2007 MACKAY TROPHY AWARDED
TO PANTHER 1 1 FLIGHT

Washington, DC, August 1, 2008 -- The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) announced that the 2007 Mackay Trophy will go to the members of the PANTHER 1 1 Flight, Pacific Air Forces – Colonel Charles L. Moore; Lieutenant Colonel Stephen C. Williams; Captain Lawrence T. Sullivan and Captain Kristopher W. Struve. The Mackay Trophy was first presented by Clarence Mackay in 1912 and deeded to the National Aeronautic Association. The trophy is administered by the United States Air Force and the National Aeronautic Association. It is awarded for the "most meritorious flight of the year" by an Air Force person, persons, or organization.

The PANTHER 1 1 flight distinguished themselves by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight as a four ship of F-16CJ’s, 13th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, 332d Expeditionary Operations Group, 332d Air Expeditionary Wing, Balad Air Base, Iraq from 12 August 2007 to 13 August 2007. During this period PANTHER flight was hand-picked to fly a 10.9 hour mission to strike 16 high value targets within the Tora Bora region of Afghanistan. Expert airmanship ensured mission accomplishment of the first Balad based F-16CJ’s to support Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and the first ever employment of GBU-38 airburst munitions in combat, all planned and executed in less than 24 hours.

Due to the mission’s highly sensitive nature PANTHER flight had to coordinate routing with control agencies that had no prior knowledge of the sortie while covertly transiting the airspace of six foreign nations. With a two minute time-on-target window over 2,100 miles from their home base, the flights expertise guaranteed delivery of the weapons and successful destruction of 15 entrenched enemy fighting positions clearing the way for ground forces to raid a high-level Taliban meeting. Approaching a dangerously low fuel state, PANTHER flight coordinated real-time for supplemental fuel from a residual tanker allowing for the safe return of four F-16CJs to Balad Air Base, Iraq. The professional skill and airmanship displayed by PANTHER 1 1 flight reflect great credit upon themselves and the United States Air Force.

The National Aeronautic Association is a non-profit, membership organization devoted to fostering America's aerospace leadership and promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States.

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