

The Best of the Best: **A Brief History of Air Mobility Command's** **Air Mobility Rodeo, 1989-2011**



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Front Cover: A rider carries the American flag for the opening ceremonies for Air Mobility Command's Rodeo 2009 at McChord AFB, Washington. (US Air Force photo/TSgt Scott T. Sturkol)

**The Best of the Best:
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: To Gather Around	1
SECTION I: An Overview of the Early Years	3
Air Refueling Component in the Strategic Air Command Bombing and Navigation Competition: 1948-1986.....	4
A Signature Event.....	5
The Last Military Airlift Command Rodeo, 1990.....	5
Roundup.....	8
SECTION II: Rodeo Goes Air Mobility Command	11
Rodeo 1992.....	13
Rodeo 1993.....	15
Roundup.....	17
Rodeo 1994.....	18
Roundup.....	20
Rodeo 1996.....	21
Roundup.....	25
Rodeo 1998.....	26
SECTION III: The 21st Century.....	41
Rodeo 2000.....	41
Roundup.....	43
Rodeo Suspended Due to War	43
Rodeo 2005.....	44
Roundup.....	47
Rodeo 2007.....	47
Roundup.....	50
Rodeo 2009.....	51
Roundup.....	55
Rodeo 2011.....	57
Roundup.....	63
Conclusion: Providing Global Air Mobility...Right Effects, Right Place, Right Time.....	65
Glossary	91

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Rodeo Winners 1990 through 2011.....	67
Appendix B: Rodeo Commanders and Vice Commanders	87
Appendix C: Named Rodeo Trophies	89

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Front Cover Photo, Rodeo “cowgirl” at opening ceremony	
Photo 1, Competitor on combat endurance course	30
Photo 2, Indonesian combat control team parachutes from C-130	30
Photo 3, Royal Australian Air Force C-130 maintenance team	31
Photo 4, Umpires judge weapon firing portion of biathlon event.....	31
Photo 5, KC-10 preflight inspections	32
Photo 6, Combat control team parachutes from C-130	32
Photo 7, Security Police combat tactics team searches a mock village.....	33
Photo 8, Airman conducts joint inspection	33
Photo 9, Airman dons gas mask during M-16 rifle range competition	34
Photo 10, Maintenance personnel pull KC-135 auxiliary power unit.....	35
Photo 11, Aerial port obstacle course competition	35
Photo 12, Belgium team offloads high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle	36
Photo 13, C-17 configured for aeromedical evacuation competition	36
Photo 14, 10K forklift driving course competition	37
Photo 15, German Air Force member and US Airman pull hose of refueling truck	38
Photo 16, Flight attendant culinary competition	38
Photo 17, Royal Thai Air Force members greet each other at Rodeo 90.....	39
Photo 18, KC-135R and C-17 at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington	39
Photo 19, Parachutist carries American flag at Air Mobility Rodeo 2011	40
Back Cover Top Photo, Precompetition planning	
Back Cover Bottom Photo, Combat controller races to landing zone on motorcycle	

INTRODUCTION: To Gather Around

The United States Air Force held its first Rodeo challenge on 5 October 1956. At that time, 13 troop carrier wings assigned to the Continental Air Command¹ (CONAC), which was the precursor to the Air Force Reserve Command, sent 2 crews each to the Reserve Troop Carrier Rodeo hosted by CONAC at Bakalar Air Force Base (AFB), Indiana. The command-wide event primarily served to maintain and sharpen the airlift and parachute airdrop skills of CONAC's World War II and Korean War veterans. A news release at the time noted that the standard crew contained a pilot, co-pilot, navigator, flight mechanic, radio operator, and "cargo-kicker." The two-day "friendly but spirited" competition had the added advantage of displaying the reliability and capability of Air Force cargo planes at a time when military airlift needed more support from Congress. Historically, rodeo had always meant "to gather around." When the early cowboys got together, they would display their formidable skills through competitions at such gatherings. From that very first challenge, Rodeo has grown into an internationally recognized tournament of Airmen and crews from around the world who compete to determine the best of the best.²

The first Rodeo lasted 2 days, during which 26 crews flying C-46 and C-119 aircraft competed to see which wings could most accurately parachute supplies into a small target area--using the computed air release point system (referred to as "CARP"), which required the navigator to determine the exact time of the drop before approaching the target area. This occurred without the navigator actually seeing the target. The drop zone for the competition was at the Army's inactivated Camp Atterbury, about 20 miles northwest of Bakalar AFB. The target consisted of 3 concentric circles with radii of 100, 200, and 300 yards from the center. Major General William E. Hall, the Air Force Assistant Chief Of Staff for Reserve Forces, and more than 200 other dignitaries, including press and radio newscasters, witnessed the events.³

Brisk autumn winds made the going rough for the aircrews on the first day, while the second day's weather proved more congenial. Safety was paramount, and thanks to the ground and flight safety crews, no mishaps occurred during the competition. To increase the challenge, Rodeo leadership forbade practice runs and the use of the autopilot mechanism. To make the exercise as realistic as possible, pilots were to consider themselves leading a

¹After January 1951, CONAC was responsible primarily for administering the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, known collectively as the Air Reserve Forces. CONAC inactivated 1 Aug 68. Fact Sheet, Air Force Historical Research Agency, "Continental Air Command," n.d.

²Article, G. Vandeventer, AFRC News Service, "Chutes and Cargo--Golden Anniversary of Reserve Rodeo," 13 Oct 06; Briefing Slide, AMC/A3, "Air Mobility Rodeo 2005," 12 Jul 05; Article, P. Chehy, "89 AW Saddles Up For AMC Rodeo," 29 Jun 09.

³Article, G. Vandeventer, AFRC News Service, "Chutes and Cargo--Golden Anniversary of Reserve Rodeo," 13 Oct 06.

nine-ship formation. As an added requirement, the wing or group commander had to be the first pilot of one of their two crews.⁴

Rodeo administrators determined the awards criteria well in advance of the competition. The troop carrier wing with the lowest composite score received a trophy (to remain in the winning team's possession for one year). Determination of the lowest scores focused on accuracy and attention to detail. For example, the timing of takeoffs not adhering to airspeed parameters during climbs or descents, missed drops, and cargo impact distances from the target's center received penalty points. Any wing winning the competition three years in succession took permanent possession of the trophy. Awards also went to the first-, second-, and third-place team winners--both to their wings and to the individual members of those crews. In 1956, the winner of CONAC's inaugural Reserve Troop Carrier Rodeo was the 302d Troop Carrier Wing (TCW) from Clinton County AFB, Ohio, commanded by Colonel Donald J. Campbell. The top aircrew was the 302 TCW's second entry, piloted by Lieutenant Paul B. Heironimus.⁵

⁴Article, G. Vandeventer, AFRC News Service, "Chutes and Cargo--Golden Anniversary of Reserve Rodeo," 13 Oct 06.

⁵Ibid.

SECTION I

An Overview of the Early Years

The first Rodeo involving airlift mobility assets commenced on 11 July 1961. The Military Air Transport Service (MATS) designated the event as a Western Transport Air Force (WESTAF) staff competition between the 1501st Air Transport Wing (ATW) and the 62d Air Transport Wing. The 62ATW, with several years of experience in the aerial delivery procedures--known as the computed air release point system (or CARP)--under its belt, lost out to the relative newcomers. This marked the beginning of the MATS tactical mission capabilities, while testing and refining new procedures, tactics, and concepts to improve airlift mobility.⁶ Initially, MATS leadership devised the competition as an incentive for C-124 Airmen to educate themselves on new flight-training procedures. But due to its popularity and training potential, the event quickly evolved into a force-wide rivalry designed to test a variety of mobility readiness techniques and strategies, foster esprit de corps, and, later, to better relationships with America's allies.⁷

The first airdrop competition for organizations of the active-duty force took place in April 1962, when MATS hosted a Rodeo at Scott Air Force Base (AFB), Illinois. Essentially, Rodeo was a readiness training exercise that emphasized "the ability to use aerial refueling operations and airdrop delivery methods to resupply ground forces when landing is not feasible."⁸ More succinctly, "the right load at the right place at the right time."⁹ By 1979, the event had been renamed Volant Rodeo¹⁰ and was conducted at Pope AFB in North Carolina. For the first time, both Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard units participated. This was an important step because of the "total force" concept. In real-world theaters, all of the military branches worked together to execute. The inclusion of these two vital components of the Air Force made it possible for this premier training exercise to more closely mirror the interaction and cooperation of the total force in a simulated environment.¹¹

⁶On 1 January 1966, Military Air Transport Service was redesignated Military Airlift Command.

⁷Message, Air Force News, "Airlift Rodeo," 152200Z Jun 92.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Article, Air Force News Service, "Rodeo 93," ca 1993, p 2-3; Article, P. Chehy, "89 AW Saddles up for AMC Rodeo," 29 Jun 09.

¹⁰A likely origin for this name is that "volant" is derived from the Latin *volare*, which translates as "to fly."

¹¹Article, C. R. Bakse, "Spirited Competition-Air Mobility Rodeo 2009," *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly*, Summer 09.

The command reached another milestone in 1980 when the 317th Airlift Wing commander, Colonel Robert B. Patterson, made the momentous decision to invite allied international teams to compete. That year, 37 USAF teams participated, with the international community represented by Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the Federal Republic of Germany. In 1987, "Airlift Rodeo" became the official name of the event. Although most of the events at Airlift Rodeo were ground events (as opposed to air), all competitions were designed to test and strengthen the skills needed by an expeditionary force. Rodeo organizers also constructed auxiliary events for combat control teams, maintenance crews, and security police. That year, the stars aligned, and Airlift Rodeo simultaneously hosted Bob Hope and the Air Force's 40th birthday celebration.¹²

Air Refueling Component in the Strategic Air Command Bombing and Navigation Competition: 1948-1986¹³

Another competition that ran concurrent to Rodeo, and which deserves mention since its refueling aircraft would eventually compete in Rodeo, was the Strategic Air Command (SAC) bombing and navigation competition. The formation of SAC was the direct result of the onset of the Cold War and the nation's buildup of nuclear weapons as a deterrent to Soviet aggression. Originating in the late 1940s as the result of the nation's long-range bomber and reconnaissance aircraft reallocated into the new command, SAC focused on its crews improving bomber capability. SAC Deputy Commander Major General Clements M. McMullen announced in May 1948 a competition--called "Giant Voice"--that was conducted for the express purpose of reinforcing training. That first event consisted of crews dropping three bombs visually and three by radar from an altitude of about 25,000 feet. The idea was to improve the accuracy of strategic bombardment forces.¹⁴

Changes to the tournament abounded. By 1959, tankers entered the "bomb comp" for the first time in a separate event; the air refueling contest proved an overwhelming success--with 91 of 94 refuelers transferring the correct amount of fuel. Tankers would play an increasingly important role in the future. Nevertheless, the participation of tankers and reconnaissance aircraft never overshadowed the importance of bombing in the competition.¹⁵

Commitments in Southeast Asia for the next decade prevented the continuation of the SAC competition. Under the command of General John D. Ryan, SAC commander, Giant Voice became a much more streamlined competition. Conversely, there was a decline in the practicality of the competition events, and by 1974, the tournament had lost much of the realism prevalent in the late 1950s. After 1980, non-SAC units increasingly participated in the Giant Voice competition. Teams from Great Britain and Australia also competed.

¹²Article, Airlift/Tanker Association, "2008-Major General Robert B. Patterson, USAF, (Ret)," n.d.; Article, C. R. Bakse, "Rodeo 2005: McChord AFB Washington Hosts the Return of Air Mobility's Premier International Competition," *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly*, Summer 05.

¹³For a comprehensive treatment of the SAC competition, see A. J. Birtle and R. D. Brunkow, *Proud Shield: SAC Bombing and Navigation Competition, 1948-1986* (Office of the Historian, Headquarters Strategic Air Command: Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, 1987).

¹⁴Article, Strategic Air Command, "Introduction to SAC," n.d.

¹⁵*Ibid.*

As the number of participants increased, SAC leaders correspondingly increased the level of difficulty of each event. Giant Voice was renamed Proud Shield in 1987, and the last competition occurred in 1989. A subsequent reorganization of the Air Force integrated tankers into Air Mobility Command a few years later.¹⁶

A Signature Event

“Mr. Hope: “All I want to do, Mr. President--I just want to welcome you. And I just want to tell you that they’ve been waiting, you know. They publicized that you were going to be here, so they’ve been waiting. And they’ve been waiting. They started at 10 o’clock this morning, and they’ve been waiting for you. And I can’t tell you how happy I am that you’re here, but I thought with this particular crowd that you might drop in by parachute.”

The President: “Well, Bob, I’ll leave that to the experts. If I tried that, I might have landed on your birthday cake.”

Mr. Hope: “Yes--the seat of government would have icing all over it, huh?”¹⁷

On 10 May 1987, Bob Hope stood on a stage in front of an audience of US and international Airmen trading quips with President Ronald W. Reagan. The king of wisecracks--at Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, to celebrate the US Air Force’s 40th birthday commemoration--had invited the Commander-in-Chief and a slew of Hollywood and music stars¹⁸ to help him honor the Service. Coincidentally, the occasion dovetailed with Hope’s own 84th birthday. The entire event, titled “Bob Hope’s High-Flying Birthday Extravaganza,” prominently highlighted the Air Force’s Military Airlift Command and aired on television’s National Broadcasting Company--NBC--on 25 May 1987.¹⁹

The Last Military Airlift Command Rodeo, 1990²⁰

There were major changes in combat tactics and ideological shifts in the United States military, including the USAF, in the late 1980s. These changes often had an impact on Rodeo

¹⁶Book, A. J. Birtle and R. D. Brunkow, *Proud Shield: SAC Bombing and Navigation Competition, 1948-1986* (Office of the Historian, Headquarters Strategic Air Command: Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, 1987).

¹⁷Transcript, Archives, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, “Remarks at Bob Hope’s 40th Anniversary Salute to the United States Air Force in Fayetteville, North Carolina,” 10 May 87.

¹⁸Onstage with him that day were actors Lucille Ball, Phylicia Rashad, Don Johnson, Kirk Cameron, Emmanuel Lewis, Brooke Shields, and Phyllis Diller. Musical guests were Alabama, Barbara Mandrell, and Glen Campbell.

¹⁹Article, Turner Classic Movies, “Overview for Bob Hope’s High-Flying Birthday Extravaganza (1987),” May 87.

²⁰Budget considerations caused the 1988 Rodeo cancellation. History (S//NOFORN//Decl OADR), HQ AMC, 1 Jan 1992-31 Dec 1994, pp 274, info used is Unclassified.

in both conception and execution. As the focus of major threats shifted, so too did the nature and type of air force needed to subdue those threats. By default, the nature of the training exercises shifted to accommodate the new skills and the equipment on which Airmen trained. Airlifts, airdrops, and air refueling, well known since the Berlin Airlift, would become staples of 21st century war strategy.²¹

The changing structure of the Air Force, and the Military Airlift Command (MAC) in particular, had a direct impact on the institutional structure of Airlift Rodeo. Early on, the hierarchy underwent a reassessment to provide for better communication and accountability. The Rodeo command structure also underwent reorganization, making it more akin to a major command. The competition commander, directly responsible to the Commander in Chief, Military Airlift Command (CINCMAC), for all competition events and the execution of the operations order, also monitored all staff operations, made daily weather decisions, and coordinated events with the host wing. The competition vice commander assisted the commander in all activities and, in his absence, assumed command of Rodeo. He kept track of the distinguished visitors during their visit to Rodeo, planned both the opening and awards ceremonies, and coordinated with other agencies, units, and protocol and public affairs offices. The director of operations arbitrated all complaints regarding rules and scoring. He also approved reflays and schedule changes in conjunction with the chief of current operations and the chief umpire. The chief umpire assisted in resolving appeals and monitored briefings and debriefings. His responsibilities also included validating the competition routes, drop zones, landing zones, and flight plans. The chief of operations met with all involved agencies and units to ensure full understanding of the agenda and its implementation. This person also conducted daily formal briefings, published changes to the Rodeo agenda as necessary, recommended flight profiles, updated the competition commander with weather data, and filed competition critiques.²²

Personnel policies and procedures also dictated the number of team members, including the number of female personnel. According to the operations order, each team was limited to the number specified under “Team Composition” in accordance with regulations.²³ The only way to circumvent this was to obtain specific authorization from Airlift Rodeo leadership. Other competition staff included the chief aerial umpire; chief loadmaster umpire; landing and drop zone scoring staff; combat control team umpire staff; competition logistics, transportation, and scoring staff; protocol, public affairs observer, and safety staff; and maintenance and transportation umpire staff. Interestingly, Rodeo did not allow substitute or alternative team members; if a team member could not compete, his/her team continued without him/her.²⁴

²¹For a detailed history of Rodeo from its beginnings through 1989, see Jeffery S. Underwood, *Airlift Rodeo: A Brief History of Airlift Competitions, 1961-1989*. (Military Airlift Command, Scott AFB IL, 1990).

²²Operations Order 14-90, HQ MAC, “Rodeo,” 1 Jan 90.

²³Military Airlift Command Regulation 28-2, HQ MAC, “Team Composition,” paragraph 6-13, ca 1990.

²⁴Operations Order 14-90, HQ MAC, “Rodeo,” 1 Jan 90.

Due to the ongoing effort to reduce the budget, administrators eliminated the security police event in 1990. The Peacekeeper Challenge²⁵ made an acceptable equivalent in the minds of MAC leadership. In an effort to cut down on preparation costs, aircraft selection announcements arrived early--30 May to be exact. This had the added effect of driving maintenance teams to focus on performance rather than aircraft appearance. The same tactic worked for aircrew selection; team announcements were made on 3 April, and a rule forbidding team practices prior to 3 April meant that practice was limited to 30 hours of dedicated flight time.²⁶

MAC Airlift Rodeo 1990 kicked off at Pope Air Force Base (AFB), North Carolina, on Sunday, 11 June, with a review of the troops by General Hansford T. Johnson, CINCMAC, and Army Lieutenant General Carl Stiner, XVIII Airborne Corps commander. Because 1990 also happened to be the 50th anniversary of the Airborne Corps, General Johnson commemorated the event by honoring General Stiner with a plaque denoting the close cooperation of the Airborne Corps and MAC through the years. At the end of the opening ceremony, General Johnson observed, "We have the best right here, and we're ready to find out who's the best of the best."²⁷

Teams from around the world also arrived to showcase their talents. Coming from Thailand, Israel, Canada, Australia, Japan, Portugal, France, United Kingdom, West Germany, Norway, Belgium, and Indonesia, these aircrews couldn't wait for an opportunity to shine. Peru, Spain, Argentina, and Sudan sent groups to observe Airlift Rodeo and make plans for future participation. They likely took close note of the crews from Australia and the United Kingdom--the odds-on favorites for the C-130/C-160 preflight competition.²⁸

But, as sometimes happens, an underdog can suddenly appear to shake up the status quo. That year it came in the form of the Israeli team commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Shlam from Base 27. The "new gunslinger team" landed their container delivery system bundle²⁹ only 28 feet from the point of impact at the HTEEE³⁰ drop zone. Considering that the drop zone was nearly invisible due to the heavy forest, this was indeed something of which to be proud. Adding to the difficulty (and increasing the realism of the scenario), Army

²⁵The Peacekeeper Challenge was an annual USAF-sponsored competition held at various major commands to "develop and show excellence in security police combat, shooting capability, tactical, and professional skills." Memo, C. A. Bowsher, Comptroller General of the United States, "Air Force Purchase of Belt Buckles as Awards for Participants in a Competition," 10 Apr 92.

²⁶Point Paper, Lt Col C. Rubner, [Budget], 19 Apr 90.

²⁷Article, Maj S. E. Behr, "Airlift Rodeo 1990," *The MAC Flyer*, Aug 90.

²⁸Article, Maj S. E. Behr, "Airlift Rodeo 1990," *The MAC Flyer*, Aug 90.

²⁹Article, Global Security, "Container Delivery System," n.d. Container Delivery System bundles provided a means of delivering equipment too heavy for the individual jumper to carry. Additionally, they were utilized to supply the airborne unit or to resupply units already on the ground.

³⁰This is the name of the drop zone.

and Marine 155mm howitzers, camouflaged by the greenery, remained along the tree line during the competition.³¹

One unexpected moment in the competition occurred on the second day when the team from the 443d Military Airlift Wing (MAW) from Altus AFB, Oklahoma, “touched down with zero deviation during their accuracy landing.” Not surprisingly, the 443 MAW won the Best C-141 Accuracy Landing award. According to chief umpire Ian Robertson, one more often saw very close landings with the C-130s, but it was much less likely for a C-141. At the JIMEE³² drop zone for the Assault Landing competition, the laser transit scoring for heavy-equipment drops had not been set up before the cargo aircraft began making their drops. Umpires had to go back to “old school” tape to determine distances from the point of impact. But the 440th Tactical Airlift Wing (TAW), represented by the 928th Tactical Airlift Group (TAG) (Air Force Reserve) from O’Hare Airfield, Chicago, Illinois, prevailed. The wind got in on the action at the TONEE³³ drop zone, making it extremely difficult for parachutists—already encumbered with the awkward T-10 parachutes—to land anywhere close to the point of impact. The 123 TAW, represented by 145 TAG, proved they could handle it by taking first place in the Best United States Aircrew event.³⁴

The Best Overall Wing award went to the 63 MAW from Norton AFB, California.³⁵ Although they did not take top honors in any one event, they did place near the top in all three airdrop and maintenance events—which determined the winner.³⁶

Roundup

Airlift Rodeo planners had outlined four main objectives for Airlift Rodeo 90--demonstrate the command’s tactical mission capabilities; test and refine new procedures, tactics, and concepts that improve mission results; enhance esprit de corps by recognizing crew professionalism and outstanding performance; and promote international relations in a friendly, competitive environment. It would be safe to say that the competition met--if not exceeded--all of these expectations. Not even the dress code for the event escaped the planners’ attention. Active-duty, Air Force Reserve,³⁷ and Air National Guard personnel

³¹Point Paper, Lt Col C. Rubner, [Budget], 19 Apr 90; Article, Maj S. E. Behr, “Airlift Rodeo 1990,” *The Mac Flyer*, Aug 90.

³²This is the name of the drop zone.

³³This is the name of the drop zone.

³⁴Article, Maj S. E. Behr, “Airlift Rodeo 1990,” *The Mac Flyer*, Aug 90.

³⁵Web page, California State Military Department, “Historic California Posts: Norton Air Force Base,” n.d. The 63 MAW inactivated 30 March 1994. The 1988 Base Realignment and Closure Commission had selected Norton AFB for closure.

³⁶For a complete list of all Rodeo winners from 1990 through 2011, see Appendix A.

³⁷Headquartered at Robins AFB GA, the Air Force Reserve, previously a field operating agency, became Air Force Reserve Command, a USAF major command, on 17 Feb 97. Fact Sheet, US Air Force, “Air Force Reserve Command,” 18 Oct 05.

attending Rodeo had instructions to wear flight suits, camouflaged fatigues, the light-blue shirt/blouse with short sleeves, or the fatigue uniform. Rodeo caps served to foster team spirit and were worn with any of the authorized attire.³⁸

According to the after-action report:

Airlift Rodeo was a highly successful airdrop competition. The level of competition remained intense; there was a strong crosstell [sharing] of information on techniques among all competitors, and, as usual, the camaraderie fostered by the competition was without parallel. All participants learned many lessons, which will be shared at home units, improving the overall force.³⁹

To accomplish this, it was suggested that training and tactics officers not participating in Rodeo interview the American and international aircrews to identify best practice training and tactical techniques. Their findings were then compiled, published, and distributed to each unit.⁴⁰

In a letter from General Hansford T. Johnson to logistics personnel, the MAC Commander in Chief had this to say about Airlift Rodeo 90:

You saw our best people doing the things they routinely do on a daily basis. The talent each of these teams brought to Rodeo is typical of the quality force throughout the Military Airlift Command. They are all motivated professionals. We are doing all we can to ensure we retain people of this caliber.⁴¹

³⁸Operations Order 14-90, HQ MAC, "Rodeo," 1 Jan 90. For the awards ceremony, Airmen were allowed to wear the above mentioned or the light-blue, long-sleeved shirt/blouse.

³⁹After-Action Report, HQ MAC, "Airlift Rodeo 90," 8 Aug 90.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Staff Summary, HQ MAC, "Airlift Rodeo Update for Ms. Morales," 14 Jun 90.

SECTION II

Rodeo Goes Air Mobility Command

The invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein's Iraqi forces in August 1990 signaled a shift in American combat tactics. As journalist Richard Atkinson pointed out, the war signified "the full emergence of air power as pre-eminent factors in modern combat."⁴² If the American war machine wanted to prove that wars could be won more quickly and with significantly fewer casualties when its Air Force was on the cutting edge of technology, the Gulf War provided the evidence. Within a week of the invasion, the Air Force began a mobilization effort that included McDonnell Douglas F-15s and--perhaps more importantly--their refuelers, the KC-135 Stratotankers. In the end, the Iraqi forces were no match for the allied coalition.⁴³

Intense involvement of Military Airlift Command (MAC) in the Gulf War meant the cancellation of Rodeo 1991. One general later joked, "I would argue that we did [hold Rodeo 91], only we called it [Operations] DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM."⁴⁴ The experiences of American forces in the Gulf War necessitated a reevaluation of strategic and tactical defense planning. That same year saw the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of several young, struggling democratic republics. To alleviate the transition to democracy and capitalism, MAC provided humanitarian aid to these countries through the spring of 1992. But, the end of the Cold War indicated a new era in terms of overall vision. Globalization and the rapid acceleration of technological advances also redefined the mission of the Air Force. Clearly, the Air Force would have to undergo restructuring to meet the needs of a post-Cold War world.⁴⁵

Consequently, the Air Force began to reconsider the long-standing distinction between two major commands: Strategic Air Command (SAC) and Tactical Air Command (TAC). The term "strategic" had become almost totally linked to the notion of nuclear deterrence. The focus of "tactical" operations, on the other hand, was on a cooperative mission, with the Air Force working in tandem with ground and naval forces. The distinction, however, did not lend itself to a limited conflict. During earlier wars, "strategic" B-52 bombers performed "tactical" missions (including close air support), while "tactical" fighter aircraft carried out "strategic" bombing deep in enemy territory.⁴⁶

⁴²Article, R. Atkinson, "Murky Ending Clouds Desert Storm Legacy," *Washington Post*, ca 1998.

