

# AIRLIFT RODEO



**A Brief History of Airlift  
Competitions, 1961-1989**



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Competitions, 1961-1989**

**Office of MAC History  
Monograph**

**by**

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## FOREWORD

Not long after the Military Air Transport Service received its airdrop mission in the mid-1950s, MATS senior commanders speculated that the importance of the new airdrop mission might be enhanced through a tactical training competition conducted on a recurring basis. Their idea came to fruition in 1962 when MATS held its first airdrop training competition. For the next several years the competition remained an annual event, but it fell by the wayside during the years of the United States' most intense participation in the Southeast Asia conflict. The airdrop competitions were reinstated in 1969 but were halted again in



1973, because of budget cuts and the reduced emphasis being given to airdrop operations. However, the *esprit de corps* engendered among the troops and the training benefits derived from the earlier events were not forgotten and prompted the competition's renewal in 1979 in its present form. Since 1979 the Rodeos have remained an important training event and tactical evaluation exercise for the Military Airlift Command.

The following historical study deals with the origins, evolution, and results of the tactical airlift competitions in MATS and MAC. It documents their successes and difficulties and relates some important lessons. The history describes nearly three decades of the competitive spirit and quest for excellence shown at the airdrop competitions by the command's men and women, both active and reserve.

H T Johnson

HANSFORD T. JOHNSON  
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## INTRODUCTION

The Military Airlift Command (MAC) held its annual international airdrop competition, named AIRLIFT RODEO, at Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, in June 1989. More than 40 teams competed in numerous aerial and ground events for five days. An immense undertaking, AIRLIFT RODEO 89 involved more than 1,600 participants and 40 aircraft.<sup>1</sup> By contrast, the first airdrop contest, held almost thirty years earlier, involved only seven C-124 Globemaster cargo planes. However, the commanders of both of these competitions endeavored to improve airlift techniques, as will future Rodeo commanders.

### CARP RODEO: FIRST AIRDROP COMPETITIONS

During the early 1960s, the Military Air Transport Service (MATS), MAC's predecessor, underwent an important change. In February 1960, the Eisenhower Administration issued a report, "The Role of Military Air Transport Service in Peace and War," which recommended changing MATS from a passenger hauling service to a strictly military airlift unit. The report also recommended equipping MATS to support either a nuclear war or a limited war. Moreover, it listed "tactical deployments" of Army and Air Force units as part of MATS' mission. Under President John F. Kennedy, the new role for MATS became even clearer. During his first State of the Union address on 30 January 1961, President Kennedy announced his goal of increasing America's airlift capability. He stated:

Obtaining additional air transport mobility—and obtaining it now—will better assure the ability of our conventional forces to respond, with discrimination and speed, to any problem at any spot on the globe at any moment's notice.

In particular, President Kennedy believed that increasing the United States' airlift capabilities would enable the republic "to meet any deliberate effort to avoid our forces by starting limited wars in widely scattered parts of the globe." Two months later, President Kennedy announced that the United States planned to deter "all wars, general or limited, nuclear or conventional, large or small." He specifically wanted the United States to possess the capability to prevent limited, guerrilla wars, and he emphasized that the nation must be prepared to make a substantial contribution in the form of "strong, highly

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<sup>1</sup>Article, *MNS*, "Australians Capture Top Honors at Airlift Rodeo," 16 Jun 89, pp1-4.

<sup>2</sup>Charles E. Miller, *Airlift Doctrine* (Maxwell AFB, Ala: Air University Press, 1988), pp 272-274; Hist, MATS, 1 Jan-30 Jun 61, pp 3-6; rpt, DOD/HQ MATS, "The Role of Military Air Transport Service in Peace and War," Feb 60. Unless otherwise noted, all documents are located in the Office of MAC History, Scott AFB, IL.



mobile forces trained in this type of warfare, some of which must be deployed in forward areas, with a substantial airlift and sealift capacity and prestocked overseas bases."<sup>3</sup> Clearly, MATS needed to improve its ability to airlift forces and supplies to forward areas.

Before January 1961, MATS had required only its troop carrier C-124 units to be qualified in Computed Air Release Point (CARP) aerial delivery operations. This procedure called for an aircrew to fill out a flight plan that included the exact time they would be over the aerial drop zone. Following their flight plan, the crew would drop its cargo at the time previously computed. If done correctly, the aircrew did not need to see its target, and CARP procedures made accurate airdrops possible, even at night. This airdrop procedure fit neatly into President Kennedy's plans for improved airlift, and in January 1961, Headquarters MATS required *all* of its C-124 units, both troop carrier and common user, to become CARP-qualified.<sup>4</sup>

Brigadier General Richard Bromiley, commander of the 1501st Air Transport Wing, conceived an incentive to encourage C-124 aircrews to learn CARP procedures. In April 1961, he proposed to the Headquarters Western Transport Air Force staff (WESTAF—the forerunner of the Twenty-Second Air Force) a MATS-wide CARP RODEO to create an atmosphere of competition. The Headquarters WESTAF staff studied the proposal, and the June 1961 WESTAF Training Officers Conference established detailed procedures and rules for the competition. Major General William P. Fisher, commander of WESTAF, then forwarded the proposal to Headquarters MATS, where it found a favorable audience. Meanwhile, WESTAF held its own CARP RODEO contest between the 1501st Air Transport Wing and the 62d Air Transport Wing on 11 July 1961. The competition consisted of low-level navigation runs with aerial drops of miniature parachutes over the northeast corner of the Winters-Davis Airport hard stand complex near Travis Air Force Base, California. Three aircrews from each wing received briefings and made three practice drops on 10 July, and the following day, the first airlift rodeo took place. Each crew made three drops, and umpires penalized them for early or late arrival and for each yard the parachute missed the drop zone. The 1501st Air Transport Wing, having only started its CARP training in January, won an upset victory over the 62d, which had years of CARP experience. Nevertheless, each team did well. Every crew scored over 1,900 points of a possible 2,400, but the 1501st Air Transport Wing won by 170 points.<sup>5</sup>

Concurrently, the Headquarters MATS staff planned to hold annual aerial delivery competitions patterned after the Strategic Air Command's bombing competition and the Tactical Air Command's William Tell competition.

<sup>3</sup>Miller, *Airlift Doctrine*, pp 275-277.

<sup>4</sup>Hist, WESTAF, Jan-Jun 61, pp 89-91; Hist, EASTAF, 1 Jan-Jun 62, pp 200-201; C. R. Terror, "Campbell Carp Caper," *MATS Flyer*, Dec 63, pp 28-29.

<sup>5</sup>Hist, WESTAF, Jan-Jun 61, pp 91-93.



Originally, they had scheduled the MATS-wide CARP RODEO for the period 6-13 November 1961 at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. However, within Headquarters MATS, objections appeared because of the chance of bad weather that time of year and the short preparation time.<sup>6</sup> As a result, the events<sup>7</sup> were postponed until the following spring. Headquarters MATS Operations planners wanted the contests to evaluate the proficiency of C-124 aircrews' aerial delivery procedures and the effectiveness of unit training programs. Moreover, CARP RODEO would publicly display MATS' capability to accomplish aerial delivery missions.<sup>8</sup>

Teams representing seven wings participated in the first MATS-wide CARP RODEO, which took place from 16 to 22 April 1962 at Scott Air Force Base. WESTAF sent teams from the 62d Air Transport Wing, the 1501st Air Transport



**C-124 and Maintenance crew at Scott AFB for first CARP RODEO, 1962.**

<sup>6</sup>Memo, Maj Irving H. Breslauer, Chief, Pub Info Office/DOI, to Lt Col R. L. Towne, "CARP Competition," 22 Sep 61.

<sup>7</sup>Officially titled the ANNUAL AERIAL DELIVERY COMPETITION, but commonly referred to as CARP RODEO.

<sup>8</sup>OPORD 4-62, MATS DCS/Ops, "MATS Annual Aerial Delivery Competition," 1 Feb 62, p 2.

Wing, the 1502d Air Transport Wing, and the 1503d Air Transport Wing. Teams from the Eastern Transport Air Force (EASTAF--the forerunner of the Twenty-First Air Force) included the 63d Troop Carrier Wing, the 1607th Air Transport Wing, and the 1608th Air Transport Wing.<sup>9</sup> Each team consisted of two six-man aircrews and one ten-man maintenance crew. Although fourteen crews participated, they used only seven C-124s, with both of a wing's aircrews flying the same aircraft. The competition involved three separate, hour-long missions. First, every crew flew one daylight, low-level, navigational mission and miniature parachute drop over a predetermined route. Then, every crew flew a similar night mission. Finally, they repeated the first mission, following a different predetermined route. The crews started each mission with 1,000 points, and umpires subtracted points for early or late takeoffs, poor briefing procedures, failure to maintain exact altitudes and airspeeds, drop-time errors, and distance their parachutes fell from the center of the drop zone.<sup>10</sup>

As a non-competing part of the Rodeo, Combat Control Teams (CCT) from the 62d Air Transport Wing and the 63d Troop Carrier Wing managed activities within the drop zone. With a 25 ounce shot bag attached, the miniature parachutes simulated a larger parachute with a 225 pound load. For the night drops, the competitors attached a small, one-cell flashlight (from a Mae West life preserver) to the parachute for tracking and recovery. Perpendicular to the parachute's shroud lines, the flashlight rested above the shot bag to prevent damage when it hit the ground. Twenty-eight knot winds at Scott Air Force Base increased the difficulty of the missions. To prevent the wind from blowing the parachutes around after they hit the ground, CCT personnel sprinted across the drop zone and tried to catch the miniature parachutes.<sup>11</sup>

The 1502d Air Transport Wing from Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, won the first CARP RODEO with a six-mission total of 4,006 points. Captain J. L.

