

# WILD WEASELS OVER IRAQ



## 81st TFS Panthers



**F-4G-45-MC 69-7211** February 1992  
*As flown from Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, during Operation Southern Watch*



## 190th FS Idaho Air Guard



**F-4G-45-MC 69-0298** December 1995  
*As flown from Incirlik AB, Turkey, during Operation Provide Comfort*

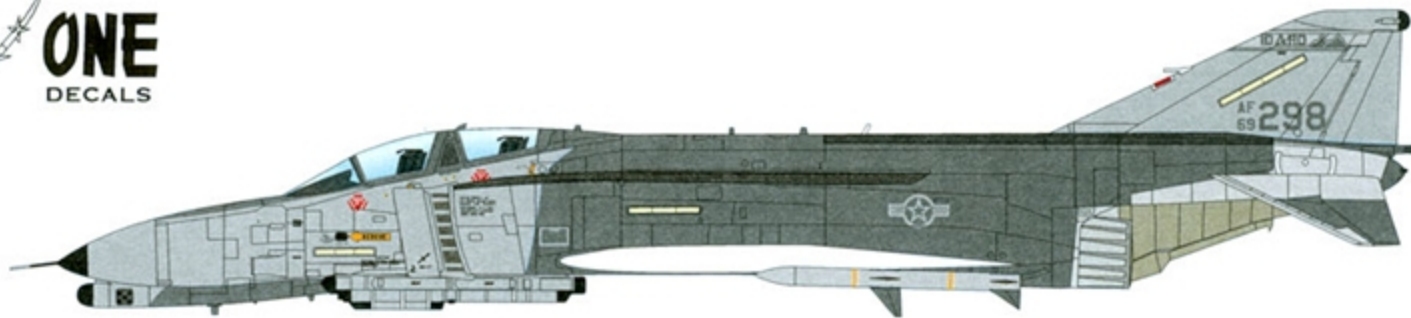


## 561st FS Black Knights



**F-4G-45-MC 69-7232** January 1996  
*The last mission flown by the F-4G, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, during Operation Southern Watch*

The McDonnell-Douglas F-4G Phantom II was in the twilight of its active USAF career when Iraq invaded Kuwait in August of 1990. This decal sheet provides markings for eleven Phantoms from units that were called upon to provide suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD) for coalition aircraft in the Persian Gulf during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm and the subsequent patrols of the no-fly zones established after the war. The effectiveness of the F-4G was demonstrated by the fact that there were no losses of coalition aircraft when they had Wild Weasel support. The USAF retired the F-4G in early 1996 despite having no replacement that could match its capabilities. These decals were designed for the Hasegawa 1:48 scale kit of the F-4G.