⁴³Article, P. Feltus, US Centennial of Flight Commission, "The Gulf War," ca 2003.

⁴⁴Message, Air Force News, "Airlift Rodeo," 152200Z Jun 92.

⁴⁵Article, J. W. Leland, "A Brief History of the Air Mobility Command," *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 93.

⁴⁶Web page, Air Combat Command, "Air Combat Command History," n.d.

Senior planners reviewed numerous options before agreeing on a plan of action--a merger of most SAC and all TAC resources and a reorganization of air mobility assets as well. This restructuring of forces consolidated airlift and most refueling assets under a single umbrella--the new Air Mobility Command (AMC). This command represented the "global reach" facet of the Air Force mission.⁴⁷

Activated 1 June 1992, under the command of General Hansford T. Johnson,⁴⁸ AMC's mission encompassed the airlift assets of the former Military Airlift Command and also gained tankers from the former Strategic Air Command. As one writer noted, "it was more than a simple merger between most of the Strategic Air Command's tankers and Military Airlift Command's cargo aircraft. It was a marriage of mobility assets that presages the era of US strategic mobility."⁴⁹

The newly minted major command, AMC, soon had its abilities tested. After the federal government declared southern Florida a national disaster zone due to Hurricane Andrew descending on 24 August 1992, AMC sprang into action delivering humanitarian aid. By the end of the relief mission in September 1992, AMC had transported nearly 21,500 tons of supplies. Since those early missions, AMC has participated in a full range of airdrop, airlift, and transport sorties.⁵⁰

Headquartered at Scott Air Force Base (AFB), Illinois, AMC was the "US military's principal provider of rapid, flexible, and responsive air transportation in support of American global interests."⁵¹ On 8 December 2008, AMC unveiled its new mission statement and focus areas. The new mission statement--*Provide Global Air Mobility . . . Right Effects, Right Place, Right Time*--more closely aligned with the new Air Force mission statement--*To Fly, Fight, and Win . . . in Air, Space, and Cyberspace*--and better illustrated the effects of the wide range of AMC missions. AMC's five new focus areas were: Win Today's Fight as Part of the Joint/Coalition Force; Develop and Care for our Airmen and Families; Enhance Nuclear Mission Support; Optimize Mobility Partnerships; and Prepare Mobility Forces for the Future.⁵²

Daily overseas contingency operations demonstrated how AMC was firmly in the fight, as AMC accounted for approximately 70 percent of the air missions flown in the United States Central Command area of responsibility. AMC Airmen flew into harm's way every day to deliver troops, cargo, and fuel with speed and precision. On a typical day, mobility forces

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸General Johnson wore two hats as the first commander of the Air Mobility Command (AMC), also serving as Commander in Chief of the United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM). On 25 August 1992, Gen Ronald R. Fogleman assumed command of AMC and USTRANSCOM.

⁴⁹Message, Air Force News, "Rodeo Results," 1552200Z Apr 93; Article, J. W. Leland, "A Brief History of the Air Mobility Command," *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 93.

⁵⁰An AMC sortie was a single point-to-point flight by an aircraft under AMC operational control performing a warfighting, exercise, contingency, or aeromedical evacuation requirement for the US Transportation Command.

⁵¹Message, Air Force News, "Rodeo Results," 1552200Z Apr 93.

⁵²Article, Gen A. J. Lichte, AMC/CC, "AMC Unveils New Mission Statement and Focus Areas," 8 Dec 08.

flew about 900 sorties and moved nearly 2,000 tons of cargo and more than 6,000 passengers. That operations tempo equated to a mobility aircraft departure every 90 seconds, 24 hours a day, every day of the year.⁵³

The reorganization allowed for greater air refueling efficiency. The importance of air refueling as part of strategic defense could not be overestimated.⁵⁴ Perhaps the most invisible Airmen within AMC were the aerial porters, also known as “Port Dawgs.” As one writer observed, “They work tirelessly around the clock, no matter what the weather. They are on the flight line making sure the warfighter down range is getting the supplies needed to fight and win. They are the unsung heroes of the flight line.” For these and other Airmen, Rodeo provided an opportunity to showcase their skills.⁵⁵

Rodeo 1992

The Air Force reorganization also directly affected Rodeo. Air Mobility Command’s (AMC) leadership renamed the competition simply “Rodeo” to reflect the inclusion of all aspects of AMC. The AMC Tanker Airlift Control Center, headquartered at Scott Air Force Base (AFB), Illinois, under AMC operational control, was responsible for providing “centralized scheduling and execution of all AMC airlift and air refueling missions. Centralization simplified customer access to mobility forces and streamlined the chain of command, eliminating bureaucratic delays and increasing responsiveness.”⁵⁶

Rodeo 1992, held at Pope AFB, North Carolina, introduced tanker training exercises in conjunction with airlift and airdrop events. For the first Rodeo conducted under AMC, planners carefully incorporated the full mission of AMC into the premier Air Force competition. It was important to AMC to include tanker events on the same level as airlift exercises, due to the importance of refueling missions. In one early planning memo, AMC Vice Commander Lieutenant General Walter Kross asserted, “[General Fogleman] is looking for a fully integrated tanker role--that means not only tanker-specific events, but combined tanker/airlift events.”⁵⁷ As the 1992 Rodeo commander, Brigadier General Donald E. Loranger, Jr., said later, “Rodeo would reflect the natural marriage of airlift and tanker operations, the two key factors in the mobility equation.” AMC senior leaders predicted that tanker involvement would increase dramatically. Their views received support in the form of after-action input

⁵³Article, L. McAndrews, “Doolittle Raiders to Attend Air Mobility Rodeo at McChord Air Force Base,” 9 Jul 09; Article, HQ AMC, “AMC Outlines Mission, Vision and Focus Areas For New Year,” 30 Dec 10; Article, Air Force-Magazine, “New Mission Statement,” 29 Aug 08.

⁵⁴Book, R. K. Smith, *75 Years of Inflight Refueling: Highlights 1923-1998* (Air Force History and Museums Program, 1998), p 76; Web page, HQ AMC, “AMC Year in Review: July 2008-June 2009,” n.d.

⁵⁵Web page, HQ AMC, “AMC Year in Review: July 2008-June 2009,” n.d.

⁵⁶Article, J. W. Leland, “A Brief History of the Air Mobility Command,” *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 93.

⁵⁷Article, Sgt. J. A. Rush, “22d cargo loaders, 452d Reserve crew earn best in AMC honors at Rodeo ’92,” *Beacon*, 19 Jun 92.

from Airmen who suggested a competition format making the KC-10s and KC-135s eligible for more awards, including best overall wing.⁵⁸

AMC decided that only Air Force active-duty and Air Reserve Component units could enter the tanker competition.⁵⁹ Competitors were judged on air refueling and tactical navigation for KC-135s. For KC-10s, the criteria focused on loading and air refueling. The refueling criterion centered on the offloading and receiving aircraft linking together for at least 14 minutes of the total refueling time (16 minutes). According to one journalist covering the competition, “tankers were allowed to navigate by position-revealing radar fixes for only 90 seconds on each navigation leg. After that, only manual determination without electronic tools--dead-reckoning--could be used.” Calculations of the final scores consisted of analyzing the accuracy to the designated flight path and estimated time of arrival. Photographers snapped pictures of the tankers exiting the course to ensure a fair score.⁶⁰

The social calendar underwent revamping as well. Given that the international teams flew in several days before the start of the competition, leaders planned a get-together to immediately follow their arrival. The steak cookout, which had been a big hit at Rodeos 1989 and 1990, remained on the agenda. However, the distinguished visitors’ golf tournament and Air-Staff-day events moved to Wednesday in order to deconflict them with the official dinner on Thursday night. The traditional Friday picnic followed the closing ceremony.⁶¹

Opening ceremonies kicked off at 1600 on 8 June 1992 on the flight line and included an airdrop of 11 combat controllers carrying a flag from each country represented in the event. The United States entered 60 teams from active-duty, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard units; as well as the Marine Corps and the Army. Nine other countries sent teams to participate as well.⁶² Altogether, there were 1,500 competitors. Aircraft present included 2 C-160 Transalls, 13 KC-135 Stratotankers, 3 KC-10 Extenders, 29 C-130 Hercules, and 9 C-141 Starlifters. The aerial port events comprised a combat endurance course, engines running onload and offload, and a static airdrop inspection. Combat control teams participated in a biathlon, drop-zone establishment, combat leadership course, and high-altitude/low-opening parachute jump. In addition, paratroopers from the 82d Airborne Division and 28th Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, rounded out the mobility teams for the personnel drops.⁶³

⁵⁸Ibid; Memo, Lt Gen W. Kross, AMC/CV, “Rodeo ’93,” 5 Sep 92.

⁵⁹Fact Sheet, AMC/PA, “Rodeo 94,” Jan 94. Incidentally, a 1994 fact sheet listed Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard refuelers and airlifters as being responsible for 25 percent of daily Air Force missions.

⁶⁰News Release, AMC/PA, “AMC Schedules Airlift Rodeo,” Jun 92; Article, Lt Col R. L. Buck, “Rodeo 1992,” *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 92.

⁶¹After-Action Report, AMC/DO, “Airlift Rodeo 90,” 8 Aug 90.

⁶²News Release, AMC/PA, “AMC’s Rodeo begins June 8,” Jun 92. The other countries participating were: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, and Belgium.

⁶³Message, Air Force News, “Airlift Rodeo,” 152200Z Jun 92; Article, Lt Col R. L. Buck, “Rodeo 1992,” *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 92. Some reports list the aircraft as 4 KC-10s and 12 KC-135s.

Eyewitnesses recounted that rain fell on 9 and 10 June, forcing events planned for those days to be “creatively” rescheduled on 11 and 12 June. The slow-moving weather front dropped an inch and a half of rain on Tuesday--earning Pope AFB the title of “Rained Out Rodeo.” “Sloppy and wet” was how Brigadier General Donald E. Loranger, Jr., described the weather. Some, however, appreciated the conditions; the British team felt right at home. First Lieutenant Tommo Thompson of the Royal Air Force (RAF) Lyneham C-130 team (a tactical unit of the RAF Lyneham 70th Squadron) said it was very typical English weather. According to Thompson, the American Rodeo was the only tournament in which the British C-130s compete, so competition for placement on the team was fierce.⁶⁴

Several countries sent teams to Rodeo to observe and discover best practices. In 1992, representatives from Sweden, Argentina, Brazil, Korea, Denmark, Mexico, Oman, Spain, and Singapore attended. Often, countries who initially attended solely to observe eventually participated. Belgium, a country that had sent observers in a previous year, sent participants in 1990 and 1992.⁶⁵ One of the fundamental goals of Rodeo was the exchange of information. In many ways, the event was similar to an open-air conference where teams learned by doing outdoors, as opposed to listening to seminars and guest speakers. Observers viewed strategies and techniques for a variety of missions, including airdrops, air refueling, tactical navigation, cargo loading, accuracy on short-field landings, post-flight inspections, and daily maintenance observations. According to a public affairs writer, special emphasis remained on ground and flight safety during Rodeo 1992. Officials’ vigilance concerning safety infractions matched crews’ determination not to receive citations for safety violations.⁶⁶

Highlights from Rodeo 1992 included the fact that 8 of the 12 competing KC-135 units finished their refueling event with a perfect score of 400. After the tie-breakers, it was determined that the 101st Air Refueling Wing, the “Maine-iacs” from Bangor, Maine, placed first. The 446th Airlift Wing won Best Overall Wing.⁶⁷

Rodeo 1993

In a memo written at the end of August 1992, AMC leadership discussed the future of Rodeo. Major General Paul E. Landers, AMC Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Transportation, suggested that the competition be held annually and “more importantly, increase tanker participation to that of the airlifters’ participation.”⁶⁸ The recommendation went on to propose that Rodeo return to a three-event competition. There was already a budget issue, however, and the plan for Rodeo 1993 was scaled back. Each wing received an invitation to send one team composed of aircrew, maintenance, aerial port, and combat control team members. The plan called for Rodeo 1993 to have C-130 and C-141 crews vie for top

⁶⁴Article, SSgt J. Hughes, “Rained Out Rodeo Presses On,” *Tiger Times*, 12 Jun 92.

⁶⁵Article, Lt Col R. L. Buck “Rodeo 1992,” *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 92. Buck’s account included Morocco, Turkey, and Greece; but not Argentina and Mexico.

⁶⁶Ibid; Message, Air Force News, “Airlift Rodeo,” 152200Z Jun 92. Some reports list the aircraft as 4 KC-10s and 12 KC-135s.

⁶⁷Article, Lt Col R. L. Buck, “Rodeo 1992,” *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 92.

⁶⁸Staff Summary, HQ AMC, “Airlift Rodeo 1992 Results,” 31 Aug 92.

honors with two airdrops each. The C-130 crew would also have two landings, while the C-141 crew would have one air refueling. KC-10 and KC-135 crews would contend with one air refueling each. KC-135s would also compete in one navigation route, while the KC-10s rounded out their program with one cargo loading. The agenda called for tanker and airlift maintenance teams to compete in refueling and post-flight inspections. Aerial port teams would maintain their roster of events with the combat endurance course, engine running onloading/offloading, and a joint airdrop inspection.⁶⁹

Although Rodeo had heretofore been held at Pope Air Force Base (AFB), North Carolina, the need to select another location became evident. The limited ramp space caused the tankers that competed in the 1992 Rodeo to complete missions away from the base. If the agenda called for a truly integrated airlift/tanker competition, clearly another, larger base was required. Subsequently, the honor of hosting Rodeo 1993 fell to Little Rock AFB, Arkansas. This was the first time Little Rock, home of the largest C-130 wing in the world--and boasting abundant ramp space--hosted the event. The new locale allowed all of the aircraft to launch and recover in one place. Sixty-eight planes participated: 6 KC-10 Extenders, 29 C-130 Hercules, 16 KC-135 Stratotankers, 12 C-141 Starlifters, 4 C-5 Galaxys, and 1 C-160 Transall.⁷⁰

As previously stated, planning for Rodeo 93 began early, and when the competition kicked off on 6 June 1993, that planning was evident. An Air Force News Service report, quoting Rodeo 93 Command Project Officer Lieutenant Colonel Ed Cook, noted,

Although this is the second Rodeo since the formation of AMC, it is the first to have tankers fully integrated into the event. Last year, tankers were a small part of Rodeo. The crews competed at locations away from Rodeo and were brought in for the closing ceremonies.⁷¹

The news release went on to discuss how the integration affected the awarding of trophies. There was still a trophy for each event, but now the best overall wing received the grand prize, the General William G. Moore Trophy.⁷²

An additional thread of continuity involved the increased participation of both Air Force Reserve teams and foreign competitors and observers. Sixteen Air Force Reserve (redesignated Air Force Reserve Command in 1997) units sent members to fight for the top spot.⁷³ Rodeo 93 teams arrived from Italy, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Indonesia, Spain, Canada, Portugal, France, Japan, and Israel. Observer teams came from Argentina, Turkey, Singapore, Sweden, Colombia, Korea, Malaysia, and Ecuador.⁷⁴ And, as always, the

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Message, Air Force News, "Rodeo '93," 282200Z Apr 93.

⁷¹Ibid; Brochure, HQ AMC, "Air Mobility Command Rodeo '93 Competition in Global Reach," Jul 94.

⁷²For a detailed description of all named trophies, see Appendix C.

⁷³Message, Air Force News, "Rodeo '93," 282200Z Apr 93.

⁷⁴Fact Sheet, AMC/PA, "Rodeo Facts," Jun 93.

Army provided paratroopers from the 82d Airborne Division and 25th Airborne Corps. They “arrived in style” by parachuting into Rodeo during the opening day ceremony on 6 June.⁷⁵

The 1993 competition was broken down into five categories:

Aircrew Events: Airdrop, air refueling, aircraft navigation, shortfield landings, cargo loading, and single integrated operations plan

Maintenance Events: Aircraft preflight, basic post-flight inspection, aircraft fuel service operation, and daily observations (launch, recovery, maintenance and flight line safety)

Aerial Port Events: Performance of airdrop loads, joint airdrop inspection, engines running on/off load, and combat endurance course

Combat Control Events: High-altitude, low-opening parachute deployment and landing zone establishment, biathlon (marksmanship and 10k run), combat leadership course, and night tactical infiltration

Security Police Events: Tactics, endurance course, marksmanship, and combat patrol⁷⁶

Portugal defended its title as Best International Team two years running. Top honors at Rodeo 93 went to the 440th Airlift Wing (AW) from General Billy Mitchell International Airport, Wisconsin, which won the Best Air Mobility Wing and was led by Team Chief Lieutenant Colonel Don Webb. The 440 AW C-130 crewmembers were: aircraft commander Captain Gary Shefchik; navigator Lieutenant Dave deVogel; co-pilot First Lieutenant Scott Moltzan; flight engineer Master Sergeant Randy Reynolds, and loadmasters Staff Sergeant Osbee Sampson and Staff Sergeant Steve Bartz. The maintenance crew was made up of crew chiefs Master Sergeant John Bruckman and Master Sergeant John Hurula; instruments, Technical Sergeant Daniel Kohl; maintenance team chief Senior Master Sergeant Paul Lacourciere; communication-navigation, Master Sergeant Pete Roth and Technical Sergeant Mike Fangmann; environmental, Staff Sergeant Bonnie Pfauwentworth; engine mechanics, Technical Sergeant Steve Szuhai and Staff Sergeant Mark Schweiso; and hydraulics, Staff Sergeant Mark Kobow. The engine-running offload and joint airdrop inspections teams consisted of Staff Sergeants Gerald Fox, Robert Block, Tim Kerrigan, Robert Sorenson, Steve Koetter, and Kelly Delany.⁷⁷

Roundup

In his closing remarks on the last day of the competition, AMC Commander General Ronald R. Fogleman noted that intratheater conflicts and humanitarian operations such as Operations JUST CAUSE, RESTORE HOPE, DESERT SHIELD, and DESERT STORM “signaled the beginning of the challenges the Air Force will face in the future.”⁷⁸ His words

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Message, Air Force News, “Rodeo ’93,” 282200Z Apr 93.

⁷⁷Fact Sheet, AMC/PA, “Rodeo Facts,” Jun 93.

⁷⁸Message, Air Force News, “Rodeo Results,” 152200Z Apr 93. Operation JUST CAUSE refers to the December 1989 US invasion of Panama to depose Manuel Noriega. Operation RESTORE HOPE supported humanitarian operations in Somalia from December 1992 to May 1993. Operation DESERT SHIELD began in 1990, when the US led an allied force to

proved prophetic; over the next 15 years, AMC would support USAF and the other armed forces with Airmen serving around the globe to keep the peace, deter aggression, offer humanitarian aid, and enforce resolutions authorized by the United Nations.⁷⁹

Rodeo 1994

The biathlon and a new cross-country run added to the combat control/special tactics events signaled the greater prominence of physical fitness in Rodeo 1994. One of many slogans on hats and t-shirts that year read “Go Hard or Go Home”--no doubt worn by the combat control teams. Held 25 June through 1 July at McChord Air Force Base (AFB) Washington, the event drew 1,800 competitors and many observers. The Army sent its usual contingent of paratroopers for personnel airdrops, but this time they arrived from the 1st Special Forces Group at Fort Lewis, Washington, in addition to the 75th Ranger Battalion. The relocation to McChord had, among other things, the added advantage of cooler weather. Opening day’s temperature was a balmy 64 degrees.⁸⁰

Several changes commenced at Rodeo 94. Plans for the first-time inclusion of the C-17 Globemaster III were on the drawing board by March 1994. AMC planned for the new airframe, described as an air refuelable, long-range, and heavy-lift cargo transport, to replace the Air Force’s aging fleet of C-130s and C-141s. Accommodations on the C-17 were massive--room for a flight crew of 4 and 102 paratroopers or 189 passengers. In terms of equipment, three Bradley vehicles or one M1A2 battle tank could fit, along with other assorted equipment. The decision to display it at Rodeo was likely somewhat political. Technical and budget issues plagued the construction of the aircraft since development. The Air Force, with congressional approval, had awarded St. Louis-based McDonnell-Douglas⁸¹ the contract in 1981, but production didn’t begin until 1986. As costs continued to escalate and time passed, the Air Force was hard put to justify the expenditures, in the face of continual production problems. Eventually, both sides reached a compromise wherein the original order decreased, and a firm suspense date was enacted with the first rollout in 1993.⁸²

At the end of March, AMC Vice Commander General John E. Jackson, Jr., had assumed that AMC Commander General Ronald R. Fogleman would not want the C-17s⁸³ to be on the

defend Saudi Arabia following Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait. Operation DESERT STORM began in 1991, the military offensive against Iraq’s forces in Kuwait and targets in Iraq.

⁷⁹Web page, United States Air Force, “United States Air Force,” n.d.

⁸⁰Article, Maj M. W. Gieringer, “Rodeo 94,” *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 94.

⁸¹Now owned by Boeing.

⁸²Report, C. Bolkcom, “CRS Report for Congress: Military Airlift: C-17 Aircraft Program,” 5 Jun 07; Article, S. H. H. Young, “Gallery of USAF Weapons,” *Air Force Magazine*, May 10. The C-17 can also be operated by a crew of three: pilot, co-pilot, and loadmaster. As of September 2009, there were 190 C-17s in the inventory.

⁸³Incidentally, on 22 April 1997, Bob Hope was the first to have a C-17 named after him--the “Spirit of Bob Hope.” At the naming ceremony, Secretary of the Air Force Dr. Sheila Widnall said to Mr. Hope, “We thought we’d give you, in a sense, an airplane; an airplane, which, like you, will go visit troops in some of the least enviable locations on the planet. After all, the folks crawling through mud and jungles don’t really expect to see this plane any more

program. The new Globemaster III achieved initial operational capability on 17 January 1993 and had since been fully supporting various operations and contingencies around the world. When questioned, General Fogleman responded with an emphatic, "Yes, I do want the C-17 at Rodeo." In a memo dated 7 April, it was clear that organizers had already sketched out an event proposal for the C-17 and that the "plan will highlight C-17 capabilities both during the opening ceremonies on Sunday and to the DVs [distinguished visitors], Airstaff [sic], and civic leaders on Monday afternoon." In addition, a C-141 had been assigned to fly media interested in covering the C-17 and Rodeo to McChord AFB from Andrews AFB, Maryland, on 27 June. The 15 media personnel (it was first come, first served) would return to Andrews aboard a Globemaster III.⁸⁴

The proposed dates for Rodeo 1994 roughly corresponded to the last week in June--a time when the weather generally remained sunny, but cool. That year, however, the weather at McChord did pose minor problems. The first day, 26 June, was so cloudy that one of the planned events to showcase the C-17 had to be scrapped. The agenda, calling for a C-17 high-altitude low-opening parachute drop, switched to 82 combat controllers jumping from a C-141 4-ship formation. The C-17 did, however, conduct an aerial demonstration that the crowd thoroughly enjoyed. Overall, the weather cooperated, and only a few missions had to be rescheduled or revised.⁸⁵

The event also welcomed such distinguished visitors as Secretary of Defense William J. Perry, Secretary of the Air Force Sheila E. Widnall, and Air Combat Command Commander General John M. "Mike" Loh. All were there to witness "some of the world's best aerial refuelers and cargo airlifters as they demonstrate their Global Reach capabilities in a friendly competition." International competitors arrived from Korea, Spain, Australia, France, Portugal, Singapore, Belgium, Italy, Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Japan. Observers came from the Philippines, Thailand, Venezuela, Mexico, Indonesia, Tunisia, Egypt, and Chile. Rodeo had gotten larger every year, and 1994 was no exception, with nearly 1,800 participants and 69 aircraft including 18 KC-135 Stratotankers, 6 KC-10 Extenders, 16 US C-130 Hercules, 7 C-5 Galaxys, and 11 C-141 Starlifters. International teams brought C-222s, C-235s, C-130s, and C-160s.⁸⁶

Rodeo 94 had five main categories of events, with three to six competitions each. Following the fitness trend, a cross-country run supplemented the usual biathlon (which included a 10k run) for combat controllers. Security police events included combat tactics, combat rifle, an endurance course, and combat handgun.⁸⁷ The security police combat tactics

than they expected to see you; but the plane, like you, will show up. And this airplane will, like you, carry the spirit of American patriotism and freedom to the furthest reaches of the world." Fact Sheet, National Museum of the US Air Force, "Bob Hope: 50 Years of Hope," 29 Jul 09; Brochure, AMC/PA, "Rodeo '96," ca Jun 96.

