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## 37th EBS flies record-setting B-1 mission

By 1st Lt. Beverly Mock  
40th Air Expeditionary Group Public Affairs

12/08/2003 – **OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (ACCNS)** – The 37th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron set a new record while deployed in support of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom recently.

The crew flew the longest B-1 combat sortie in history -- 21.7 hours.

“This sortie is different from any other sortie flown in B-1 combat operations because of the duration,” said Capt. Matt Brown, aircraft commander. “The sortie lasted a little less than 22 hours, involved six separate air refuelings and several classified operations.”

Most B-1 sorties flown from this base average 16 hours, making this flight significantly longer, the captain said. When the crew initially received their pre-mission briefing, there was no indication that the flight would last almost 24 hours, he said.

“The mission was evolving as we were in the air,” Captain Brown said. “The mission planners needed the B-1 with its weapons to execute the mission, and there were no other B-1s scheduled to replace us for six hours. Since the target was time-sensitive, they extended us.”

Staying alert was a major challenge, Captain Brown said. The crew managed their rest cycle during lull periods of the fight so they could stay alert during critical parts of the mission.

“It’s challenging to stay alert during long periods of inactivity, but when flying in-country, every crewmember is prepared and ready to execute the mission, no matter how tired they may be,” said Lt. Col. Gary Mausolf, 37th EBS commander.

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