**69-0298 190th FS, 4404th CW(Prov) June 1993**



**69-0298 190th FS, 7440th CW December 1995**



**69-0278 561st FS, 57th FW January 1996**



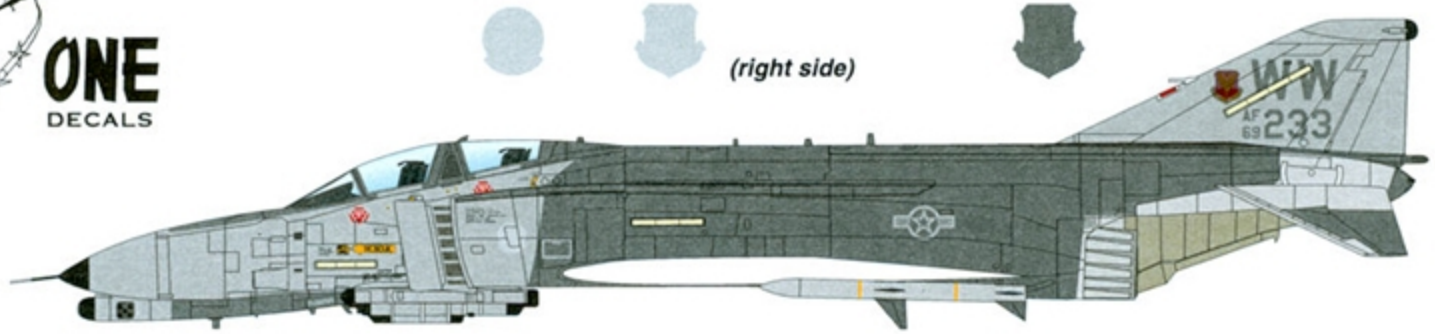
**69-7232 561st FS, 57FW January 1996**



**69-7579 561st FS, 57th FW January 1996**



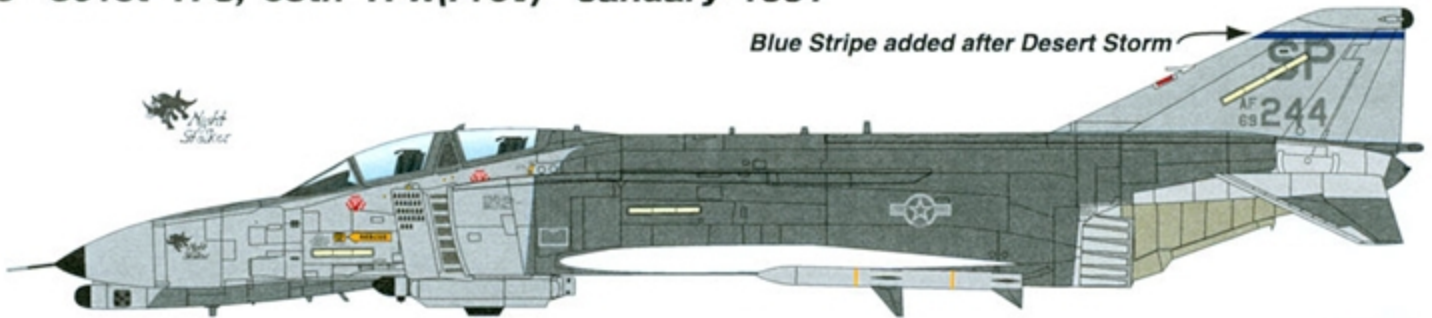
**69-7211 561st FS, 57th FW January 1996**



