

Pilots Honor Medic For Heroic Rescue

SAIGON — SSgt. Albert E. Teasley, 28, of Portland, Ore., an aeromedical technician assigned to the 3rd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group, has been presented a squadron plaque by the 497th Tactical Fighter Squadron for cutting straps that held a pilot in his burning aircraft.

The plaque was presented by the squadron commander, Lt. Col. George R. Halliwell, Carnegie, Pa., after which Sergeant Teasley received a prolonged standing ovation from the squadron pilots. The squadron is a unit of the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing, known as the Wolf Pack, the only quadruple-seat wing in the Vietnamese War with 24 MIG kills to its credit.

The medic was credited with saving the life of Maj. Richard D. Whittington. With rockets and missiles exploding around the major's burning aircraft, Sergeant Teasley jumped from a rescue helicopter, entered the flames without fire protective clothing and recovered the in-

jured pilot, escorting him through the flames to safety while firefighters fought the blaze.

Sergeant Teasley administered first aid while the pilot was enroute to the dispensary.

Col. Robin Olds, commander of the Wolfpack, cited the airborne medic with action well above the call of duty.

Rescuers Risk Death

SAIGON (Vietnam Bureau)

SAIGON—The F4B pilot, his hair afire, hung upside down over his bombload and the burning fuel of his smashed plane.

His hands were so badly burned that he was unable to release his leg-restraining straps and free himself.

Any second the bombs might blast pilot and plane into nothingness.

Capt. Holy Bell nosed his HH43 rescue helicopter down over the Phantom pilot's seat, cooling the pilot with a down-wash of air.

Bell held the copter over the jet as S. Sgt. Albert Teasley, a medical technician, and two hooded firemen dashed in to cut the pilot free.

The Phantom had blown a during a takeoff from U Royal Thai Air Force base had crashed through a barrier bursting into flames as it gro to a stop.

One pilot had ejected, other was trapped where and his crew found him.

As Teasley and the firer pulled the pilot from the Phantom, one fireman beat out flames in the pilot's hair clothing.

Gently they carried the p to the helicopter, lifted aboard and climbed in the selves. Bell wheeled the co around and raced for the b hospital, where the pilot's was saved.

Seconds after the rescue, Phantom's bombs blew up.

TWO AIRMEN SAVE PILOT FROM BURNING AIRCRAFT

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UBON AB, Thailand (MNS) -- Two Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service

HH-43 Huskie helicopter crewmen plunged through flames to save a pilot from the burning wreckage of an F-4C Phantom recently.

The back-seat pilot escaped after the Phantom crashed during take-off at Ubon. However, aircraft commander Maj. Richard Whittington was unable to free himself from his restraining harness and was hanging upside down over the side of the aircraft.

With only his flightsuit for cover, SSgt. Albert Teasley dove through the flames and cut the restraining harness. At the same time, ALC James Tevis smothered the fire on Major Whittington's flightsuit with asbestos gloves.

While the men worked, some of the aircraft's ordnance began to explode.

Once cut free, the major was carried to the Huskie and rushed to a hospital.

DECLASSIFIED

July 6 '67

Dear Sir,

I realize this letter is long overdue but circumstances prevented an earlier reply. As a matter of fact, my wife is writing this for me as I am unable to use my hands. This letter concerns a most heroic act by your unit on 9 May 1967. I am the A/C of the F-4C who humbly owes his life to one of your rescue crews. There are no words adequate to express my gratitude as I lie here in my hospital bed recovering thanks to the rescue made by your crew. As far as I am concerned there is no reward great enough for the heroism displayed on that night. I sincerely hope that that crew received just recognition.

Please thank S/Sgt. Albert S. Treasley for sending the knife which freed me from the harness holding me to the aircraft.

Recalling the event of 9 May I can only say that I had just about given up all hope when your rescue

crew pulled me out of the fire without regard to the armament and fuel load.

When I arrived at Brooke Army Hospital, my chances for survival were rather slim - but I am over the hump and well on the mend. In about a year I should be able to resume a normal life in the Air Force. Should I ever come in contact with a rescue detachment I shall certainly look upon its members with respect and never forget that I owe my life to such men.

The night of the accident I vaguely recall demanding to see those who rescued me, and remember asking for their names, but I am ashamed to say that between the shock and sedation I cannot recall them. In a letter from S/Sgt. Teasley, five names are given. If any of you pass through San Antonio in the next few months on your return stateside I'd be very pleased if you would stop by so that I may meet you.

May you continue the work that all pilots so deeply respect.

Gratefully

Richard B. Whittington
Major, U.S. A.F.

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