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B-1B Dakota BackBone

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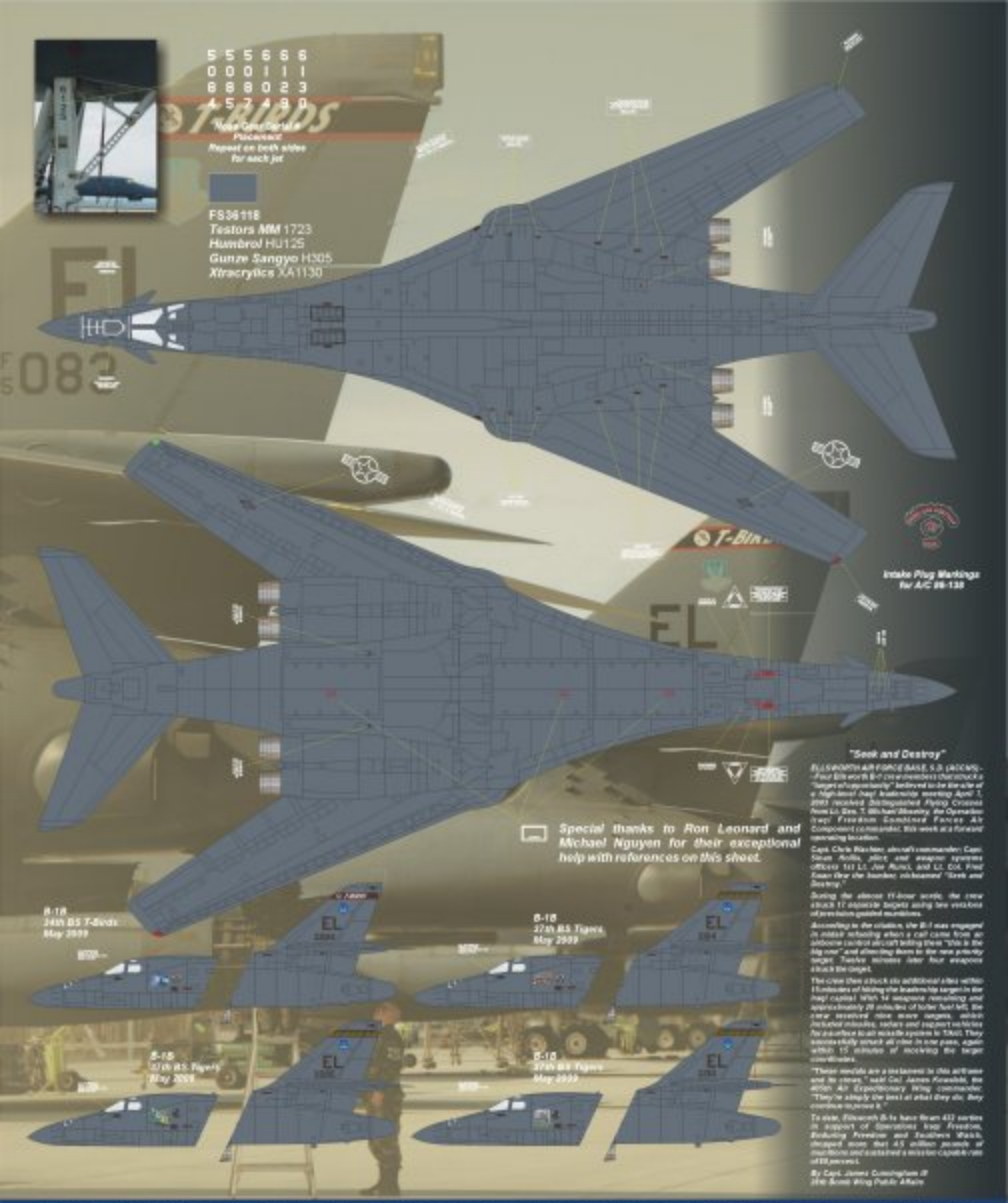

Special thanks to Ron Leonard and Michael Nguyen for their exceptional help with references on this sheet.

"Seek and Destroy"

ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE, S.D. (ACC/PA) - Four Ellsworth B-1 crew members that struck a "target of opportunity" believed to be the site of a high-level Iraqi leadership meeting April 7, 2003 received Distinguished Flying Crosses from Lt. Gen. T. Michael Moseley, the Operation Iraqi Freedom Combined Forces Air Component commander, this week at a forward operating location.

Capt. Chris Backer, aircraft commander; Capt. Steve Avila, pilot; and weapon systems officers 1st Lt. Joe Rusick and Lt. Col. Fred Kaan (the bomber nicknamed "Seek and Destroy")

During the almost 11-hour sortie, the crew struck 17 opposite targets using two versions of precision guided munitions.

According to the citation, the B-1 was engaged in mission refueling when a call came from an airborne control aircraft telling them "this is the big one" and directing them to the new priority target. Twelve minutes later four weapons struck the target.

The crew then struck six additional sites within 15 minutes of hitting the leadership target in the Iraqi capital. With 14 weapons remaining and approximately 45 minutes of bomber fuel left, the crew received nine more targets, which included missiles, radars and support vehicles for surface to air missile systems in Tikrit. They successfully struck all nine in one pass, again within 15 minutes of receiving the target coordinates.

"These medals are a testament to this airframe and its crews," said Col. James Kowalski, the 28th Air Expeditionary Wing commander. "They're simply the best at what they do, they continue to prove it."

To date, Ellsworth B-1s have flown 432 sorties in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom and Southern Watch, dropped more that 4.5 million pounds of munitions and sustained a mission capable rate of 88 percent.

By Capt. James Cunningham III
28th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

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Being modelers ourselves, we understand that there is no substitute for this painstaking research and we are proud to offer, what we feel, are the best decals on the market. If you have any subject matter that you feel should be the next Twoboba creation, let us know. We'll be happy to listen to any and all customer input.