

72nd FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

72nd Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) constituted, 4 Oct 1941
Activated, 5 Oct 1941
Redesignated 72nd Fighter Squadron, 15 May 1942
Inactivated, 10 Oct 1946
Redesignated 72nd Fighter Bomber Squadron, 15 Nov 1952
Activated, 1 Jan 1953
Inactivated, 8 Feb 1958
Redesignated 72nd Tactical Fighter Squadron, 19 May 1958
Activated, 1 Jul 1958
Inactivated, 9 Apr 1959
Redesignated 72nd Tactical Fighter Training Squadron and activated, 1 Jul 1982
Redesignated 72nd Fighter Squadron, 1 Nov 1991
Inactivated, 19 Jun 1992

STATIONS

Wheeler Field, TH, 5 Oct 1941
Hilo Field, TH, 25 Jul 1943
Wheeler Field, TH, 21 Oct 1943

Makin, 18 Dec 1943
Haleiwa Field, TH, 23 Apr 1944
Mokuleia Field, TH, 8 Jun 1944
Iwo Jima, 26 Mar 1945
Isley Field, Saipan, 5 Dec 1945
Northwest Field, Guam, 17 Apr-10 Oct 1946
George AFB, Calif, 1 Jan 1953-26 Nov 1954
Chateauroux, France, 14 Dec 1954
Chambley AB, France, 9 Jul 1955-8 Feb 1958
Clark AB, Luzon, 1 Jul 1958-9 Apr 1959
MacDill AFB, FL 1982-1992

ASSIGNMENTS

15th Pursuit (later Fighter) Group, 5 Oct 1941
318th Fighter Group, 15 Oct 1942
21st Fighter Group, 15 Jun 1944-10 Oct 1946
21st Fighter Bomber Group, 1 Jan 1953-8 Feb 1958
6200th Air Base Wing, 1 Jul 1958-9 Apr 1959
56th Tactical Training Wing 1982-1 Nov 1991
56th Operations Group

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-40, 1941-1943
P-39, 1943-1944
P-39Q
P-38, 1944-1945
P-38J
P-38L
P-51, 1944-1946
P-51D
P-47, 1946
F-51, 1953
F-51D
F-86, 1953-1957
F-100, 1958-1959
F-16C
F-16D

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

Central Pacific

Air Offensive Japan

Eastern Mandates

Air Combat, Asiatic-Pacific Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation

Japan, 7 Apr 1945

EMBLEM



On a red disc within a black border edged Air Force golden yellow, a stylized silhouette of a bird in profile, its upraised wings extending over the border in sinister chief, its claws grasping three lightning flashes, all white; in the bird's beak a green olive branch; on the border in chief three white stars, in base the motto, letters white. (Approved, 24 Nov 1958)

MOTTO

PAX PER AUXILIA PARATA, Peace through Readiness.

NICKNAME

Falcons

OPERATIONS

Activated on 5 October 1941 as the 72nd Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) and equipped with P-40s. the unit was redesignated as the 72nd Fighter Squadron by 15 May 1942. Operations included patrols over the Pacific during 1943 and after re-equipping with the P-38, combat in the central and western Pacific. Later the unit re-equipped with the P-51. It was also assigned to a

number of fighter groups including the 15th, 318th and the 21st. Finally, on 10 October 1946 the squadron was deactivated.

When reactivated on 1 January 1953, the unit became the 72nd Fighter Bomber Squadron, based at George Air Force Base, California, equipped with the F-86F Sabre. The 72nd was assigned to the 21st Fighter Bomber Group and in 1954 the group and squadrons moved from George AFB to Chateauroux Air Base France for about eight months before moving once more to Chambley, France, where it remained as part of USAFE, operating the F-86F until it was deactivated on 8 February 1958.

On 1 July 1958, it was again reactivated and designated the 72nd Tactical Fighter Squadron, assigned to the 6200th Air Base Wing at Clark Air Base, The Philippines, under PACAF (Pacific Air Forces).

Air Force Order of Battle
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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.