



# NEWS RELEASE

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RELEASE DATE: March 23 2011

RELEASE NUMBER: 110323-01

## KINNICK STADIUM FLYOVER RESULTS

**VANCE AIR FORCE BASE, Okla.** – The 71st Flying Training Wing investigation for the flyover in Iowa City, Iowa, involving four T-38 aircraft, was completed Dec. 20, 2010.

The flight lead, Maj. Christopher Kopacek, a pilot with the 25<sup>th</sup> Flying Training Squadron, received Nonjudicial Punishment under Article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. He has submitted a request to give up his aeronautical rating, which is still pending, and he will separate from the Air Force of his own accord.

Major Kopacek was found to have violated the following:

-Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice for flying above the speed of 300 knots below 10,000 feet mean sea level for the practice flyover Nov. 19, 2010, and the actual flyover Nov. 20, 2010.

-Article 92 of the UCMJ for flying over a congested area below 1,000 feet above ground level above the highest obstacle within 2,000 feet of the aircraft on Nov. 20, 2010.

-Article 92 of the UCMJ for failing to verbally report the flight deviations to a supervisor or commander within 24 hours of the flight deviation and failing to make a detailed written record within 24 hours.

-Article 107B of the UCMJ for making a false official statement to investigators during the course of the investigation.

Vance Air Force Base leadership initiated the Command Directed Investigation Nov. 24, 2010, and all four pilots and two ground controllers were removed from flying status until the investigation was complete.

The investigation found that the pilots were flying below the minimum 1,000 feet AGL above the highest obstacle for the flyover. The highest elevation of the stadium is at the northwest corner of the stadium's press box, which is 160 feet AGL. The aircraft flew directly over the stadium score board which is 118 feet AGL. Cedar Rapids Approach

Control verified that the aircraft cleared the score board by 58 feet and were just 16 feet above the press box, which put them at 176 feet AGL.

The three practice flyovers that occurred the day before on Nov. 19, 2010, also violated Air Education and Training Command instructions by flying below the minimum required altitude and above the maximum speed. Cedar Rapids Approach Control also verified that their speed on Friday approached 400 knots, which was above the maximum speed of 300 knots.

No waiver was submitted by Major Kopacek to deviate from either the speed or altitude restrictions.

“While I understand that fans attending the game enjoyed the flyover, rules are in place to ensure everyone’s safety,” said Col. Russell Mack, 71<sup>st</sup> Flying Training Wing Commander. “We appreciate the opportunity to perform flyovers and thank the University of Iowa for the chance to showcase our abilities. However, this was a serious breach of flight discipline and it was necessary to take administrative action against all of the members involved.”