

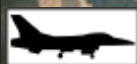


Force Protection



Current FPCON: Alpha
Threat Level: Low

"6-5...
IN THE FIGHT!"
FY 2011



447
SORTIES

7,824
LODGED



2.4 million
gallons
FUEL ISSUED

Weekend Weather Forecast (Lajes Weather Flight)

Friday (a.m. / p.m.)

Mostly Cloudy
Wind E 11 mph



High 63F / Low 55F

Saturday (a.m. / p.m.)

Mostly Cloudy
Light Showers
Wind NE 15 mph
NE 15-22 mph



High 61F / Low 55F

Sunday (a.m. / p.m.)

Mostly Cloudy with Showers
Wind N 20-30 mph



High 61F / Low 53F

Lajes varsity basketball team places third in DoDDS Europe tournament

By Staff Sgt. Olufemi Owolabi
65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

To Head Coach Carter Hoff and his team, the Falcons, placing third in the DODDS-Europe Division "hoops" is an historic and well-rounded victory for Lajes.

After playing their hearts out with a strategy that allowed the team to bounce back from the bottom of the list, the

court press that gave us some problems getting our offense started. Rota went on to beat Sigonella 65-61 to capture the Division III title."

On the Lajes line up were Toderick Stevens, Tyler Storms, Seth Aamodt, Justin Aamodt, Garrett Hall, Caje Cobb, Josh Case, DeMarkus Hodge, Eric Merkison, and Kenny Stewart.

"The players are definitely happy to do better than



The Lajes Department of Defense Dependents High School Varsity Boys Basketball Team poses for a group photo. (From left to right are: (back row) Toderick Stevens, Tyler Storms, Seth Aamodt, Justin Aamodt, Garrett Hall, Caje Cobb, Coach Carter Hoff; (front row) Josh Case, DeMarkus Hodge, Eric Merkison, and Kenny Stewart. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Derek Breaux)

Lajes Department of Defense Dependents School's varsity basketball team brought home the third place trophy Feb. 27, 2010.

The Lajes team defeated a team from England, Menwith Hill High School, 36-33 in overtime.

This happens to be the first time the Falcons are bringing back a trophy to Lajes from a DODDS-Europe Division III basketball competition.

"Our Lajes boys' basketball team has never placed in a European tournament," said Coach Carter. "Our boys' basketball team took fourth place my first year coaching in 2005, but the team has not won a single game at the tournament since then. Lajes is by far the smallest school in our division. This is a true underdog story, and it was a great experience to not only win some games, but to bring home a third-place trophy and put Lajes back on the map."

The first and second-place winners were the only two schools that defeated Lajes during the entire tournament.

"Our most difficult game was against Rota High School," the coach said. "They have a 6-foot-6-inches guard that is just amazing. He hit five threes in a row and played equally well on defense. Rota also ran a half

any other Lajes boys' basketball team," added the coach. "While the losses against Rota and Sigonella were tough, they held their heads high knowing they gave everything they could in the games."

The Lajes team came into the tournament seeded eighth out of eight teams, but according to the coach, this did not deter them from giving their best.

Team Captain Eric Merkison, son of Master Sgt. Eric Merkison of the Lajes Defense Media Activity Center, is also the team point guard. He said being a captain of the Falcons is a big responsibility. "You have to find the right tempo for (yourself and the team) so that everyone is on the same level," he said.

Since Lajes does not play other DoDDS schools during the regular season, it was a challenge to predict how the team would match up at the tournament. But Coach Carter said expectations were high because the team was well prepared.

Some of the parents noted their perseverance throughout the season.

To read more on "Basketball" see page 6



Pride in the name of Lajes

By Col. Eric Axelbank
65th Air Base Wing
vice commander



Pride is second to none at Lajes! Col. Jose Rivera and I were at the Café Bean recently, talking about the pride of Lajes, and when he said "six-five," a spouse of an Airman who walked by with her Venti Latte shouted out, "In the Fight!" The wing commander and I turned around and smiled.

Recently, the 65th Air Base Wing leadership bid farewell to Lajes High School students as they departed for their incredible basketball tournament victories in Germany. After we wished the teams good luck, I asked Dr. Barbara Hickman, the school principal, if they had a school "war cry." She said, "The girls' team adopted 'Six-Five...In the Fight.'" As Chaplain Colon would say, "That is amazing!"

Where else in the U.S. Air Force do spouses, civilian Airmen and our "little" Airmen know and respond to the base's war cry with such pride?

Another example of our pride here at Lajes was evident two weeks ago during the visit by Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, U.S. Air Forces in Europe commander. During his commander's call, General Welsh gave us his path toward success. The general said that, "People plus pride equal performance."

