

Special Hawgsmoke 2008 Edition

MOHAWK

442nd Fighter Wing





PHOTO BY LT. COL. ANNE YELDERMAN

Staff Sgt. Jacob Nicholls, 442nd Security Forces Squadron, stands at attention Oct. 15 during a "Lost Hogs" ceremony during Hawgsmoke 2008 at the Salina, Kan., airport. Members of the 442nd SFS served as the color guard for

the 30-minute ceremony, which honored deceased A-10 pilots. Hawgsmoke is a biennial A-10 bombing and aerial-gunnery competition, which was hosted this year by the 442nd Fighter Wing.

Thank you for remembering lost pilots during Hawgsmoke

To Master Sgt. Bill Huntington, thank you for mentioning in your article the A-10 Thunderbolt II missing-man formation flown after the first full day of Hawgsmoke 2008 to commemorate all A-10 Warthog pilots who have perished since the aircraft first flew. To A-10 Warthog maintainers and crews, thank you for taking care of your pilots so they can fly, fight and win. Finally, to A-10 pilots at Hawgsmoke and Hog drivers everywhere, Godspeed. And, thank you. As the widow of A-10 pilot Capt. Robert I. "Nova" Lopez, who died during a combat-training mission, it is comforting when I am reminded that Rob's and others' sacrifices are not forgotten.

Kathleen A.K. Lopez
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio
10/17/2008



PHOTO BY MAJ. DAVID KURLE

Lt. Col. Daryl Newhart, an A-10 pilot with the 103rd Fighter Squadron, Pennsylvania Air National Guard, throws a shot glass into a firepit during the "Lost Hogs" ceremony.

MOHAWK

442nd Fighter Wing

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PHASE-ONE ORE

Wing continues ORI Journey

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SMOKING ALLOWED

Fire rains from Kansas skies

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November 2008
Charge-of-quarters



SENIOR MASTER SGT. TODD SIELEMAN 442ND MAINTENANCE SQUADRON

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COVER PHOTO:

Fourteen Squadrons from across the Air Force, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard competed in Hawgsmoke 2008, hosted by the 442nd Fighter Wing Oct. 15 to 18 in Salina, Kan. Hawgsmoke tested A-10 pilots' combat flying skills in a number of events designed around the training sorties pilots fly every day.

(Graphic by Maj. David Kurle)

MOHAWK

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COMMANDER, 442ND FW

Col. Mark Clemons

CHIEF, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Maj. David Kurle

PA NCOIC/EDITOR

Master Sgt. Bill Huntington

PA STAFF

Tech. Sgt. John Vertreese

Tech. Sgt. Leo Brown

Staff Sgt. Tom Talbert

Staff Sgt. Kent Kagarise

Staff Sgt. James Emerich

For more information, call Public Affairs at commercial voice number: (660) 687-3842 or fax at: (660) 687-2985. DSN:975-3842/3844, or fax: DSN:975-2985. E-mail submissions or questions to: william.huntington@whiteman.af.mil

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442nd Fighter Wing Tip of the Spear

TECH. SGT. VAN SWEARINGIN 442ND SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON

Tech. Sgt. Van Swearingin uses a huge array of past experiences in day-to-day operations where he plays an invaluable role. His rapport with subordinates has led to an unprecedented level of faith and trust between himself and his troops.

His technical expertise garnered many accolades during a recent deployment to Kirkuk Air Base, Iraq. Assigned to the Mobile Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System team there, he created a vehicle-search database that tracked critical process timings. Essential trend analysis was conducted, identifying several pitfalls that were modified or eliminated, greatly improving entry procedures to the base by authorized personnel. While assigned to the MVACIS team he conducted perimeter and PAR sweeps during two small-arms attacks at the vehicle-search area to the base. He sacrificed several off-duty days for qualifications of critical weapons utilized by defense forces. His Combat-Arms background enabled him to train to several deployed SF personnel and to acquire additional M-240 machine gun positions greatly enhancing the security for the base. His efforts earned him the 506th Air Expeditionary Group NCO of the month in October 2007.

