

DECLASSIFIED

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R # 45036

61

MISSION NARRATIVE 22 May 1966

DOWNGRADED
IAW AFR-205-2
12 MAY 1970

Jolly Green 56 (low bird) and Jolly Green 52 (high bird) were on alert at NKP at 0530 on 22 May 1966. We were notified by Crown 61 (HC-130H) at 1039L, that an F-105 was down on the 0890/62 NM from NKP. Both Jolly Greens were airborne at 1044L, enroute to the area. The weather at launch was 5000' broken to overcast, 10,000' broken, high broken, and visibility 10 miles. No problems were encountered during the scramble.

Weather enroute to the area was 7000' broken to overcast, with layers at 9000' and 10,000'. The Jolly Greens climbed to 7,500' to take advantage of the cloud coverage over known flak areas. Sandys' 41 and 42 were rescort. While flying to the area, we could hear a Gombay (FAC) advise all forces that two miles north of the downed pilot were many 37mm and 57mm positions along a ridge line. He also said they were possibly "Fire Can". Dragonfly 23, a FAC A1E, was over the area talking to the survivor and advised him to move southwest to get out of range of the guns. The survivor said he had a bad leg and couldn't move too easily, and that many enemy camps were all around him. Dragonfly 23 then requested fighters with bombs to knock out the guns. The Jolly Greens arrived in the area at 1120L. The weather was 7000' broken to overcast, but visibility was 15 miles. We let down through the weather and were advised by Dragonfly 23 to orbit a few miles short of the target until the fighters arrived. Crown 61 advised that there would be a delay on the fighters. Dragonfly continued to fly in and out of the area without drawing any fire. Since time is always of the essence, Jolly Green 56 suggested they get all the White Phosphorus they had and lay down a smoke screen and attempt the rescue.

At about 1155, one Sandy dropped a W.P. to determine the wind direction. Then a line of them were dropped between the survivor and the guns. When the Sandys started dropping, the survivor reported heavy ground fire directed at them. Jolly Green 56 started a rapid descent, taking advantage of the smoke screen and terrain to get into the area. As we approached we could see red smoke, but it was right on the edge of the first W.P. dropped. The survivor had his beeper on at this time and all attempts to talk to him or to get it turned off failed.

We made a high speed pass over the red smoke, but couldn't see the survivor due to the high trees and foliage. A rapid teardrop turn was made into the wind and we came to a hover over the smoke. The flight mechanic spotted the survivor and directed the helicopter over him. We were receiving small arms fire, so we pulled the helicopter up into the edge of the W.P. smoke, trying to keep the screen between us and the fire. Hovering was very difficult because we were about 80' above the trees, and the smoke was partially obscuring ground references. Just as soon as the flight mechanic advised that the survivor was on the penetrator and clear of the trees, we initiated a takeoff. We proceeded easterly at a slow airspeed with the survivor still 50' below the chopper, bringing him up enroute. Sandy advised us to break right because heavy AAA guns at the end of the valley were firing at us. This brought us over the pickup area again and although we were still climbing, we were only 1000' above the ground.

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(Date) 13

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DOWNGRADE AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS

DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS

DOD DIR 5200.10

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ARDC #

661855

RGRC-66-0063

DOD DIR 5200.10

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We got the survivor inside just as some heavy automatic weapons opened up to our right. The Sandys were in excellent position and returned the fire immediately. We broke left, flying southwest and started receiving heavy automatic weapons fire from our left. All this time, the pararescueman and the flight mechanic were returning fire with M-16's. They could see the enemy and reported they had hit at least three. We were changing heading constantly and climbing for the clouds, which we entered at 5000'AGL. We then proceeded IFR out of the area.

The only problems encountered were heavy chatter on the radios when we first arrived, however all unnecessary chatter ceased when the pickup began. Also the beeper being left on by the survivor prevented further voice contact. While in a hover making the pickup, the crew observed a dirt road next to us with about fifteen 50 gallon drums of fuel beside it. This was later reported to intelligence, along with the known gun positions.

Jolly Green 56 received only one hit (5 holes), from all the fire thrown at it. I believe the jinking (rapid changing of altitude and heading) kept the hits to a minimum. The first J.P. was put too close to the survivor, but at that time he was believed to be further south. As it worked out, the smoke that close acted as a good screen.

The survivors name was Richard H. Hackford Jr., 1stLt,
Both Jolly Greens recovered at NKP at 1455L.

469th TFS.

LOW BIRD

RCC: Capt J. L. Butera
RCCP: Capt D. Henry
HM: TSgt S. Heywood
PJ: A2C Williamson

HIGH BIRD

RCC: Capt Drangstveit
RCCP: Lt Kenny
HM: SSgt Schrader
PJ: SSgt Farrior

James L. Butera
JAMES L. BUTERA, Captain
RCC, Low Bird

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By Authority of GDS

By [Signature] (Date) 13 Mar 71

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Butera.jpg

22MAY66

USAF Captain Saves Downed Pilot in Viet

22 May 66

U.S. Air Force Capt. James L. Butera, son of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel S. Butera, 1820 N. Ave., National City, recently rescued an F-105 pilot downed among enemy gun emplacements in Viet Nam.

The rapid rescue, which marked the 53rd for Butera's detachment of the famed Jolly Green Giant rescue squadron, required a smoke screen to obscure recovery actions from the nearby guns.

