

Mississippi Scout Attack Unit History Executive Summary

A Co. 1-149th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion (ARB) is an AH-64 Apache National Guard unit based out of Tupelo, MS. The unit traces its origins to 1993, when we were the first National Guard unit to field the OH-58D Armed Reconnaissance helicopter. Several pilots and maintainers have been with us since initial combat aviation training in 1993, and their collective experiences have influenced all who have joined us since. Given the unmatched experience level of our personnel, as well as our track record of highly successful deployments, A Co. 1-149th is irreplaceable. An active duty unit may receive our helicopters, but that new unit will not possess the same skills, experience and expertise.

The highest and best use of our unit's personnel is that of AH-64 pilots and maintainers. The return on the Army's investment in these soldiers is heightened when they are operating the aircraft and performing the missions for which they have trained over many years. Likewise, the effectiveness and capabilities of the entire AH-64 fleet is enhanced when its membership includes these highly competent professionals. The data below illustrate these points.

Collectively, the 21 pilots who fly the AH-64 in Tupelo possess the following combined experience:

- 41,233 total flight hours (average flight time per member is 1,963 hours)
- 18,396 AH-64 flight hours (average AH-64 flight time is 876 hours)
- 8,251 combat flight hours (average combat flight time is 392 hours)

These pilots have earned the following individual and Unit awards:

- Distinguished Flying Cross 2
- Soldier's Medal 2
- Air Medal 12
- Air Medal with Device 14
- Bronze Star 11
- Combat Action Badge 28
- ARCOM 30
- Combat Action Streamer
- 2 Campaign Streamer Iraqi Campaign and Global War on Terror
- British SAS Award
- Valorous Unit Award

Beyond these individual experiences, the unit's excellence has been recognized through the Valorous Unit Award. The unit has participated in multiple training exercises, which demonstrate the irreplaceable capabilities of A Co. 1-149th:

- Apache Subject Matter Expert Support - Yama Sukra (Multi-National Exercise)-Camp Asaka, Japan- DEC 2008
- Multiple National Guard Pre-Mobilization Training Support @ Camp Shelby Joint Training Center 2008-2013
- Special Tactics Training Squadron (Hurlburt Field) - Combat Controller Training (JTAC Air to Ground) - Camp Shelby Joint Training Center Range 202 East - NOV 2012
- 155th ABCT - Operation Death Adder (Air to Ground) - Camp Shelby Joint Training Center - APR 2012
- 155th ABCT - Operation Hammer Time (Air to Ground) - Camp Shelby Joint Training Center - DEC 2012
- Southern Strike (Combined Joint Operation Exercise) - CRTC/Stennis Space Center /Camp Shelby Joint Training Center - DEC 2013
- Southern Strike(Combined Joint Operation Exercise) - CRTC/Stennis Space Center /Camp Shelby Joint Training Center - OCT 2014
- 155th ABCT CALFEX - Camp Shelby Joint Training Center - AUG 2014

- 1st Special Operations Wing - Combat Controller Training-Air to Ground - Camp Shelby Joint Training Center Range 202 East - OCT 2014
 - SEAL Team 7 / JTAC (Air to Ground)-Razorback Range, Fort Smith, Arkansas - OCT 2014
 - 172nd Air Wing - C-17 Load out Training CRTC - MAR 2015
 - 155th ABCT XCTC/CALFEX/PRE-NTC Training- Camp Shelby Joint Training Center - JULY-AUG 2015
- Of the 21 Apache pilots, nearly half (10) have extensive experience in the OH-58D Armed Reconnaissance helicopter. An OH-58D deployment in 2003 and 2009, comprised of many current A Co. 1-149th personnel, generated the Meritorious Unit Citation. The senior Warrant Officers in this unit, two of whom are unit Instructor Pilots, participated in the 2003 invasion of Iraq in the OH-58D airframe. These experiences heavily influence the training, culture, expectations and experience of today's A Co. 1-149th.

The following anecdotes from our OH-58D lineage illustrate the capabilities of the current membership and the value they bring to the attack community in today's Army:

- 1996 CATB: Unit completed Combat Aviation Training Brigade (CATB) certification. Evaluators gave very high marks to our flight personnel and unit capabilities;
- 1998 JRTC Rotation: Our primary evaluator noted that of the 15 aviation rotations he had evaluated, only the 160th Special Ops rotation graded higher than ours;
- 2003: 22 unit members assigned to the following active duty units for Iraq as OH-58D pilots to fill vacancies in units prepared for the invasion of Iraq: 3ID, 4thID, 101st ABN, 3rd ACR, 1st CAV. Upon assignment to these units most unit aviators immediately became SPs, MTPs, and MEs of their deployed units.
- One current member of A Co 1-149th was part of the aerial attack (in an OH-58D airframe) on Uday and Qusay Hussein;
- The following are credited to the 2009 OH-58D deployment (again, comprised heavily of current A Co. 1-149th personnel)

These pilots have earned the following individual and Unit awards:

- Air Medal 20
- Air Medal with Device 2
- Bronze Star 2
- Combat Action Badge 15
- ARCOM with Device 2
- Purple Heart 1
- Meritorious Unit Award

The Bottom Line: The war-fighters of A Co. 1-149th are without peer. No other unit (active duty or reserve) can match this level and depth of combat aviation experience. The Army's capabilities will immediately be diminished if A Co. 1-149th ceases to exist, or if its professionals are re-assigned to a utility airframe.