⁸⁴Staff Summary, HQ AMC, "C-17 at Rodeo," 7 Apr 94.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶News Release, AMC/PA, "Secretary of Defense Perry to Visit Rodeo Competition," 13 Jun 94; Fact Sheet, AMC/PA, "Rodeo '94," Jan 94; Article, Maj M. W. Gieringer, "Rodeo '94," *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 1994; News Release, AMC/PA, "C-17 Globemaster III to Appear at Rodeo '94," 13 Jun 94.

⁸⁷Fact Sheet, AMC/PA, "Rodeo '94," Jan 94.

course also incorporated a simulated hostage situation in a desert village. The replication was incredibly realistic, although teams fired blanks as opposed to live rounds. In addition, security police personnel wore Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System outerwear to imitate being shot, wounded, and killed. Each team had only 40 minutes to “enter the village, work their way through sniper fire, ambushes, and screaming villagers, then locate the hostage, and remove him to a helicopter extraction site.” Of 42 teams, only 5 completed the exercise successfully. While some likely saw this as a failed course, the security police viewed it as a more precise way to pinpoint shortcomings in the training requirements in urban warfare tactics necessary for their troops to complete the mission successfully.⁸⁸

Afterwards, in August, General Fogleman put together an after-action package and sent personalized copies of Rodeo 1994 videos,⁸⁹ as well as a photo of each trophy presented, to each family for which a trophy was named. A three-page letter describing Rodeo--its purpose, the competition events, and the scoring formula for each event--accompanied each package.⁹⁰

After Rodeo 94, the tenure of Lieutenant Colonel Ed “Mr. Rodeo” Cook ended. Chief coordinator since the 1970s, he’d been involved in 9 of the 14 Rodeos to date. In 1986, he moved to MAC headquarters and fulfilled his duty as the MAC standardization and evaluation C-141 navigator, by default becoming the point man for Rodeo. In 1994, he oversaw opening ceremonies at the McChord AFB flight line, the planning for the 27 June dinner to honor Secretary of the Air Force Dr. Shelia E. Widnall, the golf tournament on 30 June, and the closing ceremonies on 1 July.⁹¹

A team from Robins AFB, Georgia, representing the 19th Air Refueling Wing, took home the General William G. Moore, Jr., Trophy for Best Air Mobility Wing.⁹²

Roundup

Because Rodeo was the premier training event for AMC, it was incumbent upon organizers to ensure that McChord Air Force Base (AFB), Washington, maintained acceptable facilities. Rodeo leadership created an extensive list of suggested improvements to the base--from ramp repairs to parking-pad construction and renovations. The underlying purpose of AMC Rodeo had always been to provide not only an opportunity for the command to showcase its talents, but also to engender a community of learning and training. To that end, officials conducted an extensive hot wash after each Rodeo, detailing at length both the strengths and the weaknesses of the event. After-action reports were expected to be completed 15 days

⁸⁸Article, Maj M. W. Gieringer, “Rodeo 94,” *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 94.

⁸⁹Rodeo footage and the closing ceremonies were videotaped by 90 specialists from the 2d Combat Camera Squadron based at March AFB CA.

⁹⁰Letter, Gen R. R. Fogleman, AMC/CC, to Maj Gen J. L. Hobson, Jr., USAF, Ret, [After Action Package], 10 Jun 94; Staff Summary, HQ AMC, “Rodeo Trophies,” 31 May 94. See Appendix C for complete list of namesake trophies.

⁹¹Staff Summary, HQ AMC, “Rodeo Trophies,” 9 Jun 94; E-Mail, Lt Col P. J. Kearney, 446 AW/CCO, to A. Nelson, AMC/HO, 30 Aug 10.

⁹²Point Paper, AMC/DOV, “Rodeo 94 Hot Wash,” 7 Nov 94.

after the event, and Rodeo 1994 was no different. Two areas of concern for the command staff were that the fuel servicing task (for KC-10s and KC-135s) had “far too many unacceptable scores” and that “overall the C-5 and C-141 scores were horrible, particularly preflights, basic post-flight operations, and hourly post-flight inspections.”⁹³

Also, the integration of the C-17s into the schedule still required fine-tuning. The question remained as to whether or not they should be included in the C-141 category or have the two C-17 wings compete separately. The most important proposed addition to Rodeo was the introduction of an aeromedical evacuation component on static aircraft. The mission of the aeromedical evacuation units was unquestionably significant and deserved to be showcased with the other crews and teams.⁹⁴

Even with the issues uncovered by the after-action report, no one could deny that Rodeo 1994 had been a resounding success. Involvement and participation had increased, with 69 competition aircraft and 12 sovereign nations. Interest and enthusiasm were at an all-time high, and everyone was on board to make Rodeo 1996 even better. Several initiatives resulting from the hot washes included creating an aeromedical evacuation competition, allowing the KC-135 cargo-loading competitors to use rollers, and changing the formula for computing scores for the Best Air Mobility Wing competition to “put more emphasis on winning, rather than scoring well at each event.” In addition, the scoring formula for the security police was adjusted to fall in line with the other events, and bonus points were added to winning events to make it easier for larger wings to compete.⁹⁵

Although the exact date is unclear, according to a November 1994 memo, AMC Commander General Ronald R. Fogleman made the decision to have the US Transportation Command host Rodeo, due to the divestiture of the C-130s. Rodeo became a full-time job for two people, “from approximately nine months prior to the event.” The two-man staff determined invitation policy, coordinated with international teams, set up host-base and Army support, wrote the competition rules, published the operations order, determined the flying schedule, set up scoring, procured trophies, and coordinated all support activities. However, the host base still bore a very significant portion of the Rodeo workload. General Fogleman was also the driving force behind permanently moving Rodeo from Little Rock AFB, Arkansas, to McChord AFB and holding the competition biannually.⁹⁶

Rodeo 1996

In time for Rodeo 96, hosting duties transferred from AMC to US Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), with the AMC Directorate of Operations remaining the executive agent and the AMC Standardization and Evaluation Division as the action office. USTRANSCOM, as a unified command with global responsibilities, managed America’s defense transportation system for the Department of Defense. The defense transportation system included the country’s air, land, and sea mobility assets. USTRANSCOM became

⁹³Memo, CMSgt D. J. Campanale AMC/CCC, to AMC/CC/CV, “Rodeo Results,” 15 Jul 94; Operations Order 14-90, HQ MAC, “Rodeo,” 1 Jan 90.

⁹⁴See note above.

⁹⁵Point Paper, AMC/DOV, “Rodeo 94 Hot Wash,” 7 Nov 94; Memo, Lt Col D. Harper, AMC/DO, “Rodeo Overview,” 22 Nov 94.

⁹⁶See note above.

the parent organization for Rodeo, but AMC managed the overall operation of Rodeo for USTRANSCOM. While AMC bore a significant portion of the responsibility for organizing, coordinating, and scheduling, the host base also put in a great deal of work, setting up all event sites; providing billeting, transportation, and maintenance support for all competitors; setting up social activities; hosting the international teams; providing proper communication support; and organizing the opening and closing ceremonies. Success at Rodeo had been and continued to be related directly to the coordinated efforts of both Headquarters AMC and the host base.⁹⁷

Fresh off the success of Rodeo 94, AMC leadership began planning for Rodeo 96. One of the major benefits was the fact that the Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve planned to convert all of their groups to wings the following year. This meant that ramp space would no longer be the main problem. Another question was the handling of distinguished visitors and civic leaders who wanted to attend. The real issue was essentially how to “limit the scope” of Rodeo by limiting participation. The location of Rodeo 96 had not been completely finalized, although AMC Commander General Ronald R. Fogleman had made it clear that he wanted it held at McChord Air Force Base (AFB), Washington. The dates proposed by the chief coordinator, Major Dana Hourihan, were 22 through 29 June 1996.⁹⁸ General Fogleman then made the decision to conduct the competition permanently at McChord and to do so every two years.⁹⁹

Several issues would need to be resolved before Rodeo officials could organize Rodeo 96. To begin with, 69 tankers and airlifters had been “crammed” onto the ramp at McChord for Rodeo 94. The likelihood was that even more aircraft would participate at the next Rodeo--close to 40 more according to Major Hourihan. As he pointed out, there was also likely to be increased international involvement. There was no way that McChord--or any other base--could accommodate that many aircraft. A feasibility plan showed that the only way to solve the ramp space problem was to limit the number of participants. To that end, Major Hourihan and his team devised a way to limit the number of aircraft, based on the force structure percentages. The policy allowed for a total of 26 aircraft for active-duty units, 19 for the Air Force Reserve wings, 18 for the Air National Guard wings, and 14 for international teams.¹⁰⁰

Rodeo leadership wanted to increase the bond between Air Combat Command (ACC) and Air Mobility Command. Upon its activation in 1992 as a major command, ACC had assumed ownership of a few C-130s, but in October 1993, Air Force Chief of Staff General Merrill A. McPeak initiated a major organizational change by assigning all C-130s based in the United States to ACC. During those years, all Rodeo communication between AMC and ACC had been between action officers. By 1996, AMC leaders wanted to make ACC a more equal partner in the planning stages and have points of contact within ACC’s safety, operations, and maintenance offices. These individuals would then be proactive participants

⁹⁷Staff Summary, Maj Gen E. F. Grillo, Jr., AMC/DO, “Initial Rodeo 96 Briefing,” 23 Aug 95; Brochure, AMC/PA, “Rodeo ’96,” ca Jun 96.

⁹⁸Staff Summary, AMC/DOV, “Rodeo Taskers,” 29 Dec 94; Briefing Slides, USTRANSCOM, [Rodeo Briefing], 29 Dec 94.

⁹⁹Staff Summary, Maj Gen E. F. Grillo Jr., AMC/DO, “Initial Rodeo 96 Briefing,” 23 Aug 95.

¹⁰⁰Briefing Slides, AMC/DOV, [Rodeo Briefing], 29 Dec 94.

in C-130 events, in addition to evaluating and endorsing aircraft parking plans. The idea of choosing a Rodeo vice commander from ACC also gained traction. However, selecting an active-duty brigadier general from ACC--which would allow for senior ACC involvement--would break the traditional practice of alternating the vice commander position between the Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard. Another possibility would be to select a brigadier general from an Air National Guard C-130 wing, which would ensure following tradition and allow for senior input during the planning process. A third option would be to renew the position of chief umpire. Created in 1993, the person in the chief umpire position served as a final arbitrator should the staff be unable to mediate scores--which proved not to be the case. Given that the chief umpire position was unwarranted, AMC leadership scrapped it for Rodeo 1994. However, if reinstated and filled by an ACC brigadier general "with a C-130 background," this would be a way to increase ACC participation. In the end, AMC settled on a trio of general officers to serve as Rodeo vice commanders--one each from ACC, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve.¹⁰¹

The question of how to manage distinguished visitors had no easy answer. While taking care of them remained important, it tended to be time consuming. Rodeo was, however, the ideal public relations opportunity, so every effort to enhance their stay, while simultaneously allocating resources and personnel effectively, was *de rigueur*. The AMC team suggested that a full-time protocol liaison be appointed to monitor distinguished visitors and their itineraries. Also suggested was that each civic group have no more than three members who would either travel with their sponsoring wing commander or take the trip with their competing team and stay for the entire competition. That wing's public affairs office would take the lead on air and ground transportation, lodging, and event scheduling.¹⁰²

Scoring was another area with room for improvement. While he was the AMC commander, General Ronald R. Fogleman¹⁰³ had made it clear that he wanted a formula established for calculating the overall Rodeo winner. The problem was that scores and, therefore, averages for security police competitions were disproportionately lower than all of the other events combined. The security police average lingered around 58 percent. To resolve the inequity, officials enacted a somewhat complicated scoring algorithm. Lastly, the Rodeo process made it harder for larger teams to compete successfully. The solution proposed by AMC was to put more emphasis on winning, as opposed to obtaining high scores, on each event. It also allowed for awarding bonus points for winning certain events.¹⁰⁴

The fifteenth international air mobility competition began on 21 June 1996. Nine international teams competed: Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, Singapore, and the Republic of Korea. Safety was the main focus of Rodeo 96. General Robert L. Rutherford, commander of AMC and commander in chief of

¹⁰¹Briefing Slides, AMC/DOV, [Rodeo Briefing], 29 Dec 94; Article, Air Combat Command, "Air Combat Command History," n.d; Brochure, AMC/PA, "Rodeo '96," ca Jun 96. This trio of Rodeo vice commanders only happened the one year, as the Air Force reversed the C-130 decision in 1997, returning US-based C-130s to AMC.

¹⁰²Briefing Slides, AMC/DOV, [Rodeo Briefing], 29 Dec 94.

¹⁰³General Ronald R. Fogleman was commander of AMC from 25 Aug 92 through 17 Oct 94.

¹⁰⁴The process called for taking the percentage of points earned divided by the points everyone else who participated in those events earned, multiplied by the overall Rodeo percentage.

USTRANSCOM, reminded everyone during the opening ceremony: "Safety must come first; there is no room in this competition for those who break the rules." The Rodeo commander, Brigadier General Richard C. Marr, also exhorted competitors to "strive for new levels of excellence and safety." Indeed, Rodeo officials took care to stress that safety was a combat skill--emphasizing that as much (if not more) capability was lost through carelessness or negligence as with a lack of technical skills.¹⁰⁵

Organizers stayed true to the Airman-cowboy theme. "Tent City," as it had been dubbed, became home to military green tents and the occasional white tent. Each tent came equipped with a water jug and fire extinguisher and often sported furnishings of picnic and/or card tables and assorted office and lawn furniture. The four streets leading out from the city center bore names of various heroes and villains of the Wild West: Wyatt Earp Lane, Jesse James Drive, Doc Holliday Avenue, and Billy the Kid Boulevard. Bales of hay and wooden fences lined the main thoroughfares--enhancing the western ambiance. The units billeted along these streets displayed their corporate personality with banners, posters, signs, flags, and even plywood cutouts.¹⁰⁶

The issue of trophy-naming arose again with the advent of the C-17 and aeromedical evacuation squadron competitions. AMC chose to name the Best C-17 Wing Trophy after General Duane H. Cassidy, commander of Military Airlift Command (MAC) from 20 September 1985 to 21 September 1989 and first commander of USTRANSCOM from 1 October 1987 to 21 September 1989. General Cassidy was instrumental in formulating the modern application of airlift, and, in particular, championed the practicality of the C-17 for redressing airlift shortfalls. As USTRANSCOM/MAC commander, he was the "undisputed premier spokesman" for all modes of defense transportation. Well into the 1990s, he was still speaking about strategic mobility, both domestically and abroad. In addition, McDonnell Douglas offered to sponsor the Best C-17 Trophy and recommended that it be named after General Cassidy.¹⁰⁷

The aeromedical evacuation award, also new for 1996, received a namesake as well--the Colonel Regina C. Aune and Staff Sergeant Michael D. Paget Trophy. In 1975, during the Vietnam War, (then) First Lieutenant Regina C. Aune and Staff Sergeant Michael D. Paget were among those crewmembers assisting orphans and other passengers aboard a C-5A requisitioned for Operation BABYLIFT. Tragically, this first flight crashed near Saigon, South Vietnam, due to a failed cargo lock and the aircraft's rapid decompression. First Lieutenant Aune survived the crash with every bone in her right foot shattered, a fractured leg, and a broken back. As the medical crew director for Operation BABYLIFT, she still managed to assist with the emergency evacuation after the crash landing--helping to rescue 149 children. Staff Sergeant Paget lost his life while assisting an extremely ill patient. On 29 June 1996, Colonel Regina Aune, now the commander of the 377th Medical Group at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, was on hand to observe the aeromedical evacuation event at Rodeo 96. She later spoke about the competition, saying an aeromedical evacuation

¹⁰⁵Article, Maj D. Rubalcaba, "Rodeo '96: The Best of the Best Competed Safely," *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 96.

¹⁰⁶Article, AMC News Service, TSgt W. C. Pope, "MASH' 'Bonanza' Collide in Tent City," ca Jun 96.

¹⁰⁷Staff Summary, AMC/DO, "Names for Rodeo Trophies," 7 May 96.

event was long overdue. She also spoke of Staff Sergeant Paget, "Mike is the best med tech I ever had the privilege of working with, and I don't think a better person could've been picked to name the trophy after."¹⁰⁸

No one was more enthusiastic at Rodeo 96 than the flight line maintenance specialists. Nicknamed "knuckle busters," these Airmen were directly responsible for keeping the Air Force airborne. Maintenance crews from California to Japan worked hard at prepping their aircraft so that the inspectors would have no complaints. The tanker teams were pumped up as well. Of the six major flying competitions at Rodeo, KC-135s were in four and KC-10s in two. Throughout the week, each team made two flights over Olympia, Washington, heading southeast and reaching an elevation of 26,000 feet. Once they reached the marker point, they climbed another 1,000 feet and prepared to engage with their receiver. The two aircraft had to hook up at a certain point using the receiver pilot-directed lighting. The boom operator cannot communicate verbally with the receiver. Points were lost for early and late hook-ups. The most difficult part of the exercise was remaining connected to the boom for 24 consecutive minutes, when normally they joined for less than 10, according to Major Chuck Phillips, chief KC-135 umpire.¹⁰⁹

The 19th Air Refueling Wing from Robins AFB, Georgia, won the award for Best Overall Wing for the second straight year and was the first to win the trophy two years in a row.

Roundup

By 15 October 1996, the selection of McChord Air Force Base (AFB), Washington, to host Rodeo 98 was official. Several important factors influenced the decision, including the investments in base infrastructure, favorable weather, an excellent working relationship with the US Army units, and access to the weapons range at adjacent Fort Lewis. In addition, existing letters of agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration, the enthusiastic support of local civic leaders, and proximity to Tacoma and Seattle, Washington, also played key roles. For Rodeo 98, General Walter Kross, commander of USTRANSCOM and AMC, selected Brigadier General William Welser III, commander of the AMC Tanker Airlift Control Center at Scott AFB, Illinois, to serve as the 1998 Air Mobility Rodeo competition commander. Two vice commanders--Colonel Arthur F. "Chip" Diehl and Colonel David L. Mitchell--were selected from the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, respectively.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸Staff Summary, AMC/SG, "Naming of Trophy for Best Overall Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron--Rodeo 96," 8 May 96; Article, AMC News Service, SrA N. Coleman, "Nurse Survives C-5 Crash, Returns to Make AF Career," *Story File*, 29 Jun 96; Article, US Air Force, "Colonel Regina Aune," n.d.

¹⁰⁹Article, AMC News Service, A1C M. Jackson, "Tanker Teams Tangle, Test Refueling Tactics," *Story File*, 30 Jun 96; Article, AMC News Service, TSgt W. C. Pope, "Knuckle Busters Unplugged," *Story File*, 30 Jun 96. KC-135s competed in cargo loading, aerial refueling, aircraft navigation, and single integrated operations plan. The other two events were airdrops and short-field landings.

¹¹⁰Staff Summary, AMC/DO, "Rodeo 98 Location," ca Oct 98; Brochure, 62 AMW/PA, "Welcome Rodeo '98," 29 Apr 98.

Rodeo 1998

Commencing 22 June, Rodeo 98 opened to an enthusiastic crowd ready to watch the best of the best. Unfortunately, the weather was not nearly as cooperative as it had been in previous years at McChord Air Force Base (AFB), Washington. Drizzly conditions did not affect the flying events, but they had a significant impact on the confidence/endurance and combat endurance courses, which contained obstacles that were hazardous when wet. Security forces and aerial port umpires met to discuss the feasibility of completing the 23-obstacle course. The McChord ground safety manager made his recommendations, but final decisions rested with the umpires. In the end, the security forces shortened the competition to six “all-weather” obstacles and a three-mile combat run. All competitors dressed in full combat gear, carrying rifles with dummy loads, full canteens, and sand in their ammo bags. The aerial port umpires chose to reduce their event to 10 “weather-safe” obstacles. The off-limits obstacles were marked with bright flags and orange cones, so everyone knew what to avoid. Medical personnel closely observed contestants throughout the competition, and anyone who sat down (for any reason) received immediate medical attention. The entire experience vividly illustrated to security forces and aerial port project and action officers that they would need to have alternate plans in the event of inclement weather at future Rodeos.¹¹¹

Rodeo debuted a modified C-130 airframe in 1998. The newly designed C-130 Hercules had actually made its first appearance on 1 April 1997 during ceremonies around the country, and many were excited to see it showcased at Rodeo. The Hercules was an integral part of AMC’s mission and helped to provide rapid, responsive, and flexible air mobility around the world. With this acquisition, the Air Force also activated the 43d Airlift Wing at Pope AFB, North Carolina, to consolidate airlift assets into one command--Air Mobility Command. Additionally, AMC activated two other organizations to help provide C-130 airlift: the 463d Airlift Group at Little Rock AFB, Arkansas, and the 317th Airlift Group at Dyess AFB, Texas. Since its’ unveiling, the redesigned C-130 Hercules had been busy in both foreign and domestic humanitarian efforts and major contingencies.¹¹²

For the first time, Rodeo included seminars sponsored by the Air Mobility Warfare Center’s Air Mobility Battlelab from Fort Dix, New Jersey. From Monday through Thursday, experts delivered presentations every morning and afternoon. Some of the seminars for tactics were “night-vision-goggle operations,” “rear-vision devices,” “C-130 weapons instructor course,” “global air traffic management,” and “fighter tactics versus tanker/airlift tactics.” Two special seminars were on the agenda entitled “Operation BABYLIFT” (hosted by Colonel Regina C. Aune) and “Mobility Senior Statesmen.” The statesmen seminar featured former tanker/airlift officers whose leadership and vision had helped shape Air Mobility Command. According to Colonel John Skorupa, director of the Battlelab, the idea behind these seminars was to make people aware that the lab was a place where ideas concerning rapid global mobility received consideration. This effort also helped combat the lack of communication and exchange of ideas that often plagued Rodeo.¹¹³

In an effort to make Rodeo as easily navigable as possible, administrators provided a welcome package to each participant--with extras at the information booth should one be

¹¹¹Article, Capt M. Russel, “Risk Management at Rodeo ’98,” *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 98.

¹¹²Brochure, AMC/PA, “1998 Rodeo International Tanker-Airlift Competition,” 1998.

¹¹³Brochure, 62 AMW/PA, “Welcome Rodeo ’98,” 29 Apr 98; Schedule, AMC Rodeo Central, “Rodeo Seminar/Demonstration Schedule for Monday,” 22 Jun 98.

misplaced. This highly detailed booklet contained essential information and included maps, diagrams, shuttle routes, climatological data, and a schedule of events. It also included a list of local restaurants and establishments off limits to United States military personnel. In addition, AMC sought to implement a simulcast so that the ceremonies and competition events could be viewed by Airmen around the world.¹¹⁴

Seventy-five teams with nearly 2,500 participants converged at McChord for Rodeo. Contingents from Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, France, Saudi Arabia, Spain, and the United Kingdom arrived to vie for top honors. Groups with observer status came from Bulgaria, Chile, Mexico, Romania, Greece, Ukraine, Switzerland, Turkey, Japan, Uruguay, and the United Arab Emirates.¹¹⁵

Aerial port events received a facelift for Rodeo 98. The material handling equipment operation/operator care competition debuted as a material-handling event in which evaluators judged individually the operator's inspection of a cargo-loading vehicle. During the second phase, team scores depended on how well competitors adhered to loading and safety procedures while using the vehicle to load heavy equipment and container-delivery systems (airdrop loads). The intransit visibility event used the remote consolidated aerial port system computer program in which two-person teams input data to create cargo and passenger listings. Judges assessed a team on the accuracy of the lists and on the successful transmission of the data to the Global Transportation Network before the aircraft's scheduled take-off time.¹¹⁶

Once again, international events had a direct impact on Rodeo. As a result of the 1996 terrorist attack of the housing complex Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, then AMC commander General Walter Kross implemented the elite Phoenix Raven program in February 1997. This antiterrorism program, consisting of teams of specially trained security forces personnel that provided close-in security for aircraft transiting airfields where security was unknown or there were additional threats, had been recognized as one of the best for its innovative approach to force protection. Airmen, Sailors, and Soldiers who voluntarily enrolled in the three-week, 130-hour course were challenged physically and mentally. The extensive training prepared them to travel wherever they were needed to protect military aircraft in an expeditionary environment. Security forces added the new Phoenix Raven event at Rodeo 98, allowing the Phoenix Raven personnel to compete in a separate tournament, which tested their skills and abilities.¹¹⁷

For the second consecutive Rodeo, the aeromedical evacuation crews competed for the title of "Best Aeromedical Evacuation Team." The 1996 inaugural competition proved so popular that aeromedical teams from throughout Air Mobility Command, Pacific Air Forces, US Air Forces in Europe, Air Force Reserve Command, and the Air National Guard participated in Rodeo 98. According to the chief umpire, Rodeo proved an excellent training

¹¹⁴E-Mail, Maj G. Schwab, Rodeo 98 Project Officer, "Rodeo/CC Meeting and Rodeo VTC 2 Summary," 20 Nov 97.

