

507th Tactical Fighter Group



Vol. IX No. 4

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Friday, March 31, 1989

On-final

507th team competes in Readiness Challenge . . . and wins!

By TSgt. Cathy Benedict
NCOIC, Public Affairs

Twenty members of the 507th Tactical Fighter Group constructed a winning team to earn the title of best engineers in the Air Force Reserve.

The reservists are members of the 507th Civil Engineering Squadron from Tinker AFB, Okla. Recently, they returned from Robins AFB, Ga., where they competed in Readiness Challenge '89. This is the first time in their history to compete in the Challenge, and they brought home with them the winning trophy.

The reservists competed against eight teams and placed in the top three in 13 out of 21 events. The 507th TFG engineers will now represent the command at the world-wide Readiness Challenge competition, May 7-14 at Eglin AFB, Fla.

The AFRES engineering and services program prepares its members for world-wide combat support roles. About 8,300 members train in 27 career fields to provide engineering and services support to Air Force combat units overseas. They represent over 21 percent of the Air Force's wartime engineering and services capability.

The engineering program provides for two distinct wartime functions: a base engineering emergency force (BEEF) and a readiness in base services (RIBS) team.

"Training. That's what the competition is about," said SMSgt. Charlie Frye, AFRES Red Horse manager. "It's also an opportunity to build camaraderie and esprit de corps between all civil engineers."

"What people need to understand, is that without CE and its mission, for example rapid runway repair, there would be no place for pilots to land their aircraft and continue with the flying mission."

"Some of the people at the competition are getting their wartime training here. They can't get training such as this under normal conditions."

Prime BEEFers slapped down an AM-2 runway matting, hammered together hardback tent frames for tents and plowed through Georgia clay on Fiat bulldozers in their quest for bragging rights and a trip to the Air Force-wide competition in two months.

In other events, Prime RIBS people constructed field kitchen tents and fired up immersion heaters.



Fire fighters flew 120 miles north to Dobbins AFB, outside Atlanta, to hose down the competition in the P-19 fire truck event.

According to SSgt. Bob Vandevander, refrigeration and air conditioning specialist with the 507th, "the team has been training in hangers and in a special field site across from the base since October for this competition."

The team has trained at great sacrifice. Civilian work schedules had to be altered, time off had to be planned and one team member had to attend college around his competition training.

"We've been training every weekend since October for this competition," said SSgt. Georgeanne Daidone, a services specialist with the 507th CES.

Some members also went to Eglin AFB, Fla., to the Base Recovery After Attack Training School for actual hands-on experience. These members, according to MSgt. Teresa Madison, NCOIC Production

Control Technician, actually repaired a battle damaged runway in a wartime environment. "This type of training will really help us in this years competition," said Sergeant Madison.

The participants in this year's AFRES Readiness Challenge were: 507th CES: OIC, Capt. Ernest Goodman; NCOIC, MSgt. Teresa Madison; MSgt. Dean Lipska; TSgts. Dennis Clapp, Richard Sanders and Billy Singleton; SSgts. Karen Hosp, Georgeanne Daidone, Mike Delaney, Sampson Djonorh, Steven McClure, Brent Nelson, Kenneth Prudom, Bill Soda, Terry Tunender, Jerry Williams, Bob Vandevander, Andy May and Mike Reed; and AIC David Haggard.

Other squadron members went to the competition as observers. They were: SSgt. Kenneth Bernard, SSgt. Paula Boyer, Sgt. Mike Edwards, Sgt. Malada Mouse and AIC Cindy Stanley.

Wife's threat and unit's need equals a toolbox

By TSgt. Cathy Benedict
NCOIC Public Affairs

His wife's threat to throw his tools out of the house inspired SSgt. Andy May, a sheet metal specialist with the 507th Civil Engineering Squadron. The threat came when the Readiness Challenge Unit needed a special toolbox. So, the sergeant combined the unit's need and his wife demands and came up with a solution.

"My wife, upset at my tools all over the house, threatened to throw them

out. Meanwhile, the competition neared and the squadron wanted an easier way to transport the equipment and the numerous toolboxes," said Sergeant May.

"I had considered building a toolbox for the carpentry equipment I use for my civilian occupation. I decided to kill two birds with one stone, so I built the tool box myself."

He built the toolbox two-foot high, two-foot wide, four-foot long. Enough room to hold it all.

"It took a day and a half to build the box and three weeks to paint it," he

explained. He delivered the finished product to the squadron during December's unit training assembly. "I brought it into the hanger and watched the stunned look on the squadron commander's face and the surprised squadron," he added with a smile. Sergeant May hadn't told the team of his solution to their dilemma.

