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# Mountain West Conference NEWS

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## **AIR FORCE'S PETER FRENCH NAMED 2007-08 RECIPIENT OF MOUNTAIN WEST CONFERENCE HAL ROTHMAN SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD**

**COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.** – Air Force sophomore Peter French was announced today as the Mountain West Conference Hal Rothman Sportsmanship Award recipient for 2007-08. The award, established in 2005-06 and re-named in honor of the former UNLV faculty athletics representative, is presented to the student-athlete who has distinguished him or herself through sportsmanship and ethical behavior. The student-athlete also must demonstrate good citizenship outside of the sports-competition setting and be in good academic standing.

A native of Austin, Texas, French has competed as a member of the Falcons' fencing team for two years. He routinely portrays the ideals of sportsmanship and competitive respect, and his character was never more evident than during a match at the 2008 Junior Men's Epee World Cup in Basel, Switzerland. During a bout to determine the top eight individuals and eventual selection to the world team, French struck the floor in a failed attempt for his opponent's foot. The scoring director did not observe the floor touch, and awarded a point to French. Immediately, French acknowledged the mistake and asked the director to remove a point from French's score – a gesture not usually exhibited in international competition. French's opponent thanked him for his sportsmanship and the bout continued. Several touches passed, and French's opponent accidentally hit the floor. He, too, acknowledged his mistake with a mutual understanding he was returning the earlier favor. French emerged from the bout victorious and later finished third in the competition, leading to his selection to the world team.

In addition to his academic and athletic commitments, French maintains an active role in the fencing community, conducting weekly instruction classes with local youth to help them develop their fencing skills while instilling the ideals of sportsmanship, respect and integrity. He has been involved in house-building projects and sports camps in post-Katrina New Orleans and has also extended his community service role overseas, teaching English in a Latvian orphanage.

French is the first Air Force student-athlete to earn the MWC Hal Rothman Sportsmanship Award. Previous honorees include Wyoming's Kevin Bretting (men's diving) and Utah's Katie Battazzo (women's soccer).