General Welsh's visit to Lajes began with five sharp and eager Airmen giving him an "anything but typical" mission briefing. These superstars—Senior Airman Kristen Piolunek,

Airmen 1st Class Terrence Ollis, Michael Wence, Davion Billups and Nicholas Fisher—delivered a stunning briefing that left everyone in the room speechless. The thing which stood out most was the "pride" exuded by these Airmen. Their confidence, enthusiasm and conviction was overwhelming, and they instantly boosted the credibility of all Airmen here at Lajes. Telling the story of Lajes in their words was truly inspiring.

Pride is also contagious. Our award-winning organizations benefit everyone from our valued local national employees to our little Airmen who attend the best school in the Mediterranean District.

As you have probably heard by now, Lajes has the best small chapel, the best clinic, the best small post office and the best marketing department in USAFE! Pride is everywhere, and it continues to flourish all over what Chief Master Sgt. Samuel Hagadorn coined as, "The Little Air Base that Could."

But why is pride so important? Pride and ingenuity are what separate us from others around the world. Pride is not uniquely American, but the spirit of America is second to none. Optimism and pride are our secret weapon, and they enable us to overcome any challenge by winning in all our endeavors.

What makes us the world's best Air, Space and Cyberspace Power? Consistently successful performance! General Welsh's formula to optimize performance, or the accomplishment of our mission, comprises people and pride. And nowhere else is pride more evident than right here in the middle of the Atlantic!

(Left to Right) Airman 1st Class Terrence Ollis, Senior Airman Kristen Piolunek, Airmen 1st Class Davion Billups, Nicholas Fisher and Michael Wence pose after their briefing for Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, U.S. Air Forces in Europe commander, during the general's visit to Lajes Field, Azores, Feb. 15. (Photo by Guido Melo)



Eric Merkison, Lajes Falcons team captain, holds up the third-place plaque won at the Department of Defense Dependents School Europe Division basketball championship, Feb 27. This is the first time in the school history that Falcons wins a trophy and ranks among the top three teams in the DoDD Europe basketball championship. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell)

Commander's Action Line
535-4240
65abw.actionline@lajes.af.mil

The Commander's Action Line is your link to the commander for suggestions, kudos and as a way to work problems or issues within the 65th Air Base Wing for which you can't find another solution.



Your chain of command should always be your first option — but when that's not the answer, call or e-mail the Commander's Action Line at 535-4240 or 65abw.actionline@lajes.af.mil.

Col. Jose Rivera
Commander, 65th Air Base Wing



The 65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs staff prepares all editorial content in the Crossroads.

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Contents of the Crossroads are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

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Capt. Russell Montante
CGO of the Year



65th Air Base Wing

2010

Annual Award

Winners



SMSgt. Gregory Rousey
SNCO of the Year



MSGt. Nicole Velsor
NCO of the Year



Mrs. Fátima Homem
Local National of the Year
Category I



Mrs. Patricia Gill
US Civilian of the Year
Category I



MSGt. Dominic Dumbra
First Sergeant of the Year



SSgt. Kara Starr
Airman of the Year



Ms. Élia Abreu
Local National of the Year
Category II



Mrs. Elizabeth McCormick
US Civilian of the Year
Category II



SrA. Johnathan Parker
Honor Guard Member of the Year



WING EVENTS CALENDAR

March

Feature

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
4 Indoor Golf Challenge TORC. AFAF Kick-Off Event Cafe Bean 0900 a.m.	5 Family Fun Run Base Track 4 p.m.	6	7	8 Portuguese Holiday Carnival	9 Rising 6 Meeting TORC, 3 p.m.	10
11 Monthly Cultural Excursion to Serreta 12 p. m. Meet at Chapel	12	13	14 9 pin no tap (TOP III) Bowling Alley 1 p.m.	15	16 Private Org Leaders Luncheon TORC 11 a.m.	17



2011 Community Assessment Survey

Air Force Integrated Delivery Systems is currently sponsoring the 2011 Community Assessment, which will survey active duty members and spouses and civilians on issues important to their quality of life and well-being at USAFE Air Force bases. If you are randomly selected to participate in this survey, we encourage you to participate. Your voice will be heard! In the past, Air Force communities have used the results of the Community Assessment to make improvements, such as:

- Start babysitting co-ops to meet the needs of working parents and shift workers
- Expand youth services and outreach to adolescents
- Build new playgrounds in base housing areas
- Expand fitness facility hours and services to meet the needs of busy families

Watch for your personal email invitation now through March 2011. We need to hear from you!

