

F/A-22 Raptor arrives at Tyndall

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. — It's sleek. It's stealthy. It's supersonic. It's just flat out "ba-ba-ba-ba-bad to the bone." And like

USAF photo



One bad bird: The F/A-22 Raptor will control and dominate the skies with a first look, first-kill capability.

the dinosaurs in "Jurassic Park," this bird will strike fear in the hearts of any enemy.

It's the Raptor, and the not so pre- but definitely historic bird was delivered by the hands of Lt. Col. **Jeffrey "Cobra" Harrigian** in late September. It's now part of the 325th Fighter Wing.

Tyndall's first Raptor was marshaled in by Tech. Sgt. **Jeff Simpson**, a crew chief with the 43rd Aircraft Maintenance Unit.

"I've been waiting a little over a year for Raptor 18's arrival," Simpson said. "To see this airplane is an awesome feeling."

The stealthy fighter, which will eventually replace the F-15 Eagle, is now part of the only F/A-22 schoolhouse and sets the foundation for the next generation of combat fighter pilots. The Raptors will become a normal sight in the skies over Tyndall as the base is projected to get a new F/A-22 each month until the first lot of 23 arrive. Eventually, 50 of the fighters will be based here.

While the initial cadre of six instructor pilots is already in place, the training of pilots at Tyndall is expected to begin early next year. The schoolhouse anticipates it'll begin training pipeline student pilots in fall 2005. The 43rd Fighter Squadron is the first unit charged with training F/A-22 pilots.

Check out more on the Raptor at www.af.mil/lib/airpower.

— Tech. Sgt. Dan Neely, 325th Fighter Wing Public Affairs, contributed to this report

Lieutenant from Iraq calls United States home

U.S. NAVAL BASE GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba — For one Air Force lieutenant, March 19 was the day war broke out in his former homeland.

Known only as **Mohammed** for security reasons, the officer is an Arabic linguist deployed as part of Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

Mohammed was born and raised in Iraq. He was part of the uprising against Saddam Hussein in March 1991. After that failed, Mohammed, his wife and young daughter were taken by American forces to Saudi Arabia.

"There were 22,000 refugees with us in the refugee camp," said Mohammed, a polite, soft-spoken man. "The majority of us came to America."

He was 32 years old when he began his American life in 1992. The passing years didn't mellow his feelings about the regime of his former country.

"It's a relief for the Iraqi people to get rid of the oppressive regime of Saddam Hussein," said Mohammed, who still has family in Iraq. "I want Iraq to be a role model for the surrounding countries in getting their democracy and freedom."

He believes the challenges of rebuilding a new, free Iraq are being hampered.

"It's unbelievable what's happening in Iraq because everybody is happy there except for beneficiaries, so-called 'Saddam orphans,' who are making troubles now," he said.

He is sure "Saddam's orphans" will be stopped.

"We'll crush them. Soon," he said.

Mohammed is a fiercely loyal American citizen, and that loyalty was one of the many reasons he joined the Air Force.

"I wanted to be part of this country that saved my life, and gave me my life back," he said.

Today, Mohammed spends his 12-hour shifts dealing directly with the detainees in the camps. His job is to translate for them. He said he isn't the most popular man on the cell block because he serves a country the detainees hate.

"What strikes me is that some of them are young, but they have a lot of hate in their heart," Mohammed said. "Some of [the detain-

ees] consider me as a traitor."

Mohammed is not exactly sure how he feels working so close to men accused of supporting terrorism, but he did say there's one thing he's sure of.

"Terrorism will be defeated because it's the wrong way," he said.

— Master Sgt. Tammy Cournoyer
Air Force Print News

by Navy Seaman David P. Coleman



A detainee is escorted to a medium-security facility that houses detainees in a communal living environment at U.S. Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.