 Sep 1973
Tabuk, Saudi Arabia, 28 Aug 1990–12 Apr 1991
Dhahran AB, Saudi Arabia, 9 Dec 1992–17 Mar 1993, 2 Dec 1994–2 Mar 1995 and 15 Apr–28 Jun 1996
Shaikh Isa AB, Bahrain, 20 Nov 1997–20 Jun 1998
Incirlik AB, Turkey, 12 Sep–5 Nov 1998

ASSIGNMENTS

33 Pursuit (later, 33 Fighter) Group, 15 Jan 1941–8 Dec 1945
33 Fighter (later 33 Fighter Interceptor) Group, 20 Aug 1946
4707 Defense Wing, 6 Feb 1952
564 Air Defense Group, 16 Feb 1953
33 Fighter Group, 18 Aug 1955
4735 Air Defense Group, 18 Aug 1957
34 Air Division, 1 Aug 1959
Albuquerque Air Defense Sector, 1 Jan 1960
Oklahoma City Air Defense Sector, 15 Sep–25 Dec 1960
33 Tactical Fighter (later, 33rd Fighter) Wing, 1 Sep 1970

33 Operations Group, 1 Dec 1991
Air Education and Training Command 1 Oct 2009

ATTACHMENTS

432 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 29 Apr–14 Oct 1972
8 Tactical Fighter Wing, 8 Jun–14 Sep 1973
33 Tactical Fighter Wing Provisional, 28 Aug 1990–12 Apr 1991

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-39, 1941
P-40, 1941–1944
P-47, 1944–1945
P-38, 1944–1945
P(later F)-51, 1946–1949
F-84, 1948–1950
F-86, 1950–1952
F-94, 1952–1955
F-89, 1955–1960
F-4, 1970–1979
F-15, 1979
F-35, 2010

COMMANDERS

1 Lt George W. Hazlett, 15 Jan 1941-unkn
Capt William W. Momyer, 23 Mar 1942
Capt Robert H. Christman, Jul 1942
Lt William Hawkes, 19 Oct 1942 (ground echelon)
Maj Phillip Cochran, c. 13 Dec 1942 (acting)
Maj John L. Bradley, 6 Feb 1943
Capt Richard R. Coulter, 30 Jul 1943
Capt William Shelton, 24 Oct 1943
Capt Elmer C. Beach Jr., 1 Mar 1944
Maj Roger B. Ludeman, c. Jul-20 Aug 1944
Maj Minar M. Dervage, by Sep 1944
Maj James E. Ward, by Oct 1944
Maj Sidney M. Newcomb, 27 Dec 1944
Maj Clarence T. Baker, 22 Mar 1945
Lt Col Harley C. Vaughn, 10 Jul 1945
Maj Everett H. Anglin, 31 Aug 1945-unkn
Maj James F. Hackler Jr., 20 Aug 1946
unkn, 1946-Apr 1948
Maj Leland R. Raphun, by 1 May 1948
Lt Col Joseph C. Smith, c. 31 May 1948
Maj Frank Q. O'Connor, 24 Jun 1948

Capt Ernest R. Wilson, by Nov 1948
Capt Jack Stevens, 1 Oct 1949
Lt Col William J. Grumbles, 17 Nov 1949
Capt Glenwood W. Eaton, 10 Dec 1949-unkn
unkn, 1950-5 Feb 1952
Lt Col Edgar S. Beam, 6 Feb 1952
Maj Curtis N. Metcalf, Jan 1953-Jun 1954
Lt Col John R. Delapp, #1956
unkn, Jul 1954-25 Dec 1960
Lt Col John C. Downey, 1 Nov 1970
Lt Col Lee E. Williams, 3 Jul 1972
Lt Col Roger E. Johnson, 17 Oct 1972
Lt Col John S. Hardy, 18 May 1973
Lt Col Paul D. Lambrides, 1 Sep 1974
Lt Col William F. Cummings, 28 Apr 1975
Lt Col Henry Viccellio Jr., 1 Dec 1976
Lt Col Stanley S. Gunnerson, 22 May 1977
Lt Col Walter T. Worthington, 1 Jan 1979
Lt Col Wayne I. Yohe, 14 Nov 1980
Lt Col Joseph D. Gorecki, 4 Jun 1982
Lt Col William J. Meeboer Jr., 18 Jun 1984
Lt Col Danny M. Reisinger, 1 Jul 1986
Lt Col Francis K. Geisler, 5 Jul 1988
Lt Col William E. Thiel, 9 Apr 1990
Lt Col Mark P. Lennon, 29 Nov 1991
Lt Col Gary A. Baldwin, 9 Nov 1992
Lt Col Delbert W. Pemberton, 22 Oct 1993
Lt Col Douglas Cochran, 3 May 1995
Lt Col Steven D. Carey, 19 Sep 1996
Lt Col Vincent P. DiFronzo, 4 Jun 1998
Lt Col Dean N. Trudeau, 19 May 2000
Lt Col Russell J. Handy, 5 Oct 2000
Lt Col Thomas W. Hampton, 27 Jun 2002
Lt Col Steven L. Thompson, May 2004
Lt Col Matthew C. Isler, May 2006
Lt Col Todd A. Jaax, 31 Oct 2007
Lt Col Mark L. O'Laughlin, 17 Oct 2008
Lt Col John B. Wilbourne, 2 Oct 2009
Lt Col Lee E. Kloos, 15 Jul 2011

