

208 Squadron

In November 2001, 208 Squadron assembled its finest, well in fact all of its QFIs, as it prepared to take part in the annual Prince of Wales competition. In the days preceding the competition, dozens of instructors frantically tried to justify why they needed Staff Continuation Training, as they gallantly fought to brush up on their time-on-target and recce skills. On the day itself, chaos ruled as staff ran about like men possessed in an attempt to make the various timing deadlines, with varying degrees of success ... For the students it was an ideal chance to sit back and see how effective rapid planning should be done for real ... not! Still, everybody landed safely and the resulting debrief supplied gossip in the crewroom for several days.



Monte sporting his elaborate defensive balloon hat.

The squadron said goodbye to V61 course in December and, after much speculation and spoofing, they were streamed. Dan and Matt are off to Canada, Andy and Kirsty will be returning as Creamies, while the remainder of the course are currently ploughing their way through 19 Squadron.

Meanwhile on CFS, Sacky and Jez have almost finished their QFI training and will soon be hitting the streets. In Jez's case his euphoria at being unleashed from the shackles of CFS will only be surpassed by their relief at seeing him go.

208 Squadron celebrated the end of its flying for 2001 in the form of a Christmas party at the Treaddur Bay Hotel. It was evident that we were going to be in for a fun-packed evening when the transport arrived at the Officers' Mess. Instead of the bus filling up with hungry diners, its passengers stampeded off in the direction of the bar, as several of the Creamie brat pack from Rhosneiger attempted to squeeze in another couple of pre-dinner sharpeners before finally setting off for the meal. The first course was dispatched in quick order, with only the occasional crack of a party popper to interrupt the proceedings.

Offending projectiles

It was only as everyone started on their main course that things really began to ignite. It would appear that the arrival of the brussel sprouts acted as a catalyst for the students to settle some unfinished business. Well-aimed vegetables rained down as the students proceeded to reap revenge for crimes committed against them earlier in the year. In an attempt to fend off the ensuing barrage, a number of people sought help from the attending magician, who gladly produced elaborate hats designed to protect their wearers from the offending projectiles. Hostilities soon subsided after Jamie Harms, who, sporting a down and out Santa costume, threatened that no dessert would be served until peace and quiet returned. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening and a big thank you must go to Jamie for organising the event.

208 Squadron then prepared itself for the long festive period ahead by staging that most familiar of seasonal events, namely Christmas drinks. To everyone's dismay, the squadron still didn't manage to get rid of the considerable stash of dust covered sherry that lurks in the crewroom and, instead, wobbly coffees ruled the day. Jamie and Gareth served up the coffees and made sure that Navy sized measures of alcohol were used throughout. Several of the wives helped by providing impressive supplies of mince pies and cakes. Again, another large thank you must go to all those who helped the afternoon go so well.

I'll end this article with Zane's fashion tips for 2002. Fed up with his peroxide look, Zane is currently sporting an impressive ginger rinse ... nice!



OC 208 Squadron wearing his appropriately coloured balloon hat.



Santa would like a razor for Christmas!