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<sup>9</sup>Eastern Transport Air Force (EASTAF) became the Twenty-First Air Force; 63d Troop Carrier Wing, Hunter AFB, became the 63d Military Airlift Wing, Norton AFB; 1607th Air Transport Wing, Dover AFB, became the 436th Military Airlift Wing; 1608th Air Transport Wing, Charleston AFB, became the 437th Military Airlift Wing; 1611th Air Transport Wing, McGuire AFB, became the 438th Military Airlift Wing. Western Transport Air Force (WESTAF) became the Twenty-Second Air Force; 62d Air Transport Wing, McChord AFB, became the 62d Military Airlift Wing; 1501st Air Transport Wing, Travis AFB, became the 60th Military Airlift Wing; 1502d Air Transport Wing, Hickam AFB, became the 61st Military Airlift Wing; 1503d Air Transport Wing, Tachikawa AB, Japan, was inactivated.

<sup>10</sup>OPORD 4-62, MATS DCS/Ops, "MATS Annual Aerial Delivery Competition," 1 Feb 62, pp 10-11.

<sup>11</sup>OPORD 4-62, MATS DCS/Ops, "MATS Annual Aerial Delivery Competition," 1 Feb 62, pp 12-17; press release, MATS Pub Affairs Ofc, "Paratroopers to Jump during Aerial Delivery Competition at Scott AFB," 5 Apr 62; article, Scott AFB *Broadcaster*, "Hawaii Wings Win Airdrop Contest," 26 Apr 62; article, Warren Stricker, "Local Reporter Flies with MATS Air Contest Crew," *Okawville Times* (Okawville, Illinois), 25 Apr 62.





**A member of the 63d Combat Control Team catches a miniature parachute during the first CARP RODEO. The miniature parachute simulated a paratrooper.**

Lodrige's crew from the 1502d won the individual crew competition with 2,159 points for its three missions. Captain J. Yannello and his crew from the 1502d Air Transport Wing achieved the best score for one mission with 932 points. First Lieutenant J. E. Scott's aircrew from the 1607th Air Transport Wing came the closest to the target, missing by only 49 yards. Only seven drops fell out of bounds (800 yards), and the other 35 drops averaged 229 yards from the target.<sup>12</sup> For its efforts, the 1502d Air Transport Wing took home the Wing Trophy, a silver punch bowl. The first through third place crewmembers received individual plaques and tie pins.<sup>13</sup>

Having gained experience with the first CARP RODEO, MATS officials planned to make the next event even more realistic. In an October 1962 letter to MATS Operations, Brigadier General Robert J. Goewey, Deputy Commander WESTAF, suggested the addition of formation, heavy cargo, and troop drops to the CARP RODEO. Major General George B. Dany, MATS Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, concurred in October, but he believed that it would be difficult to obtain a suitable site for troop and heavy cargo drops near Scott Air Force Base.<sup>14</sup> The increased emphasis placed upon realism for CARP RODEO paralleled the evolution of MATS' mission to include a tactical capability.

On 1 April 1963, Headquarters MATS implemented new tactical requirements. Henceforth, all MATS units possessing aircraft with an aerial delivery capability had to become qualified in all phases of formation flying and in the aerial delivery of personnel, cargo, and equipment using the CARP system. Although excellent for procedural training, the use of miniature parachutes did not provide the necessary aircrew experience needed for actual aerial delivery.<sup>15</sup> Aircrews needed to make real drops, using heavy loads and personnel, once the procedures had been mastered.

The Military Air Transport Service conducted the second Annual Aerial Delivery Competition, still referred to as CARP RODEO, at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, during the week of 22-28 September 1963 with greater realism than the first. The same seven wings participated as the year before. Again, each wing sent one C-124 with two crews. In addition, both the 1501st and

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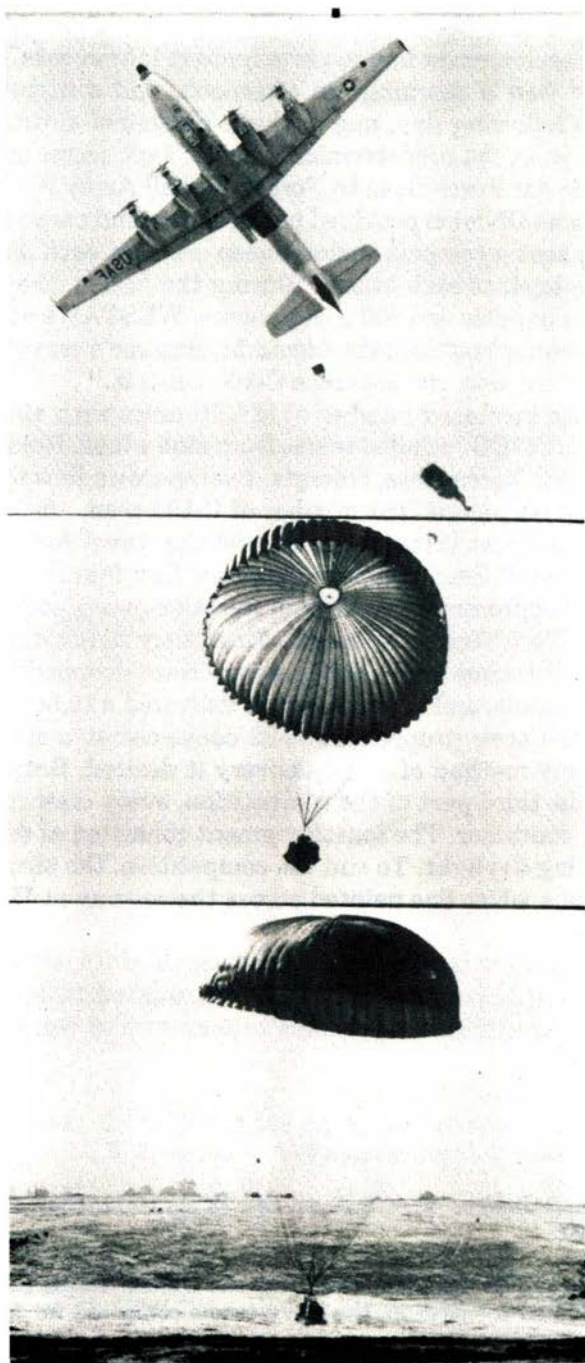
<sup>12</sup>Press release, MATS Pub Affairs Ofc, "Hawaii-Based Wing Wins MATS First Annual Aerial Delivery Competition," 20 Apr 62; score card, "MATS Aerial Delivery Competition," w/atch, 19 Apr 62.

<sup>13</sup>Article, Scott AFB *Broadcaster*, "Hawaii Wings Win Airdrop Contest," 26 Apr 62; press release, no OPR, "Members of the Winning Team," ca 21 Apr 62; ltr, Maj Gen R. J. Reeves, Vice Com MATS, to Brig Gen J. C. Sherril, 1608 ATW/CC, ns, 20 Jun 62; ltr, Maj Gen R. J. Reeves, Vice Com MATS, to Col R. J. Barnick, 63 TCW/CC, ns, 20 Jun 62.

<sup>14</sup>Ltr, Maj Gen G. B. Dany, MATS DCS/Ops, to EASTAF Ops, "Additional CARP Rodeo Events," w/atch (missing), 10 Oct 62.

<sup>15</sup>Hist, EASTAF, 1 Jan-30 Jun 63, pp 174-176; ltr, Col G. L. Curtis, MATS Ast DCS/Ops, to EASTAF/Ops and WESTAF/Ops, "Combat Airlift Requirements," 22 Apr 63.





**Sequence of photographs showing the "dead center" aerial delivery of a 1,000 pound container at the third CARP RODEO, 1964.**

1608th Air Transport Wings entered one operational C-130E Hercules, flown by the wing's two best C-130 aircrews. The number of competition missions also grew. Now, each aircrew had to participate in four events. During the first day, every crew flew a morning, an afternoon, and a night cargo delivery mission. On the following day, one daylight personnel airdrop was made by each crew. That year, the predetermined routes, kept secret until the mission, went from Dover Air Force Base to Fort Campbell Army Airfield, Kentucky. The 101st Airborne Division provided paratroopers and cargo for the airdrops. Also, the wings sent a ten-man maintenance crew for each aircraft, but they did not compete against each other.<sup>16</sup> During the Rodeo, the competitors delivered 54 one-ton bundles and 360 paratroopers. WESTAF's 62d Air Transport Wing took first place, and Captain Alcuin M. Scherer's crew from the 1608th Air Transport Wing won the separate C-130 contest.<sup>17</sup>

Reflecting the increased number of MATS units with airdrop capability, the third CARP RODEO included teams from nine wings. Held 9-13 November 1964 at Hunter Air Force Base, Georgia, twelve crews flew C-124s, with two crews per aircraft as before. The number of C-130 teams increased to five as the Naval Air Transport Wing, Atlantic, and the Naval Air Transport Wing, Pacific, participated.<sup>18</sup> Each competing aircrew flew four low-level navigation airdrop sorties of approximately one-hour duration over a predetermined route to drop zones at Fort Stewart, Georgia. First, they flew a daylight cargo airdrop using CARP techniques. Globemaster crews dropped A-22 containers weighing 2,000 pounds, and Hercules crews delivered a 10,000 pound platform load. Second, each crew dropped an A-22 container at a specified time and altitude, using any method of aerial delivery it desired. Returning to CARP procedures for the third part of the competition, every crew made a night airdrop of an A-22 container. The fourth segment consisted of dropping a single paratrooper during daylight. To end the competition, the aircrews performed a spot landing on a white line painted across the runway at Hunter Air Force Base.<sup>19</sup>

Changes in the awards also accompanied the third CARP RODEO. General Howell M. Estes, Jr., commander of MATS, wanted to increase esprit by remembering his predecessors. For this reason, and to enhance the prestige

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<sup>16</sup>Hist, EASTAF, 1 Jul-31 Dec 63, pp 231-232; OPORD 18-63, MATS DCS/Ops, "MATS Annual Aerial Delivery Competition," nd, pp 1-13.