**69-7233 561st TFS, 35th TFW(Prov) January 1991**

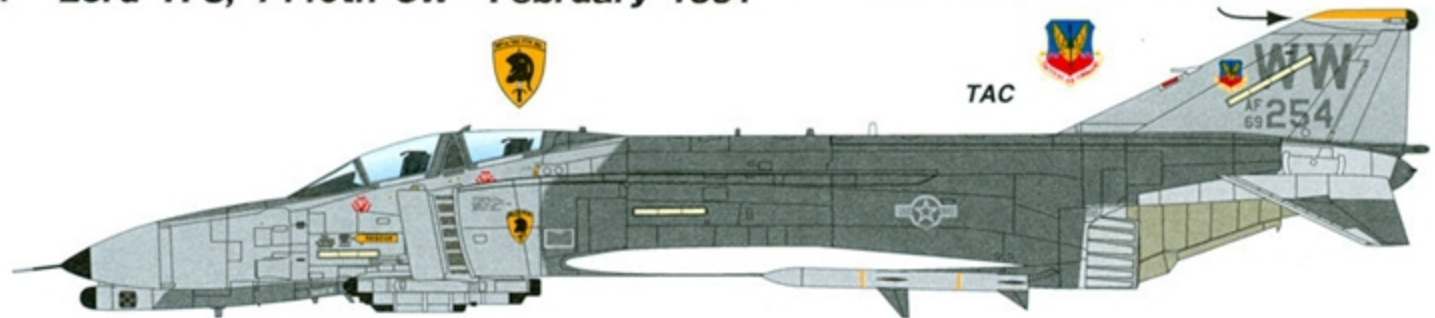


**69-0265 561st TFS, 35th TFW(Prov) January 1991**

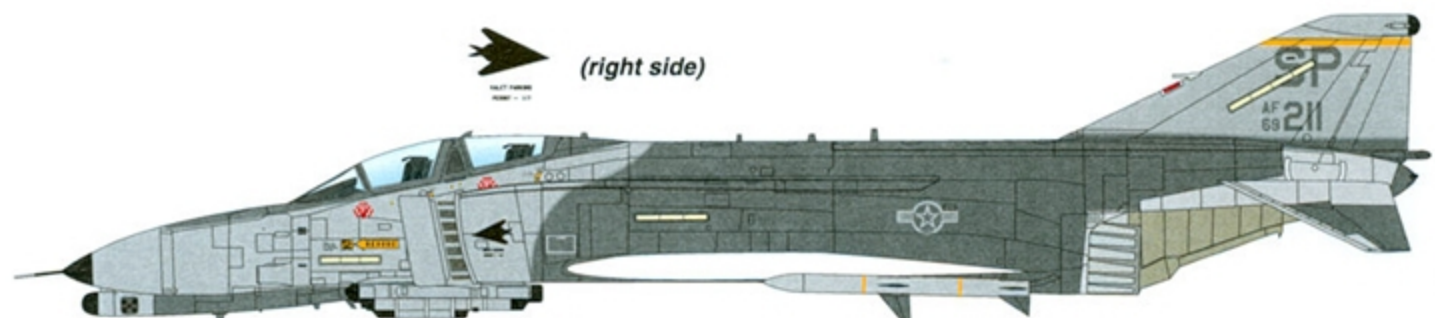
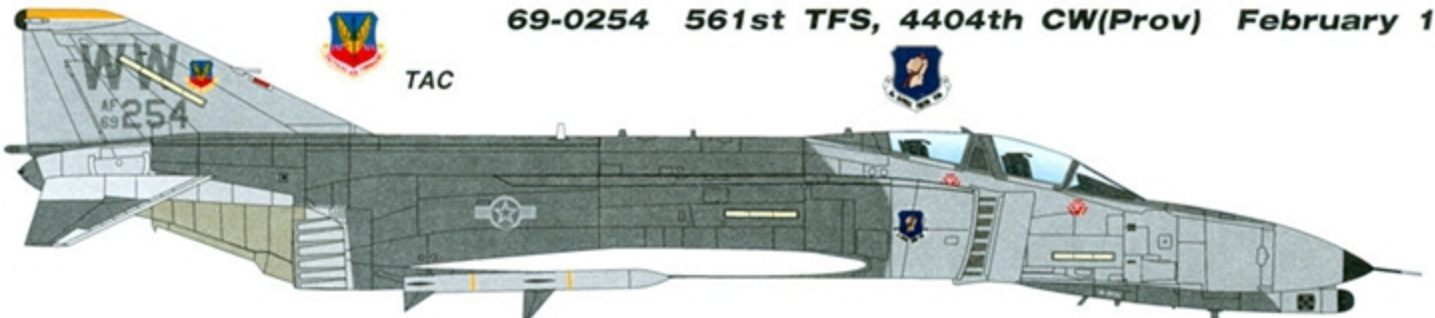


**69-0244 23rd TFS, 7440th CW February 1991**

Paint Fin Cap Yellow, use Thin White Stripe Decal



**69-0254 561st TFS, 4404th CW(Prov) February 1992**



**69-7211 81st TFS, 4404th CW(Prov) February 1992**

# Notes and Modeling Information on Colors, Markings, and Ordnance

The 561st TFS Black Knights equipped with F-4G Wild Weasel Phantoms was one of the first four USAF squadrons deployed to the Persian Gulf under Operation Desert Shield in August of 1990. Col George "John Boy" Walton led his squadron on the deployment just fourteen days after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and ten days after assuming command of the 561st. The Black Knights departed George AFB for Sheikh Isa Air Base, Bahrain, which was so new that it wasn't on any of their maps. Strapping into his airplane, Col Walton was finally given a satellite photo of the base but no other information, not even runway length! The flight lasted 15-1/2 hours and involved more than twenty in-flight refuelings per airplane. The 81st TFS Panthers from Spangdahlem AB, Germany, arrived later in two waves of twelve aircraft to supplement the Black Knights. The 23rd TFS Hawks, also from Spang, flew as a mixed F-4G/F-16C unit assigned to the 7440th Composite Wing at Incirlik AB, Turkey.

During the air war, no coalition aircraft were lost to SAMs when Wild Weasel support was provided and, despite the inherent danger of the SEAD mission, only one Weasel was lost. This occurred on 19 January 1991 when F-4G 69-7571 from the 81st TFS crashed in thick fog at King Khalid Military City Airport in Saudi Arabia. Bad weather precluded in-flight refueling and electrical problems prevented the aircrew from making an instrument landing after four attempts. The loss was officially credited to hostile fire as later examination of the wreckage revealed a hole in one of the fuel tanks.

