

Air Force finishes 12th in Eco-Challenge

GLENDHU BAY, New Zealand — The Air Force team finished 12th in the 2001 Eco-Challenge as it paddled ashore, completing the demanding 230-mile ultimate race.

The race started Oct. 21 with 73 international teams. The four airmen who competed all possessed navigation, interpersonal and technical skills to assist in the multi-sport endurance race of river rafting, mountaineering, rope climbing, cliff rappelling and

trail biking. The team was the first Eco-Challenge team staffed by all military service members, said Mark Burnett, race director.

Team America's Air Force was made up of Tech. Sgt. Kenneth "Ken" Fournier (team captain) of the 38th Rescue Squadron, Moody Air Force Base, Ga.; Senior Master Sgt. Rudolph "Skip" Kula and Tech. Sgt. David Shuman, 210th RS, Kulis Air National Guard Base, Anchorage, Alaska; and

1st Lt. Rebecca "Becky" King, 611th Air Communications Flight, Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska.

"We hope our achievements will be good for the Air Force [by showing the quality of our people]," Kula said.

Prior to this event, the highest showing by a U.S. military team was a 17th place finish in Morocco by a team of mostly Navy SEALs in 1998.