¹¹⁵Article, 1st Lt J. Fuchs, Rodeo Public Affairs, "Flying Events Capture Spirit of Rodeo," AMC News Service, 25 Jun 98.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

¹¹⁷Article, Air Mobility Command, "Phoenix Raven Factsheet," n.d.; Article, TSgt S. T. Sturkol, AMC/PA, "Phoenix Raven Airmen Are a Special Breed," 18 May 06.

ground for aeromedical crews because it tested the teams on combat-oriented skills they seldom used in their day-to-day routine missions.¹¹⁸

Rodeo 98 officials created many innovations in their quest to make that year's competition the most efficient, fun, and organized to date. Lessons learned from Rodeo 96 were absorbed and used to create effective policies and procedures, which, in turn, led to the most comprehensive overhaul of Rodeo thus far. Past Rodeo participants had complained that the events were no longer fun and exciting; nor could they watch all of the events of interest to them. In response, AMC moved "Tent City" to an area overlooking the park and named it "Rodeo Corral" to promote esprit de corps. Two new dining facilities provided more variety in food choices, as well as entertainment options. The Barn, in addition to great food, boasted an amazing view of Mount Rainer for diners to enjoy during their meals. The "Trough," a Western-themed saloon, came complete with game tables, darts, and a movie screen. Rodeo attendees could also enjoy horseshoes and soccer nearby.¹¹⁹

One of the true success stories of Rodeo 98 included the introduction of new web scoring and event-scheduling software applications. The rapid application development team responsible for the software included Technical Sergeant Dan Derick, Master Sergeant Rick McMullen, Master Sergeant Doug White, Senior Airman Eric Patmythes, and Ms. Rene Davis. Organizers provided them with a general concept and noted that they wanted scheduling/scoring as close to near real time as possible; something along the lines of what airports used to monitor airline flight arrivals and departures. The tech team did an outstanding job and developed software that used electronic scoreboards, saving several hundred man-hours by preventing the need to transfer information from data bases to manually-built power-point slides. Over 600 event staff were provided information on schedules that allowed critical actions (i.e., changes to aircrew briefings, collateral competition rescheduling, and event deconfliction) to be taken in the most expeditious manner possible. All of the participants and all the Mobility Air Forces around the world were able to track the competitions. The rapid application development team also took on Rodeo's web publishing requirements and successfully handled hardware requirements as well.¹²⁰

An internal document noted that the introduction and use of the Air Force Fund Cite Authorization form (Air Force Form 616) proved to be one of the most contentious aspects of Rodeo 96. AMC leadership intended for this form to track and control all money spent by McChord personnel for Rodeo 96. Since the modus operandi in 1996 was essentially to "spend whatever it takes, and we'll fix it during the Integrated Unfunded Requirement [IUR] cycle," the result was that every organization was liable for any bill not funded in the IUR cycle. Unfortunately, AF Form 616 created more problems than it solved, galvanizing Rodeo 98 organizers to do it differently and better.¹²¹

Researchers spent 20 months analyzing budget data in an attempt to estimate costs as closely as possible. AMC's commander approved the budget, after which the AMC functional

¹¹⁸Brochure, AMC/PA, "1998 Rodeo International Tanker-Airlift Competition," 1998.

¹¹⁹Article, SSgt P. Hanson, "Seminars Offer Inside Look at Global Mobility," Rodeo Roundup, 22 Jun 98; Article, "AFRC Looking Good at 50," Rodeo Roundup, 22 Jun 98.

¹²⁰Report, Maj G. Schwab, AMC/DO, [Rodeo After-Action Report], 1998.

¹²¹Ibid.

management board assumed daily management of it. This strategy allowed fund allocation within and between functional areas with project officer approval. The maneuver also allowed Rodeo officials to transfer lump sums to McChord to execute programs.¹²²

The production of quality videos and photographs reached a high point in Rodeo 98. Although the Combat Camera (COMCAM) staff budget was one of the largest, the return on investment was clearly worth it. The COMCAM staff, comprised of personnel from Fort Dix, New Jersey; Hill AFB, Utah; and Vandenberg AFB, California, produced a professional video of the closing awards ceremony, as well as hundreds of still photographs that were posted to the internet within hours after being taken. New for 1998, the COMCAM team also produced simulcasts of the closing ceremony for all of the USAF bases worldwide, as well as simulcasts of drop-zone action and broadcast clips for the local wing commander cable access TV channel. No one doubted the validity of these additional programming options, but they did question the budget. The hotwash recommended that budget planning for COMCAM begin very early, with no additional requirements within six months of execution.¹²³

The 3d Wing from Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, earned bragging rights for the next two years as the world's Best Air Mobility Wing, spoiling the dreams of the 19th Air Refueling Group from Robins AFB, Georgia, which had hoped for a three-peat--having won in 1994 and 1996. However, the 3d Wing victory almost didn't happen. On Saturday, the crew landed at McChord after a scheduled stop at Fairchild AFB, Washington. At McChord, maintenance workers noticed a one-inch gash in a main landing-gear tire. The hunt was on to find a suitable replacement. The Belgian team had two spares, but the tires had the wrong rim style. Other teams with spare tires wanted to help, but Technical Sergeant Ed Guilliams noted that the Elmendorf crew was reluctant to "put any of the other competitors in a bad spot by taking their only tire." The Canadian team, having arrived with two extra tires, came to the rescue by donating one. As Sergeant Claude Paquette, aviation technician for the 8th Air Maintenance Squadron, Trenton, Ontario, stated, "we always deploy with a lot of spare parts." Rounding out the international maintenance repair operation, the Egyptian Air Force loaned the 3d Wing team a dolly to transport the tire, and the team from Little Rock AFB, Arkansas, offered a vehicle to tow the dolly.¹²⁴

¹²²Ibid.

¹²³Ibid. In spite of the excellent job done by the combat camera staff, recommendations for a feasibility study for outsourcing television production, due to the unavailability of military resources, remained. There was simply not enough live television experience in the Air Force to maintain a high level of excellence. And the thought was that it would be better to put those numbers on paper as soon as possible so leadership would have time to recover from "sticker shock."

¹²⁴Article, AMC News Service, "3rd Wing Grabs Top Honors at Rodeo," 1 Jul 98; Article, MSgt D. Ernst, "Canadian 'gift' Keeps Alaskan Unit Flying," 26 Jun 98. It was fortunate that the Canadians did bring so many extra parts; during the competition, they supplied equipment to teams from the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, and Belgium.



A competitor crawls through the mud under barbed wire on the combat endurance course during Rodeo 1990 at Pope AFB, North Carolina. (US Air Force photo/SSgt Dean Wagner)



Members of the Indonesian combat control team prepare to parachute from a C-130 Hercules transport aircraft during the drop zone establishment phase of Rodeo 1990 at Pope AFB, North Carolina. (US Air Force photo/TSgt H. H. Deffner)



Members of the Royal Australian Air Force C-130 Hercules maintenance team work on the transport aircraft's engines prior to a competition inspection during Rodeo 1990 at Pope AFB, North Carolina. (US Air Force photo/TSgt David McLeod)



Rodeo 1992 umpires judge the weapon firing portion of the biathlon event at Pope AFB, North Carolina. Six combat teams were required to fire 9mm pistols as well as the M-16 rifle (or similar weapon used by other countries). (US Air Force photo/SSgt Dean Wagner)



A1C Charles Anderson, a strategic aircraft maintenance specialist stationed at March AFB, California, talking to the crew of a KC-10 Extender during preflight inspections prior to a Rodeo 1992 tanker competition mission at Pope AFB, North Carolina. (US Air Force photo/SSgt Tony Lambert)



A Combat control team parachutes from a USAF C-130 for a high-altitude, low-opening airdrop during the drop zone event of Rodeo 1993 at Little Rock AFB, Arkansas. (US Air Force photo/Sgt M. R. Preston)



A team of competitors in the Security Police combat tactics event at Rodeo 1994 at McChord AFB, Washington, searches a mock village in hope of locating and rescuing a hostage without being taken out by sniper fire. (US Air Force photo/TSgt Tony Lambert)



A US Air Force member conducts a joint inspection during the Rodeo 1994 competitions at McChord AFB, Washington. (US Air Force photo/TSgt Jennifer C. Wallis)



An Airman, Devlin Kastral, from the 3d Wing, Elmendorf, Alaska, puts on his gas mask during the M-16 rifle range competition at McChord AFB, Washington, during Rodeo 1994. (US Air Force photo/A1C Sean Worrell)



319th Air Refueling Wing maintenance section personnel from Grand Forks AFB, North Dakota, pull an auxiliary power unit to a KC-135 Stratotanker as they compete in the Rodeo 2005 KC-135 Stratotanker post-flight inspection competition at McChord AFB, Washington. (US Air Force photo/TSgt Jennifer C. Wallis)



An Airman from the 86th Airlift Wing at Ramstein AB, Germany, competes in the Rodeo 2005 aerial port squadron obstacle course competition at McChord AFB, Washington. (US Air Force photo/SrA Desiree N. Palacio)



Belgium airman CLC Smets Keen directs LCC Adama Dirk as he offloads a high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle from a C-130 Hercules at the aerial port's engine running onload competition during Rodeo 2007 at McChord AFB, Washington. (US Air Force photo/ MSgt Richard Cassidy)



Master Sergeant Vivian Caraviello, 315th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, Charleston AFB, South Carolina, configures a C-17 Globemaster III during Rodeo 2007 at McChord AFB, Washington. (US Air Force photo/TSgt Maria J. Bare)



Staff Sergeant Mark Hoffman, 62d Aerial Port Squadron, McChord AFB, Washington, guides teammate Senior Airman Dan Levindorske during the Rodeo 2007 10K forklift driving course competition at McChord AFB, Washington. (US Air Force photo/TSgt Maria J. Bare)



Florian Fuchs, left, of the German Air Force helps a US Airman pull out the hose from a refueling truck during Rodeo 2007 at McChord AFB, Washington. (US Air Force photo/SrA Daniel St. Pierre)



Staff Sergeant Sloan McGhee, 99th Airlift Squadron, Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, adds frozen blueberries to 25 glasses to act as ice cubes as part of the first-ever Air Force flight attendant culinary competition at Rodeo 2011 at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. (US Air Force photo/SSgt J. G. Buzanowski)



Flight Lieutenant D. Kongsri, left, and Major Bill Grant greet each other after arriving at Rodeo 1990 at Pope AFB, North Carolina. Both are assigned to the 601st Squadron, Royal Thai Air Force, Don Muang Air Base, Thailand. Major Grant is the US Air Force C-130 Hercules exchange officer. (US Air Force photo/TSgt David McLeod)



A KC-135R Stratotanker from Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, lands on 23 July 2011 at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, for the Air Mobility Rodeo 2011 competition. A 62d Airlift Wing C-17 Globemaster III sets on the flightline in the foreground; Washington State's highest peak, Mount Rainier, stands in the background. (US Air Force photo/SSgt J. G. Buzanowski)



A parachutist descends, carrying the American flag for the Air Mobility Rodeo 2011 opening ceremonies on 24 July 2011 at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. (US Air Force Photo/ MSgt Scott T. Sturkol)

SECTION III

The 21st Century

Rodeo 2000

The 62d Airlift Wing's conversion from C-141s to C-17s at McChord Air Force Base (AFB), Washington, became an issue for Rodeo 2000. The demands made on the C-141 fleet over the years had taken their toll. Boeing's C-17 was the perfect replacement, due to its ability to operate from shorter, rougher runways and a larger payload capacity than the C-141. It carried up to 102 paratroopers and their equipment and operated on airfields as short as 3,000 feet (914 meters) long and 90 feet (27.4 meters) wide. It could turn and reverse using a three-point star turn and had backing capability. The aircraft was "operated by a crew of three, thereby reducing manpower requirements, risk exposure, and long-term operating costs."¹²⁵

The work required at McChord AFB during the C-17 conversion process meant that Rodeo planners would have to find an alternate location. Pope AFB, North Carolina, although home of Rodeo for years, was simply too small for the growing competition. However, AMC leadership chose Pope AFB as the location for Rodeo 2000, scheduled for 6 through 13 May. Due to the base's previous problems with inadequate facilities, USAF completed over 28 major civil engineering projects, at a cost of over \$5.8 million, before the start of Rodeo 2000. Although the location temporarily changed, the mission of Rodeo did not. It remained what it had always been: a chance to demonstrate the Mobility Air Forces' mission capabilities; test and refine new procedures, tactics, and concepts that improve mission results; promote international relations in a friendly, competitive environment; and enhance esprit de corps by recognizing crew and unit professionalism and outstanding performance.¹²⁶

As had been the trend for years, the numbers of aircraft and participants increased: to 80 and 3,000, respectively; and even more countries sent teams to compete and observe. Two new competitions debuted--the 10K forklift driving course and the aeromedical evacuation endurance course--locking in the idea that this Rodeo was all about skill and professionalism.¹²⁷

The opening-day ceremony jumpstarted (literally) with a mass paratroop drop of over 800 paratroopers from the XVIII Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Seventeen international aircrews attended Rodeo, with observer teams from Chile, Australia, Greece, Switzerland, the Ukraine, and international doctors from Poland, Germany, Japan, and the

¹²⁵Article, Defense Industry Daily, "DID Focus: The Global C-17 Sustainment Partnership," 22 Jul 10.

¹²⁶Point Paper, AMC/DO, "Air Mobility Rodeo 2000," 18 May 00; Operations Order 14-00, AMC/DOV, "Air Mobility Command Rodeo 2000," 15 Nov 99; Article, "2000-2005," McChord Air Museum: Our History, n.d.

¹²⁷Point Paper, AMC/DOV, "Air Mobility Rodeo 2000," 18 May 00.

Netherlands.¹²⁸ Each 43d Airlift Wing squadron, located at Pope, sponsored an international team--promoting international esprit de corps and generally ensuring that the international teams had a great time. The 743d Maintenance Squadron escorted the Ukrainian team to local restaurants, shopping malls, and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, so that the Ukrainians could fulfill a wish of swimming in the Atlantic. The 43d Civil Engineer Squadron hosted get-togethers with the 32-member crew from Turkey. The reciprocity was mutual; each group learned even more of the other's culture, lifestyle, and country. The 43d Operations Support Squadron took on hosting duties for the team from South Korea. Each group learned to be more culturally sensitive so as not to cause offense. For example, a mask hanging in an office (a face with the tongue sticking out) was rather shocking to the South Koreans, in whose country people did not display such things. For the duration of Rodeo, the mask remained in a desk drawer.¹²⁹

The Egyptian team paired up with the 43d Medical Operations Squadron for Rodeo and immediately noticed one cultural difference between themselves and the Americans. As Captain Mohammed Morsy, C-130 navigator noted, "Americans always seem to be in a hurry." The Brazilian team made quite an impression on their hosts--the 43d Logistics Support Squadron (LSS). By the end of Rodeo, the Brazilians were made honorary Blacksmiths--the nickname for the 43 LSS. All of the international teams appreciated the warmth and generosity of the Americans and noted that the friendships formed at Rodeo would endure.¹³⁰

A new event added to the aerial port competition challenged Airmen to balance a pitcher of water on a bright red 2- by 4-foot board. The newly minted 10K forklift event required a 2-man team to maneuver its way in and out of 14 strategically placed orange cones. One person picked up the load, drove it through the tight fit created by the cones, then placed it on sawhorses at the other end of the course. The other driver then steered the forklift backwards with no load. The purpose of the competition was to increase forklift skills vital for onloading or offloading sensitive cargo around the flight line. Testing their skills at Rodeo made the Airmen better and safer at their jobs.¹³¹

AMC staff designed a new special tactics event--parachute employment--with combat controllers and pararescuemen in mind. The idea met with great enthusiasm from the intended competitors. The career field was so small and difficult to get into that, for many, the chance to compete at Rodeo was also a way to renew old friendships and make new ones.¹³²

In the end, the 6th Air Refueling Wing from MacDill AFB, Florida, took home the General Moore Trophy for Best Air Mobility Wing.¹³³

¹²⁸Article, Capt S. Idziak, 43 AW/PA, "Team Pope Units Host Rodeo International Teams," *Carolina Flyer*, 12 May 00.

¹²⁹Ibid.

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹Article, SSgt T. L. Keebaugh, "Not a Drop to Spare," 10 May 00.

¹³²Article, SSgt E. Grill, "Rodeo Introduces Special Tactics Competition for 2000," 12 May 00.

¹³³Article, SSgt T. L. Keebaugh, "The Sun Sets Over Rodeo Skies," 18 May 00.

Roundup

AMC coordinators wasted no time beginning planning for the next Rodeo. Although the C-17 conversion had begun at McChord Air Force Base, Washington, in 2000, questions remained as to whether or not the C-17 projects at McChord would be completed in time for the next competition scheduled in 2002. However, McChord officials assured Rodeo leadership that the base would work closely with contractors to ensure that the only remaining ongoing projects--two nose-dock alterations--would in no way affect Rodeo 2002 activities. The project office confirmed that by July 2002, McChord would be ready for Rodeo.¹³⁴

An in-progress report conducted 10 February 2000 determined that the Rodeo commander would confer only the 34 major awards at the closing ceremony. The rest were to be presented either onsite in one of the terminals or at Rainier Ranch. Officials also intended to develop a policy and procedure for presenting early award winners with some token of recognition for their individual prowess. However, the solutions to those, and other issues, were not immediately forthcoming.¹³⁵

Rodeo Suspended Due to War

On 11 September 2001, Islamic fundamentalist terrorists hijacked four US commercial airliners. The attack of the first two planes leveled the World Trade Center, and the crash of the third plane inflicted serious damage to the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. A fourth plane, which the terrorists planned to divert to Washington DC, crash-landed into a Shanksville, Pennsylvania, cornfield when the heroic passengers and crew--who had learned of the plot--subdued the hijackers. Al-Qaeda, an organization led by Osama Bin Laden, quickly assumed responsibility for the terrorist conspiracy.¹³⁶

In response to the terrorist attacks, President George Bush initiated a war against terror named Operation INFINITE JUSTICE (later renamed Operation ENDURING FREEDOM). By October 2001, in response to the tragedy of 11 September (commonly called "9/11"), the United States military, with participation from its ally, the United Kingdom, commenced the first attack in the Global War on Terror on the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. Although the ties between the Taliban and Al-Qaeda were never crystal clear--the Taliban was largely a Pashtun movement focused on grievances within Pakistan and/or Afghanistan, while Al Qaeda's main focus was international terrorism--there was evidence of collaboration between the two groups, a collaboration that made them both targets of American retribution. By March 2003, a war in Iraq began when the United States and coalition forces bombed

¹³⁴Staff Summary, AMC/DOV, "Air Mobility Rodeo Basing," 31 Mar 00.

¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Article, Capt C. Wellman, "Building Dedication Honors Airman Killed on 9/11," 10 Oct 08. On 4 October 2008, the 445th Airlift Wing (AW) at Wright Patterson AFB OH dedicated a new operations building to an airman who lost his life in the 9/11 attack. Major LeRoy W. Homer, a member of the Air Force Reserve Command's 445 AW from 1995 to 2000, was serving as the first officer on United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed near Shanksville PA.

Baghdad after mandates from the United Nations failed to remove Saddam Hussein from power.¹³⁷

In addition, a 9.3 Richter scale earthquake in the Indian Ocean the day after Christmas in 2004, followed quickly by a tsunami, further added to the sense of global devastation. Two hundred and ninety thousand people from Sri Lanka to Indonesia died, while hundreds of thousands more were injured or displaced. This natural disaster created one of the greatest humanitarian tragedies in history. The United States, along with many other nations, initiated a worldwide relief effort to assist the victims.¹³⁸

Records indicate that planning for Rodeo resumed at least by March 2002 for a competition scheduled for the following year. In a memorandum to the AMC Director of Operations, Colonel Paul J. Selva, who was the 62d Airlift Wing commander, submitted a list of proposed Rodeo 2003 projects and additional civil engineering operational budget requirements. The list included projects that had been approved for Rodeo 2002, but were never realized. By July 2002, AMC leadership accepted the initial requests for funding. Later, the McChord Rodeo staff submitted another request for additional funding for facility projects deemed essential to the success of the competition. AMC did not approve the new request, due to budget constraints.¹³⁹

Another Rodeo issue discussed in early 2002 centered on the fact that planners had crammed each day of Rodeo full of events “with absolutely no margin for flexibility.” Planners wanted to brief the Air Mobility Command and McChord staffs on the potential pitfalls of such a packed program--especially since Rodeo administrators allotted the competition fewer days than it had in previous years. The AMC Standardization and Evaluations office believed a five-day option better suited the competition, unless officials wanted to “consider reducing the number of competitors to a more manageable level.” Eventually, plans for a Rodeo in 2003 were scrapped altogether due in large part to the worldwide crises.¹⁴⁰

Rodeo 2005

The Global War on Terror, humanitarian relief efforts, and other obligations precluded conducting Rodeo again until 19 through 24 June 2005. Although McChord Air Force Base (AFB), Washington, sponsored the event, the Air Mobility Warfare Center, headquartered at Fort Dix, New Jersey, served as the executive agent, planning and coordinating all aspects of competition. Rodeo 2005 organizers more than made up for the long wait--and the weather cooperated as well. Opening-day ceremonies were spectacular, with an Army Stryker vehicle, carrying the competition’s official party, exiting the cargo bay of a C-17. The official party, consisting of AMC Commander General John W. Handy and the Rodeo commander and vice commanders, reviewed a tight formation of over 1,000 Rodeo competitors and observers

¹³⁷Article, McChord Air Museum, “2000-2005,” n.d.; Report, F. Kuehn, “Separating the Taliban from al-Qaeda: The Core of Success in Afghanistan,” Feb 11.

¹³⁸Article, McChord Air Museum, “2000-2005,” n.d.

¹³⁹Memo, Col P. J. Selva, 62 AW/CC, “Memorandum,” 11 Mar 02.

¹⁴⁰E-Mail, J. Bishop, AMC/DOV, to Maj S. Janeczko, “E-Mail,” 21 Mar 02.

assembled along the flight line tarmac. Women riders of the Tacoma Lariettes Drill Team rode stately white horses, while transporting the flag of each participating country. Taking their places in a split formation along each side of the review stand, the women carried flags representing Brazil, France, Germany, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Kingdom. The Lariettes also carried flags for countries that sent observer teams. Those observers included Switzerland, Oman, Mexico, Malaysia, India, Chile, Colombia, Algeria, and Denmark. The flag of the United States arrived last--appropriately from the sky. Captain Michael Jensen, a McChord AFB special tactics officer, parachuted from 10,000 feet "with 'Old Glory' waving in the wind." He delivered his precious cargo to the last waiting flag bearer, who then took her place at the review stand.¹⁴¹

General Handy opened his remarks on 19 June 2005 by noting the five-year hiatus of Rodeo. Attributing it to the Global War on Terror, he observed that all in the armed forces had been "tested hard," but had "passed every challenge brilliantly." He exhorted the 2005 competitors to adhere to all safety and professional standards and closed with a quote from General Douglas MacArthur, "On the fields of friendly strife are sown seeds that, on other fields and other days, will bear the fruits of victory."¹⁴²

Although the number of participants, particularly United States military teams, was down due to the ongoing wartime operations tempo, the enthusiasm and determination shared by competitors were undiminished. The single Air National Guard unit at the competition was the 121st Air Refueling Wing team from Columbus, Ohio. Undaunted, the 121st team commander, Major Dave Johnson, stated, "It is our honor to be here and further the tradition of the Citizen-Soldier. We are proud to go shoulder to shoulder against the 'best of the best' in air mobility and showcase our strong commitment to the total force and Ohio." For many of the team members, 2005 was their first Rodeo.¹⁴³

Relationships forged in earlier Rodeos grew stronger, and new ones developed. The Brazilians, a perennial favorite, came prepared to learn more about night-vision-goggle operations so that they could create their own night capability.¹⁴⁴

A new event, close precision engagement (CPE), an elite Air Force countersniper team and part of Security Forces, made its debut at Rodeo 2005. The purpose of CPE was to perform air base defense missions; those duties included route reconnaissance, surveillance, anti-sniper defense, target-of-opportunity selection, and anti-materiel tasks such as destroying military equipment. In addition, a large part of their effectiveness was due to the psychological warfare their reputation engendered. So impressed was General Dan K. McNeil, commander, United States Army Forces, with what he saw of the two-man close precision engagement event that he asked how he could tap into it.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹Article, C. R. Bakse, "Rodeo 2005: McChord AFB Washington, Hosts the Return of Air Mobility's Premier International Competition," *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly*, Summer 05, p 7; History (S/Decl 15 Sep 2015), HQ AMC, 1 Jan-31 Dec 05, pp 154-155, info used is Unclassified.

¹⁴²See note above; Message, Gen J. Handy, AMC/CC, "Message from General Handy, AMC/CC, to Rodeo Competitors," n.d.

¹⁴³Briefing Slides, Lt Col M. Whelan, Rodeo director, "Air Mobility Rodeo 2005," 12 Jul 05.

¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵Article, SSgt K. Barrett, "Precision Engagement Team Hits the Mark," 24 May 06.