His crew used the helicopter's hoist to raise the fighter pilot from the towering jungle trees and began maneuvering from the crash site while the pilot still dangled in the hoist some 30 feet below.

The captain and his crew circled the enemy gun positions as the downed pilot was brought aboard.

Butera, a helicopter rescue pilot, is a member of the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service which flies combat and peacetime air rescue and aeromedical evacuation missions.

He is a veteran of the Korean War, and was commissioned upon completion of Officer Candidate School.



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~Det 2-3-60-18 May

(C) An O-1E with two people aboard was brought down by enemy fire in Laos at 1715N 10611E. A Navy F4B making a low pass over the crash site was hit heavily and set afire. The pilot and RO ejected at 1714N 10611E approximately two miles SW of the DRV border. Two HH-3E's scrambled from Nakhon Phanom and were led to the area by A1E's. The two survivors of the F4B were recovered individually by hoist. During the second pick up the pararescueman was hit in the knee and elbow by one 30 cal round. Both survivors and the wounded pararescueman were returned to Khe Sanh and then evacuated to DaNang. Search suspended for the crew of O-1E after search of immediate area. Wingman reported in his opinion there was no chance for survivors.

Det 2-3-61-19 May

(C) An Air America helicopter was shot down in Laos at 1959N 10329E. Request for SAR assistance was responded to by diverting an HC-130, two HH-3E's and A1E's toward the scene; however, the Rescue helicopters were recalled when Air America advised they were not needed. Air America H-34 picked up survivors and the deceased were left at the wreckage for a ground party to recover.

Det 2-3-62-22 May

(C) An F-105 pilot was recovered 62 NM East of Nakhon Phanom by HH-3E using the hoist. The recovery was made in conjunction with a smoke screen laid down by A1E's to reduce the effectiveness of heavy ground fire.

Det 2-3-63-25 May

(C) Two HH-3E's, call sign Jolly Green 52 and 56, were scrambled to look for the downed pilot of an F-105 at 1933N 10343E. Led to the scene by fighters, the A1E's dropped white phosphorous rockets to screen the pick up point. The low bird, Jolly Green 56, moved into the area where the parachute was located. About 50 feet above the site, heavy ground fire started from automatic weapons. The helicopter mechanic saw several men and returned their fire and observed five or six of them fall. Taking hits on the aircraft, #2 engine failed. At low altitude and airspeed a crash landing was imminent; however, the application of full emergency power on #1 engine enabled Jolly Green 56 to balloon over a ridge toward some rice fields. Airspeed and RPM built back so that level flight was maintained and fuel was dumped to gain altitude. With fighter escort and navigation assistance from an Air America aircraft the helicopter recovered at an airfield with 170 lbs of fuel left. During the following day's search, an A1E aircraft went down just south of the F-105 beeper position. He was recovered by an HH-3E and the search for the F-105 pilot continued. When two F-105's made low passes over the beeper, flak was picked up. Suspecting a trap, the search was then suspended.

A1E lost
SAR pilot OK

Det 2-3-64-30 May

(C) An F-105 pilot bailed out at 2213N 10423E. A1E's in contact with the pilot reported that he was under his chute which was caught in the trees. An HH-3E lowered its forest penetrator hoist and hovered over the chute for about two minutes hoping the downed pilot would come to the hoist. Just then the helicopter was hit twice by small arms fire and had to withdraw. Later attempts to locate the pilot were unsuccessful and the search was suspended.

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MAY 21

19 The sky was clear & blue
and bright but a few clouds were
seen in the morning.

19 The air was clear.

19

19

19

SUN. MAY 22

19 High tide today. Scrambled on
F115 jock down 65 miles on
the 070 radial. Sandy & Laidy
smoke all around him after he

19 walked for 1/2 hr. away from
gun emplacements on top of hill.
Just as they reached the pilot
they started taking fire.

19 They stayed and got him.
Williamson PT was returning
the fire along with the A1E5
Pilot J.C. CART Butera CPT Capt Henry

19 HM. SGT HAYWOOD.

19

Bob-

I finally found this stuff in boxes I have not been into in some time. Sent some orders which I thought you might find interesting for other names. (Kellerman, Hansen, Rogan, Farrior, Schmidt, Berry, Hunt, Watson)

On my second SS mission, Kennedy got the AFC. 1LT Harris actually made the pickup with my "urging" and direction. Kennedy was a basket case and didn't want to go back in. I would like to know the crew that was killed on Hackney's mission. I do know Don Hall was, but I can't remember if Perry and Harris were. Because (it seemed) PJ's and P's/FE's rotated at different times, we took on a new replacement to introduce him to the crew/mission prior to your departure. I brought Hackney on as a young pup and got him comfortable with the crew I had been working for a couple months. I was home on leave when Cliff Buckley told me they were all killed except Duane.

22 MAY 66

Obviously, the citations are ^{CANNED}. The 1st, I took out a quad mounted 50 with 3 bursts of my AR-15. Total fucking luck (almost thrown out of helo - gunner belt disconnected - ^{Took} pilot to back litter) ran to door and shot as we passed about 100' overhead. Got 3 KBA's (killed by air) (NVA regulars) near Mu Gia pass - 105 pilot. 2nd was a big day. That pilot (F-4) is the one you can contact at Kelly AFB. In my heart, that man would be dead if I hadn't insisted we keep trying. Yes, even as a 2striper. I had no reverence for rank. Always call 'em like I see 'em. 1:10..