

A1C Juan Alas

Medical Technician, 27 SOMDG



TSgt Marie Thomas

Dental Lab Technician, 27 SOMDG

Q: What do you do as a part of the 27 SOMDG (Medical Group)?

A: TSgt Thomas:

I make crowns, mouth guards... that sort of thing.

A1C Alas: I'm a Medical Technician. So, we pull patients back, interview them, assess them and do any interventions that the provider needs us to, like injections or braces.

Q: What made you choose this [medical] career field?

A: Thomas: Well, my career field particularly is rather artistic, and you get to work with your hands.

Alas: I actually wanted to go Security Forces. But I like Medical. I thought I was going to be out in the field doing stuff like 68Whiskey's (Combat Medic Specialist), but it's a lot more clinical. At the end of the day, I feel it's more about just helping people.

Q: Going more into the Medic Rodeo, what is this event?

A: Thomas: Medic Rodeo is this really cool, really unique type of event where medics from all of the world, Air Force specific, come together. There are teams, 3 Medical Technicians and 1 MedX (A MedX are non-medical medics).

Q: This event is to help train everybody and make sure they're prepared to face this situation should the need arise?

A: Alas: Yes. They should be able to somewhat start and sustain a patient until actual medics get there.

Thomas: Medic Rodeo is that combination of that team being able to work together. So team dynamics, how well you can respond, and then how well you can get that patient into an ideal situation.

Q: How many participants were there?

A: Thomas: Cannon had one team, there were sixteen teams from all over. Each base had one team. We had Korea, Japan, three or four other overseas teams and the rest were state-side teams.

Q: Where was this event held?

A: Thomas: We were out by the Portales gate at Cannon Permanent Exercise Facility (CPEF).

Alas: And we went to Melrose Air Force Range (MAFR).

Q: Does Cannon host every year?

A: Thomas: They have traditionally.

Alas: I think they have every year except the last two years because of COVID-19.

Q: Were there awards given? Did Cannon place?

A: Alas: We placed in the top fifty percent. Which is huge, but we didn't place in the top three which are the places that got trophies.

Q: How much training and preparation goes into this event?

A: Alas: For teams, they recommend that they start training about six months before. We were training Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. And we would start around 3:30 and get out at 7:00. The last week we were leaving around 9 or 10 at night from Med Group. We'd come in on Saturdays and Sundays to train.

Q: What do you focus on in these trainings?

A: Alas: The Medic Rodeo is divided into two categories. There's your tactical combat casualty care and then the EMT portion which is where the 4N0's would come in and they go off their Air Force protocols for EMT's. The tactical care is more for a deployed environment.

Thomas: Which is why MAFR was used. They were in full battle gear.

Alas: Just being able to do care under fire, tactical field care and then prolong field care. Being able to sustain with the limited supplies you have until EVAC can get there. It was difficult.

Q: Can you explain your roll in this event?

A: Thomas: For myself, I ran the moulage team. I go out there and 'make people up', casualty simulation [creates fake injuries]. I got to put together a team and train them on how to do different types of injuries. We had big burns, impaled objects, there was a car crash. I think overall it was an earthquake scenario. That was my primary role. I got to be on the planning committee as well and put together a number of scenarios to test the teams.

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To throw some curve balls at them, give them an overall situation, and rate them on how they do responding.

Alas: I was actually on the team for the medic rodeo. I was lead medic. We were going through all the scenarios, getting all the curve balls tossed at us.

As lead medic, what was your role to guide your team?

Alas: Generally. We kind of broke our up a little bit. As lead medic I was relied on for all of the medical information, the process, what we need to do for the patient, what interventions need to be taken and what we needed to ensure. Basically the textbook for the group.

Q: How much mental preparation does that take?

A: Alas: A lot. Luckily, I had a good team. Our Lieutenant who was our MedX, he was prior 4N0 so he had a lot of good advice. The feedback that we got from our coach really helped a lot too.

Alas: A lot. Luckily, I had a good team. Our Lieutenant who was our MedX, he was prior 4N0 so he had a lot of good advice. The feedback that we got from our coach really helped a lot too.

Alas: Like she said, one of the most important things for us to know as medics is not to zone in on one thing. Just going in and seeing it for real and not mimicking it makes a big difference.

Q: How long does Medic Rodeo last?

A:Thomas: Aside from the training and preparation, two days.

Q: Is it part-one the first day and part-two the second day?

A:Alas: All the teams are split in half, one team goes to MAFR and the other half goes to CPEF, and on the second day they switch.

Q:Are you already planning for next year's Medic Rodeo?

A:Thomas: Yes. I know that they said this year, that was their first goal. It is a big thing to plan.

Q: Are you both hoping to participate again?

A: Thomas: I think I would volunteer for anything that involves any kind of moulage.

Alas: I'm actually getting out in February, but I'm hoping they'll let me come back and be a coach.

Q: Any closing remarks?

A: Thomas: I just want to give a shout out for my team. They were awesome. If anybody gets the opportunity to go out and see, it's a great thing to watch and see what the medics do.

Alas: To everyone who put it up. It was really cool and a really good experience. For the medics as well, I know a lot of people were hesitant to join the team, but it's a good experience because it changes your perspective a lot. It's not real-world, but it does help build you as a medic.