As in 2000, each international team paired with a sponsoring squadron. Eighteen of the 27 Rodeo interpreters available were from the Air Force Reserve Command's 446th Airlift Wing, stationed at McChord. In the past, military linguists had been scarce, forcing Rodeo officials to hire off base. In 2005, they saved about \$7,000 by not hiring contract interpreters. The Saudi Arabian team had special need of the military liaisons when they arrived--they didn't have enough hotel rooms, rental cars, and mobile phones. Technical Sergeant Cameron Ames of the 446th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron was able to procure everything they needed.¹⁴⁶

Between events, the participants, visitors, and observers could refresh themselves at Rainer Ranch. Located near the restored C-124C Globemaster and C-141B Starlifter on display at Heritage Hill, the ranch featured tents from each country, which displayed that nation's food, music, and culture. Dates, tea, and coffee graced the menu at the Saudi Arabian tent, and the Brazilians offered a delicious beverage known as Caipirinha to those visiting their tent. From Pakistan to the United Kingdom, each tent provided Rodeo attendees a different slice of life. Not to be outdone, the various American teams also set up tents displaying regional cultures and providing plenty of refreshments.¹⁴⁷

Another newcomer to Rodeo 2005 was the United States Air Force Band of the Golden West. Although the designation was relatively new (as of 1 May 1997), the band's lineage dated back to 1941. Activated at Scott Field, Illinois, on 1 October 1941, the first incarnation, the "Air Force Band," deployed to Le Havre, France, and later to Warton, England. After going through several name changes in the intervening years, in 1994, the band, then redesignated the "Air Mobility Command Band of the Golden West," moved from March AFB, California, to Travis AFB, California. Invited for the first time to play at Rodeo 2005, the Travis AFB-based USAF Band of the Golden West "brought it." They performed at both the opening and closing ceremonies and got the party started each night at the Ranch. The 30-member band highlighted their talents by playing jazz, ceremonial music, pop, country-western, classic rock, and even salsa music. They impressed Rodeo commander Brigadier General David S. Gray so much that he named them *the* "Rodeo Band"--an honor previously held by the US Air Force Band of Mid America stationed at Scott AFB, Illinois.¹⁴⁸

The armed forces commitment to physical fitness influenced the introduction of a new fitness competition in 2005. "Fit-to-Fight," an event worth 300 points, allowed for random selection of participants chosen to demonstrate their physical fitness. Participant selection occurred after the teams arrived at Rodeo in an effort to make it as fair as possible. The event consisted of push-ups, sit-ups, and a 1.5-mile run. The difference between this competition and the official Air Force fitness test was the one-standard rule for all participants, meaning that the same rules applied to males and females. The 715th Air Mobility Operations Group stationed at Hickam AFB, Hawaii, easily finished first--earning 297 of 300 points available.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶Article, C. R. Bakse, "Rodeo 2005: McChord AFB Washington, Hosts the Return of Air Mobility's Premier International Competition," *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly*, Summer 05.

¹⁴⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸Article, US Air Force Band of the Golden West, "About Us," n.d.

¹⁴⁹Article, C. R. Bakse, "Rodeo 2005: McChord AFB Washington, Hosts the Return of Air Mobility's Premier International Competition," *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly*, Summer 05.

The 2005 Best Air Mobility Award went to the 6th Air Mobility Wing from MacDill AFB, Florida.¹⁵⁰

Roundup

Rodeo 2007 was on the minds of AMC officials shortly after Rodeo 2005. With the advent and ensuing popularity of night operations competitions in 2005, Rodeo planners were keen to include even more such features in 2007. The initial planning phase began in October 2005, with subsequent sessions continuing through June 2007. The emphasis on details meant that Rodeo 2007 would run more smoothly than it ever had. The registration/inprocessing procedures were fine-tuned. The original operations order underwent adjustments early enough to execute it successfully.¹⁵¹ The 618th Tanker Airlift Control Center (TACC) provided core scheduling and a mission execution staff of at least 8 personnel to allow 24-hour operations. In the event that 618 TACC manning could not support the total requirement, billets could be filled by wing current operations or command post personnel. Personnel from aviation fields filled four of the eight positions. All personnel had to demonstrate proficiency in the use of the new software, Global Decision Support System 2.¹⁵²

Rodeo 2007

Rodeo 2007 coincided with the Air Force's 60th anniversary and was the largest Rodeo to date. Many of the attendees were there to pay tribute to AMC's contributions to the Air Force, particularly humanitarian missions, and to the Service's role in the military.¹⁵³

At 0800 on 21 July 2007, the first of 46 US military crews arrived at McChord Air Force Base (AFB), Washington. More than 30 countries spanning 6 continents sent observers and participants to Rodeo 2007; but only 9 were prepared to compete: Brazil, Belgium, Germany, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, South Korea, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates. Observers hailed from Australia, Argentina, Botswana, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Finland, Greece, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kuwait, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Switzerland, the Ukraine, and the United Kingdom. Operational requirements and limited resources kept many international teams from actually competing in 2007, although they had participated in past competitions. The New Zealand crew had not been to Rodeo since 1984, so they attended in order to take notes and prepare for future competitions. The Nigerian and Ukrainian teams were newcomers to the event and looked

¹⁵⁰Ibid.

¹⁵¹Article, Capt S. Ovel, "Great Synergy' Team McChord: Rodeo Commander Praises Competition Preparation Efforts," 7 Jun 07.

¹⁵²Operations Order 14-07, AMC/A3, [Rodeo 2007], 1 Nov 06; Article, AMC News Service, "AMC Unveils New Generation Command and Control System," 24 May 05. Global Decision Support System 2 was a new command and control system that provided unit-level and force-level mission planning, scheduling, and tracking of all mobility airlift and air refueling missions.

¹⁵³Fact Sheet, AMC/PA, "Air Mobility Rodeo 2007," ca Jul 07.

forward to learning air mobility techniques from the competing teams. In all, Rodeo teams executed 1,573 ground and flying events.¹⁵⁴

As in previous years, the competition extended past the gates of McChord AFB. Civilian airports like Seattle/Tacoma International shared airspace with the competition and coordinated flights around the event schedule. The large volume of communication among Rodeo officials, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the area airport resulted in the creation of a new software system designed to facilitate faster and better communication capabilities. Covering both ground and air events, the new program allowed Airmen to keep both components organized. A “rainbow” feature provided a summary that gave coordinators an effective visual of all assets, missions, and flight times. Lieutenant Colonel Mike Mattinson, who was trained as a C-17 Globemaster III instructor, was responsible for the new software system. His hobby was working on computers, and, over time, he had taught himself computer programming and eventually became the office technology and interface systems guru for the senior command staff.¹⁵⁵

For Airmen of the 337th Airlift Squadron (assigned to the Air Force Reserve Command’s 439th Airlift Wing), the competition began the moment the lumbering C-5 took off from Westover, Massachusetts, on 21 July. In only their second Rodeo (having competed in 2000), the “Patriot Wing” touched down 2,460 miles cross-country at McChord one second shy of a mandatory 1135 arrival time. Rodeo rules called for a strictly enforced one-minute leeway window for all aircraft--regardless of the distance flown.¹⁵⁶

The engine-running offload (ERO) competition garnered a lot of interest; the crowd was larger than usual--and full of high-ranking personnel. After an air refueling with a KC-10 tanker from Travis AFB, California, the giant C-5 Galaxy¹⁵⁷ circled McChord before its aircrew guided the craft’s 28 wheels towards the flight line. The 439th Airlift Wing’s aerial porters then sprinted toward the C-5. In a matter of 7 minutes, the porters loaded and unloaded a 25,000-pound Halverson loader, a high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV or Humvee), and a trailer--all while the C-5’s 4 engines hummed. The team finished the offload with only two seconds to spare and took home the trophy for Best C-5 ERO. As one technical sergeant put it, the crew from the 439th came in with a plan, and “it was just a matter of execution on game day.”¹⁵⁸

The ERO competition was the culmination of all the skills possessed by air transportation Airmen. The event showcased teams in a race to see who could load and unload a cargo transporter as quickly and as safely as possible--without turning off the engines. Most people

¹⁵⁴Article, SrA D. Kiliz, “International Observers Look to Rodeo for Techniques, Knowledge,” 22 Jul 07; Briefing Slide, HQ AMC, “International Teams,” 18 June 07; Report, Lt Col C. Duffek, Director Air Mobility Rodeo, “Rodeo 2007 After-Action Report, Executive Summary,” 12 Oct 07.

¹⁵⁵Article, SSgt Nick Przybyciel et al, “Rodeo 2007: McChord AFB Hosts International Air Mobility Competition,” *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly*, Summer 07.

¹⁵⁶Article, SrA T. Huffman, “Westover Porters, Aircrew Take Home Rodeo Trophy,” *Patriot*, Sep 07.

¹⁵⁷The C-5 Galaxy was known variously as the Big Mac, Fat Albert, and cumulous aluminus.

¹⁵⁸Article, SrA T. Huffman, “Westover Porters, Aircrew Take Home Rodeo Trophy,” *Patriot*, Sep 07.

probably would not run up to an aircraft that has not shut down, but Airmen around the world did it every day to keep supplies and troops moving downrange. By structuring the event in that manner, Rodeo made the training scenario relevant. That was important because it was how Airmen accomplished the operation in theaters like Iraq and Afghanistan. For many aerial port troops, the ERO was the main reason they attended Rodeo, although they also competed in other events. However, loading and unloading cargo planes constituted the culmination of all of their training. ERO was also the only event that combined ground crews and aircrews, so the level of competition generally remained intense.¹⁵⁹

Multicultural missions were standard fare at Rodeo. The Pakistani team, having never accomplished a combat engine-running offload, asked the Brazilians to assist them. The latter, in turn, brought in American, French, and British Airmen who set aside the friendly rivalry to aid the Pakistani crew. While competition was often tough, with everyone striving to win, all participants understood that the real mission was cooperation.¹⁶⁰

It tended to happen at every Rodeo--that a plane would malfunction--and Rodeo 2007 was no different. The Turkish C-130 broke down just before the competition began--and a repair job that should have taken weeks was completed in five days. The international teams generally arrived a week before the competition began and, in this instance, that was fortuitous. The Turkish team noticed trouble soon after they landed; a crewmember spotted loose metal shavings during the post-flight inspection. Troubleshooting began, and the team soon realized that one of the plane's engines had a broken reduction gear box, the mechanism that turned the propeller--and one of the largest parts of a C-130 engine. A non-functioning gearbox meant the team was grounded indefinitely.¹⁶¹

Captain Eric Peterson, a 10th Airlift Squadron pilot from McChord, set to work locating a new gearbox, all the parts and tools needed to install it, and the funding to purchase everything. McChord was a C-17 Globemaster III base, so C-130 parts were not in stock. In addition, red tape forestalled access to funds. After briefing Rodeo commander Brigadier General Kip L. Self about the situation, Captain Peterson obtained the green light to proceed and within 24 hours had all the major parts. The gearbox itself, however, was 700 miles away in Reno, Nevada. A local plane retrieved the gearbox, and the other parts were shipped from all over the United States via Federal Express. The last challenge centered on locating tools. The C-17 sent to pick up the gearbox stopped in Boise, Idaho, on the return trip from Reno to obtain the necessary tools and equipment before heading back to McChord. Maintenance liaison teams from the 446th Airlift Wing at McChord AFB worked with Turkish maintenance professionals around the clock to get the Turkish C-130 fully restored. One day before Rodeo 2007 began, the aircraft was combat ready, enabling the crew to conduct a familiarization flight to get the layout of the area and compete in the flying events the following day.¹⁶²

The spirit of teamwork that Rodeo engendered indicated the level of respect that the Air Mobility Command had for its global counterparts and vice versa. Competitions like Rodeo fostered the high regard that made international cooperation possible. Although the benefits of Rodeo were sometimes intangible, the esprit de corps fostered among participants

¹⁵⁹Article, SSgt Nick Przybyciel et al, "Rodeo 2007: McChord AFB Hosts International Air Mobility Competition," *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly*, Summer 07.

¹⁶⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁶¹*Ibid.*

¹⁶²*Ibid.*

was measurable in theaters around the world. Rodeo also helped strengthen the total force, the Air Reserve Component that included the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command.¹⁶³

For the first time, Rodeo 2007 had two teams composed of both active-duty and Air Reserve Component Airmen. The combined teams were from the 437th and 315th Airlift Wings stationed at Charleston AFB, South Carolina, and the 305th and 514th Air Mobility Wings from McGuire AFB, New Jersey. The associate wing crew concept was particularly beneficial because of the shortage of active-duty personnel due to the wartime operations tempo. Master Sergeant Russell Gardner, an active-duty maintenance team chief from the 437th Airlift Wing, likened it to a fantasy football draft “where you get to choose your best players.” The teams also recognized that their combined efforts mirrored real-world operations.¹⁶⁴

Rodeo “wranglers” deserve a special mention. Two hundred volunteers from the 62d and 446th Airlift Wings, the host units at McChord AFB, started preparing weeks in advance for Rodeo, ensuring the success of the venture. They were trained “in a little bit of everything.” In the past, wranglers only did the grunt work, i.e., setting up and tearing down tents and moving equipment. Transportation, greeting incoming participants, and marshalling aircraft were duties reserved for “cowpokes” or “rustlers.” Over time, wranglers became adept at handling all responsibilities, from supporting security enforcement to trash detail. Wranglers--easily identifiable in tan staff t-shirts and baseball caps--remained the go-to people for just about anything. Work included setting up a distinguished visitor lounge, flight line set-up, and 24-hour communication security.¹⁶⁵

In a rousing final celebration, officials announced the Rodeo 2007 awards on 27 July. The 60th Air Mobility Wing from Travis AFB won the General William G. Moore Trophy for Best Air Mobility Wing.¹⁶⁶

Roundup

The Rodeo 2007 after-action report provided insight into how Rodeo 2009 could be even better. Suggested were changes in scoring, team competitions, definitions of specific awards, and the blended wings concept. Most of the issues dealt with maintenance events. For example, one suggestion was that all write-ups garner the same point deductions. Another recommendation was that the operations order allow teams to bring up to 12 maintainers. Two additional personnel would allow 24-hour coverage for night-flying and maintenance-repair issues. The Maintenance Knucklebuster Award clearly needed better definition, to include separate-ramp Knucklebusters and having daily “kudos points” count towards the award. Most competitors arrived within seconds of their scheduled time, earning full points for arrival--the scores based on touchdown, which allowed some teams to “stretch” their flares to the second. The recommendation was to tighten arrival times for the scoring component to

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁴Ibid.

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

¹⁶⁶Ibid.

make it more consistent. It was also suggested that umpires should use threshold crossing, not touchdown, as the standard.¹⁶⁷

An additional maintenance issue centered on the fact that maintenance events were not very spectator-friendly. The recommendation was to reassess the events to make them more exciting so that people would enjoy watching the teams compete. A combat service support event was proposed to more closely resemble a “warfighter” skill.¹⁶⁸

Other areas that came under review were the Rodeo website and in-processing for Rodeo participants and observers. Technical changes to the drop-down menus would standardize the registration. The recommendation was that a team from AMC’s Manpower and Personnel Directorate would work with the web designers when they began the web modifications for 2009. The inprocessing policies and procedures were far from ideal and caused frequent problems. Because sometimes the team chiefs had not prepared required documents for the inprocessing line, the resulting process had been chaotic. One suggestion was to have wranglers brief the team chiefs on the bus from the aircraft to have orders, fees, and rental car drivers ready. Also, a checklist could be developed and provided to team chiefs during the bus ride.¹⁶⁹

The fit-to-fight competition also came under reexamination. In 2007, the event was scheduled as teams arrived on Saturday. The participants were given three hours after touchdown to report and commence the competition--which often coincided with opening ceremonies. Confusion reigned because of incorrect information, tight schedules, and late arrivals. Due to the fact that the aerial port squadron, aeromedical evacuation, and special forces competitions already contained a physically challenging match, the recommendation was to consider realigning the fit-to-fight event or eliminating it altogether.¹⁷⁰

Officials also discovered that there was no safety mishap reporting procedure in place for Rodeo. In the event of an accident, no policies or procedures were in place to document and follow up on the incident. Planners recommended development of a mishap reporting plan for both United States and international military teams, to capture all mishaps during Rodeo and to ensure that the reports were forwarded to the home units.¹⁷¹

Rodeo 2009

The invitations for Rodeo 2009 to international competitors and observers went out from Headquarters Air Mobility Command on 24 September 2008. In addition to the invitation list compiled from previous Rodeos, the Secretary of the Air Force’s Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs requested AMC include countries that had expressed interest in purchasing the C-17 and joint cargo aircraft. Rodeo 2009 was set to feature more

¹⁶⁷After-Action Report, Lt Col C. Duffek, Director, Air Mobility Rodeo 2007, “Rodeo 2007 Executive Summary,” 12 Oct 07.

¹⁶⁸Ibid.

¹⁶⁹Ibid.

¹⁷⁰Ibid.

¹⁷¹Ibid.

participation from contingency response wings, whose participation was considered essential as they were often the first troops to be deployed for the “base opening” mission.¹⁷²

The year 2009 also marked the 80th anniversary of the famous Question Mark air refueling. On 1 January 1929, the Question Mark, a tri-engined Fokker C-2 aircraft, flew nonstop for a total of 150 hours and 40 minutes. The crew flew a 110-mile racetrack from Santa Monica, California, to San Diego, California--passing over the New Year’s Day Rose Bowl game during their flight. To stay aloft for so long, the crew successfully refueled--in the air--43 times. The crew consisted of Major Carl Spaatz, Captain Ira Eaker, Lieutenant Elwood Quesada, Lieutenant Harry Halverson, and Staff Sergeant Roy Hooe. Honoring 80 years of inflight refueling excellence, refueling teams from AMC participated in both the tanker and receiver categories using a KC-135R/T.¹⁷³

Rodeo 2009, once again held at McChord Air Force Base (AFB), Washington, had retired military celebrities in attendance. World-renowned “Candy Bomber” Colonel (Retired) Gail Halvorsen attended Rodeo. Several of the Doolittle Raiders--Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Richard E. Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Edward J. Saylor, and Major (Retired) Thomas C. Griffin--also made an appearance, much to the delight of all the Airmen present. Also noteworthy was the presence of two Tuskegee Airmen--Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Edward P. Drummond, Jr., and Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) William Holloman.¹⁷⁴

Arriving in plenty of time to attend opening ceremonies and shake hands with participants, the famous Tuskegee Airmen answered questions and shared stories. Both Lieutenant Colonels Drummond and Holloman had spent time at McChord AFB while in the service. Lieutenant Colonel Drummond had been one of the youngest Tuskegee Airmen when he graduated in June 1946. Although African Americans had fought in US wars since the American Revolution, in the early part of the twentieth century, many in the War Department believed that they lacked the courage, intelligence, and patriotism necessary to fly combat missions successfully. However, in 1941, with global war fast approaching, Congress authorized the formation of an all-black Army Air Corps unit. By 1947, nearly 1,000 black pilots had graduated from Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama. They flew missions over Germany, Austria, Italy, and North Africa and maintained an impressive record of protecting bombers. Both Lieutenant Colonels Holloman and Drummond were impressed with the quality and quantity of the Rodeo competitions and the international participation, agreeing that anything that enhanced teamwork would only boost the overall mission of the USAF.¹⁷⁵

Special guests of General Arthur J. Lichte, AMC commander, the Doolittle Raiders observed Rodeo events, signed autographs, and attended a town hall meeting. In April 1942, led by Lieutenant Colonel James H. “Jimmy” Doolittle, the Raiders accomplished the first air

¹⁷²Staff Summary, Maj Gen F. F. Roggero, AMC/A3, “International Invitations for Rodeo 2009,” 24 Sep 08.

¹⁷³Article, E. Wallwork, AMC/HO, “Flight of the Question Mark,” 24 Dec 08; Article, Lt Col R. Pochert, “Air Mobility Command Rodeo 2009,” 10 Jun 09.

¹⁷⁴Article, Keith Ervin, “Tuskegee Airman Bill Holloman dies at 85,” *Seattle Times*, 16 Jun 10. Lt Col William Holloman died in June 2010 in Seattle WA, and his WWII flight jacket was on display at the Northwest African American Museum in that city.

¹⁷⁵Article, A1C A. Kelly-Herard, “2 Tuskegee Airmen Visit Rodeo,” 23 Jul 09.

bombing raid by the United States against a Japanese island during World War II--using 16 B-25B bombers launched from the USS Hornet, a Naval aircraft carrier. All 16 aircraft were lost, and 11 crewmembers were either captured or killed.¹⁷⁶

Retired Colonel Gail Halvorsen received his nickname, “Candy Bomber,” as a result of dropping candy tied to tiny parachutes from his C-54 Skymaster to children during the Berlin Airlift. The idea grew out of a chance meeting with a group of hungry schoolchildren who had gathered to watch the cargo transporters near Tempelhof Airport in Berlin, Germany. After giving two sticks of gum to the children, who divided them into tiny pieces to share amongst themselves (and shredded the wrappers into miniscule pieces to give to the children to sniff who didn’t receive a piece of gum), the Airman pledged to return bringing candy. He promised to wiggle the wings of his plane so the children would know it was he delivering the candy and gum. Although there were potential consequences, some quite severe for throwing unauthorized objects from the transport planes, then-Lieutenant Halvorsen was undaunted. Eventually, 23 tons of candy fell over Berlin, thanks to the efforts of “Uncle Wiggly Wings.”¹⁷⁷

For retired General Walter Kross, former AMC commander, who had not attended a Rodeo since 1998, the contrast between the past and present was clear. The most noticeable change was the uniforms, but other changes abounded, some more subtle. Airlift planes and loaders were thoroughly modernized, with Tunner and Halvorsen loaders¹⁷⁸ and C-17 aircraft on the tarmac. Wireless was *de rigueur*; technology dominated events and social gatherings. Airmen were much more physically fit, and teams included a higher percentage of female members.¹⁷⁹

While the famous guests caused quite a stir, the events themselves also triggered excitement. The German dream of a repeat win of Best International Team was routed by the Korean contingent led by Colonel Soocheol Park. The Koreans had sent observation teams to earlier Rodeos in order to analyze procedures from other countries and improve their mobility operations skills. Their determination and desire to succeed paid off--they took home the Air Commodore David F. L. Edwards Trophy.¹⁸⁰

The cargo joint inspection competition was one of many events fundamental to the air mobility mission. The contest involved a time-based observation of preconfigured loads with discrepancies that the teams, composed of one Army rigger and one Air Force loadmaster, had to identify. Rarely did a team locate every error. Crews preconfigured 2 heavy-equipment loads and 4 container delivery system bundles with between 7 and 10 mistakes each. The

¹⁷⁶Article, L. McAndrews, “Doolittle Raiders to Attend Air Mobility Rodeo at McChord Air Force Base,” 9 Jul 09; Article, TSgt S. T. Sturkol, AMC/PA, “Rodeo 2009: Doolittle Raiders Land At Competition,” 23 Jul 09.

¹⁷⁷Article, American Forces Press Service, “‘Candy Bomber’ Showed Berlin Kids Affection Through Confection,” 15 May 08; Article, TSgt B. Gonzales, Air Force News Agency, “Berlin Candy Bomber Meets Children of Today, Yesteryear,” 25 Mar 07.

¹⁷⁸The Tunner and Halvorsen were cargo loaders. The Tunner had a payload capacity of 60,000 pounds. The Halvorsen, a 25K self-propelled loader, was used for smaller loads from C-130s or inside larger aircraft and was especially adaptable to desert conditions.

¹⁷⁹Article, W. Kross, “Chairman’s Comments,” *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly*, Summer 09.

¹⁸⁰Article, C. R. Bakse, “Spirited Competition-Air Mobility Rodeo 2009,” *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly*, Summer 09.

errors used in the event were derived from real-life situations encountered in the years immediately preceding Rodeo; thus, the content remained fresh and relevant. In that way, the inspection experience also served as a teaching tool. In the real-world theater, verifying properly rigged loads was critical to successful drop landings; if rigged incorrectly, the load could malfunction and plummet to the ground. In 2009, the USAF malfunction rate, based on tens of thousands of drops, was one-half of one percent. Given that as recently as 1990 that rate was 20 percent, the improvement was phenomenal.¹⁸¹

An addition to the Rodeo 2009 event lineup was the flight attendant egress competition, based on an aircraft evacuation. Following a simulated emergency landing, judges scored flight attendants on preflight inspection of emergency equipment, using informational cards, providing appropriate briefings to passengers, and following aircraft procedures using the proper commands. As this was the first event of its kind, teams had no precedent to study. Participants relied on their own years of experience to guide them through the event, and they performed at a high level. The competition organizers put every team into an unfamiliar situation and graded them based on non-standard procedures. For example, administrators added a simulated injured passenger who required treatment during the after-crash procedures. Teams adapted and showcased their skills--often in record time. The winning crew consisted of Master Sergeant Monique Townsend, Technical Sergeant Bret A. Baker, and Staff Sergeant Joel Rose of the 89th Airlift Wing based at Andrews AFB, Maryland.¹⁸²

Contingency response was the key focus of several new competitions at Rodeo. The first was a timed event, requiring teams to build a small-package initial communication element (SPICE), which provided contingency response forces with electronic communications, including internet, secure and non-secure networks, and military telephone capabilities. Because of the need for rapid mobility and immediate operational effectiveness all over the world, SPICE was necessary for effective communication anywhere an Airman may deploy. Developed at Scott AFB, Illinois, SPICE answered requirements for a smaller, easier-to-use, communications hub for deployed situations. One of the first operational uses for the communication elements was during a deployment for Hurricane Gustav in 2008.¹⁸³ Rodeo 2009 required participating teams to build a SPICE from the ground up--with no existing structure or network available--in less than two and a half hours.¹⁸⁴

Another contingency event dealt with situations where the Air Force might not have an established command post. The hardside expandable light air mobility shelter (HELAMS) was a command and control mobile air shelter designed to be set up on a new airfield within 48 hours. HELAMS replaced the Air Force's previous mobile shelter, the mobile air reporting communications (MARC) shelter. A HELAMS was 50 percent bigger and 30 percent lighter

¹⁸¹Article, TSgt S. Wilkins, "Rodeo 2009: International Participants Vie in Ground Crew Competition," 21 Jul 09.