<sup>17</sup>Article, "CARP Rodeo," *MATS Flyer*, Dec 63, pp 10-11; Hist, EASTAF, 1 Jul-31 Dec 63, pp 231-232.

<sup>18</sup>At this time, MATS included units from the United States Navy. Having only recently been qualified for airdrop, the Navy teams competed for the first time.

<sup>19</sup>OPORD 37-64, MATS DCS/Ops, "MATS Annual Aerial Delivery Competition," 1 Oct 64, pp 1, A-V-1-4; news release, Ofc of Info, 63d TCW, CARP RODEO, 19 Nov 64; pamphlet, MATS Directorate of Information, "MATS Third Annual Aerial Delivery Competition," Nov 64.



of the highest CARP RODEO awards, General Estes named the top four trophies after former MATS commanders. These awards were presented for the following events:

Lieutenant General Laurence S. Kuter Trophy (1948-1952)--for the wing of the C-124 team having the highest aggregate score.

Lieutenant General Joseph Smith Trophy (1952-1958)--for the wing of the C-130 team having the highest aggregate score.

Lieutenant General William H. Tunner Trophy (1958-1960)--for the individual crew, either C-124 or C-130, with the best single drop--closest circular error (CE) and time on target (TOT)--in the competition.

General Joe W. Kelly Trophy (1960-1964)--for the individual crew, either C-124 or C-130, deemed by the umpires to have been the most outstanding crew entered in the competition.

Each trophy was a 10-inch silver punch bowl.<sup>20</sup>

The Eastern Transport Air Force's 1608th Air Transport Wing from Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina, made a virtual sweep of the 1964 CARP RODEO awards. It won the Kuter, Kelly, and Smith Trophies. The Tunner Trophy went to Captain Frederick T. Francis' crew of the 1607th Air Transport Wing from Dover Air Force Base, Delaware. Captain Francis' C-124 aircrew had a circular error of only 36 yards and reached the target a mere one second early. Also from the 1607th, Captain David S. Poppa's C-124 crew made the closest drop, only 23 yards. The Naval Air Transport Wing, Pacific, came closest in the personnel drops, missing the target by only 36 yards. At the awards banquet, General Estes stressed the importance of the maintenance support personnel, and they received awards this year. Matching the efforts of their aircrews, the 1608th Air Transport Wing's maintenance crews took first place in both the C-124 and the C-130 categories. However, more important than the trophies and awards, the quality of the competitors' training stood out. General Estes noted that during the three short years since the CARP RODEO had begun the over-all performance had consistently improved. The average circular error had fallen from well over 200 yards in 1962 to 193 yards

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<sup>20</sup>Ltrs, Gen H. M. Estes, Jr., MATS/CC, to Gen J. W. Kelly, USAF (Ret) and Lt Gen L. S. Kuter, USAF (Ret), CARP RODEO Trophies, 30 Nov 64; purchase orders, MATS Directorate of Information to L. G. Balfour Co, trophies, 8 and 22 Oct 64.

the following year. Then, it had dropped to only 174 yards—despite the increased number of competitors.<sup>21</sup>

Undoubtedly, the CARP RODEO had helped to stimulate proficiency with Computed Air Release Point procedures. Preparations began for a fourth CARP RODEO,<sup>22</sup> but escalating American involvement in the Vietnam War apparently ended the CARP RODEOS. MATS' growing intertheater logistics airlift mission during 1965 left little time for airdrop competition. In 1966, MATS was redesignated the Military Airlift Command, and its airlift mission to Southeast Asia grew until 1969.<sup>23</sup>

## New Airplanes, New Competitions

Even as the CARP RODEOS ended, MATS greatly improved its airdrop capabilities with the acquisition of the first new Lockheed C-141A Starlifter on 19 October 1964. The Starlifter showed its potential in July 1965, when one dropped 70,000 pounds of cargo. Two months later, a Starlifter dropped 120 paratroopers. By December 1965, MATS had received 65 of the jet aircraft, with more to follow.<sup>24</sup> Despite the intertheater logistics airlift to Southeast Asia, MATS—and then MAC—still had the air mobility mission described by President Kennedy. American withdrawal from Vietnam and the declining need for airlift into Southeast Asia after 1969 allowed MAC to reinstate its airdrop competitions. Just as MATS had units needing airdrop training in 1961, MAC had units which needed airdrop training for the new C-141.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, in 1969, Headquarters MAC's DCS Operations, decided to revive the airdrop competitions to evaluate MAC aircrew proficiency in combat airlift procedures, tactics and techniques; to ascertain the effectiveness of wing combat airlift training

<sup>21</sup>News release, 63d TCW Ofc of Info, CARP Rodeo, 19 Nov 64; telex, MATS/DOI to SAFOI, "Aerial Delivery Story," 17 Nov 64; Hist, EASTAF, 1 Jul-31 Dec 64, pp 227-228; article, *Navy Times*, "Navy Air Crew Sets Record in Drop Meet," 25 Nov 64, p 11.

<sup>22</sup>Ltr, 2d Lt G. N. Poppink, 63d TCW/WOI, to MATS/MADOI, "Final Information Report 1964 Aerial Delivery Competition," 24 Nov 64.

<sup>23</sup>Rprt, Project Corona Harvest, "USAF Airlift Activities in Support of Operations in Southeast Asia, 1 January 1965 - 31 March 1968," Jan 1973, p 10; Miller, *Airlift Doctrine*, pp 309-310.

<sup>24</sup>Chronology, no OPR, "Highlights and Accomplishments: C-141 Program, 1962-1966," nd, C-141 File, History; article, "C-141 Shatters Four Records with Massive Cargo Parachutes," *AFSC Newsreview*, Sep 65, p 1; article, "Jet Jumpers' Make History; So Does Starlifter," *Lockheed Southern Star*, 2 Sep 65, p 3.

<sup>25</sup>One of the lessons learned from the Vietnam War was that a combat area was no place for a unit to learn its mission. Rprt (S), USAF Tactical Airlift Center (HQ TAC: Project CORONA HARVEST): "Tactical Airlift in SEA, 1 January 1965 - 31 March 1968," vol 2: "Tactical Airlift Operations," 19 Dec 69, p II-76, info used (U).



programs; and to select the best qualified maintenance support team and combat airlift aircrew, both wing- and air force-level, for recognition and suitable awards.<sup>26</sup>

During 12-20 July 1969, MAC held the COMBAT AIRLIFT COMPETITION at Charleston Air Force Base for C-141 wings. Teams from the 60th, 62d, and 63d Military Airlift Wings represented the Twenty-Second Air Force at the first all-jet competition, while teams from the 436th, 437th, and 438th Military Airlift Wings represented the Twenty-First Air Force. A wing's team consisted of two aircrews and one maintenance crew, using the same C-141 aircraft. To avoid confusion, each aircrew was identified as "Blue" or "Gold." They competed against one another in personnel and heavy equipment airdrop missions, both day and night and using CARP procedures, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; a simulated airdrop against the Strategic Air Command's Radar Bomb Scoring Site at Richmond, Kentucky;<sup>27</sup> and aircraft engine running offload (ERO) procedures. The maintenance crews received evaluations for their aircraft's mechanical condition and maintenance launch reliability.

COMBAT AIRLIFT COMPETITION, an all-jet competition, required MAC to change the awards previously given to the best C-124 and C-130 crews during CARP RODEO. Although the trophy names remained unchanged, they now represented C-141 events. The Twenty-First Air Force won the General Kuter Trophy, given to the MAC numbered air force accumulating the highest total points, winning by 71.5 points. The 63d Military Airlift Wing won the other three major trophies. It took the General Smith Trophy for having the highest aggregate score. Captain Richard J. Trzaskoma's crew won the General Tunner Trophy for having the best circular error average of 110 yards, and Major Frank P. Carter's maintenance team captured the General Kelly Trophy.<sup>28</sup>

Headquarters MAC, Operations, expanded the second COMBAT AIRLIFT COMPETITION, held 20-24 July 1970 at Travis Air Force Base, to include one Reserve associate aircrew from each MAC Air Force. Instead of having two aircrews from a wing competing as a team, however, wings equipped with C-141s and tasked with a combat airlift mission sent only one aircrew and a maintenance crew. That year, a total of eight teams participated. Also, both MAC numbered air forces sent a six-man Combat Control Team (CCT) and a

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<sup>26</sup>OPORD 11-69, MAC DCS/Ops, "Combat Airlift Competition," 10 Jun 69, p 1.

