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Ref # 35664

FROM: Det 7, 38th ARRSq, APO 96337

19 September 1966

Subject: Mission Narrative Report 1-3-65

TO: 3d ARRGp, APO 96307

At 0150Z, 17 September 1966, I was scrambled in Jolly Green 24, accompanied by Jolly Green 15. We were airborne at 0155Z. Alert and scramble procedures were all normal. Shotgun One was returning from a northern mission with battle damage and reported he would have to bail out. His position was reported at 340 degree radial, 44 miles from channel 37. As I crossed the coast line Cigar relayed a message from King for Jolly Green 15 to return to our forward operating base. I then received another position from the cripple aircraft of 350 degree radial, 35 miles from channel 37. At approximately 0210Z Shotgun One bailed out of his F-105. His wingman Shotgun Two remained over his leader during descent and stayed until I arrived on scene. Shotgun Two gave me the position of Shotgun One as being the 355 degree radial, thirty three miles out of channel 37. Captain Johnson my copilot plotted the position on his map and converted it to radial and distance from channel 46 due to the inability to pick up channel 37. When I arrived in the general area I got three UHF steers from Shotgun Two and sighted the survivor at 0220Z. The survivor ignited one MK 13 mod 0 flare. The red smoke showed the wind direction with a speed of about 15kts. I then decided to omit the smoke drop and turned on a downwind for a hoist pickup. ALC Lowe, crewchief and ALC Tobey pararescue had the hoist and cabin ready for a water pickup. ALC Tobey had donned his swimming gear. I came into a high hover over the survivor at about 75 feet. ALC Lowe kept directing me forward until I sighted the survivor moving forward away from the helicopter. ALC Lowe advised me we were over him on the initial approach but he immediately started to be blown forward when the hover was established. I then decided to try a lower hover to decrease the length of hoist cable to facilitate the maneuverability by ALC Lowe. Again the survivor was blown in front of the aircraft by the rotor wash before the hoist could be positioned. The survivor did not acknowledge hand signals to have him get out of his raft. Crown Charlie and Ox Wood 94 arrived over the scene. I then made the decision to make a water landing to pick up the survivor. The sea condition evaluation is as follows: Period. 5, Velocity 15, Distance between crests 125 ft, wind direction 350 degrees, 15 knots, swell direction 315 degrees, swell height 2½ feet. I made my approach from a hover of approximately 25 feet. I landed 50 feet from the survivor and taxied up to him. The survivor then got out of his raft. ALC Lowe and ALC Tobey then tried unsuccessfully to bring the survivor on board. The survivor was facing the aircraft and placed his knees against the side of the aircraft in an attempt to help. This caused a pivot point which the two Airmen could not overcome. The survivor then slipped away two or three feet and I had to taxi back to him. ALC Tobey then punctured one side of the survivors LPU to facilitate bringing him on board. Again their attempt was thwarted by the survivor placing his knees on the side of the aircraft. When the survivor again drifted away ALC Tobey was deployed due to ½ of the LPU being punctured. I then taxied up to the survivor and the pararescue man, and instructed ALC Lowe to bring them on board with the rescue hoist. The two pickups were made

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at 0226 in quick succession with no difficulty at all. I recommend that this procedure be used on all future water landing pickups until a sea rescue platform is designed and installed on the HH-3E aircraft. A normal hover take off was made into the wind, the engine power was checked and found to be adequate, and the take off was completed without incident. The salt spray around the aircraft was minimal except just prior to touch down and lift off. Captain Alan Rutherford, , the survivor was then returned to channel 37 at 0245Z. Anti corrosion measures were accomplished on the aircraft. Post flight inspection revealed the primary servo reservoir was almost empty. Further investigation showed a defective hydraulic valve leaking fluid. The valve was replaced with a like item and the aircraft returned to the forward operating base.

Kenneth D. Murphy

KENNETH D. MURPHY, Capt, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

Downed Twice in 1 Day

SAIGON (7thAF)—Many pilots have been shot down but few have gone through the experience twice in one day.

First Lt. Joseph E. Merrick of Whitehall, Mont., did.

After being forced to eject from his F-4C Phantom fighter, along with his aircraft commander, Maj. Lacy W. Breckenridge of Lufkin, Tex., and hanging helplessly in his parachute harness near the top of a 200-foot tree for over an hour, he was rescued by a helicopter, Jolly Green 02.

The copter, badly damaged by ground fire during the rescue operation was forced down in a nearby clearing.

A second copter arrived soon and picked up Merrick and the downed crew.

Ground fire was so heavy during the entire ordeal that crew members of the downed Jolly Green Giant helicopter gave Merrick a flak vest and an M-16 rifle and told him, "... We'll have to run for it."

Merrick, with a small wound to one foot, dashed 100 yards to the waiting helicopter. Though he fell once in the 7-foot high elephant grass, he was the first aboard.

The second helicopter retrieved Breckenridge, who had waited and watched the ordeal, from the top of another tall tree.

Both pilots were returned to home base later the same day.

Merrick recalled telling the first rescue team "You'd better hurry or you won't be able to get to me." There was shooting all around him.

Breckenridge praised the courage of the rescue crew.

"I seriously thought the prop wash would blow me out of the tree," he said, "but Capt. (Lee) Kennedy, held that copter so steady, it was as if the penetrator was hanging from a limb."

Successful Rescue of Capt. Alan K. Rutherford, F-105 pilot in the Gulf of Tonkin after being damaged while engaged in a strike against North Vietnam near Hanoi. 17 September 1966. This was the first water landing pick up by a Jolly Green in Southeast Asia.

Jolly Green 24 A/C 65-12786 Low Bird

P. Capt. Kenneth D. Murphy
C.P. Capt. Thomas R. Johnson
H.M. A1C. William T. Lowe, Jr.
R.S. A1C. John F. Tobey

The Jolly Greens pass Hue on the way North.



CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF

THE AIR MEDAL
(SEVENTH OAK LEAF CLUSTER)

TO

JOHN F. TOBEY

Airman First Class John F. Tobey distinguished himself by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight as a Rescue Helicopter Pararescue Specialist in Southeast Asia on 17 September 1966. On that date, the successful rescue of a downed American pilot was accomplished, necessitating an open sea landing. Although the sea state was near the maximum limitations for the helicopter, the rescue was quickly and efficiently completed. The professional skill and airmanship displayed by Airman Tobey reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

SEPTEMBER 17

20 Jeffers and Tobey up North
Low bird (Tobey) picked up F-105
piloted 40 miles north of Da Nang.
Jolly Green made first open sea
landing for purpose of rescue recovery.
Swam out to survivor, started
bringing him to plane, ran my
knife blade through one side of life
preserver (on purpose) Later caught
hell for it. Gratitude for being saved.
Grabbed flying HU-16