¹⁸²Article, A1C P. McKenna, "89 AW Flight Attendants Take First at AMC Rodeo," *Capital Flyer*, 31 Jul 09; Article, A1C A. Kelly-Herard, "Rodeo 2009: Flight Attendants-First Class Service, First Time Competing at Rodeo," 22 Jul 09.

¹⁸³Article, R. Gutro, "Hurricane Season 2008: Gustav (Atlantic Ocean)," 4 Sep 08. Hurricane Gustav was a Category 4 hurricane that had dwindled to a Category 2 by the time it hit the United States gulf coast in August 2008 and impacted the entire lower Mississippi Valley.

¹⁸⁴Article, 2d Lt E. Wonn, "Rodeo 2009: New Competition Adds SPICE," 21 Jul 09.

than a MARC and capable of housing a SPICE. Weather resistant and climate controlled, it also served as a medical triage facility or secure location for classified briefs and communications and operations security. Umpires based evaluations on structural set-up. According to Technical Sergeant Steve Holcomb, Headquarters AMC HELAMS subject matter expert, “The clock stops when satellite communications are established with headquarters.” The teams also had to dismantle the units for deployment. Two units, the 615th Contingency Response Wing from Travis AFB, California, and the 621st Contingency Response Wing from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JB-MDL), New Jersey, competed in this first-ever HELAMS event.¹⁸⁵

Attending Rodeo 2009 from the USAF Expeditionary Center’s Mobility Operations School at JB-MDL, Technical Sergeants Rayshawn King and John Haynes--both air transportation career field instructors teaching in the School’s Air Transportation Branch--were part of the team from AMC’s Directorate of Analyses, Assessments, and Lessons Learned at Scott AFB, Illinois. They planned to evaluate ideas that could improve a host of AMC career fields and operations. Mr. Gene Marquez, a program officer in the AMC Lessons Learned directorate, explained it this way, “Many of the fresh ideas we see at Rodeo can be integrated into effective standards across the board.”¹⁸⁶

Some of those “across the board” integration areas were in the air transportation career field. The USAF Expeditionary Center focused on training Airmen in basic and advanced theories of air transportation functions. Those functions included aerial port expediter, aerial port operations, and joint inspector instructor qualification. Airmen who competed in Rodeo and then deployed often provided feedback. Instructors then evaluated the most effective tactics, techniques, and procedures in the field and passed that information on to their students. In addition, information brought back from Rodeo helped “reinvigorate lesson plans,” as well as pinpoint critical training requirements to the air transportation career field.¹⁸⁷

For 2009, the 62d Airlift Wing, stationed at McChord AFB, won the Best Air Mobility Wing trophy.¹⁸⁸

Roundup

At the conclusion of Rodeo 2009, the AMC commander decided it was in the best interest of the command to make McChord Air Force Base, Washington, the permanent home of the biennial competition. Other actions from the lessons learned briefing included commencing planning for Rodeo 2011. The staff would also continue to research additional functional competitions to add to Rodeo, such as financial management’s original “Top Dollar” competition. The event planners envisioned scenarios in which financial and contracting issues, critical

¹⁸⁵Article, A1C A. Kelly-Herard, “Rodeo 2009: Air Force’s Newest Mobile Air Shelter Part of New Event,” 20 Jul 09.

¹⁸⁶Article, TSgt S. T. Sturkol, AMC/PA, “Expeditionary Center Instructors Applying Rodeo Lessons Learned to Aerial Port Courses,” 21 Aug 09.

¹⁸⁷Ibid.

¹⁸⁸Ibid.

to the Airman specifically and the Air Force in general, were completed correctly and in record time. In addition, the staff would investigate conducting scenario-based events when feasible.¹⁸⁹

Planning initiatives for 2011 included over 35 issues that fell into roughly two categories--events and administrative. Several of the tournaments came under review for the purpose of tightening policies and procedures associated with those events or creating new ones. For example, the inaugural flight attendant aircraft emergency evacuation event proved a bit awkward, as some teams had two members, and others--for example, those serving on C-40s--had three. Future Rodeos would employ both types of aircraft to ensure fairness. Aeromedical evacuation teams identified other events to enhance the Rodeo competition and provide realism to their training. One recommendation was to determine the feasibility of night-time aeromedical evacuation events for future Rodeo competitions. Another proposal was to add night-vision-goggle operations for aeromedical evacuation and aerial port--competitors agreed that the incorporation of night-vision-goggle events would be beneficial. Several suggestions centered on integrating the best practices of teams into standard operating procedures for all participants. To that effect, umpires noted how the team from the Republic of Korea used hand signals instead of radio communications during the combat tactical competition. The fact that the team employed visual hand signals, while maintaining coordinated individual movement (i.e., demonstrating superior intra-team communication), led the umpires to recommending that all teams consider using hand signals to augment radio communications or to replace failed radios.¹⁹⁰

Scoring proved a challenge because two different formats were used. In several instances, scorekeepers posted incorrect scores before updating with corrections. In other cases, umpires reported scores late because they had other events to evaluate and were unable to submit their "hard copy" score sheets in a timely manner; in addition, they used different scoring formats for different events. The recommendation was to develop a web-enabled scoring capability and a standard score sheet for all events. Only changes or adjustments written into the operations order (OPORD) became official. Another alteration involved establishing definitive tie-breakers for all events, since determining final winners had proven challenging in some events because of the lack of established procedures. There had also been instances of scoreboard tampering, which led to the Rodeo staff suggesting better security.¹⁹¹

Several administrative functions received attention--the opening and ceremonies, cultural sensitivity, and disseminating the operations order and making it more easily understood. Both competitors and umpires reported that because some teams did not thoroughly review and digest the OPORD's guidance, they were unable to avoid defined penalties or exploit allowances. The recommendation was to provide clear OPORD guidance and strongly encourage teams to examine the applicable portions carefully to ensure their full compliance. Some competitions also conflicted with worship times, so leaders instructed the staff to reflect on religious observance considerations when planning various Rodeo activities and meals. Rodeo staff also planned to work with the base's religious and cultural experts to ensure that international partners of all faiths received opportunities for worship with times, places, and conditions appropriate to their cultural norms. Some international teams were required to accomplish aircraft preflight duties during the opening ceremonies--precluding full

¹⁸⁹Memo, Maj Gen B. Bash, AMC/A3, "Air Mobility Rodeo," 29 Sep 09.

¹⁹⁰E-Mail, T. Hurst, AMC/A9, to A. Nelson, AMC/HO, "Lessons Learned (L2) Assignment Rodeo 2009 Observations and Recommendations," 1 Jul 10.

¹⁹¹Ibid.

representation of their countries. Officials planned to schedule all international competitions to begin well after the conclusion of the opening ceremony.¹⁹²

The band at the Rodeo 2009 opening ceremony had played the theme songs to several movies in a repetitive cycle during the commander's review of Rodeo troops. Many felt that a wider selection of music, to include martial songs (e.g., John Philip Sousa marches), would enhance the ceremony.¹⁹³ Another consideration was that the Friday morning award ceremony last only two hours, instead of four. Rodeo leadership decided to allow wranglers to lead and pace winning teams to the stage to minimize delays.¹⁹⁴

The menu selections for the Rainer Ranch Chuck Wagon received attention. International participants from countries whose culture and religion forbade the consumption of pork were uncomfortable entering the facility when pork meals were served. Once again, AMC leadership charged Rodeo officials with considering international cultures and customs when planning various Rodeo activities and meals so as not to detract from objectives of encouraging international understanding and partnership.¹⁹⁵

Rodeo 2011

The 2005 Base Closure and Realignment Commission's directive to consolidate 26 stateside military installations led to merging the Army's Fort Lewis and United States Air Forces' McChord Air Force Base (AFB) in Washington. The new installation, renamed Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) on 1 February 2010, became fully operational on 1 October 2010. As organizations reorganized services, some Rodeo processes became more streamlined and utilized fewer 62d Airlift Wing personnel--resulting in increased funding and manpower support from the Fort Lewis side, when the joint base came under the command of Army Colonel Thomas Brittain.¹⁹⁶

For the first time in Rodeo history, AMC conducted two new symposiums the week prior to Rodeo. The International Airdrop Symposium, chaired by Major Patrick Linson and Master Sergeant Philip Moss, kicked off at the JBLM Club on 19 July and ran for three days. The arrival of the international teams on 18 July ensured well-attended sessions. Brigadier General Frederick H. Martin, AMC Director of Operations, noted that this inaugural event brought together a multidisciplinary team of experts and visionaries from around the world. With the symposium's theme "Airdrop Capabilities Delivering Hope," organizers identified three main goals: "to create international partnership through airdrop, garner knowledge of coalition drop techniques, and to generate ideas to improve future airdrops."¹⁹⁷

¹⁹²Ibid.

¹⁹³The songs were the themes to "Indiana Jones," "Superman," and "Star Wars."

¹⁹⁴E-Mail, T. Hurst, AMC/A9, to A. Nelson, AMC/HO, "Lessons Learned (L2) Assignment Rodeo 2009 Observations and Recommendations," 1 Jul 10.

¹⁹⁵Ibid.

¹⁹⁶Article, Lisa Daniel, American Forces Press Service, "Bases Get New Names in Realignment," 24 Mar 10.

¹⁹⁷Agenda, HQ AMC, "International Airdrop Symposium," 19-21 Jul 11; Article, MSgt S. T. Sturkol, AMC/PA, "Mobility Airmen Gather For International Airdrop Symposium," 18 Jul 11.

Topics varied widely--from operations presentations by representatives from Colombia, Japan, and Canada to a briefing given by Captain Jennifer Trapp from Travis AFB, California, on the 2010 Haiti earthquake humanitarian relief operation. During his presentation, Australian Air Commodore Gary Martin discussed the need for airdrop support in Afghanistan to continue into the foreseeable future. Other sessions focused on intelligence support to airdrop and US Army aerial delivery. The second and third days of the symposium included C-130 and C-17 Low-Cost Low-Altitude demonstration airdrops, aerial delivery rigging tours, static displays, and demonstrations of advanced technologies at the 10th Airlift Squadron stationed at JBLM.¹⁹⁸

Attendees could participate in the cargo airdrop demonstration on both the C-130 and the C-17, observing exactly how the military's new Joint Precision Airdrop System (JPADS) worked. JPADS was a "high-altitude, all-weather capable, global positioning system-guided precision airdrop system." AMC demonstrated a new variant--JPADS2K--that delivered supplies to ground troops with dramatically improved accuracy from altitudes of up to 25,000 feet. Development of JPADS2K had begun in February 2010 to improve the ability to resupply troops accurately from overhead in the face of difficult ground terrain like mountains and steep valleys. Employing JPADS reduced the need for truck convoys, which were vulnerable to enemy fire.¹⁹⁹

On 20 July, the International Aeromedical Evacuation and En Route Medical Care Conference, spearheaded by Major Lea Calderwood, kicked off at the JBLM Club. Organized for the many doctors, nurses, paramedics, and medical specialists who routinely comprised aeromedical evacuation teams, the two-day event garnered participation from United States and international military medical personnel. Presentations covered topics such as pain management during aeromedical evacuation, strategic aeromedical evacuations of patients with severe lung failure, airworthiness certification, aeromedical research, and the history of the critical care air transport program. International speakers came from the United Kingdom, Jordan, Germany, Japan, Canada, and New Zealand. Vendors set up static displays and demonstrations. Major Kyungpil Choi noted that the Republic of Korea Air Force had little experience with aeromedical evacuations and that his team was excited to train with and observe how other countries managed their systems.²⁰⁰

Air Mobility Rodeo 2011 officially began with the opening ceremony on 24 July, accompanied by music from the US Air Force Band of the Golden West stationed at Travis AFB, California. Under a cloudless sky, American and international teams lined up in formation in front of their aircraft, while observers, distinguished visitors, general officers, and spectators sat in bleachers to watch the event unfold. Seven countries sent competition teams: Sweden, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, Pakistan, and Belgium. Many countries dispatched teams of observers, including five African countries:

¹⁹⁸See note above.

¹⁹⁹Article, Air Force Magazine, "Enhanced JPADS Made Combat Debut," 5 Jul 11; Article, MSgt S. T. Sturkol, AMC/PA, "'Precision' Airdrop Systems Are Growing For Future Ops," 22 Jul 11.

²⁰⁰Program Brochure, HQ AMC, "International Aeromedical Evacuation and En Route Medical Care Conference," 20-21 Jul 11; Article, SSgt J. G. Buzanowski, AMC/PA, "Air Force Officials Host First International AE Conference," 18 Jul 11; Article, SSgt J. G. Buzanowski, AMC/PA, "Mobility Commander Highlights AE History, Importance at Conference Kick-Off," 21 Jul 11.

Botswana, Algeria, South Africa, Nigeria, and Ethiopia. The highpoint of the 45-minute ceremony came when two parachutists from the 22d Special Tactics Squadron floated gracefully from a C-17 Globemaster III, each carrying either an American or Prisoner of War/Missing in Action flag. Following tradition, the American flag was transferred to the last remaining Rodeo “cowgirl,” who then carried it to her place in the line. The 62d Airlift Wing commander, Colonel Regan W. Elder, thanked Garrison commander Colonel Thomas Brittain for his support during the first-ever joint-base Rodeo--calling him the “finest Airman in the United States Army.”²⁰¹

There were several new events at Rodeo in 2011--all of which garnered attention. One of these events, called “Top Dollar,” actually had its inception in 1992, when United States Air Forces in Europe challenged its teams with a financial management competition. In 1994, Headquarters USAF opened the competition to all major commands. That first USAF-wide event occurred near Nellis AFB, Nevada, and the Air Mobility Command team from Scott AFB, Illinois, earned the top honor. In 1995, the 92d Air Refueling Wing at Fairchild AFB, Washington, sponsored the competition and featured contracting teams for the first time. From that point on, all competing teams had five Service members and two contractors. In 1995, the Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) team from Peterson AFB, Colorado, won. Camp Bullis, Texas, hosted Top Dollar in 1996, and the first-place prize went to Air Education and Training Command’s team from Vance AFB, Oklahoma. The 1998 first-place honor went to the AFSPC team based at Malmstrom AFB, Montana. The last Top Dollar competition took place in December 2000 at the Gulf Port Readiness Training Center, Mississippi. That year, an Air Force Materiel Command team from Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, won. The Top Dollar competition ended due to the events following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack on the United States. Troop deployment to real-world theaters had increased so much that no one considered it necessary to invest in simulated training scenarios.²⁰²

The revised comptroller competition for Rodeo 2011 pitted teams from various USAF bases against each other in areas such as accounting and disbursing of funding, cash, and vouchers for a total of 40 financial scenarios per day. Each team operated a booth at Forward Operating Base Pacemaker, Afghanistan--a simulation of a real-world base, which was set up in Terminal 4 at Joint Base Lewis-McChord. In the real world, financial management teams would have comprised personnel from various wings and groups. However, for the competition, each team came from the same base and consisted of Air Force Reserve Command, Air National Guard, and active-duty members. Each team gave themselves a nickname related to money, such as “Easy Money.” Team Scott (from Scott AFB), whose

²⁰¹Article, MSgt S. T. Sturkol, AMC/PA, “Five African Nations Represented In International Airdrop Symposium Exchange,” 21 Jul 11; Article, A1C M. Battles, AMC/PA, “Band of the Golden West Opens Air Mobility Rodeo 2011 Ceremony,” 24 Jul 11; Article, MSgt S. T. Sturkol, AMC/PA, “International Participants Add ‘Flavor’ To Air Mobility Rodeo 2011,” 24 Jul 11; Article, SSgt J. G. Buzanowski, AMC/PA, “Air Mobility Rodeo 2011 Kicks Off,” 24 Jul 11.

²⁰²Interview, A. Nelson, AMC/HO, with CMSgt A. Castaneda, Rodeo financial management director of operations, “Comptroller Competition,” 27 Jul 11.

moniker was “Loose Change,” had won the first USAF-wide Top Dollar in the 20th century and came back for the 21st century version to prove they were still number one.²⁰³

As previously mentioned, in Rodeo 2009, flight attendants competed in the first-ever egress (aircraft evacuation) competition. As egress was one of the primary duties of flight attendants, Rodeo officials developed a competition around it. Evaluators tallied scores based on evacuation and safety during an inflight emergency for each three-person team. Competitors completed a 10-minute simulator course that tested knowledge and proficiency in each graded category. Flight attendants were also responsible for the preparation of onboard meals during longer flights, which led to the organization of another event that tested inflight culinary skills. Rival teams competed by preparing meals that were scored on taste, presentation, and originality. Meals were not actually prepared inflight, but at the fire station at JBLM. According to umpire Chief Master Sergeant Seina Enright from Headquarters AMC, scoring centered primarily on taste, with attention given to creativity, timing, temperature, and sanitation. Flight attendants often took the culinary course at Lackland AFB, Texas, but none of the courses available taught inflight cooking.²⁰⁴

In 2009, the advent of the advanced marksmanship event had only three teams competing for the trophy. In 2011, 10 teams from across the USAF and 1 international team took up the challenge. Coordinated by Rodeo umpires Senior Master Sergeant Nathan Brett and Staff Sergeant George Reinas²⁰⁵ from the 421st Combat Training Squadron at JBLM, each team was composed of a shooter and a spotter, using the M-24 weapon system and with spotting scope. Shooters had to hit predetermined targets at short- and long-range distances. The umpires expressed optimism that increased information about the Rodeo sniper competition and the Air Force Sniper course at USAF Expeditionary Center would encourage Airmen to enter the program.²⁰⁶

Another new event at Rodeo 2011 centered on maintenance skills. As then-Colonel Randall L. Harvey, commander of the 305th Maintenance Group, observed in 2005,

²⁰³Ibid; Personal Papers, A. Nelson, AMC/HO, “Rodeo Notes,” 27 Jul 11; Article, SrA Abigail Klein, AMC/PA, “Rodeo 2011 Finance Competition ‘No Easy Money,’” 28 Jul 11. Scores from the Comptroller Competition were not included in the final tally for the overall Rodeo winner scores.

²⁰⁴Personal Papers, A. Nelson, AMC/HO, “Notes on Culinary Competition,” 28 Jul 11; Article, SSgt S. Wade, 375 AMW/PA, “Scott AFB Airmen Prepare For International Skills Competition,” 14 Jul 11; Article, SSgt J. G. Buzanowski, AMC/PA, “Air Force Flight Attendants Hold First-Ever Culinary Arts Competition At Rodeo 2011,” 26 Jul 11; Article, A1C M. Battles, 60 AMC/PA, “Rodeo Airmen Demonstrate Egress Evacuation Capabilities,” 27 Jul 11.

²⁰⁵Article, J. Anderson, “DVR Spoiler!! Q&A With the Winner of Top Shot Season 2,” *Military Times*, 26 Apr 11. In 2011, SSgt George Reinas competed against professional civilian shooters and former military marksmen on Season 2 of The History Channel’s “Top Shot” show. He placed in the final three.

²⁰⁶Article, MSgt S. T. Sturkol, AMC/PA, “Beefed Up Advanced Marksmanship Event for Rodeo 2011 Raises Bar for Air Force’s Best Shooters,” 28 Jul 11. The USAF Expeditionary Center was stationed at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.

“Maintenance 101 is doing the little things right, doing things by the book, doing it now instead of putting it off, and doing things in a manner which is repeatable over time.”²⁰⁷

For the first time, a competition tested teams on ordinary maintenance activities performed daily at installations across the world. Umpires allotted competitors 30 minutes to complete 8 tasks. Team scores comprised proficiency, compliance with regulations concerning safety, vehicle movement, inspections, and aircraft maintenance.²⁰⁸

Pallet-building may seem an unlikely choice for an event, but for those involved, it proved a real challenge. Rolled out in 2011 as a new competition, the event aimed to recreate the high-stress environment of a deployed location where speed and agility count. Twenty-five teams performed in various scenarios in which they had to complete pallet buildup within predetermined parameters. Scoring focused on safety, attention to detail, and pallet utilization.²⁰⁹

Although Israel did not send a team to compete in Rodeo for 2011, the Israeli presence was still seen in the form of Chief Master Sergeant Itzhak Nevo, a C-130 maintainer. CMSgt Nevo was invited by Rodeo umpires to partner in judging events that focused on mission readiness, air refueling, and airdrop, as they related to maintenance. As Brigadier General Frederick H. Martin, AMC Director of Operations, commented, “every Rodeo competition has a specific purpose to it. Through these events, we’re finding more efficient and effective ways to move passengers and cargo, refuel planes, and save lives.”²¹⁰

For many years, an integral component of Rodeo had been the contributions of artists from the Air Force Art Program. The program, established in 1950, has covered every USAF operation. The roster of Air Force artists derived from members of the Northwest, Southwest and Midwest Artists’ Groups, in addition to the Society of Illustrators of New York and Los Angeles. All the artists volunteered to document Airmen at work in all types of Air Force missions--or, in the case of Rodeo, at play with a purpose. In 2011, Mr. Mark Morgan of the Air Mobility Command History Office escorted Mr. Paul Rendel of Milton, Delaware, and Mr. Scott Bakalo of Boston, Massachusetts, to JBLM to capture images and experiences that would enable them to create pieces of art for the Air Force Art Program.²¹¹

Rodeo would not be complete without an account of cooperation between various countries. For 2011, that story centered on Pakistan. Only one flight surgeon, Captain Asif Jan, had arrived to compete in the aeromedical evacuation competition--an event that needed a team of five (three medical technicians and two nurses). His Pakistani teammates experienced visa difficulties and could not leave their country. When members of JBLM’s Air

²⁰⁷History (FOUO/PV), 305 AMW, 1 Jan-31 Dec 2005, pp 108-109, info used is not For Official Use Only or Privileged.

²⁰⁸Article, A1C M. Battles, 60 AMW/PA, “Wrench-Turners Battle For Top Spot In Rodeo 2011 Maintenance Competition,” 25 Jul 11.

²⁰⁹Article, A1C J. Trimarchi, AMC/PA, “Pallet Build Up Contest Introduced At Rodeo,” 26 Jul 11.

²¹⁰Article, SSgt J. G. Buzanowski, AMC/PA, “Israeli Chief Serves As Umpire At Rodeo 2011,” 28 Jul 11; Article, Brig Gen Rick Martin, “Rodeo 2011-Sharpening Skills, Showcasing Results: The Spirit of Competition Supports the Fight,” *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly*, Summer 11.

²¹¹Article, TSgt S. T. Sturkol, AMC/PA, “Rodeo 2009: Air Force Art Program Artists Cover Competition,” 20 Jul 09.

Force Reserve Command unit, the 446th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron (AES), heard of the Pakistanis' plight, they "loaned out" Airmen to man a crew for Pakistan. Although the team exceeded the 25-minute deadline by 5 minutes, both the Americans and Captain Asif Jan were excited about their performance. The Pakistani captain commented that the competition was a victory for Pakistan because he could return to his country with more knowledge of KC-135R and C-17 patient configurations. His 446 AES teammates, under the direction of Colonel Jan Moore-Harbert, were happy to extend a helping hand and further develop international goodwill in the process. As Colonel Moore-Harbert stated, "The more you train together, the more you increase survivability."²¹²

One of the highlights of Rodeo 2011 included the ceremony for naming the Air Force's newest C-17. On 26 July at 1700, a large crowd gathered in Hangar 4 to witness the Globemaster III dedicated as the "Spirit of the Medal of Honor." The Medal of Honor was an award for military members who received that distinction for serving with courage, heroism, and, often, the ultimate sacrifice. Two living recipients attended the naming ceremony--Colonel Joe Jackson (USAF, Retired) and Colonel Bruce Crandall, (Army, Retired).²¹³

Rodeo 2011 ended with the closing ceremony Friday afternoon. Amid flashing lights and Ricky Martin's "Livin' La Vida Loca," Brigadier General Martin--driven by Mr. Doug LeMay, a representative of the LeMay Family Collection--arrived in style to Hangar 4 in a bright red 1929 Chrysler Imperial. The automobile was part of a collection of over 500 vintage vehicles the LeMay family maintained at the LeMay Family Collection at the Marymount Event Center in Tacoma, Washington. Brigadier General Martin presented the named trophies and other major awards as the event was simulcast to Air Force bases around the world. For the presentation of Rodeo's most important award, the General Moore Trophy for Best Air Mobility Wing, a tank from the 402d Stryker Brigade, escorted by security forces from JBLM's 627th Security Forces Squadron, rolled into the hangar as the crowd applauded. Toward the end of the program, AMC Commander General Raymond E. Johns, Jr., stated that Rodeo 2011 had been a hugely successful enterprise between the newly merged installations of Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base. He also declared that Rodeo 2013 would be held at Joint Base Lewis-McChord--thereby signaling to all that Rodeo was at JBLM to stay.²¹⁴

The concept of building partnerships with other nations had become a core component of the United States Air Force--and, by extension, AMC--defense strategy. For AMC, Rodeo proved an excellent means of executing building partnerships as a core function. AMC had committed to assisting partner nations in establishing basic airlift operations such as passenger and cargo movement, medical airlift, operational support airlift, and disaster relief/humanitarian support. The training engendered at Rodeo served to enhance interaction with partner nations.²¹⁵

²¹²Article, A. Ashton, "Team Pakichord To The Rescue At Air Mobility Rodeo," *The News Tribune*, 28 Jul 11.

²¹³Article, A1C Michael Battles, AMC/PA, "C-17 named in Honor of Medal of Honor Recipients During Air Mobility Rodeo 2011," 28 Jul 11.

