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United States Air Force Crews of Rooster 73 Flight Awarded the Mackay Trophy for 2013

Washington, DC, June 26, 2014 – The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) will present the Mackay Trophy for 2013 to the Crews of Rooster 73 Flight (Rooster 73, Rooster 74, and Rooster 75).

The Mackay Trophy was first presented by Clarence Mackay in 1912 and was later deeded to the National Aeronautic Association. Administered by the United States Air Force and NAA, the trophy is awarded for the "most meritorious flight of the year" by an Air Force person, persons, or organization.

As outlined in the Air Force nomination, in early December of 2013, with South Sudan on the brink of a civil war, the U.S. State Department ordered evacuation of the embassy and American citizens located in Bor. On December 21st, the formation of three CV-22 Ospreys, carrying 21 total Special Operations Forces, departed from Djibouti Int'l Airport. En route to Bor, the three aircraft flew through three countries and conducted aerial refueling through mountainous terrain while avoiding unforecasted weather.

On approach to land, the formation took heavy surface-to-air fire, received damage to multiple aircraft systems, and four Special Operations Forces personnel onboard were injured. The extensive damage caused multiple fuel leaks requiring the aircraft to call for emergency airborne refueling to allow for the safe recovery of all three battle damaged aircraft, crew, and passengers.

During the return flight, crew members had to manually extend the refueling probes and activate the emergency aerial refueling valves to accomplish the multiple refueling tracks to onload enough fuel to reach Entebbe. Other crew members set up a "mobile blood bank" so that the critically injured could be transfused immediately upon arrival at Entebbe.

The time critical decision making, outstanding airmanship, extraordinary crew resource management, and exceptional attention to detail of Rooster 73 Flight saved 34 aircrew and three \$89M aircraft. The distinctive accomplishments of the crews of Rooster 73, Rooster 74, and Rooster 75 reflect great credit upon themselves and the United States Air Force.

NAA will present the trophy on November 5, 2014, at the [Fall Awards Dinner](#) at the Marriott Crystal Gateway in Arlington, Virginia.

The National Aeronautic Association is a non-profit membership organization devoted to fostering opportunities to participate fully in aviation activities and to promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States. NAA is the caretaker of several major aviation awards, and certifies all world and national aviation records set in the United States. For information, visit www.naa.aero.

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