<sup>27</sup>Airdrops of this type were referred to as "Oilburner" missions.

<sup>28</sup>OPORD 11-69, MAC DCS/Ops, "Combat Airlift Competition," 10 Jun 69, p C-III-1; rpt, MAC DCS/Ops, "MAC Combat Airlift Competition," Jul 69; rpt, 437 MAW, "Final Report: Combat Airlift Competition, 12-20 Jul 69," 1969, pp 6-14; Hist, 63 MAW, Jul-Dec 69, pp 28-29; article, "MAC's 1969 Combat Airlift Competition: A Pictorial Review," *MAC Flyer*, Nov 69, pp 15-17.

three-man Aerial Delivery Team to compete.<sup>29</sup> To the major trophies, MAC added the General Howell M. Estes, Jr., Trophy for the unit of the aircrew scoring the highest total points.<sup>30</sup>

For the first time, the CCTs competed in airdrops, physical fitness tests, marksmanship, and a four-mile map and compass course. Meanwhile, umpires graded the aerial delivery teams in aerial delivery, preparation of airdrop loads, and inspection of airdrop loads. As before, the flying competition consisted of radar scored airdrops, engine running offload, and the airdrop of paratroopers and equipment during day and night conditions. These airdrops took place at four different drop zones: Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho; Wendover Auxiliary Field, 100 miles west of Salt Lake City, Utah; Fallon Naval Air Station, Reno, Nevada; and Camp Roberts, about 75 miles southwest of Fresno, California. The Twenty-First Air Force won the Kuter Trophy this time. The 58th Military Airlift Squadron of the 436th Military Airlift Wing captured the first Estes Trophy, and the 436th also won the Tunner and Smith Trophies. A reserve unit, the 939th Military Airlift Group (Associate) won the Kelly Trophy.<sup>31</sup>

After the 1970 competition, representatives from the Twenty-First and Twenty-Second Air Forces met at Scott Air Force Base to critique the 1970 COMBAT AIRLIFT COMPETITION. They unanimously agreed that the next competition should have a trophy for the Aerial Delivery and the Combat Control Teams. Accepting this recommendation, the MAC Operations staff added the Commander's Award for the wing compiling the highest combined score for competing combat control and aerial delivery teams,<sup>32</sup> bringing the total of major awards to six. At the 1971 COMBAT AIRLIFT COMPETITION, held at Charleston Air Force Base, the 63d Military Airlift Wing won all five of the wing-level trophies: Estes, Kelly, MAC Commander's, Tunner, and Smith. In addition, the 63d's scores, combined with the 944th Military Airlift Group (Associate), won the Kuter Trophy for the Twenty-Second Air Force.<sup>33</sup>

Using the circular error average (CEA) as a measure, MAC units had improved their C-141 aerial delivery skills. In 1971, the 63d Military Airlift Wing had won the Tunner Trophy with an average error of 77 yards. But during

<sup>29</sup>OPORD 11-70, MAC DCS/Ops, "Combat Airlift Competition," 10 Jun 70, p C-1.

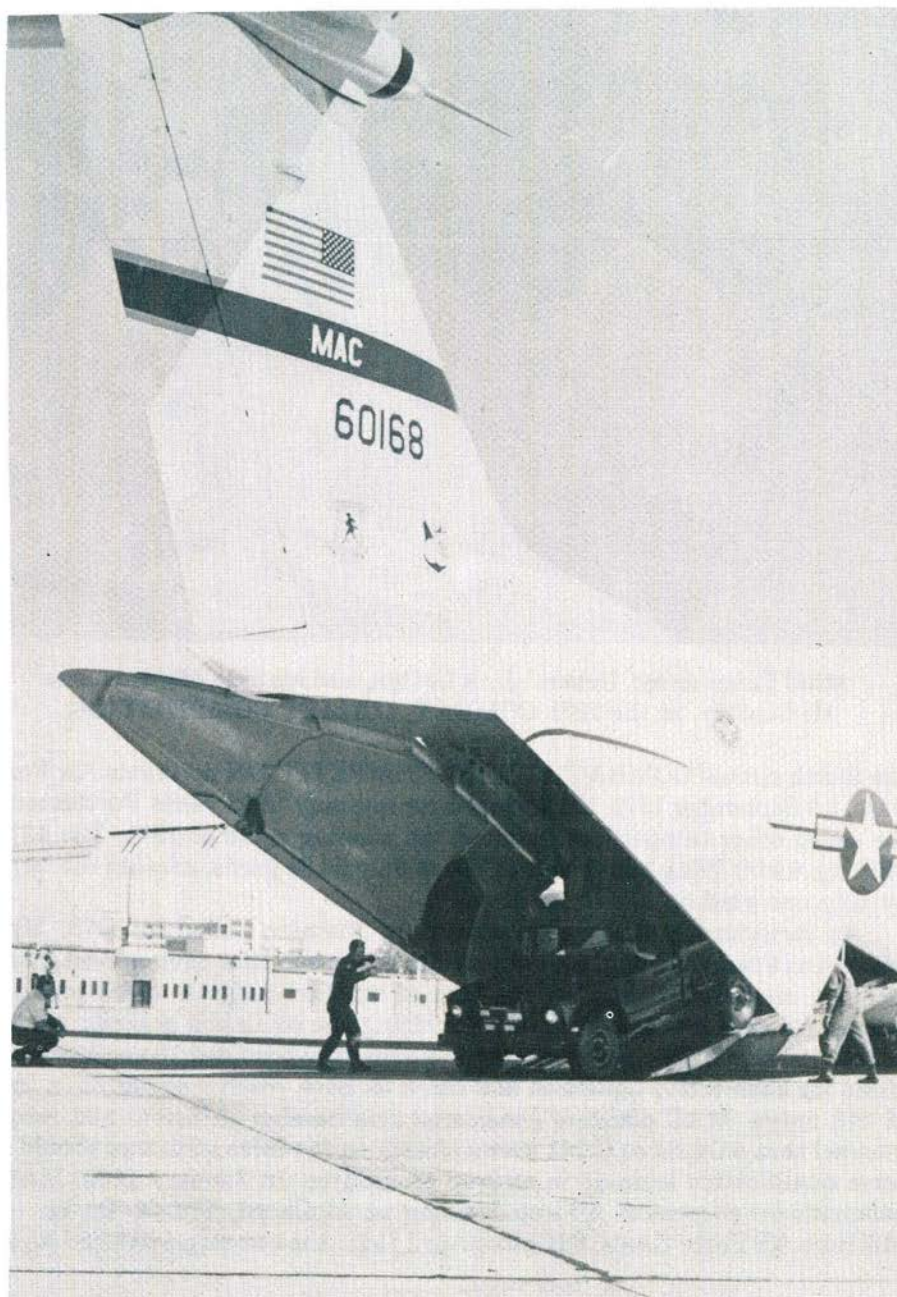
<sup>30</sup>Ltr, Gen J. J. Catton, MAC/CC, to Gen H. M. Estes, Jr., USAF (Ret), ns, 20 Jan 70; ltr, Gen H. M. Estes, Jr., USAF (Ret), to Gen J. J. Catton, MAC/CC, ns, 23 Jan 70.

<sup>31</sup>Hist, 63 MAW, Jul-Sep 70, pp 19-22; press release, MAC DCS/Pub Info, Combat Airlift Competition, ca Jul 70; press release, MAC DCS/Pub Info, Combat Airlift Competition, ca Jul 70.

<sup>32</sup>Rprt, MAC DCS Ops/DOX, "Critique of 1970 Combat Airlift Competition," w/atch, 5 Aug 70; brfg, MAC DCS Ops, "1971 Combat Airlift Competition," Apr 71; press release, MAC DCS/Pub Info, "63d Wing Wins Combat Airlift Competition," 3 Jun 71.

<sup>33</sup>OPORD 11-71, MAC DCS/Ops, "Combat Airlift Competition," 23 Feb 71, p 1; Hist, 63 MAW, Apr-Jun 71, pp 28-34.





**The C-141 Engine Running Offload event during the  
COMBAT AIRLIFT COMPETITION, 1972.**



**MAC Commander, General Jack Catton, and his aide, Major Duane H. Cassidy, at the 1971 COMBAT AIRLIFT COMPETITION.**

the fourth annual COMBAT AIRLIFT COMPETITION at Travis Air Force Base, 2-9 September 1972, the *highest* error was only 78.83 yards. Furthermore, the seven other competitors bettered the winning score of 1971. The 437th Military Airlift Wing had the best CEA of only 24.33 yards, missing the target by only one yard on one of its drops.<sup>34</sup>

As American military involvement in Vietnam ended in 1973, MAC underwent a restructuring and streamlining for a peacetime environment, which included austere funding. In the face of smaller budgets, MAC planners questioned how much combat airlift training the command actually needed. In late 1972, MAC's combat airlift force structure provided 18 combat ready crews for each active squadron and three for each reserve squadron, a total of 273 crews. MAC planners considered this number sufficient and recommended that only those C-141 crews already in the force structure should receive qualification training in airdrop procedures. In January 1973, MAC's commanders suspended airdrop training at McChord, Travis, Dover, and McGuire Air Force Bases. Effective April 1973, the command reduced its air-

<sup>34</sup>Hist, 436 MAW, 1 Jul-30 Sep 72, pp 55-57; Hist, 437 MAW, 1 Jul-30 Sep 72, pp 45-51.



drop crew force to 40 active duty and eight associate reserve crews.<sup>35</sup> In 1973, the COMBAT AIRLIFT COMPETITION became a casualty of the declining fiscal budget and a decreased emphasis on airdrop capabilities. Again, the competitions ended.

