

Airmen assist in repulsing convoy attack

BAGHDAD, Iraq — During an Iraqi insurgent attack on an American convoy north of here in March, time seemed to stand still, said Tech. Sgt. **George Stewart**.

"It seemed like forever," the 447th Air Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron Airman said. Squadron members credited Sergeant Stewart, their

by Master Sgt. Sean E. Cobb

independent-duty medical technician, with stabilizing and preparing three wounded service members for an aero-medical evacuation during the attack.

One Soldier was killed and three service members were wounded, while three Iraqi insurgents were killed and another wounded in the attack that started quickly.

"The vehicles in front of us stopped. Then we heard weapons fire," said Senior Master Sgt. **Richard Parsons**, the Air Force convoy commander.

Several service members were lying wounded in front of the Air Force portion of the convoy as attention turned to muzzle flashes along a roadside tree line. That's when Airman 1st Class **Shina Watkins** opened fire, said 1st Lt. **Leo Baustian**, the convoy's intelligence officer.

Airman Watkins, a squadron fire team member, was manning one of the turret guns. She provided cover fire as the remainder of the security forces darted into position, he said. Toward the head of the convoy, Airman 1st Class **Raul Mexicano** also returned fire from a turret.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Baustian and Staff Sgt. **Kurt McNeely**, a civil engineer readiness noncommissioned officer assigned to the squadron, fired on the muzzle flashes as the rest of the Airmen maneuvered into place.

During the firefight, Sergeant Parsons directed Sergeant Stewart toward the wounded members. The medic wasted no time as he tended the wounded.

"He just jumped out of the vehicle and got busy," said Tech. Sgt. **Ed James**, assistant convoy commander.

Sergeant Parsons and the other wounded were taken by helicopter to a nearby Army medical treatment facility while Sergeant James rallied the Air Force portion of the convoy and safely left the area.

"It's kind of funny, but after it was all over with, I sat there in the helicopter and simply felt like I did my day's work," Sergeant Parsons said.

— Master Sgt. Sean E. Cobb
447th Air Expeditionary
Group Public Affairs



Senior Master Sgt. Richard Parsons uses props to describe the action during an Iraqi insurgent attack on an American convoy north of Baghdad in March. Sergeant Parsons dislocated his elbow and sustained bruises to his ribs and hip during the attack that killed one Soldier and wounded two other service members.