

# USAREUR SOLDIERS "SURE BETS"

By CSM Gene C. McKinney

**S**erving as the command sergeant major for the U.S. Army, Europe (USAREUR) is quite a challenge during these changing times. But I can do my job with confidence because I always have one "Sure Bet"—USAREUR soldiers—I can rely on to accomplish any mission. This may seem like bragging, but, actually it's my way of saying "thank you" to the professional soldiers, their families and civilians serving in USAREUR.

The same qualified, motivated and dedicated soldiers—that served from the beginning with the U.S. Army in Europe (European Theater of Operations) and through all the changes to the USAREUR of today—have remained constant. They're dedicated to "winning" at training, deployments and on the battlefield. These excellent soldiers are USAREUR's key to its history of excellence.

What is this "Sure Bet" I'm talking about? The acronym stands for "Soldiers/civilians/family members of USAREUR, Represent Excellence, Best led, Exercise initiative, Trained and ready."

The "Bet" is that our soldiers will be deployed. Whether it's from Moscow to Rwanda, Bishkek to Skopje, the eyes of the world are upon them. Much is riding on this "Bet"—soldiers' lives, America's reputation, and the command's credibility. The USAREUR commander-in-chief and I are very comfortable with this "Bet." We already know the outcome. History tells us that from Normandy to today, "Sure Bet" soldiers have shown they are able to accept and accomplish the mission. USAREUR soldiers are trained. "Sure Bet!"

How "Sure" is this Bet? Very sure. Along the way, our soldiers participated in disaster relief, humanitarian and national assistance to noncombatant evacuation, peacekeeping and potentially peace-making missions. The Rwandan refugee mission, Operation Support Hope, marks our 47th deployment since the end of the Gulf War.

Our soldiers are standing watch in Macedonia, Kuwait and Turkey. They've provided medical services in Zagreb and fueled Russian helicopters in Angola (an operation orchestrated by a staff sergeant). Nations of the former USSR continually call on USAREUR to provide NCOs to lecture on developing and training professional NCOs for their armies. They want to know how we do it! It's a "Sure Bet" our sol-

diers have the answers to these problems.

All of the above mission accomplishments didn't stop our soldiers and NCOs from improving themselves through professional and self-development. Our NCO population is in excess of 34,000, of which 990 became Sergeant Morales Club members. In 1994, 146 Sergeant Morales members were considered for advancement to sergeant first class in the primary zone and 64 (44%) were selected. There were 10 selected in the secondary zone.

Each year, four NCOs and four junior enlisted soldiers work their way to the competition to earn the title of USAREUR Soldier and NCO of the Year. They comprise the top 1/100 of one percent of the NCO and enlisted ranks. Our soldiers and NCOs do consistently well in Army-wide competitions (see box). USAREUR soldiers have won the Boes-

leger Competition many times and won again in 1994.

We are also on the cutting edge of initiatives to improve the quality of life for single and married USAREUR soldiers. This is a readiness issue that's just as important as individual weapons proficiency, and is treated as such. USAREUR has addressed such thorny issues as providing medical services to family members, single soldier housing and transportation for remote and/or isolated units. As of this writing, we have approval for 33 Quality of Life (QOL) standards covering everything from fitness centers to Army Community Services.

"Sure Bet" equals reliability, professionalism and determination to accomplish the mission. Sure Bet equals "Hooah!", the Army's Ethic. It's an attitude that reflects "Yes sir; I understand, accept the mission and

will accomplish it. I'm motivated, full of energy and can do anything you throw my way; there is nothing I can't do. I know my job. *I am a professional. Count on me.*"

It's clear that USAREUR soldiers have been "Sure Bets" for over 50 years. I can't say what the future will bring, what challenges will arise or where they'll come from. I'm very confident that the "Sure Bet" soldiers will do as they have done—fight our nation's wars and win! ■

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## USAREUR'S 1994 "SURE BET" WINNERS:

**SSG Mark Warren**, 1st place, Army Chef of the Year.

**SFC Mike Thompson**, Retention NCO of the Year.

**SPC Dino Napier**, three gold medals, Armed Forces Track & Field championships.

**SSG Countess Irvin**, Armed Forces Women's Basketball Team Member (also voted Rookie of the Year).

### All Army Sports Teams

Sergeants **Charles Swindell**, **Roberta Sheffield**, **Benjamin Cureton** and **Theresa Chittenden**, CPL **Derian Ashford** and PFC **Kanyon Rodriguez**.

A USAREUR band, "**Abstract**," with seven enlisted and one officer, took "Best Overall Band," Army-wide. The band placed first every year for the past three years as the best rock-and-roll band Army-wide.