In 1965, Congress had directed the United States Air Force to redesignate MATS as the Military Airlift Command, effective 8 January 1966. Then, under the McConnell-Johnson Agreement of April 1966, the United States Army had relinquished its claim to all fixed-wing aircraft designed for transport functions, transferring its C-7 Caribou and C-123 Provider aircraft to the Air Force. These aircraft joined the Tactical Air Command's (TAC) C-130s as tactical airlift aircraft. During the period 1974-1975, the Air Force consolidated its tactical and strategic airlift forces under MAC.<sup>36</sup> General Paul K. Carlton, MAC's commander from 1972-1977, saw a need "to recognize and preserve the image and spirit [of tactical airlift] in name and through organizational accommodations."<sup>37</sup> Therefore, the tactical airlift units transferred from TAC to MAC retained the term "Tactical" in their names, and MAC established the USAF Airlift Center at Pope Air Force Base, to test tactical airlift systems and procedures.<sup>38</sup>

In the late 1970s, as the United States became increasingly concerned about rapid and effective military response to crisis situations, MAC's leaders recognized the necessity of realistic planning for quick responses. For some time, American military planning had focused on Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This planning took into consideration the Warsaw Pact's assets, the stability of NATO's northern and southern flanks, the type and quantity of materiel and personnel needed for sufficient defense, and the airlift capability required to support these plans. New estimates of Soviet response capabilities against NATO members and elsewhere necessitated a reappraisal of America's military planning. By 1979, defense guidance demanded planning which provided rapid reinforcement of Europe during a crisis, and it also directed planners to prepare for a simultaneous response to other contingencies, especially in the Middle East. Because of the diverse and geographically widespread nature of the nation's interests and allies, American

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<sup>35</sup>Hist, MAC, 1973, pp 10 and 361-362.

<sup>36</sup>"Agreement Between Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, and Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force," 6 Apr 66, reprinted in Richard I. Wolf, ed, *The United States Air Force: Basic Documents on Roles and Missions*, (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, United States Air Force, 1987), pp 379-384.

<sup>37</sup>Ltr, Gen P. K. Carlton, CINCMAC, to Gen D. C. Jones, CSAF, [subj: Preserving the image of Tactical Airlift], 16 Nov 74, w/1 atch, Sup Doc VI-29 in Hist, MAC, Jul 74-Dec 75.

<sup>38</sup>Background paper, MAC DCS Plans/XPPP, "Airlift Consolidation - Preservation of the Image of 'Tactical Airlift,'" 2 Dec 74, w/atch, Sup Doc VI-30 in Hist, MAC, Jul 74-Dec 75; Hist, MAC, Jul 74-Dec 75, pp 319-320."

responses to foreign challenges had to be effective as well as rapid. Therefore, MAC planners concentrated their efforts on providing for a more rapid reinforcement of NATO, identifying the airlift resources needed to support the United States' forces and allies in the Persian Gulf region, and defining MAC support to the newly-formed Joint Deployment Agency and Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force. In addition, Headquarters MAC improved its plans for strategic airdrop capability and initiated research to refine the techniques, tactics, and equipment employed during tactical airlift operations.<sup>39</sup>

A return to airlift competitions offered MAC one way of improving its tactical airlift capabilities, and airlift competitions were not new to the tactical units. While part of TAC, these units had held a few airlift competitions. In 1972, the 316th Tactical Airlift Wing had held an Airdrop Competition to encourage the aircrews to improve their proficiency and to study the ballistic changes of the airdrops. And the following year, TAC had held a competition at Pope Air Force Base.<sup>40</sup>

### Return of the Rodeo

In September 1978, the Headquarters MAC senior staff discussed holding a new airdrop competition.<sup>41</sup> After careful consideration, General William G. Moore, MAC commander in chief from 1977 to 1979, decided to reinstate the airdrop competitions.<sup>42</sup> On 27 January 1979, General Moore instructed each active duty MAC unit that it would participate in a forthcoming, command-wide tactical airdrop competition, and he invited MAC's associate Air National Guard and Air Force Reserves units to participate.<sup>43</sup> The 317th Tactical Airlift Wing at Pope Air Force Base hosted MAC's first Tactical Airdrop Competition, more commonly known as VOLANT RODEO, from 3-9 June 1979. Teams from the active force, the Air Force Reserves, and the Air National Guard participated in this first VOLANT RODEO. A total of 31 aircrews competed: eleven C-141, thirteen C-130, four C-123, and three C-7. The C-130 and C-141

<sup>39</sup>Hist, MAC, 1979, pp 336-337.

<sup>40</sup>Hist, 316 TAW, 1 Jan-31 Mar 72, p 17; After action rppt, 317 TAW/CC, "After Action Report, 1979 CINCMAC Tactical Airdrop Competition (Volant Rodeo)," w/atch, ca Jul 79, Sup Doc 38 of Hist, 317 TAW, 1 Apr-30 Jun 79.

<sup>41</sup>Hist, MAC, 1979, footnote #177, p 220.

<sup>42</sup>Msg, MAC/OII to MAC wing newspaper editors, "MAC News Service Release," 111900Z Jun 79, Sup Doc 31 in Hist, 317 TAW, 1 Apr-30 Jun 79.

<sup>43</sup>Msg, CINCMAC to 21 AF/CC, *et al*, "MAC-Wide Airdrop Competition," 271600Z Jan 79, Sup Doc III-31, in Hist, MAC, 1979. General Moore referred to the competition as "Tactical Rodeo," but this nickname changed.



crews dropped personnel, heavy equipment, and Container Delivery Systems (CDS).<sup>44</sup> Meanwhile, C-123s dropped personnel, CDS, and a door bundle, and C-7s dropped personnel and two door bundles. Afterward, the C-141 teams performed engine running onload/offload (ERO), and the teams flying the other three types of aircraft made assault takeoffs and landings. Maintenance, aerial delivery joint inspections, Combat Control Team, and security police competitions rounded out the Rodeo.<sup>45</sup>

Rodeo planners tried to make the competitions as realistic as possible. Major General Edward J. Nash, MAC Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, requested the assistance of the United States Army's XVIII Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, and the Army cooperated by providing equipment, paratroopers, and drop zones at Fort Bragg.<sup>46</sup> Rodeo planners also introduced new elements of realism into the non-flying competitions. For example, the security police teams not only had marksmanship events, but they also underwent tactical exercises. In addition, each police team received grades for its ability to guard a C-130 while confronting distractions and diversionary tactics from a group of "terrorists."<sup>47</sup>

Awards presented at the 1979 VOLANT RODEO differed from those given during the earlier airdrop competitions. Gone were the trophies named for commanders. Instead, awards went to the best aircrews and maintenance crews for each type of aircraft. The best wing, aerial port joint inspector, ERO, CCT, and security police team received awards as well. Also, the Kuter Trophy, presented to the MAC numbered air force accumulating the highest total points, did not reappear. The Twenty-Second Air Force's 443d Military Airlift Wing from Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma, won the Best Wing Award in 1979.<sup>48</sup>

General Moore had wanted VOLANT RODEO 79 to demonstrate the capabilities of MAC's aircrew and support personnel in both the active and reserve forces.<sup>49</sup> And the Rodeo succeeded admirably. Just before the awards ceremony at Pope Air Force Base, General Moore told reporters that MAC was

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<sup>44</sup>CDS-A system for airdropping A-22 containers by parachute.

<sup>45</sup>Hist, MAC, 1979, p 220; brfg, Competition Staff to Gen W.G. Moore, Jr., CINCMAC, VOLANT RODEO 1979, 18 May 79, Sup Doc 36 in Hist, 317 TAW, 1 Apr-30 Jun 79.

<sup>46</sup>Hist, MAC, 1979, p 220; ltr, Maj Gen E. J. Nash, MAC DCS/Ops, to Lt Gen V. F. Warner, Comdr 18th Airborne Corps, Army assistance for VOLANT RODEO, w/atch, 8 Mar 79, Sup Doc 33 in Hist, 317 TAW, 1 Apr-30 Jun 79.

<sup>47</sup>Hist, 443 MAW, 1 Apr-30 Jun 79, p 43.

<sup>48</sup>Hist, MAC, 1979, pp 220-221. For a detailed narrative of the 1979 VOLANT RODEO, see Hist, 443 MAW, 1 Apr-30 Jun 79, pp 31-49.

<sup>49</sup>Msg, CINCMAC to 21 AF/CC, *et al*, "MAC-Wide Airdrop Competition," 271600Z Jan 79, Sup Doc III-31 in Hist, MAC, 1979.

a good outfit, but "a good outfit, when it's been involved in routine operations, sometimes doesn't understand what it really can do until the chips are down." He believed that MAC periodically needed to put its people into that type of environment. "Not only do we, the leaders of the command, have the opportunity to see what these folks can do," he said, "but they also see [for] themselves."<sup>60</sup> The success of VOLANT RODEO 79 ensured that more competitions would follow.