"I wasn't too sure how the project would turn out, so I waited until it was finished and just brought it in. It holds all the equipment the team needs to build a hardback tent frame," he said. Some of the necessary equipment in-

cludes eight saws, 10 hard hats and 10 hammers.

"It doesn't sound like a lot of required equipment, but the tools are bulky and hard to crate without toolboxes," he said.

The team kept the box in their tent and also used it as a table. The toolbox went into action March 11 during the hardback tent construction event. "The team said they hope other teams acknowledge the innovation of the Okie when problem-solving," Sergeant May said.

On-final is an Air Force Reserve supplement to the Tinker Take Off and is published by the Journal Record Publishing Co., a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Air Force, under exclusive written contract with the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center Public Affairs Office. This commercial enterprise Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for Air Force Reserve members of the U.S. military services.

Contents of On-final are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

Advertisements contained herein do not constitute an endorsement by the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force or Tinker AFB, Oklahoma. Everything advertised is available without regard to

race, color, religion, sex or other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided to the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center Public Affairs Office, or his designated representative, by the Public Affairs Office of the 507th Tactical Fighter Group.

Commentary

Homework key to higher ratings

By Col. Marcus F. Cooper Jr.
Air Force Reserve Inspector General
Robins AFB, Ga.

Do people in your shop read unit effectiveness inspection reports from other bases? Do they examine their procedures to ensure similar problems don't exist? To an inspector, there's nothing more frustrating than a deficiency that was identified on more than one previous report.

Repeated deficiencies are a common occurrence. Inspectors from Air Force Reserve headquarters see the same problems over and over. Some reservists aren't paying attention to the crossfeed information and receive write-ups that could have been avoided.

To prevent this from happening to you, pay attention to the Inspector General Crossfeed Newsletter. Many articles are based on areas that generate repeated write-ups. Read inspection reports. Include identified deficiencies in your self-inspection checklist. If you find the same problems in your unit, fix them. Make sure your corrective actions don't merely gloss over the problems or create new ones.

If you need more information, check previous inspection reports to learn which bases had these problems, and then talk to your counterparts there. Don't take an unnecessary hit.

Do your homework. It could be the key to a higher rating.

Drugs and military don't mix

By Lt. Col. Sanford Kutner
Social Actions Officer

People do things without thinking of the consequences — a prime illustration is taking drugs. Every month, just like any active duty unit, the 507th performs random drug testing. Every unit member could be tested.

If you test positive, immediate action for discharge is initiated. And while positive test results are lower than ever, it still amazes me when someone tests positive with only one or two years until retirement.

Losing your retirement benefits can be very expensive. For example, if you are a technical sergeant with six years active duty, your approximate retirement pay would be about \$4,000 a year, which totals \$40,000 over ten years. Add in the loss of standard benefits, such as medical and commissary privileges and the loss is enormous. Are drugs worth that much?

American Indian explores India

By 2nd Lt. Rich Curry
Chief, 507th Public Affairs

Sergeant Earl Wheeler, of the 507th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Electrical Shop, recently completed a tour to India as an Oklahoma good will ambassador.

Sergeant Wheeler and four other Oklahoma Indians, visited New Delhi, India during the International Trade Fair in February. The Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission and the State Department of Commerce sponsored the group.

The Prime Minister of India invited the group, consisting of Muskogee (Creek) Nation and Cherokee Nation members, to perform traditional ceremonial dances, known as Stomp Dancing, and to lecture on the status of American Indians at selected universities in that area.

Sergeant Wheeler joined the 507th as an air reserve technician on January 27. He resides at Bristow, Okla.

"I'm a member of the Yuchi (Yuchihazoyaha) branch of the Creek tribe and a member of the Sand Creek Tribal Town," he said.

Sergeant Wheeler is a former National Council Representative to the Muskogee National Council, the legislative branch of the Muskogee (Creek) tribal government. He is chairman of the Bristow Indian Community. A father of four, Sergeant Wheeler serves on several Indian Education boards and committees and is an advocate of maintaining and improving Indian education.

He said Dr. Charles Gourd, executive director of the Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission, first ap-

proached him to go to India in mid-January.

"Initially, I decided I would wait and see. But when I realized they were serious, and the trip was really going to happen, I felt very excited. It was a great honor and privilege to represent my town, state and country," he said. Before their departure, Governor Henry Bellmon officially proclaimed Sergeant Wheeler and the others Oklahoma's Ambassadors of Good Will to the government and people of India.