Active in his community, Sergeant Swearingin gives freely of his time as demonstrated by his participation in the American Heart Association's Heart Walk held in Sedalia, Mo., and his active involvement with fundraisers and craft functions in the Girl Scouts of America organization. While deployed to Kirkuk AB, he initiated a letter writing project, facilitating correspondence with over 20 second-grade students from the states. This was a huge morale boost for his sector personnel.

Maj. Preston McConnell, a 303rd Fighter Squadron A-10 Thunderbolt II pilot, waits for his crew chief to signal chocks in on the first A-10 to arrive at Salina Airport, Kan., for Hawgsmoke 2008, a biennial A-10 bombing and tactical-gunnery competition.



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON

Hawgsmoke 2008 gets off to soggy start

By Master Sgt. Bill Huntington

SALINA, Kan. – Two A-10 Thunderbolt IIs broke through the overcast skies of central Kansas today and crossed over the center point of the Salina Airport's north-south runway officially kicking off Hawgsmoke 2008, the United States Air Force's biennial A-10 bombing and tactical-gunnery competition.

The moment also marked the end of two years of exhaustive preparation for the 442nd Fighter Wing's 303rd Fighter Squadron, the event's host.

The 303rd FS earned the right to host the contest by winning Hawgsmoke 2006, held at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., which pitted the 303rd's pilots against pilots from 16 other Air National Guard, Air Force and Air Force Reserve A-10 units from around the world.

Hawgsmoke tests A-10 pilots in flight leadership, target acquisition, weapons delivery and support, and the amount of preparation and coordination to host the event is daunting.

"There is a lot more that goes into Hawgsmoke than the general public and most of the participants realize," said Maj. Les Bradfield, 442nd Operations Support Flight. "It's much more than just coordinating between an airport and a range."

Since the event is not being held on an Air Force base, many of the organic support elements regularly used by A-10 units at a government-owned facility, and sometimes taken for granted, needed to be created or cultivated.

Fortunately for the Hawgsmoke-hosting team, they struck gold with the facility at Salina's airport. The facility offered a supportive administration and close proximity to the Kansas Air National Guard's Smoky Hill bomb and gunnery range where most of the competition happens. The airport, formerly Schilling Air Force Base, is just a few miles from Smoky Hill and the airfield has a large amount of available open ramp space, which makes it ideal for parking and servicing the visiting A-10s.

"They are not used to this many aircraft coming in and staying for this long," Major Bradfield said. "We've been greasing the wheels, letting them know that we are coming, what rules we operate by and making sure they can facilitate that."

That preparation, airport and Salina community officials, along with great support from sponsors and the community at large made the event possible.

One late wrinkle in the preparation was the Air Force's announcement of a time-compliance technical order (TCTO) that required immediate inspection and repair of wing cracks in approximately 130 A-10s throughout the Air Force. The 442nd FW was required to inspect 11 of its 27 A-10s.

The order caused units to re-evaluate their ability to participate and caused some to cancel. Other Wing's with available A-10s, including the 442nd, stepped forward to provide aircraft for those that couldn't use their own jets.

Even though there were enough teams and aircraft to compete, the TCTO hampered some units in their ability to bring maintenance personnel to support Hawgsmoke 2008 as they worked at their home stations to inspect and repair A-10s. Still, the maintainers were able to meet the challenge.

"Everybody is [affected]," said Chief Master Sgt. Greg Wetzel, 442nd Maintenance Squadron. "Getting the rest of their fleet up to speed became a higher priority [but] we have enough people here to take care of everything. It's not really an issue."

Having the first two jets cross the airfield's center point was a source of excitement and relief for Whiteman's Citizen Airmen. It means that while the preparation paid off and the competition got underway, there is still work to do as more aircraft arrive.

"We've only just begun," Major Bradfield said. "Having the 'iron' on the ground means the all of the work of the last two years, not only for the local community but for our own people, is starting to pay off."

Skies clear as Hawgsmoke goes into high gear

By Master Sgt. Bill Huntington

SALINA, Kan. – With the arrival of the last group of A-10 Thunderbolt IIs late in the afternoon, Hawgsmoke 2008 got into full swing Oct. 15 as pilots flew out to the Kansas Air



Capt Jeremy Stoner, A-10 pilot from the 110th Fighter Wing, Michigan Air National Guard, prepares to shut down engines.

