

21st Fighter Squadron

Lineage.

Constituted as 21st Fighter Squadron, Single Engine, on 5 October 1944.

Activated on 15 October 1944.

Inactivated on 15 October 1946.

Redesignated as 21st Fighter-Day Squadron on 26 August 1954.

Activated on 11 November 1954.

Redesignated as 21st Tactical Fighter Squadron on 1 July 1958.

Inactivated on 15 March 1959.

Redesignated 21st Tactical Fighter Training Squadron on 27 October 1972.

Activated on 1 December 1972.

Redesignated 21st Tactical Fighter Squadron on 9 October 1980.

Redesignated 21st Tactical Fighter Training Squadron on 1 July 1983.

Inactivated on 28 June 1991.

Redesignated 21st Fighter Squadron, and activated, on 1 November 1991.

Inactivated on 31 December 1993.

Activated on 8 August 1996.¹

Honors.

Campaign Streamers.

World War II Asiatic-Pacific Theater:

Air Offensive, Japan [1942-1945]

Eastern Mandates [1943-1944]

Western Pacific [1944-1945]

Ryukyus [1945]

China Offensive [1945]

Decorations.

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

2 February 1976-31 March 1977

1 June 1985-31 May 1987

1 March 1990-28 June 1991

1 January 1992-31 December 1993



¹ AETC SO G-96-25, 7 August 1996

Decorations. (Continued)

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (Continued)

8 August 1996-30 June 1998²
1 July 1998-30 June 2000³
1 July 2001-30 June 2003⁴
[1 July] 2003-30 June 2005⁵
1 July 2005-30 June 2006⁶
1 July 2006-30 June 2007⁷
1 July 2007-30 June 2008⁸
1 July 2008-30 June 2009⁹
1 July 2009-30 June 2010¹⁰
1 July 2010-30 June 2011¹¹
1 July 2011-30 June 2012¹²
1 July 2012-30 June 2013¹³
1 July 2013-30 June 2014¹⁴
1 July 2014-30 June 2015¹⁵
1 July 2015-30 June 2016¹⁶
1 July 2016-30 June 2017¹⁷
1 July 2017-30 June 2018¹⁸
1 July 2018-30 June 2019¹⁹
1 July 2019-30 June 2020²⁰
1 July 2020-30 June 2021²¹

² AETC SO GA-12, 9 November 1998

³ AETC SO GA-9, 8 December 2000

⁴ AETC SO GA-55, 29 April 2004

⁵ AETC SO GA-0052, 22 June 2006

⁶ AETC SO GA-045, 8 May 2007

⁷ AETC SO G-054, 28 February 2008

⁸ AETC SO G-071, 3 April 2009

⁹ AETC SO G-025, 11 March 2010

¹⁰ AETC SO G-086, 9 May 2011

¹¹ AETC SO G-171, 17 April 2012

¹² AETC SO G-036, 1 March 2013

¹³ AETC SO G-017, 1 February 2014

¹⁴ AETC SO G-029, 8 January 2015

¹⁵ AETC SO G-006, 14 October 2016

¹⁶ AETC SO G-022, 22 March 2017

¹⁷ AETC SO G-015, 19 Dec 2017

¹⁸ AETC SO G-057, 20 May 2019

¹⁹ AETC SO G-013, 18 Dec 2019

²⁰ AETC SO G-013, 16 Dec 2020

²¹ AETC SO G-009, 15 Nov 2021

Squadron – 3 Total Aerial Victory Credits. 1 Squadron Ace:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Aerial Victories</u>	
	<u>In Sq</u>	<u>Lifetime Total</u>
2d Lt I.B. Jack Donaldson	3	5

Assignments. 413th Fighter Group, 15 October 1944-15 October 1946. 413th Fighter-Day Group, 11 November 1954; 413th Fighter-Day (later, 413th Tactical Fighter) Wing, 8 October 1957-15 March 1959 (attached to Sixteenth Air Force, 14-15 March 1959). 35th Tactical Fighter (later, 35th Tactical Training; 35th Tactical Fighter) Wing, 1 December 1972-28 June 1991. 507th Air Control Wing, 1 November 1991; 363d Operations Group, 1 May 1992-31 December 1993. 56th Operations Group, 8 August 1996-.

