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Ref # 14599

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NARRATIVE OF MISSION BY JOLLY GREEN 51, 20 Mar 66

DOWNGRADED

11/1 AFR-203

13 MAY

Following an urgent request for help, two Jolly Green (HX-38) which were standing strip alert in a remote area of Southeast Asia, were directed to recover 13 friendly troops cut off and surrounded by the Pathet Lao forces. The Jolly Greens first had to defuel auxiliary tanks and then the internal in order to configure the aircraft for the recovery effort.

Upon joining with additional recovery aircraft, four Skysiders of the USAF (Sandys), the team proceeded to our recovery area located 062/2 from Lima Site 48A. This particular area is infested with hostile troops and has known locations of quad 50's machine guns. In our entry to the area, we were advised that the minimum safe altitude to avoid enemy ground fire was 6500 MSL.

Upon arrival of the recovery team at the scene, a white "T" was to be displayed as a recognition signal. The signal was finally located in just about the most inaccessible area a person could get. It was later determined that the government troops were forced into the area by the unfriendly forces. It is a mountainous, rugged area, and a landing was impossible. I flew Jolly Green 51 into the canyon expecting retaliatory fire but none was evident. Prior to this, the Sandy crews had flown over the area to examine and possibly detect enemy ground forces. I am sure the presence of the Sandy aircraft prevented any ground fire from being aimed in our direction since friendly aircraft had reported ground fire just prior to our entry to the pickup area.

On my first entry to the canyon I was forced out due to lack of available power. I next asked Sandy for a smoke bomb to help determine wind direction. This they readily supplied and it only showed that there was no wind at all. Another trip into the canyon was made in a different direction and a power check was performed, followed by a hover over the trapped men. The hoist was lowered and recovery initiated. Throughout this maneuver, the Sandy aircraft maintained a race track pattern around the hovering Jolly Greens to discourage any would be sniper from shooting. I elected to hover high in order to have altitude to execute an emergency exit out of the confined area. This altitude was over 200 feet above the terrain and out of ground effect. I picked up three men in my first attempt and was about to hoist the fourth when my #2 engine fire warning light illuminated. I informed Jolly Green 56 that I would like to leave the hover to check things over and allow him to continue with the recovery. He retrieved one man only and experienced some difficulty with his aircraft. Loss of RPM was eminent if he continued and I asked if we could land nearby and I would transfer my passengers to his aircraft and continue with the pickups with Jolly Green 51. In the mean time I went back for a fourth attempt. Following pickup of the 4th man it was evident that further pickups would endanger the Jolly Green crew of 4 plus the 5 passengers I had aboard the aircraft, due to the limited power available. We proceeded to Site 33 after being advised that the closest friendly forces

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were located there and we could safely land and offload the passengers and return for the remaining eight surrounded soldiers.

Upon return to the pickup area, Jolly Green 56 recovered four more men by hoist, and I recovered the remaining four via the same method. Again, the Sandy aircraft provided rescop for the Jolly Greens and kept the enemy away from our area. I would like to point out that this was not a normal "EXTRACTION" but a rescue and that a pickup from over 200 feet takes an eternity, if not on the clock, in my mind. No doubt the rescuees felt somewhat apprehensive about coming up such a long way also. Quite possible to, the helicopter is quite vulnerable to ground fire but in a situation which we encountered, a low hover and loss of rotor rpm could prove to be disastrous since the escape route was over a ridge and thus necessitated a climb with an already deteriorating situation resulting from rotor decay. My high hover paid off during my 4th pickup, first go-around. The engines were topped and we experienced rotor drop with a man in the hoist. I started a gradual descent to obtain additional rpm and airspeed thus enabling us to recover the man in forward flight of 25 knots airspeed.

The mission was performed as requested and was successful. The thirteen government troops were returned to friendly forces.

The three crewmembers of Jolly Green 51 which was assigned Low Bird, performed in a commendable manner. I would like to single them out and commend them for their performance of duty during an extremely difficult mission into known hostile territory with known gun emplacements.

|                          |                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Captain Dale V. Hardy,   | Co-Pilot            |
| A1C Robert E. Crites,    | Helicopter Mechanic |
| A2C John J. Dagneau III, | Paramedic           |

Technical Data: OAT 28°C, Pressure Altitude 3000', Fuel on board 2400 lbs. Five persons on board for first 4 pickups, thus total of nine personnel. Over 200 feet of hoist cable used for each pickup.

ROBERT D. FURMAN,  
Captain, USAF  
Rescue Crew Commander

DOWNGRADED  
1/V AFR-205-2  
18 MAY 1976

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DOWNGRADE AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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Re # 14598

AKRS

MISSION NARRATIVE  
20 March 66

Jolly Green 51 and 56 were scrambled from a forward operating site to recover a group of friendly forces who's position had been over run. After adjusting our fuel load for the mission we proceeded to the recovery area with four Sandy (A-1E's) as escort. An Air America Helio Carrier acted as Forward Air Controller. The area was hostile and position was within two miles of known hostile gun emplacements.

Jolly Green 51 proceeded in for a pickup with Sandys providing cap and smoke plus firing a few well placed rockets to discourage unfriendly forces located on the ground.

The pickup area was in extremely rugged terrain at 3,000 feet MSL elevation. A 200 foot hover was necessary and our operation was at our maximum power limits. Jolly Green 51 recovered 3 personnel and then received two fire warning lights. He transitioned into forward flight and we (Jolly Green 56) proceeded into the area to attempt a pickup. We came to a high hover and lowered the hoist. Just after one of the personnel mounted the bree penetrator we experienced rotor decay and started to settle. I was forced to lower the nose attempting to regain translational lift in forward flight. The next few seconds were harrowing for both the people in the aircraft and our passenger on the hoist. We lost altitude until we had regained sufficient forward speed and narrowly missed damaging the rotor blades on the canyon walls. The man on the hoist had managed to stay on the hoist. Sgt Youngblood continued the hoist pickup and I held the airspeed down to 25 knots until he was safely in the aircraft. He sustained a few minor scratches and bruises.

It was obvious we were too heavy to continue the pickups. I coordinated with the FAC to lead us to the closest safe landing area to off-load the personnel already picked up and to burn off additional fuel, reducing the gross weight. Both Jolly Greens proceeded to a nearby Lima Site, off-loaded our passengers and returned to the pickup area. Jolly Green 56 proceeded in first and picked up 4 more personnel on the hoist followed by Jolly Green 51 who picked up the remaining 5 personnel. One more moment of terror, one of the passengers in Jolly Green 56 dropped a hand grenade in the cabin compartment. Both Jolly Greens plus escort proceeded back to our forward operating site without incident with the personnel recovered.

Low Bird - Jolly Green 51  
RCC Robert D. Fuman, Capt  
RCCP Dale V. Hardy, Capt  
HM Robert E. Crites, ALC  
PJ John J. Dagneau III, A20

High Bird - Jolly Green 56  
RCC Norman E. Kamhoot, Capt  
RCCP Donald A. Vavra, Major  
HM Theodore M. Youngblood, SSgt  
PJ William G. Daniels, NSgt

NORMAN B. KAMHOOT  
Captain, USAF  
Rescue Crew Commander

ARODC # 661210

No PARC Log No. 1105266

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AFR-205-2

12 MAY 1970

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