VOLANT RODEO 80, again held at Pope Air Force Base between 13 and 19 July, expanded upon its predecessor.<sup>61</sup> Although the competitions continued unchanged, the number of participants increased: 37 aircraft and aircrews, 37 maintenance crews, 11 C-141 ERO teams, 13 C-130 ERO teams, nine CCTs, 21 security police teams, and 23 airdrop load inspectors.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, General Robert E. Huyser, MAC commander in chief from July 1979 to June 1981, invited Australia, Canada, Great Britain, and the Federal Republic of Germany to take part in any of the Rodeo events they desired. Only Australia chose to enter teams in each event; the other three allies did not send combat control or security police teams. The West Germans, flying a C-160 Transall, competed in the C-130 events. Every maintenance crew kept its aircraft spotless. One observer remarked that he had seen a lot of airlift aircraft, but this was the first time he had ever seen the rollers in the cargo compartment polished. When the umpires tallied the final scores, the 317th Tactical Airlift Wing had won the Best Wing Award, now named the General William G. Moore Trophy in honor of the former MAC commander in chief. The 38th Airlift Group from Great Britain won the Best Allied Aircrew Award.<sup>63</sup>

Inviting allied teams to the Rodeo turned out to be a wise decision. Close associations at the Rodeo facilitated the flow of information between MAC personnel and their Allied counterparts. In fact, the British complained about the limited time available to exchange information with the other aircrews. Responding, the Headquarters MAC Operations staff made provisions for the allied teams to arrive earlier at the next Rodeo, giving them adequate time to fly and talk with MAC aircrews. In 1981, many of the allied aircrews took the opportunity to fly on MAC aircraft, and they became acquainted with pro-

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<sup>60</sup>Msg, MAC/OII to MAC wing newspaper editors, "MAC News Service Release," 111900Z Jun 79, Sup Doc 31 in Hist, 317 TAW, 1 Apr-30 Jun 79.

<sup>61</sup>Originally, MAC's Directorate of Aircrew Training had responsibility for VOLANT RODEO, but later in 1980, responsibility was transferred to the Directorate of Aircrew Standardization/Evaluation. Hist, MAC, 1980, p 256.

<sup>62</sup>After action report, Col R. R. Utley, VOLANT RODEO Competition Commander, 18 Sep 80, w/9 atchs, Sup Doc 3-91 in Hist, MAC, 1980.

<sup>63</sup>Hist, MAC, 1980, pp 256-259; article, "Volant Rodeo," Lockheed C-130 Service Letter, Aug 80, p 1; intvw, J. S. Underwood, MAC Hist, with Maj E. Cook, MAC Ops/DOVF, 24 Jul 89.





Cartoon drawn by Dave Davenport for VOLANT RODEO 81.

cedures employed by MAC aircrews and staff personnel. Furthermore, Headquarters MAC planners decided to ask the allied countries to provide umpires for future Rodeos. The command also gained helpful information from the international contact. For example, a 314th Tactical Airlift Wing flight examiner noticed that the British copilot helped his navigator by performing map reading, radar updating, and telling the pilot where to fly the aircraft. In MAC C-141s, the navigator had to handle all these duties, which overtaxed him on low-level missions. Using this information, MAC's Directorate of Aircrew Standardi-

zation/Evaluation staff started working on more evenly distributing C-141 crew duties and improving crew coordination during low-level missions.<sup>54</sup>



**Lt Paul Harris, 436 Security Police, talks with a Security Police team after its Combat Patrol exercise at AIRLIFT RODEO 89.**

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<sup>54</sup>Hist, MAC, 1980, pp 258-259; Hist, MAC, 1981, p 233.



In early 1981, MAC planners considered adding intelligence information to the Rodeo competition to increase the realism. Major General Thomas M. Sadler, Twenty-First Air Force Commander, suggested to General Huyser that some combat environment training, recently practiced by MAC aircrews, should also be included. General Huyser concurred, and the MAC Tactics Division developed a plan to introduce an aircraft threat, requiring careful avoidance planning by the Rodeo participants. However, the Tactics Division staff ultimately decided against implementing their plan because the competitors could inadvertently pass the information to the subsequent aircrews, making the competition unfair.<sup>55</sup>

Although the basic format for VOLANT RODEOS had been established by 1981, important changes continued to appear. Between 1981 and 1982, the Air Force Reserve phased out its C-7 and C-123 aircraft. Thus, the 1981 VOLANT RODEO witnessed the final participation of these two aircraft for the short takeoff and landing (STOL) award.<sup>56</sup> Notably, Italy's 46th Air Brigade became the first foreign nation to win the Best Wing Award at VOLANT



**A container dropped by the Australian team during Airlift Rodeo 89 just misses its target.**

<sup>55</sup>Hist, MAC, 1981, pp 230-236.

<sup>56</sup>Hist, MAC, 1981, pp 230-236.

RODEO 1982.<sup>57</sup> In the fall of 1982, officials at Headquarters MAC discussed moving the site of VOLANT RODEO away from Pope Air Force Base. After reviewing the availability of adequate ramp space, fuel, routes, drop zones, billeting, and weather, the command decided to continue holding the competition at Pope Air Force Base. Thereafter, Pope Air Force Base became the permanent site for the future Rodeos.<sup>58</sup>

Aircrews continued to learn new airdrop techniques under General James R. Allen and General Thomas M. Ryan, Jr., CINCMACs from 1981 to 1983 and from 1983 to 1985 respectively, which appeared at the Rodeos. For example, after winning the Best C-141 Aircrew Award at the 1984 VOLANT RODEO, the 445th Military Airlift Wing (Associate) revealed a crude, but effective, sighting system. It consisted of a series of strings placed strategically on the cockpit windows. With this sighting system, the crew found that it could accurately align the aircraft over the drop zone (DZ) in relation to the navigator's CARP flight plan. "The nav[igator] could look directly at the DZ—not out to the side—so he could concentrate on DZ alignment," explained



**Joint Airborne Inspection during AIRLIFT RODEO 89.**

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<sup>57</sup>Hist, MAC, 1982, pp 288-290.

<sup>58</sup>Hist, MAC, 1983, p 330.





**Paratroops exiting an Israeli C-130 at AIRLIFT RODEO 89.**

aircraft commander Captain Hans Martel. This new sighting system proved intriguing enough to warrant comment in *The MAC Flyer*, a publication dedicated to circulating information about airlift techniques and safety, and it received command-wide recognition.<sup>59</sup>

At the 1985 VOLANT RODEO, the 94th Tactical Airlift Wing, an Air Force Reserve unit from Dobbins Air Force Base, Georgia, passed another Rodeo milestone when it became the first reserve unit to win the Best Wing Award. Moreover, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard units won four more of the major events. "We've heard a lot about the 'total force' concept in the Air Force in the past 15 years," said Brigadier General Larry Wright, Twenty-Second Air Force Vice Commander and the 1985 VOLANT RODEO Commander, but he believed that the final standings of the 1985 VOLANT RODEO showed that "we have finally achieved total force reality."<sup>60</sup>

<sup>59</sup>Article, Capt Byron L. Howard, "Volant Rodeo: MAC's 1984 Airdrop Competition," *The MAC Flyer*, Aug 84, p 10.

<sup>60</sup>Article, Captain Byron L. Howard, "Volant Rodeo '85," *The MAC Flyer*, Aug 85, p 21.

## A New Name and a New Orientation

General Duane H. Cassidy, CINCMAC from 1985 to 1989, renamed the tactical airdrop competition in 1987 to more accurately describe its purpose. VOLANT RODEO became AIRLIFT RODEO to emphasize the command's ability to resupply ground forces with airdrops when landing was not feasible. Also, for the first time, the competition incorporated a spot landing event for C-141 crews. Made on improved runways and comparable to C-130 assault landings, the C-141 teams tried to land at the optimum touchdown point, 1,000 feet down the runway. Rodeo umpires deducted points for short and long landings, bounces, crew-initiated go-arounds, bad approaches, poor airspeed control, and spiking—abruptly slamming the airplane on the runway. Other events further added to the realism of AIRLIFT RODEO for the participants. Reflecting the importance of aircraft maintenance to effective airlift operations, Rodeo officials increased the potential points that the maintenance teams contributed to the Best Wing Award from 20 percent to 25 percent. The Security Police added combat marksmanship to their events, and the Combat Control Teams added drop zone establishment, combat leadership, and tactical overland infiltration events to their award. During the combat marksmanship event, the Security Police teams fired live rounds at pop-up targets as they assaulted an objective over rugged terrain. The Combat Control Teams made high-altitude, free-fall parachute jumps, opening their parachutes close to the ground, and established drop zones as they would in a contingency operation. For the tactical overland infiltration event, the teams fired at human and human-like mechanical targets with the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES)—an M-16 rifle equipped with a laser transmitter that activates sensors worn on helmets and vests. This event added the utmost realism without risk to the participants. The West German team, the 62d Air Transport Wing, won the Best Wing Award for 1987.<sup>61</sup>

AIRLIFT RODEO 87 will always be remembered by the participants, not only for the competition itself, but for the special festivities as well. Bob Hope, the comedian, used the AIRLIFT RODEO as a backdrop for filming a two-hour television program commemorating his eighty-fourth birthday. Hope and many other celebrities entertained the Rodeo participants, distinguished guests, and families from Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base. President Ronald Reagan and Secretary of the Air Force Edward C. Aldridge, Jr., also attended the performance honoring Bob Hope's longtime support of American servicemen around the world.<sup>62</sup>

The following year, 1988, AIRLIFT RODEO fell on hard times. Faced with a declining budget, General Duane H. Cassidy, had to make a number of

<sup>61</sup>Article, "MAC Schedules Airlift Rodeo," *MAC News Service*, 27 Mar 87, pp 1-3; Hist, MAC, 1986-1987, p 400; article, Maj Thomas C. Weinzierl, "Airlift Rodeo 1987," *The MAC Flyer*, p 25.

