

APPENDIX H

Air Force Academy Third Verse

Mountain West Policy Regarding Air Force Academy Third Verse

All teams visiting the Air Force Academy in the following Mountain West sponsored sports are encouraged to participate as outlined below in the Third Verse ceremony at the conclusion of the contest. During its December 10, 2018, meeting, the MW Board of Directors reaffirmed its support for the Air Force Academy Third Verse (which was originally endorsed by the Mountain West Joint Council).

Basketball (Men's), Basketball (Women's), Football, Soccer (Women's) & Volleyball –

Air Force team will form and hold hands in front of the Cadet Drum and Bugle Corp (band) or, if the band is not present, in front of the Air Force cheering section.

Swimming & Diving (Women's) – Air Force team will line-up on the Western bulkhead of the natatorium.

Tennis (Men's), Tennis (Women's) – Air Force team will line-up on Court Two.

At the present time, teams in the sports of baseball, men's and women's track and field, men's and women's cross country and men's and women's golf do not sing the Third Verse after competitions.

In each case where the Third Verse is played, the visiting team should line up behind the Air Force team (or in an appropriate location if that is not possible) while the song is being played/sung. Information will be provided by Air Force in its game management documents and an Air Force representative will work with visiting teams to further explain the process and specifics for each sport.

After the song is finished, the Air Force team will raise arms as a final salute to those brave men and women who have fallen in the line of duty.

[NOTE: The Air Force football team is the only team which participates in the singing of the Third Verse at away games. When this occurs, fellow Conference teams are encouraged to take the same approach as they would for a game at the Air Force Academy. The respective administrators should communicate in advance to confirm plans – including if there is a home team fight song/alma mater which may be played first.]

Participation by opposing teams in the Third Verse ceremony is not required nor is this policy intended to be prescriptive. How each fellow Conference member chooses to approach the Third Verse shall be determined via guidance from the institution's administration (e.g., president, director of athletics). Those teams or individuals who choose not to participate are asked to exit the competition venue immediately or, at a minimum, provide two minutes of quiet for the completion of the song. If fellow Conference member institutions have similar traditions for which they would like to experience reciprocation, they are encouraged to communicate this with Air Force and other league opponents.

Finally, during the Mountain West Men's & Women's Basketball Championships ***no alma maters (including the Third Verse) will be permitted.***

Background and Context for The Third Verse: A Toast to the Host

In order to facilitate education and understanding, the following background information is provided regarding the Third Verse.

Singing the Third Verse of the Air Force Song is a time-honored tradition at many Air Force home sporting events. The Third Verse is part of the original Air Force Song and is sung as a separate piece. The verse honors those who have fallen in service to our great nation. It's not a song to honor the game that Air Force just played, but to honor those who have given the ultimate sacrifice to protect freedoms everyone in our great nation enjoys.

Verse Three

Here's a toast to the host

Of those who love the vastness of the sky.

To a friend we send a message of his brother men who fly.

We drink to those who gave their all of old,

Then down we roar to score the rainbow's pot of gold.

A toast to the host of men we boast, the U.S. Air Force!

History of the Air Force Song

In 1938, Liberty magazine sponsored a contest for a spirited, enduring musical composition to become the official Army Air Corps song. Robert Crawford's song was selected from 757 scores submitted. The song was officially introduced at the Cleveland Air Races on September 2, 1939. Fittingly, Crawford sang it in its first public performance. The first page of the score, which Crawford submitted to the selection committee in July 1939, was carried to the surface of the moon on July 30, 1971, aboard the Apollo 15 "Falcon" lunar module by Colonel David R. Scott and Lieutenant Colonel James B. Irwin.

Interestingly, at the moment the "Falcon" blasted off the surface of the moon with Scott and Irwin on board, a rendition of the "Air Force Song" was broadcast to the world by Major Alfred M. Worden, who had a tape recorder aboard the "Endeavor" command module which was in orbit around the moon. Scott, Irwin and Worden comprised the first and only "All-Air Force" Apollo crew and arranged to take the page of sheet music with them as a tribute to Crawford and the United States Air Force.

This video link provides additional context: [Air Force Third Verse](#)