

# FEATURE

## Air Force, Army to attack, seize runway

By Senior Airman Jason Smith  
437 AW Public Affairs

The runway here, which is shared with the Charleston International Airport, is going to be attacked and seized by a joint Air Force-Army operation Saturday.

The airfield seizure, part of Air Expo 2000, will start around 12:55 p.m., and should last a little over an hour and a half.

"This is the first time Charleston AFB, or anyone as far as I know, has tried a scenario this in depth as part of an airshow," said Capt. Steve Erickson, 437<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing plans officer and Air Expo 2000 drop zone control officer and airfield seizure planner.

The demonstration will start with an A-10, from the 23<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Squadron, Pope AFB, N.C., flyby to include pyrotechnic destruction of simulated ground targets. Next, three OH-58 Kiowa Warrior attack helicopters, from the Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C., will perform a landing zone security demonstration, taking out simulated enemy positions.

The OH-58s will depart the area, and then forty members of the 82 AD and 20 members of the Tactical Air Control Party from the 14<sup>th</sup> Air Support Operations Squadron, Pope AFB, will jump from three C-17s. They will move

off to fighting positions to prepare to take control of a fuel pump station on the flightline, firing all the way.

The minute the paratroopers hit the ground, three UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters, from the Army's 1/17 Cav will fly through and destroy any targets which may have been missed by the A-10. The UH-60s will be escorted by OH-58s, which will then land and offload 24 members of the 437<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron.

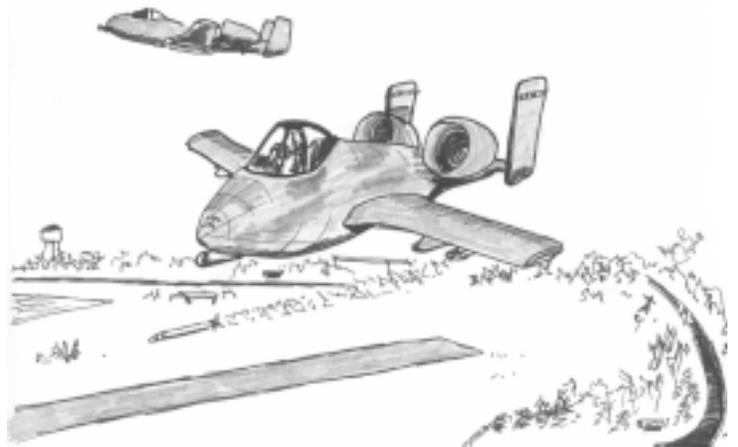
The assault team, made up of two security forces squads led by Tech. Sgt. James Scott, will be firing M-60, M249s and M-16 machine guns, providing a diversion for the paratroopers as they take fighting positions for the assault on the fuel pump station.

According to Erickson, the security forces squad will be showing their heavy fire power capabilities. "A lot of people don't know the same folks working the gates each day are highly trained and qualified air base defenders.

They can bring some serious fire power to the fight, and it will be interesting to see them practice their wartime mission."

"I think this will steal the show," said Capt. Jeffrey Prindle, 437 SFS

Stage 1: A-10 flyby with destruction of ground targets.



Illustrations by Staff Sgt. Alan Campbell, 437 OSS

operations officer. "It's going to show the capabilities of the C-17 as well as security forces capabilities to deploy from the C-17 and helicopters. It's going to be awesome!"

Amidst the firing, the UH-60s will deliver three 105 mm Howitzers and members of the "Bravo" Battery, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 72<sup>nd</sup> AD. The Howitzers will be fired at enemy positions across the airfield to simulate clearing a larger perimeter.

When the Howitzers begin firing, three C-17s will land and offload the Immediate Ready Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, Fort Benning, Ga., including two M2A2 Bradley fighting vehicles and two M1A1 Abram tanks. The tanks will maneuver into position near the crowd to support ground troops, and the backs of the Bradleys will open with troops running out.

After a small artillery raid, the UH-60s will pick up the Howitzers and security force members and fly away.

"The crowd will be able to see just how quickly the 82 AD can come in and seize an airfield, with paratroopers, the Kiowa Warrior and UH-60s, to take control of an airfield in a very short time," said Maj. Michael Pyott, 1/17 Cav Operations Officer.

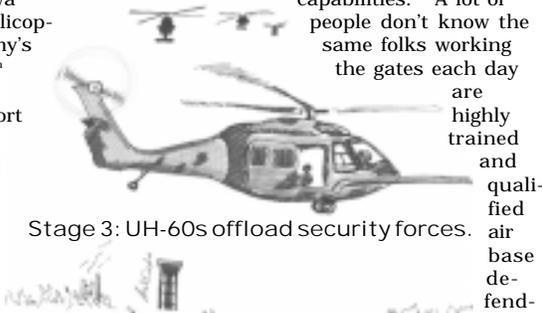
The seizure demonstration not only is intended to awe the crowd, but also is a training exercise for those involved.

"The airfield seizure is one of the basic missions of the 82 AD. The training value of conducting or participating in the Charleston airshow builds on our proficiency level for executing in operation," said Pyott.

The show will end with a C-17-seven ship overhead recovery. The recovery will include a formation with the planes landing one at a time, symbolizing follow-on airland delivery that typically follows an airfield seizure.

"This is the C-17 wartime mission," said Erickson. "It's as real a scenario as you can have."

Stage 3: UH-60s offload security forces.



Stage 2: OH-58s demonstrate landing zone security.



Stage 4: C-17s perform paratrooper airdrops and airland heavy tanks.

