

AIRLIFT Dispatch

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437th Airlift Wing, Charleston AFB, SC

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Rodeo work

Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe

Senior Airman Cheyenne Strachota, 437th Aerial Port Squadron, prepares to put away a strut on a C-141 Starlifter after cargo had been downloaded. Strachota is a member of the 437 APS C-141 engine running offload team and is preparing to compete in Rodeo 2000 at Pope AFB, N.C., May 6-18. For more on Rodeo, see page 3.

CAFB named best active unit in 21 AF

By Staff Sgt. Pamela Smith
437 AW Public Affairs

Charleston AFB was recently awarded the Lt. Gen. Malcolm B. Armstrong trophy for 1999, officially making it the best active duty wing in 21st Air Force.

"The 437th Airlift Wing's role in local, national and world affairs is unsurpassed," said Col. Karl Young, 437 AW vice commander. "1999 was a banner year. The wing demonstrated its unequalled talents and unparalleled mission capabilities time and again throughout the year."

Charleston stayed busy during the past year with deployments in support of Operations Allied Force, Joint Guardian and Shining Hope, along with other contingencies an humanitarian missions.

"The Armstrong Trophy recognizes the peacetime and contingency contributions that a wing makes over an annual period," said Col. Ron Richardson, 437th Operations Group commander.

Last year, Charleston set up an Air Expeditionary Group, composed of aviators, maintainers and support personnel, to operate 12 C-17s out of Ramstein AB, Germany, in support of numerous real-world missions into the Balkans.

"Team Charleston members from the 437th Security Forces Squadron provided crucial force protection at Tirana Airfield, Albania, into where a lot of the C-17 missions were flown," said Richardson, who was the AEG commander.

Charleston also moved vital com-

bat and humanitarian supplies around the clock over a three-month period during the height of the Kosovo conflict, he said.

Aside from ongoing support during the conflict, Charleston was recognized for helping with the Kosovo refugee relief effort.

"I think Team Charleston won this award because we consistently perform in a manner that reflects Air Force core values, which in turn, generates a passion for doing our best in any environment," said Richardson.

On the home front, the Charleston AFB drug abuse and prevention treatment program won the Secretary of Defense Drug Awareness Award as best in the Department of Defense. The base has also numerous unit award winners that factored into being named best in 21 AF.

The maintainers excelled by winning the United States Air Force Chief of Staff and Department of Defense Team Excellence Awards, while the 437th Contracting and Civil Engineer Squadrons won the DoD David Packard Award for Excellence in Acquisitions.

"There is spirit of success resident in Team Charleston, whether in yesterday's combat theater or tomorrow's peacetime office job," Richardson said. "It's spirit of success that every visitor sees shortly after arriving here and meeting our folks. That spirit is why we won the Armstrong Trophy.

(For more on the accomplishments of Charleston AFB troops in 1999, see page 5)

Charleston, MacDill Rodeo teams practice together

By Lt. Col. Ed Memi
437 AW Public Affairs

Charleston Rodeo Team members will get some additional training this week as they practice with members of the rodeo team from MacDill AFB, Fla., our sister wing.

The 26 members arrived Monday afternoon on one of their KC-135 tankers and have been practicing all week with the 437th Airlift Wing Rodeo Team. The team leaves Saturday morning and will practice with a Rodeo C-5 team out of Dover AFB, Md., on their way back home.

Maj. Bob West, one of two operations officers in the 91st Air Refueling Squadron at MacDill AFB and the Rodeo team chief for their wing, brought their tanker to practice refueling with their Charleston Rodeo counterparts.

"We were scheduled to fly Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and during our off-days, our maintenance and security forces team are also here and they are doing cargo loading training as well as the combat handgun/rifle endurance and those types of event for security forces," West said. "Our two boom operators are practicing

cargo loading and our maintenance folks are working on the aircraft."



"Our C-141 and C-17 Rodeo members practiced with them before they even landed on Charleston on Monday," said 437th Rodeo Team chief Maj. Matt Heuer.

"A lot of units go off-station to build esprit de corps as a team so when you get to Pope, it is not like an austere environment, like you are doing some-

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