Despite the excellent performance of the Wild Weasel Phantoms during Desert Storm, a mere 43 days after the Gulf War ended, the USAF announced that the F-4G would be retired by 1993. Following a brief stand-down period after the cessation of hostilities, 561st and 81st TFS Weasel crews began patrolling the northern no-fly zone of Iraqi airspace as part of Operation Provide Comfort. The 561st was deactivated on 30 June 1992 leaving Spang's 81st FS (the Tactical prefix was dropped in March, 1992) as the only active duty F-4G squadron in the USAF. Because of the demands of Provide Comfort and, later, Southern Watch, the F-4G enjoyed a brief reprieve of a few years. In 1993, the 190th FS of the Idaho ANG traded its RF-4Cs for F-4Gs. They and the 81st continued the combat air patrols over Iraq. On 29 December 1992 it was announced that the 81st FS would transfer its F-4Gs to the reactivated 561st Fighter Squadron based at Nellis AFB. The 561st flew the final Southern Watch F-4G mission on 9 January 1996 and the last USAF F-4G was retired later that same month.

## Paint Scheme:

The T.O. 1-1-4 officially specifies FS 26118 and 26270 semi-gloss colors for the Hill Gray II paint scheme, however these grays faded quickly in service, turning almost dead flat. Walkways varied by aircraft, generally, however, the 81st and 23rd TFS used black outlines with no fill color, the 561st TFS used black outlines with 36118 interior, and the 190th and 561st FS used black outlines with dark gray fill color

## Unit Markings:

561st TFS Desert Storm: All unit and personal markings were ordered removed from the airplanes with the exception of the WW tail codes. Although most 561st aircraft were flown this way, a few were photographed still displaying their TAC shields. After Desert Storm, the 561st reapplied full command, wing, and squadron markings to their F-4Gs.

81st TFS/FS: F-4Gs sported yellow tail stripes and SP tail codes. Some had HARM tally marks painted on their splitters to indicate radar kills. The 52nd TFW badges were sometimes painted gunship gray on the forward part of the intake which was painted neutral gray, and neutral gray in the gunship gray aft area. The Phantoms selected for this decal did not carry the wing badge during operations. During Southern Watch/Provide Comfort missions, some aircraft sported Spook mission tally symbols on the splitter carried over from Desert Storm when the 23rd TFS used those aircraft.

23rd TFS Desert Storm: Displayed SP tail codes. A Spook symbol was applied to the splitter for each Weasel mission flown. Dark tail blue stripes were carried before and after Desert Storm but not while deployed.

561st FS Provide Comfort/Southern Watch: After reforming at Nellis AFB as part of the 57th Wing, the new 561st FS displayed the Nellis WA tail code and black and yellow checked tail stripe. Many of the 561st's Weasels carried a small black helmet in the center of the stripe. On the squadron's final deployment of six aircraft to Southwest Asia, individual art was added to the left splitters. HARM markings, representing kills by that particular aircraft during Desert Storm, were subsequently added in theater.

190th FS: The 190th carried three different variations of their tail band: a full color version with white background, red edging and blue writing; another with the tail band in Light Ghost Gray with FS 26118 edging and writing; and a version with the stripe being the same FS 26270 as the tail with FS 26118

edging and writing. They are probably best known for the weasel mouth on some of their noses. The second option is included in this decal. The WW taila version with the stripe being the same FS 26270 as the tail with FS 26118 edging and writing. The second option is included in this decal. The WW tail code was not adopted until the 1994 deployment. The 190th is probably best known for the shark mouths applied to some of its Phantoms in 1995/6.

## Weapons:

During the first days of Desert Storm, the F-4G used two primary weapons configurations. Weasels bound for targets in Iraq carried three fuel tanks, two AGM-88B HARMs on the inboard pylons, two AIM-7F Sparrows in the rear bays and an ECM pod in the left forward bay. When attacking targets in the Kuwait area, two additional HARMs were carried in place of the outboard fuel tanks. After the first two days of operation, it became standard for all Weasels to use the three bags of gas and two-missile loadout, as problems were encountered when aircraft already airborne configured for a flight in the KTO were vectored to targets further north. There were also a lot fewer targets after the first few days' strikes. For a brief period, HARM use was suspended and AGM-45 Shrikes were employed instead. AGM-65G Mavericks and CBU-87/B cluster bombs were dropped to destroy the missile launchers and support vehicles, since the anti-radiation missiles homed only on the antennas. Mavericks were carried one on each inboard pylon on a LAU-117 launcher. These launchers were painted olive drab. Sometimes one Maverick was carried on the right inboard pylon and while one AGM-88B was on the left inboard pylon. The CBU-87 was alternatively carried in pairs on each inboard pylon with the rest of the loadout similar to the others. Wild Weasel Phantoms carried high-speed F-15 centerline fuel tanks. During Operations Provide Comfort/Southern Watch, the standard loadout was three fuel tanks, two AGM-88s on inboard pylons, two AIM-7F in the rear bays and an ECM pod in the left forward bay.

