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Ref # 31556 62

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NARRATIVE OF RESCUE MISSION 30 JUNE 1966

MSN 2-3-82

Pilot Rescued: Captain Robin K. Nierste, F-105, Korat RTAFB

Coordinates: 18 13N 103 59 E

We were standing strip alert at Lima Site 98 with Jolly Green 56 as low bird and Jolly Green 55 as high bird. At 1430L we heard a call on the HF radio that Savannah 2, an F-105, had received battle damage and was headed in our direction, and to be prepared for a scramble. After two air starts, Savannah 2's engine flamed out for the third time. The third airstart attempt was unsuccessful and we received word that he was bailing out. We scrambled immediately, contacted Crown 61, and they gave us the bailout position as 17 miles on the 131° radial of Channel 79. The position was later revised to 23 miles on the 111° radial. The cloud coverage of the entire area was very thick, with clouds down in the narrow valleys and completely covering most of the mountains and hills. Some of the buildups extended over 15,000 feet, and the 9,246' mountain peak was completely hidden. Upon arriving in the area of the downed pilot, we were advised that a Continental Porter, 'Butterfly 44' had voice contact with the downed pilot, but could not pin-point the survivor's location due to the thick cloud coverage. We established voice contact with the survivor but could not get a compass wing on his exact position due to the high cloud buildup directly over his position, extending all the way down onto the mountain. We found a "small sucker hole" in the overcast and let down with the visibility about 1/4 mile and ceiling from 0 to 150 feet. We worked our way up the valley in his direction at about 30 knots airspeed, with barely enough room for an 180° turn to get out. The survivor, Savannah 2, could hear our 'chopper' and kept telling us we were west of him. We kept working our way up the narrow valley and homed on his Beeper for about two miles, but ran into a dead-end cloud bank. The hole appeared to be closing in so we were forced to make a 180° turn and pull out. We told the survivor of our problem and he agreed to contact us in 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, the hole in the cloud had moved some distance north east of the first position and we again established contact with the pilot. After about 30 minutes of unsuccessful attempts to relocate him, we asked him to give us another call after 30 minutes and to try to work his way east down the valley to a small clear area. After about 10 minutes, Jolly Green 55, the high bird, saw a small break in the clouds approximately over the downed pilot's position. The survivor saw the Jolly Green and activated his beeper. After getting a UHF-DF compass wing on him for the first time in two hours, we were able to pin-point his position. We then saw him fire a flare and reestablished voice contact with him. The MSL altitude of his position was 5,000 feet. He was on side of a 9,246' mountain at the end of a narrow valley with tall trees and very thick jungle growth surrounding him. For our helicopter, Jolly Green 56, to hover at this high altitude, we would have to jettison the tip tanks and dump fuel. We jettisoned the tips and dumped fuel for about 5 minutes, all of the time making a very tight turn due to the high mountain slopes on both sides. We dumped fuel until we could safely maintain a hover out of ground effect at our gross weight, increased our topping adjustment one revolution, and then set up our approach for the pick up. The pilot set off a red smoke flare and shot a flare, barely missing our helicopter, his last one. The hole was closing up and we were up.

ARODC #

66-2276 662414

IAW AFR-205-2

22 MAY 1980

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 Or Changed to SECRET
 By Authority of CDR 132m75

 DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
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 DOD DIR 5200.10

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a hover about twenty yards downhill from the pilot due to the tall trees directly over him. SSgt Berry, our PJ, could see him working his way down to the tree penetrator which SSgt Youngblood, our flight mechanic let down through the thick underbrush. We had to extend all 250 feet to reach the ground. After he was seated on the tree penetrator, SSgt Youngblood raised him slowly up through the thick jungle growth and trees to minimize the pilot's injuries. After about 15 minutes hovering time, we had the pilot on board. He was in very good condition with only a few bruises and abrasions. We then worked our way out of the valley and returned to Lima Site 98 where Jolly Greens 05 and 51 were ready to take him back to Udorn. The total time logged for the mission was 3 hours and 10 minutes. I would like to commend my crew on performing their duties in an extremely professional manner and especially SSgt Youngblood in the difficult task of working the tree penetrator up through the trees without injury to the pilot. Also I would like to commend Jolly Green 55 for helping locate the pilot when the small break in the overcast became visible. We appreciated the Sandys' A-1E's cover, however it was impossible for them to do much searching due to the thick cloud coverage down on the mountains and the very tight turning radius once a hole was found. The only detriment to the rescue effort were too much talking on primary SAR frequency 364.2; then on Guard frequency by Butterfly 44, and too many aircraft at one time in the small valley trying to locate the pilot.

LOW BIRD CREW (JOLLY GREEN 56)

RCC: Capt Rush
RCCP: Capt Hendrickson
HM: SSgt Youngblood
PJ: SSgt Berry

HIGH BIRD CREW (JOLLY GREEN 55)

RCC: Capt Matthews
RCCP: 2d Lt Dean
HM: ALC Beaumonte
PJ: A2C Stevson

for *Frank A. Schmidt, Major*
CHARLES P. RUSH, Capt, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

DOWNGRADED
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ARDC # 10084
96-22-76

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Hq ARRS SC No. 662474

JUNE 30

19 6 PLANES DOWN TODAY. WE COULD
ONLY GET 1 OF THEM. BERRY ON
PICK-UP BY 98 - F105 PILOT.

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JULY 1

19 5 PLANES DOWN TODAY.
HITTING THE OIL FIELDS AROUND
HANOI. LISTENED TO HU-16 MAKING
A PICK-UP IN THE GULF, THE P.J.

19 HAD TO GO IN THE WATER AFTER
THE PILOT. MAJ. WILLIAMS, SANDY
PILOT GOT IT TODAY OVER AT MU GIA
PASS WHILE SEARCHING FOR A 105

19 JOCK. OUT OF 70 A15'S THAT
CAME OVER HERE LAST SEPT,
THERE ARE 42 LEFT.

19