<sup>62</sup>Hist, MAC, 1986-1987, pp 403-404.



difficult financial decisions, and one of them involved AIRLIFT RODEO. Since AIRLIFT RODEO served as a training exercise, MAC paid for it from the Congressionally apportioned operation and maintenance fund at no additional expenses for the American taxpayer. Rather than cutting back on programs required to sustain MAC personnel, General Cassidy chose to reduce training expenditures, and the command cancelled the tenth annual Rodeo.<sup>63</sup> But unlike its predecessors of the 1960s and 1970s, AIRLIFT RODEO returned to Pope Air Force Base in 1989.

At AIRLIFT RODEO 89, the Royal Australian Air Force's 36th Squadron won top honors as the Best Overall Wing. However, a C-5 Galaxy from the 436th Military Airlift Wing stole the show. On 7 June, the Galaxy crew<sup>64</sup> set a world's airlift record while demonstrating the C-5's airdrop capabilities. By dropping four Army Sheridan armored reconnaissance vehicles and 73 paratroopers of the 82d Airborne Division, a total weight of 190,346 pounds, the aircraft and crew won a place in the National Aeronautical Association's official record book. This airdrop surpassed the unofficial world's record of 180,000 pounds set a year earlier.<sup>65</sup>

## The Future of AIRLIFT RODEO

The revival of AIRLIFT RODEO after a one-year interruption demonstrated the importance of the competition to MAC's training. Furthermore, like its airdrop competition forerunners, AIRLIFT RODEO indicated a new direction for the Military Airlift Command. Brochures distributed for AIRLIFT RODEO in 1987 and 1989 no longer described the event as "the command tactical airdrop competition," as they had previously.<sup>66</sup> AIRLIFT RODEO had become the "international airlift and airdrop competition."<sup>67</sup> The change in emphasis foreshadowed the addition of advanced airlift aircraft to MAC's inventory and increased airdrop capabilities. Future years would demonstrate the full extent of airlift capabilities in the Air Force.

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<sup>63</sup>Hist, MAC, 1988, p 61; brochure, MAC Ofc of Pub Affairs, *Airlift Rodeo '89*, n.d., p 3.

<sup>64</sup>Capt Mark Hutchings, aircraft commander; 1st Lt Gary Cooke, co-pilot; Maj Richard Moken, navigator; MSgt Dale Hill and TSgt Timothy Griesa, flight engineers; and loadmasters SMSgt Lawrence Pifer, MSgt David E. Jones, MSgt Ernie Baggers, and TSgt Walter E. Ramsey.

<sup>65</sup>Article, "MAC Sets Airdrop Record at Airlift Rodeo," *MAC News Service*, 16 Jun 89, pp 7-8.

<sup>66</sup>Brochures, MAC Ofc of Pub Affairs, *Volant Rodeo 1979 to Volant Rodeo 1986*, n.d.

<sup>67</sup>Brochure, MAC Ofc of Pub Affairs, *Airlift Rodeo '87*, n.d., p 2; brochure, MAC Ofc of Pub Affairs, *Airlift Rodeo '89*, n.d., p 2.



**A Sheridan armored vehicle from the 82nd Airborne Division exits a C-5B assigned to the 436 Military Airlift Wing during the world record breaking airdrop at AIRLIFT RODEO 89.**



## **APPENDIX I**

### **COMPETITIONS**

#### **CARP RODEO**

- 1962 - Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, 16-22 April*
- 1963 - Campbell Army Air Field, Kentucky, 22-28 September*
- 1964 - Hunter Air Force Base, Georgia, 9-13 November*

#### **COMBAT AIRLIFT COMPETITION**

- 1969 - Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina, 12-20 July*
- 1970 - Travis Air Force Base, California, 20-24 July*
- 1971 - Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina, 22-29 May*
- 1972 - Travis Air Force Base, California, 2-9 September*

#### **VOLANT RODEO**

- 1979 - Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, 3-9 July*
- 1980 - Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, 13-19 July*
- 1981 - Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, 7-13 June*
- 1982 - Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, 13-18 June*
- 1983 - Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, 12-18 June*
- 1984 - Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, 10-22 June*
- 1985 - Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, 3-8 June*
- 1986 - Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, 1-7 June*

#### **AIRLIFT RODEO**

- 1987 - Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, 11-15 May*
- 1988 - Not Held*
- 1989 - Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, 4-9 June*

## APPENDIX II

### COMPETITION COMMANDERS

#### CARP RODEO

- 1962 - Colonel William C. Armstrong, Commander, 1405th Air Base Wing
- 1963 - Colonel Oren J. Boage, Deputy Commander, 1607th Air Transport Wing
- 1964 - Colonel Everett W. Langworthy, 63d Troop Carrier Wing

#### COMBAT AIRLIFT COMPETITION

- 1969 - Colonel Orion P. D. Canant, 437 MAW/DO
- 1970 - Colonel William A. Rogge, Jr., Director Aircrews Stand/Eval, MAC/DOV
- 1971 - Colonel William A. Rogge, Jr., Director Aircrews Stand/Eval, MAC/DOV
- 1972 - Colonel Harry F. Smith, Jr., Deputy Director Aircrews Stand/Eval, MAC/DOV

#### VOLANT RODEO

- 1979 - Colonel Jerry D. Livingston, Deputy Director of Aircrews Stand/Eval, MAC/DOV
- 1980 - Colonel Roger R. Utley, Director of Command and Control, MAC/DOC
- 1981 - Brigadier General William M. Constantine, Vice Commander, Twenty-Second Air Force
- 1982 - Brigadier General Robert B. Patterson, Vice Commander, Twenty-First Air Force
- 1983 - Brigadier General Browning C. Wharton Jr., Vice Commander, Twenty-Second Air Force
- 1984 - Brigadier General Robert B. Patterson, Vice Commander, Twenty-First Air Force
- 1985 - Brigadier General Larry D. Wright, Vice Commander, Twenty-Second Air Force
- 1986 - Brigadier General Floyd Hargrove, Vice Commander, Twenty-Third Air Force

#### AIRLIFT RODEO

- 1987 - Brigadier General John F. Sievertson, Vice Commander, Twenty-First Air Force
- 1988 - Not Held
- 1989 - Major General Frank E. Willis, Vice Commander, Twenty-Second Air Force



## APPENDIX III

### AWARDS

#### AERIAL DELIVERY COMPETITION, CARP RODEO

1962

*Best Wing* - 1502d Air Transport Wing (WESTAF)

*Best Crew* - Captain J. L. Lodrige's crew, 1502d Air Transport Wing

*Best Score for One Mission* - Captain J. Yannello's crew, 1501st Air Transport Wing

*Best Single Airdrop* - 1st Lieutenant J. E. Scott's crew, 1607th Air Transport Wing  
circular error: 49 yards

1963

*Wing Trophy* - 62d Air Transport Wing

*Best Crew (C-124)* - Captain Jack B. Compton's crew, 1503d Air Transport Wing

*Best Crew (C-130)* - Captain Alcuin M. Scherer's crew, 1608th Air Transport Wing

*Best Single Airdrop* - Captain Richard Barckhoff's crew, 1607th Transport Wing,  
circular error: 32 yards

1964

*General Kuter Award* - 1608th Air Transport Wing

*General Kelly Award* - Captain C. W. Hardie's crew, 1608th Air Transport Wing

*Lieutenant General Smith Award* - 1608th Air Transport Wing

*Lieutenant General Tunner Award* - Captain Frederick T. Francis' crew (C-124),  
1607th Air Transport Wing, circular error: 36 yards, time on target plus one  
second

*Airdrop Crew Award (C-124)* - Captain C. W. Hardie's crew, 1608th Air Transport  
Wing

*Airdrop Crew Award (C-130)* - Captain J. G. Stephen's crew, 1608th Air Transport  
Wing

*Best Maintenance Team (C-124)* - Staff Sergeant L. J. Bush's crew, 1608th Air  
Transport Wing

*Best Maintenance Team (C-130)* - Master Sergeant H. J. Butler's crew, 1608th Air  
Transport Wing

#### COMBAT AIRLIFT COMPETITION

1969

*General Kuter Trophy* - Twenty-First Air Force

*Lieutenant General Smith Trophy* - 63d Military Airlift Wing

*Lieutenant General Tunner Trophy* - 63d Military Airlift Wing

*General Kelly Trophy* - 63d Military Airlift Wing

1970

*General Kuter Trophy* - Twenty-First Air Force  
*Lieutenant General Smith Trophy* - 436th Military Airlift Wing  
*Lieutenant General Tunner Trophy* - 436th Military Airlift Wing  
*Lieutenant General Kelly Trophy* - 939th Military Airlift Group (AFRES)  
 (Associate)  
*General Estes Trophy* - 436th Military Airlift Wing  
*Best Air Force Reserve Unit* - 939th Military Airlift Group (AFRES) (Associate)