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Algeria-French Morocco with Arrowhead
Tunisia
Sicily
Naples-Foggia
Anzio
Rome-Arno
Air Combat, EAME Theater
India-Burma
China Defensive
Central Burma

Vietnam
Vietnam Ceasefire
Southwest Asia

Defense of Saudi Arabia
Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Panama, 1989–1990

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Central Tunisia, 15 Jan 1943
Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device
25 Apr–16 Oct 1972

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards
1 Oct 1978–30 Apr 1980
1 May 1984–30 Apr 1986
1 Apr 1990–31 Mar 1992
1 Jun 1996–31 May 1998; 1 Jun 1998–31 May 1999

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm
29 Apr–18 Oct 1972

EMBLEM



58 Fighter Squadron emblem



58 Fighter Squadron, Jet emblem





58 Fighter Interceptor Squadron emblem: On a light azure disc, piped dark azure, a demi sphere issuing from base of the last, surmounted by a conventionalized jet speeding through space proper, bendwise, on its nose an eagle's head erased, flames issuing from its tail, all between a circle of stars, five and eight, all gules. (Approved, 30 Mar 1951)



58 Tactical Fighter Squadron emblem: On a disc composed of a Light Blue sky and White cloud formations, within a band divided into four segments, top and bottom segments Blue, dexter and sinister segments checky, alternating Blue and White, a Brown gorilla (eyes and tongue Red, pupils Dark Brown, teeth White) rising above a White cloud formation issuing from base on which are two Red flight symbols each trailing an arced Light Blue vapor trail. (Approved, 14 Jul 1971)



58 Fighter Squadron patch
Approved, 18 Jan 1944, latest rendering, 24 Oct 2018

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

The 58 Fighter Squadron has a long and distinguished history that dates back to the aerial battles of World War II. Activated as the 58 Pursuit Squadron (part of the 33rd Pursuit Group) stationed at Mitchel Field, New York, the squadron was charged with the ongoing mission of aerial defense of the United States. When the United States entered World War II, the 58 took an active role in the war effort by participating in several operations during a three year overseas tour. These operations include the invasion of Morocco in November 1942, combat operations in the Mediterranean Theater from November 1942 to February 1944, and operations in the China-Burma, India campaign, April 1944 to August 1945. During the operations in the Mediterranean Theater, the 58 earned the nickname "Gorillas" for the guerrilla warfare-like techniques it utilized. While operating in the various theaters, the 58 flew the P-40 Warhawk, P-47 Thunderbolt and P-38 Lightning. As a result of its superior performance, the 58 received the Distinguished Unit Citation for combat operations conducted in central Tunisia.

Part of US occupation forces in Germany 1946–1947.

Air defense of US, 1947–1960.

The 58 FIS had been stationed at Otis AFB, Massachusetts, and assigned to the 4707th ADW while flying F-94Cs.

The 58 FIS, which had switched from F-86As to F-94Bs in the spring of 1952, transitioned to F-94Cs commencing in March 1953, receiving the first batch directly from Lockheed, and then the remainder in August from other units as the older aircraft were transferred.

In February 1953 they were further assigned to the 564th ADG. Conversion from Starfires to F-89Ds began in early 1955, and by the end of June they had sixteen on hand. On August 18, 1955, Project Arrow took effect, and the 58 FIS rejoined their reactivated and original 33rd Fighter Group. The initial Group Commander was Colonel Fred Hook, who was replaced by Colonel David Tudor in 1956. The 58 FIS was commanded by Lt. Colonel John Delapp. By the end of the year, the number of F-89Ds had increased to twenty-six.

