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DODGE CENTER, MN



# USAF T41A



Please review the history of Squadron 28's 1965 T41A – USAF Serial No. 65-5249 and Civilian Registration N5249F.

In 1964 the U.S. Air Force Air Training Command chose Cessna Aircraft to build a pilot screening/training aircraft. The contract required limited avionics, 2 seats (instructor/student pilot) and price not to exceed \$7,000 each. Our aircraft was included in the first order of 170 units built under this program. These aircraft were given a military designation of T41A (USAF).

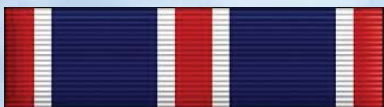


Prior to the T41 program, the USAF used the expensive T37 jets for entry level pilot training. In the T37 jet training program used by the USAF, introductory pilot trainees that were not attaining the required pilot training proficiency in the allotted time or those training pilots that were unable to overcome airsickness, claustrophobia, and fear of flying proved to be a large expense to the USAF. The expensive jet operating cost proved to be a poor investment in the early stages of USAF pilot training in the new jet age. A major shift in USAF leadership attitude was required to shift back to propeller based introductory trainer. The T37 jet training program was started in 1961 and going back to propeller driven training aircraft seemed outdated to the USAF and Congress.

However, budget constraints in the USAF Training Command drove the T41 program for 34 years (1965 until 1999). During this service period the primary flight instructors and maintenance personnel were civilians, under a program modeled after WWII pilot training. Each T41 carried a military serial number in addition to a civilian registration since each T41 was required to be maintained to Federal Aviation Administration requirements by civilian mechanics. The USAF provided a layer of military oversight and each T41 was supervised by military personnel for flight training and maintenance.

The T41 pilot training program was carried out in 8 different locations in the United States. Our specific T41A “Eagle Spirit” was originally put into service on May 17, 1965 with the 3650th Pilot Training Wing at Columbus AFB in Columbus, Mississippi. It continued service at Hondo, Texas and then later with the Civil Air Patrol (USAF Auxiliary) before civilian purchase in 1985.

This T41A is sponsored by Southern Minnesota Warbirds of America Squadron 28, Inc. Squadron 28 is a Nonprofit 501c3 Corporation with the mission to keep historical military aircraft flying so they may be seen and experienced by aviation enthusiasts in the upper Midwest. Squadron 28 is based out of Dodge Center, Minnesota.



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