## ECM Pods:

Two pods were used by the squadrons featured on this sheet, the ALQ-131 and the ALQ-184. The specific versions of the ALQ-184 used are unknown, however most of the differences are insignificant for modeling purposes. Although there were several versions of each pod, externally there were only two differences. The ALQ-131(v)-9/10/13/15 were the shallow versions and the (v)-4/5/6/12/14 were the deep versions. The 23rd and 81st Weasels primarily carried the deep versions of the ALQ-131 pod. Only the shallow version has so far been included in kit form, but in scale there is not really much difference. The ALQ-184 is a bit more complicated. The (v)-2/4/6 were the short versions which were used during Desert Storm and the years immediately thereafter. By the time the 190th and the reactivated 561st were patrolling Iraqi airspace, the long version of the pod, which could be (v)-1/3/5, was used. Very nice resin castings of both the long and short versions of the ALQ-184 are available in 1:48 scale from Shawn Hull (shull24@hotmail.com). Note that the F-4G had chaff and flare dispensers mounted on the rear of the inboard pylons.

Desert Storm: The F-4G squadrons brought their own ECM pods to Southwest Asia and primarily used them, although there were exceptions to this general rule. The 81st TFS brought the ALQ-131(v)-12; the 561st the ALQ-184(v)- short pod. While specific photos of the pods used by the 23rd TFS are lacking, they most likely brought the ALQ-131(v)-12 to the war zone and used them.

Provide Comfort (in the year or two after Desert Storm): The 561st and 81st used the same pods they used during the war.

Provide Comfort/Southern Watch of the Mid-90s: The 561st and 190th used the ALQ-184(v)-? long pod.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## REFERENCES

Private photo collections.  
The Phantom Story, Anthony M. Thornborough and Peter E. Davies, Arms and Armor, 1994.  
Iron Hand, Anthony M. Thornborough, and Frank B. Mormillo, Haynes Publishing, 2002.  
Phantom, Air Forces Monthly special issue, 2000.  
Wild Weasel, Larry Davis, Squadron/Signal, 1993 (revised edition).  
Smoke Trails 6:3, 1992  
Smoke Trails 10:3, 1996

**Hill Gray II Paint Scheme**

- Semigloss Gunship Gray FS26118
- Semigloss Medium Gray FS26270
- Bright Metal Areas
- Burnt Metal Areas
- Wheel Wells: Gloss White FS17875
- Walkways: varied by aircraft; see notes and individual drawings
- Pylons, Launchers and Tanks: Semigloss Gunship Gray FS26118

**TYPICAL UPPER SURFACES**

GRAY 36081 Walkways (typical)

Canopy, 69-0265 and 69-0298

DARK GRAY Star

**TYPICAL UNDER SURFACES**

DARK GRAY Star

**Markings Notes**

- Full Color Markings on 69-0244, 0265, 0298 (1993), 7211 (1992), and 7233
- Low Visibility Markings on 69-0278, 0298 (1995), 7211 (1996), 7232 and 7579
- Rescue Arrow used on 69-0254, 0265, and 7233
- Rescue Arrow used on 69-0244 and 7211 (1992)
- Rescue Arrow used on 69-0298 (1993)
- Rescue Arrow used on 69-0298 (1995)
- Rescue Arrow used on 69-0278, 7232, 7579, and 7211 (1996)
- CAUTION Used on 69-0244, 0254, 0265, 0298, and 7233
- CAUTION Used on 69-0278, 7232, 7579, and 7211 (1996)

**Crew Names**

69-0298  
Dec 1995

69-7233, 7254  
both sides

69-0278

69-7232

69-7579

69-7211  
Jan 1996

**Nose Gear Doors**

- 69-7233
- 69-0265
- 69-0254
- 69-0298  
Dec 1995
- 69-0278
- 69-7232
- 69-7579
- 69-7211

- 69-0244
- 69-0298  
Jun 1993
- 69-0298  
Dec 1995
- 69-0278
- 69-7579
- 69-7211

**Inlet Ramps**

The 561st FS applied art and mission markers to its Phantoms in stages. 69-7232 was typical:

- Aug 1995
- Oct 1995
- Jan 1996