LAJES AIRMEN OF THE WEEK



Name: James Purdon
Rank: Senior Airman
Unit: 729th AMS
Hometown: Dowagiac, Mich.
Duty Title: Air Freight Specialist
Accomplishments: Senior Airman Purdon is a hard charger. He and his family recently arrived from Dover AFB, Del. He works in the Air Freight and Ramp Services Element, where he prepares and loads cargo in support of AMC's global

reach mission. He was recognized by Headquarters Air Mobility Command as an "Outstanding Performer" for his flawless execution during two channel missions and can-do attitude. His contributions led the "Port Dawgs" of the 729th AMS to earn an "Excellent" rating during the Logistics Compliance and Assessment Program Inspection.



Name: Manuel A. Toste
Rank: LGS-7
Unit: 729th AMS
Hometown: Feteira
Duty Title: Lan Administrator
Accomplishments: Mr. Toste was recognized by Headquarters Air Mobility Command as an "Outstanding Performer" for his meticulous maintenance of the squadron's Global Air Transportation Execution System. Sr. Toste's contributions

led to the 729th AMS earning an "Excellent" rating during the Logistics Compliance and Assessment Program Inspection. His hobbies include reading, fishing, hiking, and being with close friends.

"6-5...IN THE FIGHT!"

Platinum CFC Plaque



Col. Eric Axelbank, 65th Air Base Wing vice commander, presents a "Platinum CFC Plaque" to Ms. Janeen Teixeira of the Lajes DODDS Elementary/High School on March 2, 2011 for the school's contribution during the 2010 Combined Federal Campaign. Also in the picture are (far left) Dr. Barbara Hickman, Capt. Brandon Morgan, 65th Medical Operations Squadron, and Master Sgt. Jeffrey Crown, 65th Security Forces Squadron. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Olufemi Owolabi)

Department of Defense Dependents School Division Europe basketball championship



Tamika Merkison hugs her son Eric Merkison, Lajes Falcons team captain, after the team returned home from the Department of Defense Dependents School Division Europe basketball championship to Lajes Field, Azores, Feb 27. Lajes Falcons won third place in the DoDD Europe basketball championship. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell)

SecAF, CSAF provide FY12 budget details

By Capt. Chris Sukach
Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz provided details on the service's fiscal 2012 national defense authorization budget request during a House Armed Services Committee hearing here Feb. 17.

Air Force officials are requesting \$150 billion in the baseline budget and \$16 billion in an overseas contingency operations supplemental appropriation, Secretary Donley said.

"Our budget request represents a careful balance of resources among the Air Force core functions necessary to implement the president's National Security Strategy and between today's operations and investment for the future," the secretary said.

General Schwartz said that the Air Force's FY12 budget request is sensitive to the current state of the economy.

"This budget request, fully appreciating the extraordinary fiscal condition that our nation faces, supports our Airmen and our continuing efforts to structure the force for maximum versatility across the full spectrum of operations for today's requirements and for tomorrow's challenges," the general said.

General Schwartz also said that despite development issues, the joint strike fighter remained a priority for the service, as does the procurement of a new tanker for the Air Force.

Another upcoming procurement for the Air Force that was discussed

was the new long-range bomber, set to be part of a family of systems. Secretary Donley said the Air Force expects to field the new aircraft in the mid-2020s.

In addition to discussing the next fiscal year's budget request, both leaders also emphasized the importance of passing the current fiscal year's budget, telling members of Congress that operating under an extended continuing resolution will stress the force.

"A decision to extend the continuing resolution at FY10 levels through the remainder of this year will delay our ability to reach the secretary of Defense's direct goal of 65 MQ-1 Predator or MQ-9 Reaper Combat Air Patrols by 2013 in support of operations in Afghanistan," Secretary Donley said.

The secretary added that a continuing resolution would cause a production break and a likely increase in the unit cost of the wideband global communications satellite, the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile, F-15 Eagle radar modernization and other programs.

General Schwartz similarly urged the committee members to pass the fiscal 2011 appropriations bill.

"In extending far beyond March 4 without a 2011 appropriations bill, we have to reduce flying hours, delay or cancel some weapon system sustainment and depot maintenance activity and disrupt other day-to-day operations, all of which will adversely affect readiness and impact our brave men and women who are preparing to serve or are serving in harm's way," the general said.



Mark your calendar

COMMISSARY OPEN MARCH 8: The Lajes Commissary will be open on Portuguese Holiday Mardi Gras, March 8, from 10:30 to 6:30 p.m. For more information, contact the Lajes Field Commissary at 535-6124.

COMPLIANCE WITH MAILBOX SIZE: Email size limits will be applied to all Lajes personnel on 8 March, so please do not delay in checking and cleaning up your mailbox. If you are over your authorized limit you will lose send and receive capability. Just as a reminder, this only applies to your "Mailbox - Last, First...". Most users have created a Outlook Personal Folder File (.pst) to archive e-mail, the size of your .pst does NOT count toward your overall size limitation. To ensure we meet this USAFE-level suspense and minimize user impact, the 65th Communications Squadron has targeted March 8 to attain base-level compliance.

