

## **Dambusters Conduct Change of Command**

NAVAL AIR FACILITY ATSUGI (NAFA), Japan (NNS) –Cmdr. Ryan S. Jackson assumed command of the “Dambusters” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 195 from Cmdr. Guy M. Snodgrass at Naval Air Facility Atsugi (NAFA), Japan, Dec. 16.

Rich in naval tradition, the change of command signifies the formal passing of responsibility, authority, and accountability of command from one officer to another. In the presence of his family and friends, Snodgrass addressed the Dambusters for the final time prior to stepping aside as the Commanding Officer.

“It’s an honor to stand before you and receive the opportunity to lead more than 200 of the Navy’s finest men and women in continuing a legacy of warfighting excellence that has spanned more than 73 years and across five major conflicts in our nation’s history,” said CDR Jackson.

A native of Dallas, Texas, Cmdr. Ryan Jackson graduated from The University of Texas at Austin in 1998, earning a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering. Jackson was commissioned through Officer Candidate School at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla, and reported for flight training in April 2000. Jackson reported as the Executive Officer of VFA-195 in 2015. Jackson has accumulated more than 2,400 flight hours and 525 carrier arrested landings, including 31 combat missions. His awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Strike/Flight Air Medal, Navy Commendation Medal (4 awards), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, and various service awards and ribbons.

During his sixteen months at the helm, Snodgrass successfully navigated the Dambusters through a demanding schedule and continual requirement for combat readiness as part of the Forward Deployed Naval Force. The Dambusters completed three Western Pacific Patrols, one of which included the historical hull swap from the USS George Washington (CVN 73) to the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), and two training detachments to improve pilot’s tactical proficiency. Under Snodgrass’ guidance, the squadron also participated in four joint exercises, Valiant Shield, Talisman Saber, and Annual Exercise to provide experiences in fighter integration.

“It’s been the honor of a lifetime to serve as your commanding officer,” said Snodgrass. “We have accomplished some incredible things during the past two and a half years, and I could not have asked for a better team. Remember to approach your challenges with an unwavering focus on mission accomplishment, take ownership, and never wait to make a difference.”

Snodgrass instituted the cultural exchange and tactical integration exercise “Benkyoukai I”, “II”, and “III” with the Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) 7th Wing, including multi-plane events with F-4EJ, F-15J, E-2C, and Japanese ground controllers, forging a lasting partnership with the 302<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron along the way. He also created and led U.S. Pacific Fleet’s Pacific Warfighter Symposium, providing an opportunity for frontline commanders to discuss how best to advance Indo-Asia-Pacific regional maritime security while broadening operational perspectives across aviation, surface, submarine, and SEAL leadership.

The Dambusters were the only Navy and Marine Corps aviation squadron to receive the Secretary of the Navy Safety Excellence award for fiscal year 2015, demonstrating the squadron’s culture of safety

excellence and mission accomplishment, and produced the best results across all commands in Naval Aviation during the 2016 Commander, Naval Air Forces Aviation Maintenance Inspection.

Snodgrass has logged more than 2,784 total flight hours, 2,390 F/A-18 flight hours, and 719 carrier landings. His next assignment is to serve as Assistant Chief of Staff for Training and Readiness for Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic in Norfolk, Virginia.