

**59-0018**

16 Sep 74

5<sup>th</sup> FIS



F-106A SN 59-030  
F-106A SN 59-018  
MAJOR ACCIDENT  
5 FIS, Minot AFB, ND  
16 Sep 1974, 1603 CDT

Continuation Sheet for Air Force Form 711, USAF ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT,  
Item 11, Narrative Description of Accident

HISTORY OF FLIGHT: On 16 September 1974, Captain Lawrence G. Randall was scheduled as instructor pilot to fly with Major James E. Waddle in two F-106A's on Major Waddle's first Aerial Combat Tactics (ACT) checkout mission.

The briefing began at 1330 hours and included Captain Christopher DeArmond, the designated flight leader and briefing officer for the four-ship flight, with Lieutenant Robert C. Benner, his student and number two man in the flight. Captain Randall's position was designated as number three and Major Waddle as number four for the four-ship formation departure, patrol, and recovery portions of the flight.

The mission was briefed in accordance with the applicable ADCM 51-106 briefing guides. Captain DeArmond used the 5FIS ACT mission briefing worksheet (TAB O) to insure coverage of all areas.

A formal weather briefing for the day's flying activity was given by Base Weather at 0730 that morning and since the weather was good, Captain DeArmond used the present and forecast weather on the telewriter to brief the aircrews on conditions for the time period of their flight. Weather was not a factor in this accident.

The 5FIS daily flight log (TAB K) shows the flight to be properly cleared for the ACT mission. Also, the 24th Region Control Center (Huntress Weapons Director) was briefed by Captain DeArmond concerning control needed for the mission. The Red Baron airspace was the area used with an altitude reservation from fifteen thousand to fifty-one thousand feet.


The flight was briefed for individual take-offs with ten second spacing, a join-up in four-ship formation, and then patrol formation to the area. After the briefing was completed for the four-ship, the instructor pilots then briefed with their respective students on the finer points of performing the maneuvers called for in the syllabus. Lieutenant Benner was on ACT mission number two; Major Waddle on number one.

Captain Randall was originally scheduled to fly F-106A 59-010 but this was later changed to F-106A 59-018 with the call sign of Yankee Kilo 09. Major Waddle's assigned aircraft was F-106A 59-030 with the call sign of Yankee Kilo 12. All aircraft were clean (without tanks) and the only aircraft loaded with a weapon system evaluator missile was F-106A 59-030.

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Preflight and taxi went according to schedule with the exception of number four (Major Waddle) who was late taxiing, but arrived for the end of runway inspection early enough for the flight to make its briefed take-off time within one minute. The join-up was accomplished and the flight moved into patrol formation. They climbed to the assigned block altitude of flight level two-zero-zero to two-five-zero and proceeded to the Red Baron airspace.

Intercept Director, Huntress 56 (Second Lieutenant Juan Alberto Hernandez) was monitoring the two flights. He was briefed to advise them of any conflicting traffic and to insure they remained within the assigned airspace.

 The confidence maneuvers that had been flown to that point were low speed vs high pitch angles, Mach 1.2 transonic tuck/airframe buffet, split S, and nose-high/nose-low rudder reversals.

Each instructor pilot had previously agreed to monitor the other's frequency on the data link receiver so they would be aware of fuel states and know when the other was ready to join-up for return to base. Captain DeArmond heard over his data link receiver that number three and four (Yankee Kilo 09 and 12) each had 3800 pounds of fuel remaining, so he knew it was about time to begin flight join-up for the return home. He had Lieutenant Benner move into fighting wing position and called his flight over to the original UHF frequency, the one that Yankee Kilo 09 and 12 were on and started maneuvering northward. He checked in with Huntress and talked to Captain Randall on the radio confirming fuel states and their plan for join-up. They agreed to meet at the eastern edge of the airspace, using Lake Sakakawea as a visual ground reference. Captain DeArmond's flight would remain south until visual contact was made. Captain Randall's flight was also planning to accomplish their fighting wing as they proceeded southward for join-up. Upon arrival at the south side of the lake, Yankee Kilo 02 began looking for their other flight. Captain DeArmond was thinking about asking the other flight lead for a burner light to mark their position and as he looked northward he saw what appeared to be three streams of smoke running roughly north and south about their same altitude which was close to twenty-two thousand feet (TAB Y-21). When he realized the smoke was not a burner puff, he called Captain Randall to ask for their position. There was no response so he tried several more times (including guard frequency) asking Huntress to try and raise them also. He then asked Huntress if they had contact and was given a bearing of 340 degrees at eighteen miles range. Lieutenant Hernandez advised them that Yankee Kilo 09 flight appeared to be in a very tight circle. As Yankee Kilo 02 flight headed north, lead picked up a target return thirty to forty degrees left at about fifteen miles range slightly low.

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Lieutenant Benner's radar had become inoperative during the flight so he was strictly visual. Lead could not get a lock-on to his contact so he couldn't get an accurate range rate. He began a left turn as they reached four miles range and then went visual to look for them, but saw nothing.

A visual check of the area was made by both members as they circled left to the south and east without sighting anything in the air or on the ground. Captain DeArmond reported the clouds to be big, puffy ones with about three-eighths coverage. They were six to seven thousand feet above the clouds which obscured a good view of the ground. At that point, Yankee Kilo 02 flight was below their briefed fuel for return to base, so they advised Huntress and took up a heading for home. Neither they or Lieutenant Hernandez had heard any radio transmission that gave the slightest hint of trouble, nor was an emergency squawk observed by Lieutenant Hernandez or anyone else watching the scope at the 24th Region Control Center (TAB V-7, V-8). Approximate time of the collision was 1603 CDT as recorded on both aircraft clocks. Captain Randall's watch read 1601 CDT (TAB Z-33).

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