1971

*General Kuter Trophy* - Twenty-Second Air Force  
*Lieutenant General Smith Trophy* - 63d Military Airlift Wing  
*Lieutenant General Tunner Trophy* - 63d Military Airlift Wing  
*General Kelly Trophy* - 63d Military Airlift Wing  
*General Estes Trophy* - 63d Military Airlift Wing  
*MAC Commander's Trophy* - 63d Military Airlift Wing  
*Best Air Force Reserve Unit* - 903d Military Airlift Group (AFRES) (Associate)

1972

*General Kuter Trophy* - Twenty-First Air Force  
*Lieutenant General Smith Trophy* - 436th Military Airlift Wing  
*Lieutenant General Tunner Trophy* - 437th Military Airlift Wing  
*General Kelly Trophy* - 944th Military Airlift Group (AFRES) (Associate)  
*General Estes Trophy* - 437th Military Airlift Wing  
*MAC Commander's Trophy* - 436th Military Airlift Wing  
*Best Air Force Reserve Unit* - 944th Military Airlift Group (AFRES) (Associate)

## VOLANT RODEO

1979

*Best Wing* - 443d Military Airlift Wing  
*Best Aerial Port Joint Inspector* - 437th Military Airlift Wing  
*Best Combat Control Team* - 317th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best Security Police Team* - 317th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best Engine Running Load/Unload* - 443d Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-141 Aircrew* - 443d Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-141 Maintenance* - 514th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)  
*Best C-130 Aircrew* - 435th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best C-130 Maintenance* - 314th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best C-123 Aircrew* - 758th Tactical Airlift Group (AFRES)  
*Best C-123 Maintenance* - 439th Tactical Airlift Wing (AFRES)  
*Best C-7 Aircrew* - 94th Tactical Airlift Wing (AFRES)  
*Best C-7 Maintenance* - 94th Tactical Airlift Wing (AFRES)



**1980**

- General Moore Trophy* - 317th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best Aerial Port Joint Inspector* - West Germany, 61st Air Transport Wing  
*Best Combat Control Team* - 63d Military Airlift Wing  
*Best Security Police Team* - 435th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best C-141 Aircrew* - 63d Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-141 Maintenance* - 63d Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-141 Engine Running On/Off Load* - 62d Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-130 Aircrew* - 317th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best C-130 Maintenance* - Tie  
     440th Tactical Airlift Wing (AFRES)  
     Great Britain, 38th Airlift Group  
*Best C-130 Engine Running On/Off Load* - 435th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best C-123 Aircrew* - 355th Tactical Airlift Squadron (302 Tactical Airlift Wing) (AFRES)  
*Best C-123 Maintenance* - 355th Tactical Airlift Squadron (302 Tactical Airlift Wing) (AFRES)  
*Best C-7 Aircrew* - 700th Tactical Airlift Squadron (94 Tactical Airlift Wing) (AFRES)  
*Best C-7 Maintenance* - 357th Tactical Airlift Squadron (94 Tactical Airlift Wing) (AFRES)  
*Best Allied Aircrew* - Great Britain

**1981**

- General Moore Trophy* - 314th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best Aerial Port Joint Inspector* - 437th Military Airlift Wing  
*Best Combat Control Team* - 317th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best Security Police Team* - Great Britain  
*Best C-141 Aircrew* - 438th Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-141 Maintenance* - 514th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)  
*Best C-141 Engine Running On/Off Load* - 437th Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-130 Aircrew* - 62nd Tactical Airlift Squadron  
*Best C-130 Maintenance* - 442d Tactical Airlift Wing (AFRES)  
*Best C-130 Engine Running On/Off Load* - Great Britain  
*Best C-130 Short Field* - 317th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best Short Takeoff and Landing (C-7/C-123) Wing* - 94th Tactical Airlift Wing (AFRES)  
*Best Short Takeoff and Landing (C-7/C-123) Maintenance* - 94th Tactical Airlift Wing (AFRES)  
*Best Allied Aircrew* - Great Britain

## 1982

*General Moore Trophy - Italy*

*Best Aerial Port Joint Inspector - 439th Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best Combat Control Team - 435th Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best Security Police Team - 435th Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best C-141 Aircrew - 438th Military Airlift Wing*

*Best C-141 Maintenance - 63d Military Airlift Wing*

*Best C-141 Engine Running On/Off Load - 437th Military Airlift Wing*

*Best C-130 Aircrew - 314th Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best C-130 Maintenance - Tied*

*West Germany*

*Great Britain*

*Best C-130 Engine Running On/Off Load - 317th Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best C-130 Short Field - 439th Tactical Airlift Wing (AFRES)*

*Best Allied Aircrew - Great Britain*

## 1983

*General Moore Trophy - 314th Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best Aerial Port Joint Inspector - 62d Military Airlift Wing*

*Best Combat Control Team - 435th Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best Security Police Team - 463th Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best C-141 Aircrew - 63d Military Airlift Wing*

*Best C-141 Maintenance - 315th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)*

*Best C-141 Engine Running On/Off Load - 437th Military Airlift Wing*

*Best C-130 Aircrew - 314th Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best C-130 Maintenance - 62d Military Airlift Wing*

*Best C-130 Engine Running On/Off Load - 616th Military Airlift Group*

*Best C-130 Short Field Landing - 146th Tactical Airlift Wing (ANG)*

*Best Allied Aircrew - Australia*

## 1984

*General Moore Trophy - Italy*

*Best Aerial Port Joint Inspector - West Germany*

*Best Combat Control Team - Italy*

*Best Security Police Team - Great Britain*

*Best C-141 Aircrew - 445th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)*

*Best C-141 Maintenance - 514th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)*

*Best C-141 Engine Running On/Off Load - 438th Military Airlift Wing*

*Best C-130 Aircrew - New Zealand*

*Best C-130 Maintenance - West Germany*

*Best C-130 Engine Running On/Off Load - 463d Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best C-130 Short Field Landing - Australia*

*Best Allied Aircrew - New Zealand*



1985

*General Moore Trophy* - 94th Tactical Airlift Wing (AFRES)  
*Best Aerial Port Joint Inspector* - 317th Tactical Airlift Wing Best Combat Control Team - 62nd Military Airlift Wing  
*Best Security Police Team* - West Germany  
*Best C-141 Aircrew* - 315th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)  
*Best C-141 Maintenance* - 443d Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-141 Engine Running On/Off Load* - 446th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)  
*Best C-130 Aircrew* - 435th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best C-130 Maintenance* - 167th Tactical Airlift Group (ANG)  
*Best C-130 Engine Running On/Off Load* - Australia  
*Best C-130 Short Field Landing* - 459th Tactical Airlift Wing (AFRES)  
*Best Allied Aircrew* - Australia

1986

*General Moore Trophy* - 145th Tactical Airlift Group (136th Tactical Airlift Wing), (ANG)  
*Best Aerial Port Joint Inspector* - 439th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best Combat Control Team* - 1st Special Operations Wing  
*Best Security Police Team* - 314th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best C-141 Aircrew* - 438th Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-141 Maintenance* - 315th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)  
*Best C-141 Engine Running On/Off Load* - 62nd Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-130 Aircrew* - Portugal  
*Best C-130 Maintenance* - Tie  
     94th Tactical Airlift Wing (AFRES)  
     145th Tactical Airlift Group (ANG)  
*Best C-130 Engine Running On/Off Load* - Australia  
*Best C-130 Short Field Landing* - Portugal  
*Best Allied Aircrew* - Portugal  
*Best Aerial Port Delivery Endurance Course* - 439th Tactical Airlift Wing

## AIRLIFT RODEO

1987

*General Moore Trophy* - West Germany  
*Best Aerial Port Joint Inspector* - 314th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best Combat Control Team* - Twenty-Third Air Force (Red Team)  
*Best Security Police Team* - 463d Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best C-141 Aircrew* - 437th Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-141 Maintenance* - 445th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)  
*Best C-141 Engine Running On/Off Load* - 438th Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-141 Spot Landing* - 443d Military Airlift Wing  
*Best C-130 Aircrew* - 314th Tactical Airlift Wing  
*Best C-130 Maintenance* - Italy  
*Best C-130 Engine Running On/Off Load* - Great Britain  
*Best C-130 Short Field Landing* - 176th Composite Group (146th Tactical Airlift Wing) (ANG)  
*Best Allied Aircrew* - West Germany  
*Best Aerial Port Delivery Endurance Course* - 317th Tactical Airlift Wing

1988

*Not Held*

1989

*General Moore Trophy - Australia*

*Best Aerial Port Joint Inspector - 317th Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best Combat Control Team - Twenty-Third Air Force (Silver Team)*

*Best Security Police Team - 1st Special Operations Airlift Wing*

*Best C-141 Aircrew - 446th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)*

*Best C-141 Maintenance - 446th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)*

*Best C-141 Engine Running On/Off Load - 446th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)*

*Best C-141 Spot Landing - 446th Military Airlift Wing (AFRES) (Associate)*

*Best C-130 Aircrew - 314th Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best C-130 Maintenance - Australia*

*Best C-130 Engine Running On/Off Load - 463d Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best C-130 Short Field Landing - 314th Tactical Airlift Wing*

*Best Allied Aircrew - Australia*

*Best Aerial Port Delivery Endurance Course - 435th Tactical Airlift Wing*