CAIB MEETING: The next Community Action Information Board (CAIB) will be held April 28 at the Conference room in Bld. T-100 at 9:30 a.m. For details, call Ricky Baptista, CAIB Executive Director, at 535-HAWC.

"Basketball" from page 1


"I am extremely proud of every young man on the team," said Senior Master Sgt. Sean E. Cobb, American Forces Network-Lajes station commander and parent of team power forward and Senior, Caje Cobb. "They played strong and well all year long. I saw their dedication in every practice, every game. These young men were a joy to watch, and I am so glad my family and I were able to experience this year's season."

The students conducted training sessions on a weekly basis, and they often held friendly games with older local basketball players at Lajes. The season began in November, and they worked very hard practicing six days a week to prepare for the tournament.

"We were very fortunate to have five returning players from last season along with the arrival of three fantastic ball handlers and shooters this year,"

Phrase of the Week

A LESSON IN PORTUGUESE




ENGLISH: Are you hungry? I need something to eat.

PORTUGUESE: Está com fome? Necessito de alguma coisa para comer.

PRONUNCIATION: Ehshta com fohme? NesseSEEtooh al-GOOmah COYzah PARuh cohMEHR.

At the Movies



7 p.m. Friday - The Dilemma PG-13
7 p.m. Saturday - The Fighter R
4 p.m. Sunday - The Dilemma PG-13
7 p.m. Sunday - The Fighter R

Movie times and schedule are subject to change. Call 535-4100 for the latest update.

the coach said. "There was a definite improvement in this year's team's defense and perimeter shooting."

Coach Carter said playing in the DoDDS-E tournament was a great opportunity for the Falcons to showcase their talents beyond Lajes Field. "The players came back to school with their heads held high. They worked so hard this season, and it was such a great achievement to bring back the trophy for the school," said Coach Carter, who has been on the team crew for six years. "We flew back to Lajes on Sunday night and had a wonderful welcome. Families, friends, and even the command, came to the airport to show their support. The airport was filled with cheers and signs supporting the two teams."

And Team Lajes enjoyed sharing in the Falcons' victory for the first time ever to bring home a trophy.

ASK ED

A column that looks at the culture and history of the Azores.

By Eduardo Lima,
Community Relations Advisor



Carnaval, or Mardi Gras as it's called in New Orleans and other U.S. locations, will be celebrated throughout mainland Portugal, Madeira and the Azores Saturday through Tuesday (March 6-8).

The historical origin of Carnaval is vague but seems to relate to pre-Christian customs, i.e. the pagan Roman and Greek festivals.

On Terceira, Carnaval has a peculiarity of its own: the "Danças de Carnaval," or carnival dances. These are dancing groups that travel from town to town for three days and four nights, almost non-stop. These groups usually include 12-24 dancers dressed in colorful play musical instruments.

Their performances are actually plays, salutation, in which the dancers greet which the plot of the play is presented in which the dancers thank the audience best. Performances usually take place in theaters and other public areas.

The groups often take advantage of policies or to make fun of certain situations past year, since traditionally criticism is

Carnaval is coming to be an important Portugal locations and in the Azores and styles. The island of Graciosa, for example, organizes masquerade balls in their community centers and clubs--the intention is to bring more tourists to the island.

Traditionally, Angra High School students organize a Carnaval parade through Angra's main street, followed by a comical bullfight in Angra's bullring. This year's parade is scheduled to start Sunday at 1:30 p.m., followed by the comic bullfight in the bullring at around 3 p.m.

Some local nightclubs, pubs and bars will also organize either masquerade balls or other Carnaval-related events during the Carnaval days. In observance of this tradition, the Portuguese Officers Club on base will host a masquerade ball tomorrow (March 5) at 9:30 p.m. while the Sargentos Club will host a similar event tomorrow and Monday at 9:30 p.m. Tickets for these events can be purchased at the respective clubs or at the door.

A final caution for those who live off base or intend to watch the Carnaval activities: it's a local custom for kids and other participants, usually wearing masks, to throw water balloons at cars or passers-by during these days. So, make sure your car windows are rolled up and try to avoid those pranksters if you are walking.

Have a great weekend and enjoy the Carnaval!



costumes, some of whom carry and

which include three distinct parts: the the audience; the theme or topic, in and developed; and lastly a farewell, for their attendance and wish them the community centers (Casa do Povo),

this occasion to criticize government or events that happened throughout the accepted during this time period.

tourist attraction on many mainland is celebrated in various forms and