Stations. Seymour-Johnson Field, North Carolina, 15 October 1944; Bluethenthal Field, North Carolina, 9 November 1944-7 April 1945; Ie Shima Airfields, Ryukyu Islands, Japan, 19 May 1945; Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan, 21 November 1945; Yontan, Okinawa, Japan, 29 January-15 October 1946. George Air Force Base, California, 11 November 1954-10 March 1959; Moron Air Base, Spain, 11-15 March 1959. George Air Force Base, California, 1 December 1972-28 June 1991. Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina, 1 November 1991-31 December 1993. Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, 8 August 1996-.

Aircraft.

Republic P-47 Thunderbolt	1944-1946
North American F-86 Sabre	1954-1956
North American F-100 Super Sabre	1956-1959
McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II	1972-1981
Lockheed F-16 Fighting Falcon	1981-1991.
Fairchild Republic OA-10 Thunderbolt II	1991-1993
Lockheed F-16 Fighting Falcon	1996-.

Emblem. Approved on 18 March 2008.

Blazon. On a disc Sable, two playing cards totaling the number twenty one, a king of spades tilted to dexter and a ace of hearts tilted to sinister all Proper, emitting from behind the king a contrail arcing below to base and terminating in a delta, point to sinister Gules.

Attached above the disc a Black scroll edged with a narrow Red border and inscribed "GAMBLERS" in Red letters.

Attached below the disc a Black scroll edged with a narrow Red border and inscribed "21 ST FIGHTER SQUADRON" in Red letters.

Official Motto. Gamblers

Significance. 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 emblem purposed for the unit is deeply rooted in the traditions and the history of the Taiwanese people. The Unit has been operating in defense of the people since 1934. The cards totaling 21 signify perfection and the pursuit of victory in any endeavor. Specifically, the king of spades representing the Taiwanese people, the ace of hearts, the heart of a nation, and the arrow absolute integrity.

Commanders.

21st Fighter Squadron, Single Engine [15 October 1944-15 October 1946]

Unknown	15 October 1944-11 October 1945
Lt Col William B. Whisonant	12 October 1945
Capt Francis J. Vetort	13 October 1945
1 Lt Robert W. Faas	1 April 1946-Unknown
Capt Samuel H. Henton	Unknown-26 September 1946
Capt Louis A. Guin	26 September 1946-Unknown.

21st Fighter-Day Squadron [11 November 1954-1 July 1958]

Maj Stephen L. Bettinger	11 November 1954-Unknown.	[Ace]
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21st Tactical Fighter Squadron [1 July 1958-15 March 1959]

Unknown	1 July 1958-15 March 1959.
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21st Tactical Fighter Training Squadron [1 December 1972-9 October 1980]

Col Roger L. Sprague	1 December 1972
Lt Col William E. Whitten	c. 1 March 1973
Lt Col D. L. Wagner	17 April 1975
Lt Col Paul Marsh	2 May 1977
Lt Col Wallace L. Mekkers	5 July 1979-Unknown.

21st Tactical Fighter Squadron [9 October 1980-1 July 1983]

Unknown	c. 1980-1 July 1983.
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21st Tactical Fighter Training Squadron [1 July 1983-28 June 1991]

Unknown	1 July 1983
Lt Col Dick E. Willis	12 November 1987
Lt Col Mark D. Gilson	26 July 1989
Lt Col David M. McLaughlin	9 November 1990-28 June 1991.

Commanders. (Continued)

21st Fighter Squadron [1 November 1991-31 December 1993; 8 August 1996-]

Lt Col Bobby G. Smith	1 November 1991
Lt Col John A. Neubauer	1 October-31 December 1993.
Lt Col James R. Mitchell	8 August 1996
Lt Col Dean A. Proffitt, III	2 April 1998 ²²
Lt Col Walter E. Grace, III	18 June 1999 ²³
Lt Col Mark J. Warner	19 December 2000 ²⁴
Lt Col Walter G. Farrar, III	18 July 2002 ²⁵
Lt Col Christopher Roeder	4 December 2003 ²⁶
Lt Col Thomas G. Abbot	8 June 2005 ²⁷
Lt Col Dennis J. Malfer	28 April 2006 ²⁸
Lt Col James G. Sturgeon	20 September 2007 ²⁹
Lt Col William D. Bowman	15 June 2009 ³⁰
Lt Col Sean C. Routier	24 June 2011 ³¹
Lt Col Paul B. Willingham	26 April 2013 ³² Ret
Lt Col Javier I. Antuna	19 June 2015 ³³ Ret
Lt Col Matthew L. Tuzel	7 June 2017 ³⁴
Lt Col David T. Welt	24 June 2019 ³⁵
Lt Col Steven S. Whisler	21 June 2021-Present. ³⁶

Narrative.