National Guard's Smoky Hill bomb and gunnery range nearby for local-area familiarization flights.

Clearing skies signaled the end of nearly two days of rain at the central-Kansas location, as maintenance crews received the new arrivals while launching and recovering the local flights participating in the United States Air Force's biennial A-10 bombing and tactical gunnery competition.

As soon as pilots stepped from the jets they were greeted by the supervisor of flying and transported to Hawgsmoke headquarters for an array of in-processing steps designed to make their arrival orderly, convenient and brief.

After storing their flight gear at the Life Support section, the pilots met with representatives from maintenance debriefing, the supervisor of flying (SOF), maintenance operations control (MOC), command post, personnel support for contingency operations, also known as PERSCO, and lodging.

An A-10 pilot takes off from Salina Airport, Kan., Oct. 15, on Day Two of Hawgsmoke 2008 for a local orientation flight. Aircraft that were delayed in arriving because of bad weather Oct. 14 arrived the following day and flying began in earnest. This A-10 is from the 110th Fighter Wing, a Michigan Air National Guard unit from Battle Creek, Mich.



Maintenance debriefing gleaned the data provided by incoming pilots regarding maintenance issues and passed problems along to the maintainers who focused on getting the jets ready to fly again. Most aircraft were back in the air after only a brief time on the ground.

"[For Hawgsmoke], debrief has been combined with MOC (maintenance operations center)," said Senior Airman Kimberly Byers, 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron maintenance debriefing. "We've been getting [the pilot's] information about the incoming jets and now we are working on the sorties for the actual competition."

For having such a large influx of aircraft and crews in a very short time, things went well for Airman Byers. Her only challenge was learning the nuances of how each unit handled the data differently.

Ensuring the mission identifiers were closed out as the aircraft arrived was the first order of business for the command-post controllers at the next stop for each team. There activities were going as planned.

"Things have been pretty much going by the book today," said Staff Sgt. Adrian Walker, 442nd Fighter Wing command-post controller. "I think we're doing very well."

PERSCO checked in all new arrivals to maintain the personnel accountability of not only the pilots, but also maintenance and support personnel. At the final stop a lodging representative made sure each pilot had comfortable living quarters during the competition.

The whole process was well orchestrated and, as a result, the pilots could focus on getting oriented to the new surroundings.

Pilots from 14 active-duty, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard squadrons participated in Hawgsmoke 2008 and shared flight time in 30 A-10s supplied by Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve units.

As the first full day of Hawgsmoke 2008 ended, an A-10 "missing-man" formation flew over the "Hog" pilots gathered at the edge of the Salina Airport flight line for a memorial service, which commemorated all A-10 pilots who have perished over the years since the aircraft first flew.

Smoking allowed -- A-10s



Planes dazzle spectators at Smoky Hill Range

By Staff Sgt. Kent Kagarise

SALINA, Kan. – Day three of Hawgsmoke 2008 continued Oct. 16 with the bombing and gunnery portion of the competition at Smoky Hill Range near Salina, Kan.

More than a year of planning went into Hawgsmoke 2008, the United States Air Force's biennial A-10 bombing and tactical gunnery competition. Part of the planning included orchestrating a way for members of the press, community leaders and other distinguished visitors to view the weapons-employment portion of the competition from a hilltop vantage point at the Kansas Air National Guard's 34,000-acre range facility operated by 184th Intelligence Wing.

"I've lived in Salina a couple of years, but I'm overwhelmed with the amount of support we've received from the city," said Lt. Col. Jeff Maddex, the 184th's range commander. "This was all coordinated across two states – Missouri and Kansas – and required a lot of communication. It's really great to see it all come together."

For many of those invited to attend, it was their first experience with the A-10. For others like Aaron White, a Marine veteran of Desert Storm and Somalia and a member of the Salina Chamber of Commerce, it was a glimpse into the past.