The 33rd FIG, with the 58 FIS flying F-89s and the 60th FIS flying F-94s, was responsible for the air defense of the US's eastern seaboard from the south of Maine to New York. In addition, the 58 FIS was tasked with working with the Lincoln Laboratory, the USAF's contractor through MIT, for the early development of the Data-Link program. An additional program was the exploration of the ACA, Aircraft Controlled Approach. This program utilized radar reflectors that were strategically placed next to Runway 24 at Otis and were tuned to the F-89s radar frequency. This permitted them to be picked up on the Scorpions radar and be differentiated from the ground clutter, "grass," on the Radar Intercept Operator's (RIO) scope. With the outline of Cape Cod being very apparent to the RIO, all that had to be done was further align the F-89 with the radar reflectors and at a predetermined point start the penetration, with additional fine tuning corrections being made as the F-89 approached Otis. The crews got to the point where they were as accurate as a GCA or ILS approach, but the system was never approved for operational use.

In the fall of 1956 the F-89Ds were replaced by F-89Hs, with twenty-six being assigned by the end of the year. In the spring of 1957 the F-89Hs were transferred to the 75th FIS at Presque Isle AFB, and replaced by F-89Js, with twenty-eight on board by the end of June. As with other ADC squadrons, the 58 FIS flew to Vincent AFB for rocket training with the Genie missiles. They flew against targets towed by B-57s on the end of a mile-long reel, and were scored by cameras on the Canberra. And, as with the other F-89 squadrons scheduled into Vincent, these training missions had to be flown only during the early morning hours or late at night, as the weight of the F-89s was heavy enough to break through the asphalt taxiways at Vincent during the daytime heat. (Not to mention that the runways were considered to be a couple miles of too short to get the F-89s airborne when it was hot). On August 2, 1959, the 58 FIS was relocated from Otis to Walker AFB, Roswell, New Mexico, with twenty-four Scorpions. They were inactivated at Walker on December 25, 1959, being the second from the last ADC squadron to fly the F-89.

After its service in World War II, the 58 saw a period of activation and inactivation at various Air Force installations flying both the F-84 Thunderstreak and F-94 Starfire. This fluctuation of activity leveled out when the 58, part of the redesignated 33d Tactical Fighter Wing was assigned to Eglin Air Force Base, Florida and began flying the F-4E Phantom.

In 1972, the 58 was deployed to Udorn, Thailand under what was known as the "Summer Help Program." During this period, the 58 was credited as the first temporary duty unit to down an enemy aircraft. On June 2, 1972, Major Philip W. Handley and Lieutenant John J. Smallwood shot down a MiG-19 with a 300 round burst from their M-61A Vulcan Cannon, disproving the

perception that American aircrews had lost their dogfighting skills. Just over two months later on August 12, 1972, another 58 fighter was credited with a kill after shooting down a MiG-21 with an AIM-7 Sparrow, a radar guided missile. This second kill was the last credited to the 58 during its six-month rotation in Southeast Asia.

Under Constant Guard I, F-4Es from the 4th TFW's 334th and 335th TFSs, Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina, arrived during April, 1972, and were assigned to the 8th TFW at Ubon RTAB. During late April, F-4Es from the 308th TFS at Homestead AFB and the 58 TFS at Eglin AFB were deployed to Udorn RTAB under Constant Guard II and there, assigned to the 432nd TRW. Seventy-two F-4Es were now available in Southeast Asia assigned to the 4th TFS, 421st TFS, 69th TFS and 34th TFS, and additional aircraft under Constant Guard continued to arrive at regular intervals.

Another F-4E kill followed on May 31, when Capt. Jeffery S. Feinstein claimed his second air-to-air combat victory. Later, Feinstein would become an ace while flying the F-4E as a pilot of the 13th TFS, 432nd TFW. On July 8, two more future aces, Capt. Steve Ritchie and Capt. Charles DeBellevue downed two MiG-21s while flying an F-4E from the 58 TFS, 432nd TRW.

58 TFS aircraft, crewed by pilot Maj. Phillip W. Handley and WSO 1Lt. John J. Smallwood, destroyed a MiG using the 20mm rotary cannon (the second kill using this weapon).

In 1979, the 58 Fighter Squadron became the first squadron in the 33d Tactical Fighter Wing to receive the F-15 Eagle. The 58 proved the war fighting capability of the F-15 during its deployment to Germany for exercise Coronet Eagle. During the exercise, the 58 utilized 18 F-15s to fly 1001 sorties in less than three weeks. The unit repeated this deployment in 1982 utilizing 24 F-15s making it the first full F-15 deployment in history. Ten years later, the 58 participated in Operation Just Cause where forces successfully removed Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega from power in Panama.

