



The **McDonnell Douglas MD 530N helicopter**, equipped with the company's NOTAR™ anti-torque system, flew for the first time at McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Co.'s facilities on 29 December 1989. The aircraft is the first conventional, single main-rotor helicopter without a tail rotor for anti-torque and directional control. NOTAR-equipped helicopters, which will be available in both MD 530N and MD 520N configurations, are the latest versions of the MD 500, which first flew in 1963. Selection of engines between the Allison 250-C20R-2 or 250-C30 powerplants determines the aircraft designation. The C20R is installed in the MD 520N while the C30 is installed in the MD 530N.

The **National Aeronautic Association**, the national aero club of the United States, has certified that a group of students at California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, CA achieved **human-powered helicopter flight** on Sunday evening, 10 December 1989. The flight — technically described as a "hover" — lasted 68 seconds. The team hopes eventually to build an even more efficient vehicle with the goal of claiming the American Helicopter Society's Igor I. Sikorsky Award. The award is a standing offer of \$20,000 to the first team who builds a human-powered helicopter that can fly for 60 seconds and rise three meters.

1st SOCOM becomes a MACOM. The 1st Special Operations Command at Ft. Bragg, NC, is receiving a phased transfer of remaining functions from the headquarters of the Forces Command at Ft. McPherson, GA. Once the transfer is completed, the reorganized 1st SOCOM will have become the sole major Army command charged with commanding

assigned or attached Army special operations forces. The Army's 16th major Army command was activated in December concurrent with Senate approval of LTG Gary E. Luck's nomination to head it. The new command will bear the title **U.S. Army Special Operations Command**. Headquarters will remain at Bragg.

Boeing Helicopters unveiled its **MH-47E CHINOOK** special operations helicopter 6 December 1989. MH-47E flight-testing is expected to begin in early 1990, with first delivery to the 160th Special Operations Aviation Group (Airborne), Ft. Campbell, KY, scheduled for November. Deliveries of production MH-47Es are planned to take place between 1992 and 1994.

Air Force is the top **ROTC-program preference** of 1990 high school seniors in an annual nationwide survey. The other branches of the Armed Forces were selected in this order: Army (19.1%), Navy (14.5%), Marines (14.3%), Coast Guard (8.4%), and Merchant Marines (1%). A total of 42.7% of the 754,000 seniors surveyed by the National Research Center for College and University Admissions (NRCCUA) selected Air Force. The survey asks students to indicate which type of ROTC program they would be likely to join if they needed financial help in college.

Twin LHTEC (Light Helicopter Turbine Engine Company) **T800 engines** are to be installed in a **Westland Helicopters Battlefield Lynx**. The T800-powered Lynx is scheduled for first flight in mid-1991. The joint program has Westland providing the test aircraft, design integration, and flight demonstration program, while LHTEC will supply engines, speed reduction gearboxes and support for what will represent a production configuration for the aircraft. LHTEC is a partnership of Allison Gas Turbine Division of General Motors and the Garrett Engine Division of Allied-Signal Aerospace Company.

— Correction —

December's Branch Chief Update contained an incorrect date. The first flight for LHX is now set for August 1993. Full rate production will run from 1995 through 2007. ARMY AVIATION MAGAZINE regrets this error.