

# *The Drop*

## *by sick*

Once you've mastered the Swoop, you probably find yourself thinking 'but what about those times when a target is right below me, and it's just begging to be gunned down?' You aren't cruising along at speed, you're just above a guy who needs to be whacked, maybe even a guy you just zoomed away from. This is a more difficult attack, but is also a bread and butter move of the energy fighter.

The idea in the Drop is almost entirely opposite from the Swoop. Instead of a high speed, low angle climbing attack, you make a low speed, very high angle diving attack. Inherently more dangerous, but with a different set of opportunities:

- You still have a good firing window, because low speed will lead to a low closure rate, even though you are diving on the target.
- You will be able to easily compensate for any defensive maneuvers the target makes by rolling, since you are headed straight down.
- You will still be able to egress from the attack, because by the time the attack is completed, you will be at just the right speed to begin a zoom climb.

How does all this work? First off, the ideal time to begin a Drop is when you have just finished off a zoom climb, and somebody tried to follow you but didn't quite catch you. You are both at stall speeds, but you are higher than your opponent, by 2-3k (or even more). Now, you need to reverse on the target and gun him down.

1. Reverse on the target. You should be in at least a medium angle climb at this point, and stalling. If you can, use a rudder reversal (hammerhead) to come directly around, or if you are climbing at a less steep angle, use a wingover to come around.
2. You are now pointed straight down at a stalling opponent. Full WEP, Mr. Sulu!
3. If he maneuvers in any way, just use your rudder and roll rate to keep your nose on him. Little or no elevator input should be required.
4. Gun his brains out. You should get a nice 2 to 3 second shot, depending on what he does to defend himself.
5. As soon as you finish firing, you should be doing around 200 to 250 knots indicated. This is just about corner speed, the perfect time to pull out of the dive, hit full WEP, and zoom climb again.

If all goes well, your target is floating to earth. If he isn't dead, you will be zooming away from an even more energy depleted foe (he had to dodge your attack, remember?), ready to come around for another attack. Whatever you do, don't try to stay on him. Zoom away as soon as your initial firing pass is done, because sticking around will leave you battling for angles, which is a fight you don't want any part of. By zooming away, you retain your advantage, and get a chance to evaluate the fight (and see if there are any new bandits on the scene), and either disengage, or begin another attack run.