The group opened the ceremonies for the 40 nation International Trade Fair and performed alternately with the U.S. Army Band throughout opening day. They demonstrated several social dances which are traditionally performed during ceremonies at the Sand Creek Tribal Town Ceremonial Ground located near Bristow.

Sergeant Wheeler said he and four other dancers performed for the Indian Prime minister. The group performed four dances in all, the Quail dance, Morning dance, Stomp dance and Evening dance. Each dance performance lasts from six to 10 minutes.

"From the time I started walking and could participate in tribal dances, I did," Sergeant Wheeler said. "I do this because I enjoy it and, it's a tradition that we carry throughout each generation. It's a way of expressing praise and worship as well as fellowship."

"This was a once in a lifetime adventure. I shared our life with others who hold a fascination for American Indians. I feel honored to be selected to represent American Indians and Oklahoma in such a prestigious affair," he said.

AF Reserves reach manpower goal

Air Force Reserve manpower went from the floor to the ceiling last year, reaching 99.7 percent of the maximum end strength goal.

The ceiling reflected a fiscal year 1988 congressionally mandated challenge, said Maj. S.B. Olson, chief of Air Force Reserve recruiting operations.

"Our FY '88 end strength stood at 82,117 people, just 283 short of the ceiling. When you get that close, it's harder to recruit. The few positions that are available are open because they are the hardest to fill. They represent the most difficult skills to find," he said.

This year's performance helped bring Reserve strength to an all-time high, according to Major Olson. "Overall, recruiting was down from FY '87, but in some months it was actually better. I don't think there was a clear trend," Major Olson said.

Some figures dropped, most notably officer recruitment which fell 270 short of the FY '88 target of 1,092. In contrast, officer recruitment the previous year topped the target figure by nearly 100.

Enlisted recruitment exceeded FY '88 goals by a handy margin. CMSgt. Edward Penniman, noncommissioned officer in charge of Reserve recruiting operations, suggested some reasons why.

"The biggest attraction is the opportunity for training. Reservists see the training they get as either helping them land a civilian job or improving their skills in the job they have," he said. The Montgomery GI Bill also helps draw in new people, Major Olson added.

Prior service enlisted people made up a larger percentage of the new reservists than during fiscal 1987 and accounted for two-thirds of all Reserve enlisted recruitments. "Pay, and the opportunity to cash in on past training, were important to many former active duty blue suiters," the chief said. Other motives, he suggested, included an opportunity to do something different than civilian jobs, while some are wanted an air reserve technician job or training.

Chief Penniman also offered another observation. "Patriotism is on the upswing in this country. That has become an increasing factor in recruiting the past two or three years."

Retention showed a two percent gain over Fiscal 1987, according to SMSgt. Harold W. Standish, chief of the AFRES career motivation division.

Forging ahead on retention is not an easy process according to the sergeant. "The key is the involvement of commanders and supervisors."

Reserve News Notes

Chapel Services Rescheduled

Chapel services have been rescheduled to 7:15-7:45 a.m. on UTA Sundays in the Sooner Room, Bldg. 1030. To accommodate the change, persons interested in attending the service should notify their supervisor for permission for early sign-in, if needed, on AF Form 40. According to Chaplain (Capt.) Joel Clay, the time change was suggested since the later chapel time was causing problems with some units sign-in times.

507th Fuel Section Competes

The 507th Mobility Support Flight fuel section participated in the first Fuels Readiness Challenge Competition Feb. 17-19 at McDill AFB, Fla. MSgt. Warren Drennan, Fuels NCOIC, said that the team scored 80 out of 100 points.

Other members of the team were: TSgt. John

Yinger, SSgt. Richard Lilly, Sgt. Mark Minchew and Sgt. Grady Martin. Capt. Mike Miller was the officer in charge of the team.

Public Affairs Best in 10th AF

The 507th Public Affairs Office has been selected as the Best in 10th Air Force for 1988. The announcement was made last month in a message from Tenth Air Force. In addition to the Public Affairs Office being the best, TSgt Cathy L. Benedict and 2nd Lt Richard Curry were selected as Best Reserve Public Affairs NCO and full-time ART Officer within Tenth Air Force.

Help Wanted

Wanted: Jet Engine Mechanics for challenging career in the Air Force Reserve. For more information call TSgt. Dianna Tow, at ext. 45331.

Reserve Offers Retention Hot Line

Hear the latest retention news in the unit program. A nationwide hot line number, 1-800-223-1784, if in Georgia 1-800-537-5907, gives callers up to a three-minute message on issues affecting retention.