"This brings back memories for me [when] I got to call in air-support on some armaments during training once," Mr. White said. "I expected Marine air-support and to my surprise they sent an A-10. I was very impressed. I remember thinking this should be a Marine plane. It's mean and ugly, just like us."

As the A-10's closed in on their appointed gunnery targets, smoke surrounded the plane, warning the viewers of the deep, belligerent roar soon to follow as the warthog unleashed its super-sonic wrath on the goal beneath.

"The noise intrigues me more than anything. I can't imagine being on the receiving end of it," said Rob Exline, a visitor from the UMB Bank, board of directors. "I didn't know what to expect from today but it has absolutely lived up to my expectations. This is all very exciting for Salina."

Hawgsmoke 2008 is all about the A-10 and its pilots but on this day the Air Force made an impression on a small group of citizens.

After viewing these aircraft and pilots in action, the visitors departed the damp grassy hill-top in central Kansas thankful they were not on a rocky hill-top in Afghanistan, dreading an oncoming storm-front moving in from a United States Air Force-dominated sky.

rain fire from Kansas sky

PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON



Above: A 442d Fighter Wing A-10 fires its 30-mm cannon above Smoky Hill Range. Below: Aaron Powell, right, reminisces of his days as a Marine when he called for close-air support and was surprised to see an A-10 come from the sky. Larry Powell, fellow Salina City-Council member intently listened as Warthogs roamed the sky. Right: Thirty-millimeter bullets impact the strafe pit at Smoky Hill.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. KENT KAGARISE



PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. JOHN VERTRESE

Idaho ANG pilots win Hawgsmoke 2008

By Maj. David Kurle

SALINA, Kan. — The Idaho Air National Guard's 190th Fighter Squadron was named the top team at Hawgsmoke 2008 in Salina, Kan., Oct. 17. An awards banquet capped off four days of competition among 14 A-10 Thunderbolt II squadrons from across the Air Force.

The 190th, part of the 124th Wing, based at Boise International Airport, Idaho, will be expected to host the next Hawgsmoke competition in 2010.

Approximately 50 pilots competed in Hawgsmoke this year. Another 400 Airmen provided aircraft maintenance and combat support.

Thirty A-10s, all from Air Force Reserve Command and Air National Guard units, started arriving at the Salina Airport Oct. 14 and flew for three days to get all 14 teams through the events.

The pilots had to share aircraft from other units because of an Air Force time-compliance technical order that mandated inspections on about 130 of the Air Force's 360 A-10 aircraft. The Air Force issued the order two weeks before the competition began.

The 303rd Fighter Squadron

hosted this year's Hawgsmoke after winning the event at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., in 2006.

Journalists and visitors from around the world traveled to central Kansas to cover and witness the competition, which ended Oct. 18.

The Hawgsmoke 2008 winners in each category were:

- Top Maverick Missile Team: 303rd FS.
 - Top Tactical Team: 303rd FS
 - Top Strafe Team: 103rd FS, Pennsylvania Air National Guard, Naval Air Station, Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove, Pa.
 - Top Bombing Team: AFRC's 47th FS, Barksdale AFB, La.
 - Top Arrival Team: U.S. Air Forces in Europe's 81st FS, Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany
 - Top Pilot Award: Capt. Jerry Cook, AFRC's 45th FS, Davis-Monthan AFB
 - Top High-Altitude Dive Bomb Award: Captain Cook, 45th FS.
 - Top 30-Degree Dive Bomb Award: Maj. Bill Zutell, 103rd FS.
 - Top Low-Angle, High-Delivery Pop Award: Lt. Col. Bob Pugh, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Test Center, Tucson, Ariz.
 - Top Strafe Award: 1st Lt. Nick Decker, 303rd FS.
- Col. Mark Clemons, 442nd FW commander, presented the awards.



The Hawgsmoke 2008 team from the 190th Fighter Squadron, Idaho Air National Guard, accept the trophy for the top team Oct. 17 in Salina, Kan. From left, Capt. Ben Rhoades, 1st Lt. Ryan Brown, Lt. Col. Tony Brown and Lt. Col. Ron Hedges, were crowned Hawgsmoke champions after four days of competition among teams from 14 Air Force A-10 squadrons. Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard units contributed all 30 aircraft for this year's event.

