

Airborne

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AIRBORNE. The code name used by U.S. Army Sergeant First Class Franklin E. Talltree. A Native American, Airborne was born on the Navaho Reservation in Nevada to oil-rich parents. He was their eldest son and they indulged him with sky-diving lessons. Though he passed the Arizona State Bar exams, Airborne decided to join the Army and entered Airborne School at Fort Benning, graduating at the top of his class. Airborne joined the G.I. Joe team in 1983. His teammates know Airborne as a likeable person who can get gravely serious during battle. On his first mission with the Joes, Airborne helped stop Cobra from contaminating the Alaskan Pipeline. He flew an assault hang-glider against Cobra gliders, bringing them in to position so Snake-Eyes could shoot them down. Airborne took part in many subsequent missions, often as part of the crew of different transport missions in the G.I. Joe C-130 transport plane. Airborne and Spirit parachuted into the High Sierras to retrieve Snake-Eyes from his mountain cabin. Soon, Cobra agents Destro, Firefly and the Crimson Guardsman, Fred Broca arrived to attack the cabin. During the ensuing firefight, Airborne was injured by Fred, who was shot by Spirit. The Joes could not prevent Firefly from destroying the cabin, but Snake-Eyes managed to survive the explosion thanks to a trap door hidden under the cabin's floor. Airborne later flew one of two Dragonfly helicopters that transported the G.I. Joe Battle Platform air-sea base from New Orleans into the Gulf of Mexico where the Joes engaged Cobra in the battle that created Cobra Island and returned to the island to drop off a group of Joes for a mission to rescue Ripcord. Airborne was Wild Bill's co-pilot in the Dragonfly during the Joes' invasion of the Cobra-controlled town of Springfield. Two years later, the G.I. Joe team entered the Cobra civil war on Cobra Island on the side of Serpentor. Airborne was part of the security team led by Duke that participated in the battle. Later, Airborne was co-pilot of the Tomahawk helicopter that rescued Snake-Eyes and Storm Shadow from a battle at the Cobra Consulate in New York City. The team then ferried Scarlett to a hospital for emergency surgery. Most of Airborne's subsequent activities are classified, but he remained on the G.I. Joe team until it disbanded in 1994.

After the Joes reinstatement in 2001, Airborne rejoined the team to fight against the forces of a revived Serpentor on Cobra Island. Airborne later used his background in the law and returned to the courtroom, where he advised new team member Barrel Roll as he spoke at his brother Thomas Stall's hearing to decide if he would be court martialed. After the Joe team stopped a plot by Cobra to unleash the weapon known as the Tempest, and defeated a new threat, the Red Shadows, the military again disbanded the team. One year later, the Joe team was reformed with a smaller roster of active members. Airborne, like most former Joes, is a reserve member of the new team. Airborne has recently worked with the team at their new headquarters, The Rock. During the conflict known as World War III, Airborne was stationed in Sudan, and later took part in fighter operations launched from the U.S.S. Flagg.

(GI 11, 16-18, 20, 22, 24, 25, 31-33, 40, 45, 49, 54, 74, 75, 77, 96; SM 24; OB 1; GIv2 24 (dream); BF 1; AE 25 (cover), 32; Figures: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)