

MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS

Pilot Safety Award of Distinction

The sortie was briefed as a 4v5 with one additional dedicated striker Blue Air OCA sortie, with Lt Col O'Mara as Number 3 in the formation. Preflight, start, taxi, and takeoff were all uneventful. Weather was skies clear, with light winds. The plan was for a 10 second interval take off and rejoin to spread container en route formation to the airspace. Shortly after takeoff, Lt Col O'Mara noticed something wrong with his right wing. There was a panel sticking up 2 inches into the airstream. Flight

controls were performing normally, and Lt Col O'Mara elected to slow to 250 knots and get a battle damage check performed on him by his wingman. During the battle damage check, Number 4 found the panel above the right flap to be bent up into the airstream. Lt Col O'Mara proceeded to dump fuel to a weight which allowed for a safe landing and performed a controllability check. He determined that the bent panel may affect the ability of the flaps to lower and retract and elected to perform a no-flap approach and landing. Lt Col O'Mara performed a flawless approach and landing, easily stopping within the available landing distance, even though the no-flap condition required a faster than normal approach and less ability to aerobrake the jet. Lt Col O'Mara's quick reactions and smart decision making quickly defused a potentially serious aircraft malfunction and saved an invaluable combat asset.

**Lt Col Raymond P. O'Mara, 27th Fighter Sqdn.,
1st Fighter Wing, Langley AFB, Virginia**

Weapons Safety Award of Distinction

Sgt Thetford, an Additional Duty Weapons Safety Representative (ADWSR), maintains an outstanding weapons safety program in the 3rd Combat Communications Group (3 CCG) for the 32nd Combat Communications Squadron (32 CCS). When he took control of the ADWSR program responsibilities, he made immediate changes in the program's process. After receiving ADWSR training, he completely rebuilt the unit weapons safety book. He did not stop there. SSgt Thetford quickly realized his program's

potentially hazardous nature and conducted a mishap risk assessment on the squadron's explosive licensed facility eliminating several hazards. SSgt Thetford's seemingly limitless knowledge of the weapons program has been instrumental in the zero mishap rates for not only the 32 CCS, but also the entire 3 CCG. During the latest safety assistance visit, SSgt Thetford was recognized by 12 AF/SEW as a highly knowledgeable and an outstanding ADWSR. When any of the 5 squadrons in the 3 CCG prepares to deploy with weapons, SSgt Thetford leads the way. SSgt Thetford is instrumental in the Herd's ability to safely deploy, and exemplifies the 332 CCS motto, "We Cover the World."

**SSgt Russell Thetford, 32nd Combat Communications Sqdn.,
3rd Combat Communications Group, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma**