Rooms for 500 -- Prior planning benefits Hawgsmoke

By Staff Sgt. Kent Kagarise

SALINA, Kan. — In January Senior Master Sgt. Travis Stickels began planning to lodge approximately 500 Airmen and distinguished guests here for Hawgsmoke 2008, an A-10 bombing and aerial-gunnery competition hosted this year by the 442nd Fighter Wing.

Sergeant Stickels' list of considerations seemed endless when planning to house more than 500 participants who would partake in the biennial event. In the end, Airmen from across the Air Force would occupy six hotels and one building at a Kansas National Guard training facility at the Salina Airport.

"In January we met with the Salina Chamber of Commerce, four hotels and the National Training Center here," Sergeant Stickels said.

Sergeant Stickels made sure parking lots had proper lighting, that security was adequate and even checked the condition of rooms in order to ensure the safety, security and comfort of Airmen.

Even when Hawgsmoke 2008 was underway, Sergeant Stickel's job didn't end.

"I'm the point of contact for any changes. If an Airman

must be moved for any reason I need to know for accountability," he said.

Since three-fourths of the people participating in Hawgsmoke were maintenance specialists, Sergeant Stickels had to work closely with Chief Master Sgt. Greg Wetzel, chief of the 442nd Armament Flight. Chief Wetzel contacted all maintenance personnel to begin plans to lodge them together and preserve "team integrity," a necessity for the smooth execution of Hawgsmoke according to Sergeant Stickels.

"I've known Sergeant Stickels a long time and have worked with him in the past. It's no surprise to me that he was able to manage all of this. He does everything within his capability to make everything quick and easy," Chief Wetzel said.

Even at Hawgsmoke, a job that began in January continued as Sergeant Stickels' personal-digital-assistant rang.

"I told you there were 138 people staying in that hotel. It just went up. There are 141 in there now," Sergeant Stickels said.

Without Sergeant Stickels, Airmen at Hawgsmoke would have been homeless. Sergeant Stickels held the keys to a warm bed, at the end of a damp, cold duty-day in the heart of Kansas.



Senior Master Sgt. Travis Stickels



Maintainers put the "Hawgs" in Hawgsmoke

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. KEVIN KAGARISE

Delicate care is given while preparing munitions for Hawgsmoke 2008, in Salina, Kan. Munitions specialists from

the 442nd Maintenance Squadron prepared BDU-33 practice bombs for the event.

By Master Sgt. Bill Huntington

SALINA, Kan. — Even though there was no flying on the third, and final, day of Hawgsmoke 2008, the United States Air Force's biennial A-10 Thunderbolt II bombing and tactical-gunnery competition, the flight line at Salina Airport was still the scene of activity as maintainers serviced aircraft in preparation for their return home.

While pilots waited for the results of the competition, A-10 maintainers turned to the tasks of any needed repair, aircraft return configuration and, in the hangar, packing equipment and cleaning up. Fortunately, because of daily maintenance and extensive pre-planning, repair needs were minimal.

There is a sometimes-heard adage on the flight line that the pilot's name may be on the jet but it really belongs to the crew chief. It is the maintainers that keep the jets in operating shape and, for many of them; it's a labor of love.

"I've loved it [here]," said Senior Airman Gentry Cline, a 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief. "I've been really busy here and that's the way I like to do business."

Hawgsmoke 2008 also marked the first time that all three models of the A-10 occupied a flight line together. Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command A-10A, A-10A+ and A-10C qualified maintainers from Barksdale Air Force Base, La.; Willow Grove Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, Pa.; Whiteman AFB, Mo.; Boise, Idaho; Ft. Smith, Ark.; and Battle Creek, Mich.; joined forces to keep the jets flying.

"This is the first time I've gotten to see this many jets [from different units] all lined up," Airman Cline said. "I got to work with the other units and see how they did things. It was a little bit different but at the same time it was effective."

