

C-130 Crash Survivor Returns To Pope

By HENRY CUNNINGHAM

Saturday Staff Writer

One of the two airmen who survived the crash of a C-130 Hercules transport airplane July 1 on Fort Bragg has been discharged from the hospital and returned to Pope Air Force Base, according to medical officials.

Air Force 1st Lt. Marc A. Lenke was discharged on Aug. 14 from the burn center of Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston near San Antonio, Texas.

Lenke, 26, was co-pilot of the airplane which crashed and burned while performing a LAPES (low-altitude parachute extraction system) maneuver during a public Army/Air Force exercise before more than 4,000 spectators on Sicily Drop Zone. The other four crew members and an Army soldier on the ground were killed by the crash.

Medical-center officials said the other survivor, Air

Force Sgt. Tony P. Holmes, 28, the flight engineer, is in satisfactory condition and "doing well."

Lenke and Holmes were taken from the crash site to Womack Army Community Hospital on Fort Bragg and transported that night to the Texas burn center. Hospital officials said the two airmen arrived unconscious and in critical condition.

The airmen who died in the crash were Capt. Garry M. Bardo, 31, the pilot; 1st Lt. John B. Keiser III, 28, the navigator; Tech. Sgt. Timothy J. Matar, 32, the load master; and Airman 1st Class Albert G. Dunse, 23, an additional load master.

The airmen all were assigned to the 40th Tactical Airlift Squadron of Pope's 317th Tactical Airlift Wing.

The soldier who died in the crash, Staff Sgt. D. Lance Hunter, 25, was an intelligence specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Bat-

talion, 73rd Armor Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg.

Hunter was sitting in a military vehicle watching the exercise in the path of the runaway airplane as it skidded off the dirt landing strip into the woods and exploded into a ball of orange flames.

Air Force officials are continuing an investigation into the crash and no date has been announced for release of information. The investigation is being conducted by five Air Force officers from other bases in the Military Airlift Command, higher headquarters for Pope and the 317th Tactical Airlift Wing.

Spokesmen say official conclusions about the cause

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of the crash probably never will be released to protect the integrity of the investigation.

Army and Air Force officials say the crash has not curtailed training exercises or resulted in any changed

regarding the LAPES procedure or the C-130, which has been in service since the mid-1950s.

Survivors' and memorial funds have been established by the units of the crash victims.

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