The 58 was once again called upon to prove its mettle in August of 1990 when Saddam Hussein invaded the tiny country of Kuwait. Twenty-four F-15s under the command of Colonel Rick Parsons departed Eglin Air Force Base for King Faisal Air Base, Saudi Arabia as part of the build-up of coalition forces in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. In the early morning hours of January 17, 1991, Operation Desert Storm commenced. Captain John J.B. Kelk claimed the first aerial victory by downing the first MiG-29. As the war progressed, the 58 flew 1,689 combat sorties and destroyed 15 other enemy aircraft. During the course of the war, the 58 accomplished feats that no other coalition member matched including; the most air-to-air kills, the most double kills, and the most sorties and hours flown by any F-15 unit in theater. The 58 also destroyed the most MiG-29s (a total of five).

Some recent accomplishments of the 58 include; the first fighter squadron to bring the AIM-120 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) into full operation, numerous rotations to the Saudi Arabian theater supporting Operation Southern Watch by patrolling the no-fly zone, and participation in Operation Uphold Democracy where the United States helped bring

control back to Haiti.

10 January 1997 F-15C. 85-0099, of the 58 TFS catches fire on take-off from Eglin. Pilot returns for an immediate landing and egresses safely on the ground. Aircraft completely destroyed by fire. This aircraft credited with MiG-25 kill by AIM-7M on 19 January 1991 during Operation Desert Storm while flown by Capt. Lawrence E. Pitta.

10-13 Apr 2008 The 58 FS deployed to Robert Gray Army Airfield, Fort Hood Texas in support of Operation NOBLE EAGLE. Their primary mission was to enforce Temporary Flight Restrictions around Crawford Ranch. The deployment consisted of 6 F-15s and 88 personnel.

26 Oct – 30 Nov 2008 58 FS deployed 10 F-15s and 170 personnel to Al Dhafra, United Arab Emirates to support AFCENT exercise IRON FALCON 09-01. The aim of the exercise was to improve tactical capabilities among coalition air forces, develop and standardize tactics, techniques, and procedures in a coalition environment, and improve air combat doctrine through training and practice.

7/15/2011 The Department of Defense's first F-35 Lightning II joint strike fighter touched down at its new home here July 14, marking a major milestone in the nation's military history. Upon arrival, the jet officially became part of the Air Force inventory. It now belongs to the JSF training unit, the 33rd Fighter Wing. Flying it in was Lt. Col. Eric Smith of the 58 Fighter Squadron, the first Air Force qualified F-35 pilot. "It was a smooth ride in," said the colonel of the hour and 40 minute flight. "The jet behaved awesomely. I'm just so proud to bring it home to Eglin (Air Force Base)." A crowd of 33rd FW people braved the 90 degree heat to watch the fifth-generation fighter touchdown and taxi in. Col. Andrew Toth, the 33rd FW commander, was the first to greet his pilot upon arrival. "It's an exciting day here at the wing where our joint and integrated team has been preparing for this day since October 2009," Toth said. "I have no doubt the caliber of the Airmen, Sailors, Marines and contractors will provide safe and effective training operations at Eglin (AFB). Now, we look forward to the start of classes later this year." Now that the aircraft is on station, F-35 maintainers will train and be certified here at home. "It's pretty exciting," said Tech. Sgt. Brian West, the crew chief for the new aircraft. "We're thrilled to be able to train with one of our own."

As the world's first multi-role stealth fighter, the F-35 is known for its superior range, cutting-edge avionics and next-generation sensor fusion. Each model shares breakthroughs in combat performance, survivability and support, while each is specifically tailored for unique service needs. Lt. Col. J.D. Wilbourne, the 58 FS commander, said he was thrilled to see his first aircraft arrive, one day before his change of command. "This is the best week ever," said the commander, who flew chase in an F-16 Fighting Falcon. "This aircraft ensures air dominance for the next 30 years, and today marks the first step toward that goal." 2011

Members of the Virginia Air National Guard's 149th Fighter Squadron, flying four F-22s from Joint Base Langley-Eustis, conducted their first operational integration-training mission with F-35 strike fighters at Eglin AFB, Fla. "The F-22 and F-35 squadrons integrated very well," said

Maj. Steven Frodsham, pilot with the 149th FS. "The lessons learned and tactics developed from this training opportunity will help to form the foundation for future growth in our combined fifth generation fighter tactics," he said. The F-22 and F-35 pilots flew offensive counterair, defensive counterair, and interdiction missions during the Nov. 5 drills. "When the F-22 and F-35 come together, it brings out the strength of both airplanes," said Lt. Col. Matt Renbarger, commander of Eglin's 58 Fighter Squadron, an F-35A training unit. "The F-22 was built to be an air-to-air superiority fighter and the F-35 was built to be a strike fighter. These airplanes complement each other and we're trying to learn how to take that from a design perspective into a tactical arena and be the most effective combat team we can be," he said. 2014

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

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