For the maintainers, the road to Hawgsmoke 2008 was fraught

with obstacles. One obstacle for all the units was the Air Force's announcement of a time-compliance technical order (TCTO) that required immediate inspection and repair of wing cracks on approximately 130 A-10s throughout the fleet. For the Whiteman Airmen, in addition to the TCTO announcement, other obstacles ranged from an Afghanistan Operation Enduring Freedom deployment from May to July of this year to a home station phase-one operational-readiness exercise in early October.

According to Chief Master Sgt. Rick Harter, Hawgsmoke 2008 maintenance NCOIC and the 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron production superintendent, since a phase-one ORE tests a unit's ability to deploy troops and equipment, they decided to use the opportunity to their advantage in getting their equipment to Salina.

"We decided that with the exercise, we'd coordinate that what we were taking to Salina would be used for the cargo processing for the ORE," Chief Harter said.

Instead of cargo palettes being marshaled on the Whiteman flight line in a row on the ramp simulating a cargo aircraft, the cargo was loaded onto a C-5A Galaxy aircraft and flown to Salina. Two requirements were met as a result.

In summarizing Hawgsmoke 2008 Chief Harter had nothing but praise for all the maintainers in helping make the event a success. He said he was especially grateful for the level of support provided by the Salina Airport. From facilities to fuel trucks he said they more than exceeded his expectations at every level.

Even though Hawgsmoke 2008 is officially behind them, the A-10 maintainers look ahead to other challenges and opportunities. When asked if he'd want to come back in two years to support the next competition, slated to be hosted by the Hawgsmoke 2008 winners, the Idaho Air National Guard's 190th Fighter Squadron at Boise, Idaho, Airman Cline didn't hesitate to answer.

"Yes," he said. "Absolutely!"



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. KENT KAGARISE

Supporting the 44th Fighter Wing's Operational Readiness Exercise, Oct. 4, a team of Airmen from the 509th Bomb

Wing, unloads a truck-load of baggage onto a waiting cargo palette to be weighed.

Wing continues climb toward ORI

By Tech. Sgt. Leo Brown

Practice makes perfect.

However, Citizen Airmen of the 442nd Fighter Wing hope practice makes "outstanding," especially in the eyes of inspectors during the operational readiness inspection next October.

The wing's recent unit-training assemblies have seen a flurry of activity, as Airmen prepare for the unit's first ORI in 11 years. The September UTA saw Airmen executing the second phase of an operational readiness exercise – operating from a deployed location – and rehearsing an ORE's first phase – assembling, processing and moving troops and equipment to a deployed location – during the October UTA.

Dubbed "Exercise Coronet Thunder Pig 1," phase I kicked off Oct. 3 and concluded two and a half days later, with some key messages about urgency, attitude and focus coming from Col. James Mackey, the vice wing commander and wing Command Chief Master Sgt. Al Sturges.

"The ORI is a year away," Colonel Mackey said. "That seems like a long way from now, but the reality is that we have 33 traditional reserve days before that happens. That's basically a month to prepare. So every time we come to work – especially for the traditional reservists – we need to focus on preparing for the ORI."

"We have a good plan and our people are extremely knowledgeable," he said. "My concern is if we don't prepare heavily

now, we won't get an 'outstanding' (the highest rating) on the ORI. But our folks are good and they'll step up. We have two Phase IIs remaining, one Phase I remaining and two combined Phase Is and Phase IIs remaining. There's a lot of work to do."

The colonel and the chief stressed that Airmen can't rest on the fact that they have deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan or other locations.

"If you look at previous failures in other organizations, it's because of lackadaisical attitudes and arguing with inspectors," Chief Sturges said. "Saying, 'we've been to Iraq and we've done things this way' is not the right answer to give inspectors."

Colonel Mackey and Chief Sturges stressed that the key to ensuring a successful inspection is having a positive mental attitude.

"I can't emphasize that enough," Colonel Mackey said. "When you're in your 12th hour of work and you're hot and tired and the inspector jumps on you, it's hard to take criticism, and you sometimes just have to say, 'Yes, sir.'"

"If you disagree with an inspector, note it and tell your supervisor," he said. "But that's the biggest thing – the positive mental attitude."

Chief Sturges said that such military bearing must be mastered now versus down the road.