²¹⁴Personal Papers, A. Nelson, AMC/HO, "Closing Ceremony," 30 Jul 11.

²¹⁵Report, Col K. J. Klausner (USAF), "Can Air Mobility Command Meet New Building Partnership Objectives?" US Army War College, 24 Mar 11.

Roundup

Exactly 20 days after the end of Rodeo, during a thorough scrub of all results, someone discovered an error in the tabulation of some of the Rodeo final scores. The errors did not affect all scores and the trophies associated with them, but the impact on one wing in particular proved unfortunate. On 21 August, Brigadier General Frederick H. Martin, AMC Director of Operations, assembled a video teleconference to brief all involved parties about AMC's next steps in releasing the information of both the errors and the new winners. Although some backlash was inevitable, he hoped to minimize the impact as much as possible. Senior leadership from the 19th Airlift Wing, 62d Airlift Wing, 314th Airlift Wing, and 97th Air Mobility Wing, as well as staff from AMC's Lessons Learned, Public Affairs, and Air, Space, and Information Operations, convened to discuss the way forward.²¹⁶

The AMC Public Affairs Office opted to release an article detailing the problem late on the afternoon of 24 August for audiences within the Air Force's internal internet networks. The article began by stating that a programming error in the Rodeo scoring system had resulted in a change to several major awards, the most important of which was the Moore Trophy for Best Air Mobility Wing--Rodeo's most prestigious award. The article further explained that an automated process in the scoring algorithm had improperly assigned a median score for events for which it was supposed to assign a total score. The glitch in the system went undetected during test runs of the program because scoring officials missed "one final check for one critical portion of the automated scoring process."²¹⁷

Of all the wings, the 97th Air Mobility Wing at Altus Air Force Base (AFB), Oklahoma, absorbed the brunt of the calculation mistake. The initial winner of the Moore Trophy, the 97th Air Mobility Wing conceded Rodeo's top prize to the 314th Airlift Wing from Little Rock AFB, Arkansas. The 97th had also won the award for Best Airdrop Wing--whose trophy now belonged to the 314th as well. Lastly, the 97th had been awarded Best C-17 Wing, but that title was transferred to the 62d Airlift Wing/627th Air Base Group at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. The 314th Airlift Wing had taken home the trophy for Best C-130E Airdrop Aircrew, but the wing handed the award over to the 19th Airlift Wing from Little Rock. In an e-mail to senior leadership, the 97th Air Mobility Wing commander graciously acknowledged that "Little Rock and McChord had won and deserved the trophies and the celebration." He then thanked the AMC Operations directorate for "keeping integrity in the system."²¹⁸

²¹⁶E-Mail, Col M. Minihan 19 AW/CC, "//VTC// (21 Aug 11, 1600) Rodeo Trophy VTC Telecon," 22 Aug 11; E-Mail, D. Phoenix, 19 AW/HO, to A. Nelson, AMC/HO, "Meeting Notes, Rodeo Scoring Error," 23 Aug 11; Interview, A. Nelson, AMC/HO, with M. Vorhis, AMC/PA, "Scoring Error," 24 Aug 11; Report, A. McCoy, AMC/A9, "Bullet Background Paper on Rodeo 2011 Scoring Error," 18 Aug 11.

²¹⁷Article, AMC/PA, "Review of Rodeo 2011 Scores Results in Several Award Changes," 24 Aug 11.

²¹⁸Ibid; E-Mail, Col A. Krawietz, 97 AMW/CC, "Re: Rodeo Scoring Issue Follow-Up," 23 Aug 11.

Conclusion: Providing Global Air Mobility... Right Effects, Right Place, Right Time

Rodeo's legendary past has given way to an exciting present and a promising future that continues to incorporate various branches of the United States armed forces and allies. The events are thoroughly examined on a continuing basis to ensure that they are relevant to the current needs of the force. Obsolete tactics and strategies are discarded in favor of what best will serve the expeditionary forces. Scoring is evaluated frequently to ensure fairness. Compliance with all safety measures remains paramount, and dedication to professionalism continues to dictate the standard, all in an effort to maintain the highest level of mobility operations.

In over 50 years, Rodeo has never strayed from its core mission: creating training scenarios with concrete operational impact, while, at the same time, developing ever-closer relationships with staunch international allies who continue to help us fight and win. By participating in Rodeo, critical aspects of air refueling and airlift/airdrop, contingency response, agile combat support, aeromedical evacuation, and security forces are showcased, capabilities demonstrated, procedures improved, techniques compared, and consistency enhanced for worldwide operations--all of which make the world a safer place.

APPENDIX A

RODEO WINNERS 1990 THROUGH 2011²¹⁹

1990²²⁰

Best Wing Awards:

Best United States Aircrew: 123 TAW, represented by 145 TAG, Charlotte AFB NC
Air Commodore David F. L. Edwards Trophy for Best Foreign Aircrew: Israel, Base 27
Best Joint Airdrop Inspection Team (tie): 317 TAW, Pope AFB NC, and 133 TAW,
represented by 167 TAG (ANG), Martinsburg WV

C-130:

Best C-130/C-160 Aircrew: Israel, Base 27
Best C-130/C-160 Maintenance: United Kingdom, RAF Lyneham
Best C-130/C-160 Engine Running Onload/Offload: 137 TAW, represented by 130 TAG
(ANG), Charleston WV
Best C-130/C-160 Assault Landings: 440 TAW, represented by 928 TAG (AFRES), O'Hare
Airfield, Chicago IL

C-141:

Best C-141 Aircrew: 446 MAW (Associate), McChord AFB WA
Best C-141 Maintenance: 62 MAW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-141 Engine Running Onload/Offload: 514 MAW (Associate), McGuire AFB NJ
Best C-141 Accuracy Landings: 446 MAW (Associate), McChord AFB WA

Transportation:

Best Transportation Team: 317 TAW, Pope AFB NC

Combat Security:

Best Combat Control Team: 1723 STSQ (Red Team), Hurlburt Field FL
Best Combat Endurance Team: 435 TAW, Rhein Main AB, Germany

1992²²¹

Best Wing Awards:

Best Overall Wing (First Aerial Competition): 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best US Team: 463 AG, Dyess AFB TX
Best C-130/C-160 Foreign Team: 501 Squadron, Portugal

²¹⁹See Glossary for definition of acronyms used in this appendix.

²²⁰Staff Summary, MAC Standardization and Evaluation Division, "Airlift Rodeo Update for Ms. Morales," 14 Jun 90.

²²¹Message, Air Force News Service, "Airlift Rodeo," 152200Z Jun 92.

C-130:

Best C-130/C-160 Airdrop Crew: 374 AW, Yokota AB, Japan

Best C-130/C-160 Maintenance Crew: 435th Squadron, Canada

Best C-130/C-160 Engine Running Onload/Offload: 5 MAPS, RAF Mildenhall, England

Best C-130/C-160 Shortfield Landing Crew: 943d Airlift Group, March AFB CA, representing the 302 AW, Peterson AFB CO

Best C-130/C-160 Basic Post Flight Operational Inspection: 1st Tactical Airlift Group, Komaki, Japan

C-141:

Best C-141 Aircrew: 438 AW, McGuire AFB NJ

Best C-141 Maintenance Team: 63 AW, Norton AFB CA

Best C-141 Airdrop Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best C-141 Engine Running Onload/Offload: 514 ARW, McGuire AFB NJ

Best C-141 Accuracy Landing: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best C-141 Basic Post Flight Operational Inspection: 63 AW, Norton AFB CA

KC-10:

Best KC-10 Loading: 22 ARW, March AFB CA

Best KC-10 Aerial Refueling: 98 ARG, Barksdale AFB LA, representing the 452 ARW, March AFB CA

KC-135:

Best KC-135 Tactical Navigation Team: 380 ARW, Plattsburgh AFB NY

Best KC-135 Aerial Refueling: 101 ARW, Bangor MA²²²

Aerial Port:

Best Aerial Port Joint Airdrop Inspection: 911 AG, Pittsburgh PA, representing the 439 AW, Westover AFB MA

Best Aerial Port Combat Endurance Course: 437 AW, Charleston AFB SC

Best Aerial Port Team: 5 MAPS, RAF Mildenhall, England

Combat Control:

Best Combat Control Team: 64 MAW, Eveaux, France

Best Combat Endurance Team: 437 AW, Charleston AFB SC

Transportation:

Best Transportation Team: 5 MAPS, RAF Mildenhall, England

²²²Ibid. In the category of Best KC-135 Aerial Refueling, there was an eight-way tie for first place--all eight had perfect 400 scores. Following two tie-breaker events, the 101 ARW, Bangor MA, took first place.

1993

Best Wing Awards:

Best C-5 Wing: 436 AW, Dover AFB DE
Best C-130 Wing: 440 AW, Pope AFB NC
Best C-141 Wing: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best KC-135 Wing: 305 ARW, Grissom AFB IN
Best Airdrop Wing: 440 AW, Pope AFB NC
Best Tanker Wing: 305 ARW, Grissom AFB IN
Best International Team: Portugal
Best Aerial Refueling Team: 9 WG, Beale AFB CA, and 60 AW, Travis AFB CA

C-5:

Best C-5 Maintenance: 436 AW, Dover AFB DE
Best C-5 Aircrew: 436 AW, Dover AFB DE

C-130:

Best C-130 Aircrew: 440 AW, Pope AFB NC
Best C-130 Maintenance: United Kingdom

C-141

Best C-141 Aircrew: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-141 Maintenance: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA

KC-10:

Best KC-10 Aircrew: 458 OG, Barksdale AFB LA
Best KC-10 Maintenance: 4 WG, Seymour Johnson AFB SC
Best KC-10 Group: 458 OG, Barksdale AFB LA
Best KC-10 Cargo Loading Team: 22 ARW, March AFB CA

KC-135:

Best KC-135 Aircrew: 305 ARW, Grissom AFB IN
Best KC-135 Maintenance: 305 ARW, Grissom AFB IN
Best KC-135 Aircraft Navigation Crew: 96 WG, Dyess AFB TX

Combat Control:

Best Combat Control Team: 317 AW, Pope AFB NC

Aerial Port:

Best Aerial Port Team: United Kingdom

Security Police:

Best Security Police Team: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
Best KC-135 Single Integrated Operations Plan Team: 305 ARW, Grissom AFB IN

Best Wing Awards:

Best Tanker Wing: 398 OG, Castle AFB CA
Best Airdrop Wing: 23 WG, Pope AFB NC
Best Airland Wing: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-5 Wing: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best KC-10 Wing: 4 WG, Seymour Johnson AFB NC
Best KC-135 Wing: 398 OG, Castle AFB CA
Best C-141 Wing: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-130 Wing: 23 WG, Pope AFB NC
Best International Team: 1 TAG, Komaki, Japan
Best Air Refueling Team: 398 OG, Castle AFB CA and 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

C-5:

Best C-5 Aircrew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-5 Maintenance: 512 AW, Dover AFB DE
Best C-5 Preflight: 349 AW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-5 Postflight: 349 AW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-5 Engine Running Onload/Offload: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-5 Air Refueling: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

C-130:

Best C-130 Aircrew: 1 TAG, Komaki, Japan
Best C-130 Maintenance: 46 Aerobrigata, Pisa, Italy
Best C-130 Airdrop: 934 AG, Minneapolis-St. Paul MN
Best C-130 Engine Running Onload/Offload: 7 WG, Dyess AFB TX
Best C-130 Shortfield Landing: 1 TAG, Komaki, Japan
Best C-130 Preflight: 61 TAW, Penzing, Germany
Best C-130 Postflight: 46 Aerobrigata, Pisa, Italy

C-141:

Best C-141 Aircrew: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-141 Maintenance: 514 AW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best C-141 Preflight: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-141 Postflight: 514 AW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best C-141 Air Refueling: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-141 Engine Running Onload/Offload: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-141 Airdrop: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA

KC-10:

Best KC-10 Aircrew: 916 ARG, Seymour Johnson AFB SC
Best KC-10 Maintenance: 98 ARG, Barksdale AFB LA
Best KC-10 Preflight: 916 ARG, Seymour Johnson, NC
Best KC-10 Postflight: 4 WG, Seymour Johnson AFB NC
Best KC-10 Air Refueling: 916 ARG, Seymour Johnson AFB NC
Best KC-10 Cargo Load: 916 ARG, Seymour Johnson AFB NC

²²³Article, Maj M. W. Gieringer, "Rodeo 94," *The Mobility Forum*, Sep-Oct 94; Article, "19th ARW Wins 'Best of the Best' at Rodeo '94," *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly*, Summer 94.

KC-135:

Best KC-135 Aircrew: 398 OG, Castle AFB CA
Best KC-135 Air Refueling: 398 OG, Castle AFB CA
Best KC-135 Cargo Load: 398 OG, Castle AFB CA
Best KC-135 Maintenance: 19 ARW, Robins AFB GA
Best KC-135 Preflight: 121 ARW, Rickenbacker ANGB OH
Best KC-135 Postflight: 398 OG, Castle AFB CA

Combat Control:

Best Combat Control Team (CCT): 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best CCT High-Altitude-Low-Opening Parachute/Landing Zone Establishment: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
Best CCT Combat Leadership Course: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best CCT Biathlon: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best CCT Cross Country Run: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA

Combat Security:

Best Security Police (SP): 19 ARW, Robins AFB GA
Best Aerial Port Combat Endurance Course: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best SP Combat Tactics: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best SP Combat Rifle: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best SP Combat Handgun: 89 AW, Andrews AFB MD
Best SP Combat Endurance Course: RAF Lyneham, United Kingdom

Aerial Port:

Best Aerial Port: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best Aerial Port Joint Airdrop Inspection: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR

1996²²⁴**Best Wing Awards:**

Best C-5 Wing: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-130 Wing: United Kingdom
Best C-141 Wing: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-17 Wing: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best KC-10 Wing: 305 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best KC-135 Wing: 19 ARW, Robins AFB GA
Best International Team: United Kingdom
Best Aerial Refueling Team: 349 AW (tanker) and 349 AW (receiver), Travis AFB CA
Best Airland Wing: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best Airdrop Wing: United Kingdom
Best Tanker Wing: 19 ARW, Robins AFB GA

²²⁴Article, AMC News Service, "19th Air Refueling Wing Repeats as Best Air Mobility Wing," 1 Jul 96.

C-5:

Best C-5 Aircrew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-5 Aerial Refueling Crew: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-5 Maintenance Team: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-5 Preflight Team: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-5 Postflight Team: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA

C-130:

Best C-130 Aircrew: 23 AW, Pope AFB NC
Best C-130 Airdrop Crew: 914 AW, Niagara Falls, NY
Best C-130 Shortfield Landing Crew: 23 AW, Pope AFB NC
Best C-130 Maintenance Team: 908 AW, Maxwell AFB AL
Best C-130 Preflight Team: 374 AW, Yokota AB, Japan
Best C-130 Postflight Team: 914 AW, Niagara Falls, NY

C-141:

Best C-141 Aircrew: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-141 Airdrop Aircrew: 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best C-141 Aerial Refueling Crew: 305 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best C-141 Maintenance Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-141 Preflight Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-141 Postflight Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

C-17:

Best C-17 Aircrew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-17 Airdrop Crew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-17 Aerial Refueling Crew: 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best C-17 Maintenance Team: 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best C-17 Preflight Team: 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best C-17 Postflight Team: 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC

KC-10:

Best KC-10 Aircrew: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Aerial Refueling Crew: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Cargo Loading Crew: 305 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best KC-10 Maintenance Team: 305 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best KC-10 Preflight Team: 514 AW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best KC-10 Postflight Team: 305 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ

KC-135:

Best KC-135 Aircrew: 92 ARW, Fairchild AFB WA
Best KC-135 Aerial Refueling Crew: 92 ARW, Fairchild AFB WA
Best KC-135 Cargo Loading Crew: 19 ARW, Robins AFB GA
Best KC-135 Maintenance Team: 22 ARW, McConnell AFB KS
Best KC-135 Preflight Team: 19 ARW, Robins AFB GA
Best KC-135 Postflight Team: 22 ARW, McConnell AFB KS

Combat Control:

Best Combat Control/Special Tactics Team: 23 STS, Hurlburt Field, FL

Best Biathlon: 22 STS, McChord AFB WA

Best Combat Leadership Course: 22 STS, McChord AFB WA

Best High-Altitude-Low-Opening Parachute/Landing Zone Establishment: 21 STS, Pope AFB NC

Best Cross Country Run: United Kingdom

Aerial Port:

Joint Airdrop Inspection Team: 624 AMSG, Pope AFB NC

Best Aerial Port Confidence Best Aerial Port Team: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR

Best Aerial Port and Endurance Course Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best C-5 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best C-130 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 7 AW, Dyess AFB TX

Best C-141 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best C-17 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

Combat Security:

Best Security Police Team: United Kingdom

Best Combat Tactics: 375 AW, Scott AFB IL

Best Combat Rifle: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

Best Combat Handgun: 374 AW, Yokota AB, Japan

Best Combat Endurance Course: United Kingdom

Aeromedical Evacuation:

Best Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 167 AES, Martinsburg WV

Best C-130 Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 23 AES, Pope AFB NC

Best C-141 Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 315 AES, Charleston AFB SC

Best C-9 Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 375 AES, Scott AFB IL

1998**Best Wing Awards:**

Best Airdrop Wing: 3 WG, Elmendorf AFB AK

Best Airland Wing: 439 AW, Westover ARB MA

Best C-130/C-160/CN-235 Wing: 3 WG, Elmendorf AFB AK

Best C-141 Wing: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best C-17 Wing: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

Best C-5 Wing: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best International Team: Saudi Arabia

Best KC-10 Wing: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best KC-135 Wing: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

Best Tanker Wing (KC-10/KC-135 aircraft): 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

Best Aerial Refueling Team (tie): 319 ARW, Grand Forks AFB ND and 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

C-5:

Best C-5 Aerial Refueling Crew: 439 AW, Westover ARB MA
Best C-5 Aircrew: 433 AW, Kelly AFB TX
Best C-5 Maintenance Team: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-5 Preflight Team: 439 AW, Westover ARB MA
Best C-5 Postflight Team: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA

C-130:

Best C-130/C-160/CN-235 Aircrew: 3 WG, Elmendorf AFB AK
Best C-130/C-160/CN-235 Airdrop Crew: 3 WG, Elmendorf AFB AK
Best C-130/C-160/CN-235 Maintenance Team: France
Best C-130/C-160/CN-235 Preflight Team: France
Best C-130/C-160/CN-235 Postflight Team: Canada
Best C-130/C-160/CN-235/C-27 Shortfield Landing Crew: 3 WG, Elmendorf AFB AK

C-141:

Best C-141 Aerial Refueling Crew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-141 Aircrew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-141 Airdrop Crew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-141 Maintenance Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-141 Preflight Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-141 Postflight Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA

C-17:

Best C-17 Aerial Refueling Crew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-17 Aircrew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-17 Airdrop Crew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-17 Maintenance Team: 437 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best C-17 Preflight Team: 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best C-17 Postflight Team: 437 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best C-17 Shortfield Landing Crew: 437 AW, Charleston AFB SC

KC-10:

Best KC-10 Aerial Refueling Crew: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Aircrew: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Cargo Loading Crew: 305 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best KC-10 Maintenance Team: 349 AW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Preflight Team: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Postflight Team: 514 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ

KC-135:

Best KC-135 Aerial Refueling Crew: 319 ARW, Grand Forks AFB ND
Best KC-135 Aircrew: 319 ARW, Grand Forks AFB ND
Best KC-135 Cargo Loading Crew: 92 ARW, Fairchild AFB WA
Best KC-135 Preflight Team: 121 ARW, Rickenbacker ANGB OH
Best KC-135 Postflight Team: 927 ARW, Selfridge ANGB MI

Aerial Port:

Best Aerial Port Confidence and Endurance Course Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best Aerial Port Team: 43 AW, Pope AFB NC
Best C-130 Configuration Enplaning Team (tie): 133 AW, Minneapolis-St. Paul MN and 153 AW, Cheyenne WY
Best C-130/C-160 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team (tie): 43 AW, Pope AFB NC and 317 AG, Dyess AFB TX
Best C-141 Configuration Enplaning Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-141 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 514 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best C-17 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-5 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 439 AW, Westover AFB MA
Best Intransit Visibility Team: 615 AMSG, Hickam AFB HI
Best Joint Airdrop Inspection Team: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
Best En Route Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 621 AMSG, Ramstein AB, Germany

Combat Security:

Best Combat Endurance Course: United Kingdom
Best Combat Handgun: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best Combat Rifle: United Kingdom
Best Combat Tactics: 317 AG, Dyess AFB TX
Best Phoenix Raven Team: 437 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best Security Forces Team: 446 AMW, McChord AFB WA

Aeromedical Evacuation:

Best Aeromedical Evacuation Equipment Preflight Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best Aeromedical Evacuation Medical Emergency Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-9 Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 375 AW, Scott AFB IL

2000²²⁵**Best Wing Awards:**

Best Air Mobility Wing: 6 ARW, MacDill AFB FL
Best Airdrop Wing: 43 AW, Pope AFB NC
Best Tanker Wing: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best Airland Wing: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best International Team: Belgium
Best C-130/C-160 Wing: 43 AW, Pope AFB NC
Best C-141 Wing: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-17 Wing: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-5 Wing: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Wing: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-135 Wing: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best Aerial Refueling Team (tie): 157 ARW, Pease ANGB NH and 437 AW (C-141), Charleston AFB SC

²²⁵Article, SSgt T. L. Keebaugh, "The Sun Sets Over Rodeo Skies," 18 May 00.

C-130:

Best C-130/C-160 Aircrew: Belgium
Best C-130/C-160 Maintenance Team: France
Best C-130/C-160 Airdrop Crew: 908 AW, Maxwell AFB AL
Best C-130/C-160 Shortfield Landing Crew: Turkey
Best C-130/C130 Preflight Team: 167 AW, Martinsburg WV
Best C-130/C-160 Postflight Team: 3 WG, Elmendorf AK

C-141:

Best C-141 Aircrew: 514 AW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best C-141 Maintenance Team: 452 AMW, March AFB CA
Best C-141 Airdrop Crew: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-141 Air Refueling Crew: 437 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best C-141 Preflight Team: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-141 Postflight Team: 452 AMW, March AFB CA

C-17:

Best C-17 Aircrew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-17 Airdrop Crew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-17 Air Refueling Crew: 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best C-17 Shortfield Landing Crew: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-17 Preflight Team: 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best C-17 Postflight Team: 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC

C-5:

Best C-5 Aircrew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-5 Maintenance Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-5 Air refueling Crew: 436 AW, Dover AFB DE
Best C-5 Preflight Team: 439 AW, Westover MA
Best C-5 Postflight Team: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA

KC-10:

Best KC-10 Aircrew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Maintenance Team: 305 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best KC-10 Air Refueling Crew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Preflight Team: 305 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best KC-10 Postflight Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

KC-135:

Best KC-135 Aircrew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best KC-135 Maintenance Team: 19 ARG, Robins AFB GA
Best KC-135 Air Refueling Crew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best KC-135 Preflight Team: 19 ARG, Robins AFB GA
Best KC-135 Postflight Team: 22 ARW, McConnell AFB KS

Aerial Port:

Best Aerial Port Team: 374 AW, Yokota AB, Japan
Best Joint Inspection: 446 AW (Team A), McChord AFB WA
Best 10K Forklift Operators: 436 AW, Dover AFB DE

Best C-5 Engine Running Onload/Offload: 97 AMW (Team A), Altus AFB OK
Best C-130 Engine Running Onload/Offload: 130 AW, Charleston WV
Best C-141 Engine Running Onload/Offload: 437 (Team B), Charleston AFB SC
Best C-17 Engine Running Onload/Offload: 437 AW (Team A), Charleston AFB SC
Best En Route Engine Running Onload/Offload: 615 AMOG, Travis AFB CA
Best Intransit Visibility Team: 437 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best Aerial Port Endurance Course Team: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best Joint Airdrop Inspection Team: 43 AW, Pope AFB NC
Best KC-10 Cargo Loading Crew: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-135 Cargo Loading Crew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

Combat Security:

Best Security Forces Team: 86 AW, Ramstein AB, Germany
Best Combat Tactics Team: 167 AW, Martinsburg WV
Best Combat Rifle Team: 86 AW, Ramstein AB, Germany
Best Combat Handgun Team: 92 ARW, Fairchild AFB WA

Aeromedical Evacuation:

Best Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 145 AW, Charlotte AFB NC
Best C-141 Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 349 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-141 Configuration /Enplaning Team: 445 AW, Wright Patterson AFB OH
Best C-130 Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 145 AW, Charlotte AFB SC
Best C-130 Configuration/Enplaning Team: Canada
Best C-9 Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 374 AW, Yokota AB, Japan
Best C-9 Configuration/Enplaning Team: 374 AW, Yokota AB, Japan
Best Equipment Preflight Team: 167 AW, Martinsburg WV
Best Medical Emergency Team: 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best Aeromedical Evacuation Endurance Course Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA

Special Tactics:

Best Special Tactics Team: 21 STS, Pope AFB NC
Biathlon: 21 STS, Pope AFB NC
Combat Obstacle Course: 21 STS, Pope AFB NC
Parachute Employment: 320 STS, Kadena AB, Japan

2005²²⁶

Best Wing Awards:

Best Tanker Wing: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best Airdrop Wing: 314 AW Little Rock AFB AR
Best Airland Wing: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best Aeromedical Wing: 86 AW, Ramstein AB, Germany
Best International Team: 47 Squadron, RAF Lyneham, United Kingdom
Best KC-135 Wing: 6 AMW, MacDill AFB FL
Best KC-10 Wing: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

²²⁶Report, Maj R. S. Hackenberger, "Rodeo 2005 Award Winners," ca Jun 06.

