

Karl Malone guarantees POW/MIA recognition

HICKAM AIR FORCE BASE, Hawaii — It's said that passionate people wear their hearts on their sleeves. For Los Angeles Lakers' forward **Karl Malone**, he chooses to wear his on his shoe.

There are more than 88,000 Americans still unaccounted for in all foreign conflicts. The Lakers could sell out six home games before the fans outnumber those prisoners of war or missing in action yet to be returned to U.S. soil.

Like many others, the idea of having unaccounted American military members greatly upsets the Lakers' most seasoned veteran.

"I've had so many friends and family, like my grandfather, who served in the military, and it always reminds me of the American POW/MIAs," the player said.

And it always brings him back to the same discomfoting thought: "It seems like sometimes they are forgotten."

Mr. Malone set a plan in motion to do some-

thing about it.

His new sneaker is emblazoned with the POW/MIA emblem.

Every time the Lakers play on television, especially this summer when the U.S. national basketball team makes another Olympic gold medal run, the emblem will be front and center.

"I have the POW/MIA flag everywhere. I fly it on my trucks," said the 6-foot, 9-inch veteran of many basketball "wars." "When my new shoe deal

was coming up and they asked me about how I wanted it to look, I just thought having the flag on there was a good idea."

It won't be a short-term design either. The flag will remain a part of his uniform for the duration of his career.

"It's just my way of saying thanks, both to those serving now as well as to our POW/MIAs," he said.

— Tech. Sgt. Mark Munsey
15th Airlift Wing Public Affairs



Los Angeles Lakers power forward Karl Malone wears a new basketball shoe with the POW/MIA flag. Designed in the off-season, the shoe debuted in a Lakers' preseason game.

by Thomas Powell



An American guy

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif.

— **Toby Keith** visits with fans in November while filming his new video, "American Soldier" here. A crowd of about 400 people filled a hangar to meet the country music star. The video debuted in December and is part of his latest album release "Shock'n Y'all." He's proud that the CD is selling big under the country banner.