"We have to remember that while we're doing an ORE, we have to keep a positive mental attitude," he said. "We're practicing the basics and we're learning things from the ORE."

Life on "The Line:" Sorting the faces for places

By Tech. Sgt. Leo Brown

"Hurry up and wait" didn't rear its ugly head during the October unit training assembly's phase I, at least in a few folks' eyes.

The 442nd Fighter Wing's Citizen Airmen, working with troops from the 509th Bomb Wing, "processed 80 increments of cargo and 291 passengers on six aircraft," according to Lt. Col. Allan Slavin, 442nd Logistics Readiness Squadron's director of operations.

The numbers impressed officers, enlisted and civilians, alike.

"This is the best integration I've ever seen between the 509th Bomb Wing and the 442nd Fighter Wing," Colonel Slavin said. "A lot of members don't realize it, but the 509th owns the entire process and has the responsibility for deploying our wing. Their mobility machine, in coordination with

ours, did an outstanding job."

"Everything went pretty well," said Teri Rizzolo, a civilian working with the 442nd Fighter Wing's finance office.

"The 509th headed it and we were there in support," said Ms. Rizzolo, a military pay technician, who helped process Airmen through the deployment line. "I thought it went smooth. Everyone stayed real close to the time schedule. Everyone was cooperative."

While troops were processed Oct. 4, 509th and 442nd Airmen took care of cargo concerns Oct. 3.

"It's the little details that'll get you," said Master Sgt. Mike McQuain, an aerospace ground equipment flight chief with the 442nd Maintenance Squadron. "Is the air pressure in tires correct? Are pallets straps facing the right way? Is there corrosion on the tie-down straps? If you get things like that right, a lot of times, bigger issues will take care of themselves. If you don't get the small details right, other stuff can be blown out of proportion."

Some of those "basics" included working with 509th Bomb Wing Airmen to process a variety of equipment and almost 300 troops for travel on six aircraft.

"The biggest lesson learned is that you can't be too ready to deploy," said Lt. Col. Allan Slavin, 442nd Logistics Readiness Squadron's director of operations. "Getting the wing to war takes an incredible amount of coordination and every little snag causes the process to fall behind.

"Members must be diligent about keeping up with their eligibility requirements and, with respect to cargo, it's all about good cargo management and proper paperwork," he said. "You have to pay attention to detail."

"Our cargo processing has gone very well," Colonel Mackey said during the second day of the exercise. "All the pallets have been built properly and that paperwork is good. With personnel, we expect to find a lot of our folks not medically qualified for a variety of reasons, but we'll engage plans to resolve that."

"We've done real-world situations many times," Chief Sturges said. "But that's different than an ORI or an ORE. Preparing and exercising for an ORI is not the same as going to war. That's what we have to remember while we're doing this. If inspectors question us on something, we have to keep a positive mental attitude. We have to play the game the way (Air Force Instruction) 90-201 ("Inspector General Activities") tells us to play the game."

"I'd suggest every individual read 90-201," Colonel Mackey said. "I'd like the wing to be prepared (for the ORI) for the 10th Air Force visit in May," Colonel Mackey said. "We have 15 reserve days to do that, but everything should be perfect by May, so 10th Air Force can come in and validate that we're ready."



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. BILL HUNTINGTON

Master Sgt. Bob Boye, 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, left, settles some last minute business with the 442nd Fighter Wing's Airman and Family Readiness chief, Master Sgt. Vickie Chambers, prior to 'deploying' Oct. 4.

An A-10 Thunderbolt II from the 442nd Fighter Wing is readied for takeoff as it is reflected in rain-water left on the ramp at the Salina, Kan., airport Oct. 15 during Hawgsmoke 2008. Hawgsmoke is a biennial A-10 bombing and aerial-gunnery competition between A-10 squadrons from across the Air Force. This year's competition was hosted by the 442nd Fighter Wing. (Photo by Lt. Col. Anne Yelderman)

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
442ND FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS
931 ARNOLD AVE.
WHITEMAN AFB MO 65305-5070**

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is one of the most effectual means
of preserving peace."
- George Washington**

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