Best C-130 Wing: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
Best C-17 Wing: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-5 Wing: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best Air Refueling Team: 319 ARW (tanker), Grand Forks AFB ND and 305 AW (receiver),
McGuire AFB NJ

Fit to Fight Competition:

Best Fitness Team: 715 AMOG, Hickam AFB HI

Best Operational Support/Special Air Missions Competition:

Best Operational Support Airlift/Distinguished Visitor/Special Air Mission Team: 314 AS,
Peterson AFB CO

C-130:

Best C-130 Aircrew: 463 AG, Little Rock AFB AR
Best C-130 Airdrop Crew: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
Best C-130 Shortfield Landing Crew: 86 AW, Ramstein AB, Germany
Best C-130 Preflight Team: Germany
Best C-130 Postflight Team: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR

C-17:

Best C-17 Aircrew: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-17 Airdrop Crew: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-17 Shortfield Landing Crew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-17 Preflight Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-17 Postflight Team: 305 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best C-17 Air Refueling Crew: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA

C-5:

Best C-5 Aircrew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-5 Preflight Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-5 Postflight Team: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-5 Air Refueling Crew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

KC-10:

Best KC-10 Aircrew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Preflight Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Cargo Loading Crew: 305 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best KC-10 Air Refueling Crew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

KC-135:

Best KC-135 Aircrew: 6 AMW, MacDill AFB FL
Best KC-135 Preflight Team: 19 ARG, Robins AFB GA
Best KC-135 Postflight Team: 92 ARW, Fairchild AFB WA
Best KC-135 Cargo Loading Crew: 6 AMW, MacDill AFB FL
Best KC-135 Air Refueling Crew: 319 ARW, Grand Forks AFB ND

Combat Security:

Top Shooter: Technical Sergeant Jesse Chervinka, 375 AW, Scott AFB IL
Best Combat Endurance Course Team: 92 ARW, Fairchild AFB WA
Best Security Forces Team: 92 ARW, Fairchild AFB WA
Security Forces Best Combat Tactics Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Security Forces Best Combat Weapons Team: 375 AW, Scott AFB IL

Aerial Port:

Best Aerial Port 60K Tunner Team: 89 AW, Andrews AFB MD
Best Aerial Port 10K Forklift Operators: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best Aerial Port Squadron: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best Aerial Port Confidence and Endurance Course Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-130 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: RAF, United Kingdom
Best C-17 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-5 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best En Route Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 721 AMOG, Ramstein AB, Germany
Best Intransit Visibility Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best Joint Inspection Team: 43 AW, Pope AFB NC

Aerial Evacuation:

Best Aeromedical Endurance Course Crew: 86 AW, Ramstein AB, Germany
Best Aeromedical Contingency Flight Crew: 43 AW, Pope AFB NC

Maintenance:

Best KC-135 Maintenance Team: 19 ARG, Robins AFB GA
Best KC-10 Maintenance Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-5 Maintenance Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-17 Maintenance Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-130 Maintenance Team: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
Maintenance Knucklebuster Award: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

2007²²⁷**Best Wing/Team Awards:**

Best Air Mobility Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best Airdrop Team: 317 AG, Dyess AFB TX
Best Airland Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best Tanker Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-135 Team: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best KC-10 Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-17 Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-130/C-160 Team: 317 AG, Dyess AFB TX
Best C-5 Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB, CA
Best International Team: German Transport Wing 61, Germany

²²⁷Article, AMC/PA, "Air Mobility Rodeo 2007 Ends With Top Award Going to Travis Team," 27 Jul 07.

Best Aerial Refueling Team: 437 AW and 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC and 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

Best Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best Aerial Port Team: 721 AMOG, Ramstein AB, Germany

Best Security Forces Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA

Flying Awards:

Beset C-5 Aircrew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best C-5 Preflight Team: 436 AW, Dover AFB DE

Best C-5 Air Refueling Crew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best C-17 Aircrew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

Best C-17 Preflight Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best C-17 Airdrop Crew: 437 AW and 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC

Best C-17 Shortfield Landing Crew: 15 AW, Hickam AFB HI

Best C-130 Aircrew: German Transport Wing 61, Germany

Best C-130 Airdrop Crew: German Transport Wing 61, Germany

Best C-130 Shortfield Landing Crew: German Transport Wing 61, Germany

Best KC-10 Aircrew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best KC-10 Air Refueling Crew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best KC-10 Cargo Loading Crew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best KC-135 Aircrew: 6 AMW, MacDill AFB FL

Best KC-135 Air Refueling Crew: 121 ARW, Rickenbacker ANGB OH

Best KC-135 Cargo Loading Crew: 6 AMW, MacDill AFB FL

Security Forces Awards:

Top Shooter: Staff Sergeant Justin Worley, 86 AW, Ramstein AB, Germany

Best Security Forces Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA

Security Forces Best Combat Tactics Team: 92 ARW, Fairchild AFB WA

Security Forces Best Combat Weapons Team: 86 AW, Ramstein AB, Germany

Security Forces Best Combat Challenge Course Team: 305 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ

Aeromedical Evacuation Awards:

Best Aeromedical Contingency Crew: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best Aeromedical Configuration Crew: 18 AW, Kadena AB, Japan

Best Aeromedical Challenge Course Crew: 86 AW, Ramstein AB, Germany

Aerial Port Awards:

Best Joint Inspection Team: II Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corp Air Station, Cherry Point NC

Best Aerial Port Team: 721 AMOG, Ramstein AB, Germany

Best Aerial Port Challenge Course Team: 721 AMOG, Ramstein AB, Germany

Best C-5 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 439 AW, Westover ARB MA

Best C-17 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best C-130 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 721 AMOG, Ramstein AB, Germany

Best Intransit Visibility Team: 715 AMOG, Hickam AFB HI

Best Aerial Port 10K Forklift Operators: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR

Best Aerial Port Halvorsen Operator: Senior Airman Jonathon Goncalves, 721 AMOG, Ramstein AB, Germany

Maintenance Awards:

Best C-5 Maintenance Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-5 Preflight Team: 436 AW, Dover AFB DE
Best C-5 Postflight Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-17 Maintenance Team: 437 AW and 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC
Best C-17 Preflight Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-17 Postflight Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best C-130 Maintenance Team: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
Best C-130 Preflight Team: German Transport Wing 61, Germany
Best C-130 Postflight Team: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
Best KC-10 Maintenance Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Preflight Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-10 Postflight Team: 514 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best KC-135 Maintenance Team: 319 ARW, Grand Forks AFB ND
Best KC-135 Preflight Team: 319 ARW, Grand Forks AFB ND
Best KC-135 Postflight Team: 121 ARW, Rickenbacker ANGB OH
Maintenance Knucklebuster Award: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Other Awards:

Best Fit to Fight: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best T-1 Aircrew: 47 FTW, Laughlin AFB TX
Best Operational Support Airlift, Distinguished Visitor, and Special Air Mission Competition Team: 89 AW, Andrews AFB MD

2009**Best Wing Awards:**

Best Aerial Port Team: 19 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
Best Aerial Refueling Team: Team McConnell (22 ARW and 931 ARG), McConnell AFB KS
Best Contingency Response Team: 621 CRW, McGuire AFB NJ
Best Security Forces Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best International Team: Republic of Korea
Best Aeromedical Evacuation Team (tanker): 22 ARW, KC-135, McConnell AFB KS
Best C-5 Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best C-130/Best C-160 Team: 19 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
Best C-17 Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Best KC-10 Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best KC-135 Team: 916 ARW, Seymour-Johnson AFB NC
Best Airland Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best Tanker Team: 97 AMW, Altus AFB CA
Best Airdrop Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA
Knucklebuster Award: 374 AW, C-130, Yokota AB, Japan

Security Forces Awards:

Best Security Forces Combat Weapons Team: 92 ARW, Fairchild AFB WA
Best Security Forces Combat Shooter: A1C Cory C. Linn, 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
Best Combat Endurance Course Team: 305 AMW and 514 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ

Aeromedical Awards:

Best Aeromedical Evacuation Configuration: Team Turkey

Best Aeromedical Evacuation Contingency Flight: 86 AW, Ramstein AB, Germany

Maintenance Awards:

Best C-5 Preflight Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best C-5 Postflight Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best C-17 Preflight Team: 437 AW and 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC

Best C-17 Postflight Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best C-130 Preflight Team: 19 AW, C-130J, Little Rock AFB AR

Best C-130 Postflight Team: 314 AW, C-130 E/H, Little Rock AFB AR

Best KC-10 Preflight Team: 305 AMW and 514 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ

Best KC-10 Postflight Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best KC-135 Preflight Team: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

Best KC-135 Postflight Team: 916 ARW, Seymour-Johnson AFB NC

Best C-5 Maintenance Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best C-17 Maintenance Team: 446 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best C-130 Maintenance Team: 19 AW, C-130J, Little Rock AFB AR

Best KC-10 Maintenance Team: 305 AMW and 514 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ

Best KC-135 Maintenance Team: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

Maintenance Knucklebuster Award: 374 AW, Yokota AB, Japan

Aerial Port:

Best Aerial Port Challenge Course Team: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best Aerial Port 10K Forklift Operators: 521 AMOW, Ramstein AB, Germany

Best 60K Tunner Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best C-5 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best C-17 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK

Best C-130 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 19 AW, Little Rock AFB AR

Best En Route Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 521 AMOW, Ramstein AB, Germany

Best Intransit Visibility Team: 19 AW, Little Rock AFB AR

Best Joint Inspection Team: 43 AW, Pope AFB NC

Best Contingency Response Hardside Expandable Light Air Mobility Shelter Team: 621 CRW, McGuire AFB NJ

Best Contingency Response Small-Package Initial Communication Element Team: 621 CRW, McGuire AFB NJ

Best Contingency Operations Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 615 CRW, Travis AFB CA

Flying Award:

Best Low-level Airdrop Crew: 47 FTW, Laughlin AFB TX

Best T-1 Aerial Refueling Crew: 47 FTW, Laughlin AFB TX

Best T-1 Aircrew: 47 FTW, Laughlin AFB TX

Best C-5 Aerial Refueling Crew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best C-5 Aircrew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA

Best C-17 Low-level Airdrop Crew: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best C-17 Aerial Refueling Crew: 437 AW and 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC

Best C-17 Shortfield Landing Crew: 437 AW and 315 AW, Charleston AFB SC

Best C-17 Aircrew: 62 AW, McChord AFB WA

Best C-130 Low-level Airdrop Crew: 86 AW, Ramstein AB, Germany
 Best C-130 Shortfield Landing Crew: 19 AW, C-130E/H, Little Rock AFB AR
 Best C-130 Backing/Combat Off-load Crew: 314 AW (C-130J), Little Rock AFB AR
 Best C-130 Aircrew: Israel
 Best KC-10 Aerial Refueling Crew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
 Best KC-10 Cargo Loading Crew: 305 AMW and 514 AMW, McGuire AFB NJ
 Best KC-10 Aircrew: 60 AMW, Travis AFB CA
 Best KC-135 Aerial Refueling Crew: 121 ARW, Rickenbacker ANGB OH
 Best KC-135 Cargo Loading Crew: 916 ARW, Seymour-Johnson AFB NC
 Best KC-135 Aircrew: 916 ARW, Seymour-Johnson AFB NC
 Best Operational Support Airlift/Very Important Person/Special Air Mission Team Arrival Crew: 86 AW, Ramstein AB, Germany
 Best Operational Support Airlift/Very Important Person/Special Air Mission Team Aircrew: 375 AW, Scott AFB IL

2011²²⁸

Best Wing Awards:²²⁹

Best Air Mobility Wing: 314 AW (C-130E), Little Rock AFB
 Best Airland Wing: Team Dover (C-5) (436 AW and 512 AW), Dover AFB DE
 Best Airdrop Wing: 314 AW (C-130E), Little Rock AFB AR
 Best Tanker Wing: 97 AMW (KC-135), Altus AFB OK
 Best International Team: Belgium (C-130)
 Best C-5 Wing: Team Dover (436 AW and 512 AW), Dover AFB DE
 Best C-17 Wing: 62 AW/627 ABG, McChord Field WA
 Best C-130 Wing: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
 Best KC-10 Wing: Team Travis (60 AMW and 349 AMW), Travis AFB CA
 Best KC-135 Wing: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
 Maintenance Knucklebuster: 439 ARW, Westover MA

Security Forces Awards:

Best Combat Weapons Team: Team McGuire (305 AMW and 87 ABW), JB-MDL NJ
 Best Combat Endurance Course Team: 446 AW, McChord Field WA
 Best Combat Endurance Team: Team Alaska (3 WG and 673 ABW), JB Elmendorf-Richardson AK

²²⁸AMC Operations Order 14-11, AMC/A3, “Air Mobility Rodeo 2011, Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), McChord Field WA, AMC Rodeo Operations Order 14-11, Change 1,” Jul 11. Blended “teams” were explained in the Operations Order Execution section, on page 10, “Blended teams of co-located associate units are encouraged. (1) If the Rodeo team includes members from more than one wing, it is considered blended. Wing commanders will agree on the team name and how to display a trophy. A duplicate trophy may be purchased with unit funds. (2) Total Force Integration units are not considered blended. (3) Only one aircrew and one maintenance team are allowed per aircraft. (4) Notify the Rodeo/A3 of team composition for all blended teams. (5) Scoring blended teams will be the same as scoring for homogeneous unit teams.”

²²⁹Report, AMC/A9, “Official Scoring Report,” 23 Aug 11.

Aeromedical Awards:

Best C-130 Contingency Flight: 446 AW, McChord Field WA

Best C-17 Static Configuration: 302 AW, Peterson AFB CO

Best KC-135 Static Configuration: 302 AW, Peterson AFB CO

Contingency Response Awards:

Best Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 615 CRW, Travis AFB CA

Best Hardside Expandable Light Air Mobility Shelter Team: 621 CRW, JB-MDL NJ

Best Small-Package Initial Communication Element Team: 621 CRW, JB-MDL NJ

Flight Attendant Awards:

Best Egress Team: 99 AS, Andrews AFB MD

Best Culinary Team: Team Ramstein (86 AW and 435 AGOW), Ramstein AB, Germany

Operational Support Airlift/Very Important Person/Special Air Mission Awards:

Best Precision Landing Team: Team Ramstein (86 AW and 435 AGOW), Ramstein AB, Germany

Best Block-In Team: Team Ramstein (86 AW and 435 AGOW), Ramstein AB, Germany

T1 Flying Awards:

T1 Low Level/Airdrop Team: 47 FTW, Laughlin AFB TX

T1 Aerial Refueling Team: 12 FTW, Randolph AFB TX

Aerial Port:

Best C-5 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: Team Dover (436 AW and 512 AW), Dover AFB DE

Best C-17 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: Team Dover (436 AW and 512 AW), Dover AFB DE

Best C-130 Engine Running Onload/Offload Team: 910 AW, Youngstown-Warren OH

Best Challenge Course Team: 521 AMOW, Ramstein AB, Germany

Best 10K Forklift Team: 521 AMOW, Ramstein AB, Germany

Best 25K Halvorsen Loader Team: Team Travis (60 AMW and 349 AMW), Travis AFB CA

Best Joint Inspection Team: 621 CRW, JB-MDL NJ

Best Intransit Visibility Team: 62 AW/627 ABG, McChord Field WA

Best Pallet Build-Up Team: 317 AG, Dyess AFB TX

Maintenance:

Best C-5 Preflight Inspection Team: Team Dover (436 AW and 512 AW), Dover AFB DE

Best C-17 Preflight Inspection Team: 62 AW/627 ABG, McChord Field WA

Best C-130 Preflight Inspection Team: 317 AG, Dyess AFB TX

Best KC-10 Preflight Inspection Team: Team Travis (60 AMW and 349 AMW), Travis AFB CA

Best KC-135 Preflight Inspection Team: 22 ARW, McConnell AFB KS

Best C-5 Maintenance Skills Team: Team Dover (436 AW and 512 AW), Dover AFB DE

Best C-17 Maintenance Skills Team: 437 AW, JB Charleston SC

Best C-130 Maintenance Skills Team: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR

Best KC-10 Maintenance Skills Team: Team Travis (60 AMW and 349 AMW), Travis AFB CA

Best KC-135 Maintenance Skills Team: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best Maintenance Skills Team: 314 AW (C-130J), Little Rock AFB AR

Aircrew Awards:

Best C-17 Airdrop Aircrew: Team Alaska (C-17) (3 WG and 673 ABW), JB Elmendorf-Richardson AK
Best C-130 Airdrop Aircrew: 19 AW (C-130J), Little Rock AFB AR
Best Joint Airdrop Inspection Team: Team Pope (43 AG and 440 AW), Pope Army Airfield NC
Best C-17 Short Field Landing Team: 97 AMW (C-17), Altus AFB OK
Best C-130 Short Field Landing Team: 302 AW (C-130H), Peterson AFB CO
Best C-5 Air-to-Air Refueling Team: Team Dover (436 AW and 512 AW), Dover AFB DE
Best C-17 Air-to-Air Refueling Team: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best KC-135 Air-to-Air Refueling Team: 121 ARW, Rickenbacker ANGB OH
Best KC-10 Tanker Cargo Loading Team: Team McGuire (305 AMW and 87 ABW), JB-MDL NJ
Best KC-135 Tanker Cargo Loading Team: 121 ARW, Rickenbacker ANGB OH
Best C-17 Backing Combat Offload Team: 15 WG, JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam HI
Best C-130 Backing Combat Offload Team: 317 AG, Dyess AFB TX

Component Awards:

Best C-5 Aircrew: Team Dover (436 AW and 512 AW), Dover AFB DE
Best C-17 Aircrew: 97 AMW, Altus AFB OK
Best C-130 Aircrew: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
Best KC-10 Aircrew: Team Travis (60 AMW and 349 AMW), Travis AFB CA
Best KC-135 Aircrew: 121 ARW, Rickenbacker ANGB OH
Best C-5 Maintenance Team: Team Dover (436 AW and 512 AW), Dover AFB DE
Best C-17 Maintenance Team: 437 AW, JB Charleston SC
Best C-130 Maintenance Team: 314 AW, Little Rock AFB AR
Best KC-10 Maintenance Team: Team Travis (60 AMW and 349 AMW), Travis AFB CA
Best KC-135 Maintenance Team: Team MacDill (6 AMW and 927 ARW), MacDill AFB FL
Best Aerial Port Team: 62 AW/627 ABG, McChord Field WA
Best Security Forces Team: Team McGuire (305 AMW and 87 ABW), JB-MDL NJ
Best Fit to Fight Team: Team Ramstein (86 AW and 435 AGOW), Ramstein AB, Germany
Best Aeromedical Evacuation Team: 446 AW, McChord Field WA
Best Financial Management Team: 375 AMW, Scott AFB IL
Best Contingency Response Team: 621 CRW, JB-MDL NJ
Best Flight Attendant Team: Team Ramstein (86 AW and 435 AGOW), Ramstein AB Germany
Best Operational Support Airlift/Very Important Person/Special Air Mission Team: Team Ramstein (86 AW and 435 AGOW), Ramstein AB, Germany
Best T1 Flying Team: 14 FTW, Columbus AFB MS

APPENDIX B

Rodeo Commanders and Vice Commanders

1990

Commander: Brigadier General James L. Cole, Jr.

Vice Commander: Brigadier General James E. Melvin III

1992

Commander: Brigadier General Donald E. Loranger, Jr.

1993

Commander: Brigadier General Bobbie L. Mitchell

Vice Commander: Brigadier General Harold E. Keistler (ANG)²³⁰

1994

Commander: Major General Marvin S. Ervin

Vice Commander: Brigadier General Michael S. Peters (AFRC)²³¹

1996

Commander: Brigadier General Richard C. Marr

Vice Commanders: Brigadier General Donald A. Streater

Brigadier General Clayton T. Gadd (AFRC)

Brigadier General William L. Fleshman (ANG)

1998

Commander: Brigadier General William Welser III

Vice Commanders: Brigadier General Joseph K. Simeone (ANG)

Brigadier General Ernest R. “Randy” Webster (AFRC)

2000

Commander: Major General Silas R Johnson, Jr.

Vice Commanders: Brigadier General John E. Iffland (ANG)

Brigadier General Jon S. Gingerich (AFRC)

2005

Commander: Brigadier General David S. “Scott” Gray

Vice Commanders: Brigadier General Timothy W. Scott (ANG)

Brigadier General Robert L. Corley (AFRC)

²³⁰Air National Guard

²³¹Air Force Reserve Command

2007

Commander: Brigadier General Kip L. Self

Vice Commanders: Brigadier General Riley P. Porter (ANG)

Brigadier General Charles R. “Buddy” Reed, Jr. (AFRC)

2009

Commander: Major General Brooks L. Bash

Vice Commanders: Brigadier General Verle L. Johnson, Jr. (ANG)

Brigadier General David S. Post (AFRC)

2011

Commander: Major General Frederick H. Martin

Vice Commanders: Brigadier General Jon F. Fago (ANG)

Colonel Jeffrey K. Barnson (AFRC)

APPENDIX C

Named Rodeo Trophies²³²

In 1994, AMC leadership initiated an effort to honor Airmen who had been instrumental in shaping air mobility by renaming the major Rodeo award trophies after them. In June of that year, letters and invitations went out to surviving retirees or their descendents, asking permission to rename the trophies.²³³ Response times varied but all contacted were genuinely appreciative of the honor bestowed upon them. In the words of former MAC commander General Howell M. Estes, Jr., “They [command-wide competitions] tend to foster a higher level of performance in day-to-day activity and enliven interest in what might otherwise become a routine akin to drudgery. . . . The Best Wing Trophy carries great prestige in the Command, and the competition for it has always been heated. I would be honored indeed to have that Trophy bear my name.”²³⁴ Armed with the retirees’ or their family’s approval, AMC renamed the trophies.

Best Air Mobility Wing--General William G. Moore Trophy

Best Tanker Wing--Major General Harold E. Collins Trophy

Best C-5 Wing--General Jack J. Catton Trophy

Best C-17 Wing--General Duane H. Cassidy Trophy

Best C-141 Wing--General Howell M. Estes, Jr., Trophy

Best C-130 Wing--General Joe W. Kelly Trophy

Best C-130 Aircrew--Lieutenant Colonel Joe M. Jackson Trophy

Best KC-10 Wing--General Richard H. Ellis Trophy

Best KC-135 Wing--Brigadier General Donald W. Saunders Trophy

Best KC-135 Aircrew--General Bruce K. Holloway Trophy

Best Airdrop Wing--Lieutenant General Harold L. George Trophy

Best Aeromedical Evacuation Wing--Colonel Regina C. Aune and Staff Sergeant Michael D. Paget Trophy

Best Air Refueling Wing--General Carl A. Spaatz Trophy

Best Aerial Refueling Wing--General John C. Meyer Trophy

Best Airland Wing--Lieutenant General Laurence S. Kuter Trophy

Best International Team--Air Commodore David F. Edwards Trophy

²³²Staff Summary, AMC/DO, “Names for Rodeo Trophies,” 7 May 96.

²³³Letter, Gen R. R. Fogleman, AMC/CC, to Gen H. M. Estes, Jr., USAF, (Ret), [Rodeo 1994], 3 Jun 94; Staff Summary, AMC/DO, “Rodeo Trophies,” 31 May 94.

²³⁴Staff Summary, AMC/DO, “Rodeo Trophy Namesake Packages,” 8 Aug 94.

GLOSSARY

AB	Air Base
ABG	Air Base Group
AES	Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron
AF	Air Force
AFB	Air Force Base
AFRC	Air Force Reserve Command
AFRES	Air Force Reserve
AGOW	Air Ground Operations Wing
AMC	Air Mobility Command
AMOG	Air Mobility Operations Group
AMOW	Air Mobility Operations Wing
AMSG	Air Mobility Support Group
AMW	Air Mobility Wing
ANG	Air National Guard
ANGB	Air National Guard Base
ARB	Air Reserve Base
ARG	Air Refueling Group
ARW	Air Refueling Wing
AS	Airlift Squadron
ATW	Air Transport Wing
AW	Airlift Wing
CC	Commander
CCS	Combat Control Squadron

CCT	Combat Control Team
CRW	Contingency Response Wing
CV	Vice Commander
ERO	Engine Running Onload/Offload
FTW	Flying Training Wing
HQ	Headquarters
JBLM	Joint Base Lewis-McChord
JB-MDL	Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst
MAC	Military Airlift Command
MAPS	Mobile Aerial Port Squadron
MAW	Military Airlift Wing
OG	Operations Group
OPORD	Operations Order
PA	Public Affairs
RAF	Royal Air Force
STS	Special Tactics Squadron
STSQ	Special Tactics Squadron
STT	Special Tactics Team
TAG	Tactical Airlift Group
TAW	Tactical Airlift Wing
WG	Wing

Back Cover Top Photo: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia team members (left to right) Major A. Farsi, navigator; Captain E. Mubarek, copilot; and Lieutenant Colonel B. Harbi, aircraft commander, plan a precompetition mission during Rodeo 92 at Pope AFB, North Carolina. (US Air Force photo/MSgt Jim Ferguson)

Back Cover Bottom Photo: A Military Airlift Command (MAC) combat controller races on his motorcycle to a landing zone to replace markers blown away by previous assault landings during Rodeo 90. (US Air Force photo/Sgt Marvin Preston)