The squadron was constituted as the 21st Fighter Squadron, Single Engine, on 5 October 1944 and activated on 15 October 1944 at Seymour-Johnson Field, North Carolina. The unit flew the Republic P-47 Thunderbolt and was assigned to the 413d Fighter Group. On 9 November 1944, the squadron moved to Bluethenthal Field, North Carolina. On 7 April 1945, it departed for Ie Shima Airfields, Ryukyu Islands, Japan, where it arrived on 19 May 1945. While there, the

²² 21 FS SO SO-GZ-003, 30 March 1998

²³ 21 FS SO SO-GZ-004, c. 15 June 1999

²⁴ 21 FS SO SO-GZ-003, 18 December 2000

²⁵ 21 FS SO SO-GZ-001, 18 July 2002

²⁶ 21 FS SO SO-GZ-001, 5 December 2003

²⁷ 21 FS SO 56OG-G-2005-10, 13 May 2005

²⁸ 21 FS SO 56OG-G-2006-06, 20 April 2006

²⁹ 21 FS SO G-2007-009, 23 August 2007

³⁰ 56 MSG SO G-033, 10 June 2009

³¹ 56 MSG SO G-015, 22 June 2011

³² 56 MSG SO GS-8, 26 Apr 2013

³³ 56 MSG SO GS-12-15, 18 June 2015

³⁴ 56 MSG SO G-27-17, 21 July 2017

³⁵ 56 MSG SO G-19-032, 19 June 2019

³⁶ 56 MSG SO G-19-032, 19 June 2019

squadron flew combat missions in western Pacific Ocean between 20 May and 14 August 1945. For its efforts, the squadron earned 5 campaign streamers. On 21 November 1945, it moved to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan, where it was part of the occupation force. On 29 January 1946, the squadron moved to Yontan, Okinawa, Japan, to continue its occupation mission. The squadron inactivated on 15 October 1946.

On 26 August 1954, the unit was redesignated as the 21st Fighter-Day Squadron and activated on 11 November 1954 at George AFB, California, flying the North American F-86 Sabre. It was initially assigned to the 413d Fighter-Day Group. In 1956, the unit converted to the North American F-100 Super Sabre. On 8 October 1957, the squadron was reassigned to the 413d Fighter-Day (later, 413d Tactical Fighter) Wing. On 1 July 1958, the squadron was redesignated as the 21st Tactical Fighter Squadron. It departed George AFB on 10 March 1959 and arrived at Moron Air Base, Spain, the next day. On 14 and 15 March 1959, it was attached to Sixteenth Air Force. The unit inactivated on 15 March 1959. During this period, the squadron conducted tactical exercises, firepower demonstrations, and joint training missions.

On 27 October 1972, the squadron was redesignated as the 21st Tactical Fighter Training Squadron and reactivated on 1 December 1972 at George AFB flying the McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II. While there, it was assigned to the 35th Tactical Fighter (later, 35th Tactical Training; 35th Tactical Fighter) Wing. On 9 October 1980, the squadron was redesignated as the 21st Tactical Fighter Squadron. During that time, the unit flew "wild weasel" radar detection and suppression practice missions. In 1981, the unit converted to the Lockheed F-16 Fighting Falcon. On 1 July 1983, the squadron was redesignated as the 21st Tactical Fighter Training Squadron. It inactivated on 28 June 1991. While flying F-16s, the unit took part in tactical exercises and training.

On 1 November 1991, the 21st was redesignated as, and activated at Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina. While there it flew the Fairchild Republic OA-10 Thunderbolt II and was assigned to the 507th Air Control Wing. On 1 May 1992, the squadron was assigned to the 363d Operations Group. It was inactivated on 31 December 1993. While at Shaw AFB, the squadron practiced forward air control missions.

The 21st Fighter Squadron was reactivated on 8 August 1996 at Luke AFB, Arizona, assigned to the 56th Operations Group. Initially, the squadron taught Taiwan Air Force (TAF) pilots to fly newly purchased TAF-owned F-16 aircraft. Later that mission changed to providing continuation training for TAF pilots.

Locally Updated on 25 February 2022

Locally Updated by Rick Grisct