

FROM: Det 9, 38th ARRSq/Captain Tyree/4184

AUG. 17, 1966

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative, 9-38-26, 16 August 1966

TO: 3rd ARRGp
APO 96307

1. At 0540L, 16 August 1966, Captain Lowery took a call at the BOQ from JSARC. A 1st Cav unit at Landing Zone Cat had an element on Chu Pong Mountain with 15 WIA, some who were going into shock. A hoist equipped helicopter was required to extract them from the jungle. Captain Lowery relayed the information to Lt Davis at Detachment 9 Operations. Lt Davis checked the weather which was measured 500 broken, 800 overcast, 3 miles, light rain showers and fog. He called JSARC and advised the weather forecaster felt it might break by 0800. By 0630 the rain was intense.

2. The crews arrived at Detachment Operations. Primary: RCC, Captain Tyree; CP, Capt Lowery; (H), SSgt Brundridge; RS, A2C Kelsey. Secondary: RCC, Capt Cardwell; CP, Capt Verneys; (H), A2C Hull; RS, A2C Stanek. At 0730 contact was made with Oasis, an Army Battalion Headquarters located between Fleiku and LZ Cat. Oasis was zero zero in rain and fog. The weather stayed down at Oasis and LZ Cat and then went down at Fleiku. The weather then gradually lifted at LZ Cat and at Oasis, but remained practically zero-zero at Fleiku.

3. At 1030L the weather at Fleiku was up to a reported 500 broken with 5 miles in rain and fog. Both Pedro aircraft departed at 1040. Five miles from Fleiku weather as low as 100 feet and one mile was encountered. However, at the 10 mile point, the weather picked up to at least 500 overcast with five miles.

4. A landing was made at Oasis to see if gunships were available for the trip into the Ia Drang valley. None were available there but we were assured that they would be available at LZ Cat. We departed Oasis at 1115L and arrived at LZ Cat at 1140. Pilotage navigation was difficult, but the LF beacon at Cat was a good aid. Weather at Cat was 500 to 800 overcast.

5. We received a briefing at Cat. We were told that a CH-47 had picked up 23 wounded earlier in the morning. Included was the original 15. However, they had another unit in contact that had two wounded that their med-evac helicopters couldn't reach. We were assigned a gunship team of two UH-1's for escort. Departure for the site was at 1200L.

6. We arrived in the pick-up area and UH-1's established contact with ground party. We requested smoke which appeared shortly. A standard approach was made to the site which was situated on the side of a hill of about 30 degree slope. Sergeant Brundridge lowered Airman Kelsey to the ground, with two stokes litters. Meanwhile, the two UH-1's set up a race track pattern around our hovering helicopter while Pedro 56 maintained a higher altitude.

7. Airmen Kelsey had been put on the ground to expedite the litter loading. The hoist recoveries were accomplished in about 20 minutes of hovering as no difficulties were encountered. The hoist operator gave excellent directions. Because the RCC had his radio function switch to interphone only, the continuous instructions from the MI radio on the ground were blocked out and no interference was experienced. After the two litter patients were picked up, Pedro 42 moved out and went into a high orbit to wait for Pedro 56 to pick up Airman Kelsey. The ground party then requested the crew also pick up one KIA, which was accomplished. The pick ups had started at approximately 1220L and were finished at approximately 1255L.

8. The four helicopters then departed for the field hospital at Oasis. After about five minutes of flight, the UH-1 lead advised that they had been recalled to LZ Cat for another mission. The two Pedro helicopters proceeded on to Oasis, landing there at 1315L. The crews reloaded the aircraft and ate some C-Rations. In the meantime, we had requested LZ Cat be contacted to see if any further requirement existed for our helicopters. We departed Oasis for Pleiku at 1420L after receiving a negative reply from Oasis. Landing at Pleiku was at 1450L.

9. The difficulties encountered were few. Communications prior to departure was difficult, so no rescore to LZ Cat was procured. That was no large problem as the enemy's positions were fairly well known and they were not overflowed going into Cat. More stress will be placed on rescore in future missions. Some artillery impacted in the general area although prior coordination by the UH-1 crews had called most of it off. Radio discipline of the ground party was poor, as they seemed to think hover instructions had to come from them. However, radio coordination between the HH-43's and the UH-1's was excellent. Although there was enemy contact 300 to 400 meters south (over a ridge), there was no indication the helicopters were fired upon. Weather was the biggest problem, and not much can be done about that.

Dale R. Tyree
DALE R. TYREE, Captain, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

W TNA 021 020702 0320PDS10

RR RUHNTB
IR RUHUKM 444 2310347
ZNY EEEEE
R 190330Z AUG 66

FM PARRC HICKAM AFB HAWAII
TO RUHNTB/DET 7 36ARRSQ FLEIKU AB RVN
INFO RUMSEJ/36ARRSQ TAN SON NHUT AB RVN
RUMSEJ/3ARRGP TAN SON NHUT AB RVN
RUEBSA ARRS ORLANDO AFB FLA

BT
UNCLAS E F T O PROCO 01479 AUG 66.

PERSONAL FROM COL SMITH TO CAPT TYREE AND CREW.

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CONGRATULATIONS FOR YOUR EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE ON 16 AUG 66. SHE

RAPID RESPONSE AND EXCELLENT TEAMWORK DISPLAYED IN THE RECOVERY OF
TWO U.S. ARMY WOUNDED PERSONNEL REFLECTS YOUR PROFESSIONAL
CONFIDENCE AND DEDICATION TO THE ARRS MISSION. YOUR MANY RECOVERIES
OF WOUNDED TROOPS ARE BEING NOTED AND BE ASSURED THAT ALL PERSONNEL
OF ARRS IN THE PACIFIC VIEW YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS WITH PRIDE. MY
PERSONAL APPRECIATION AND ADMIRATION TO ALL CONCERNED.
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