

FROM: Det 6, 38th ARRS, APO 96227

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report (6-38-66-3 Dec 67)

TO: 38th ARRS

1. This mission which resulted in five combat saves, involved the recovery of members of a Long Range Recon Patrol of the 25th Infantry Division. Det 6 was notified by Third Group JSARC at 0035Z, 3 Dec 67 of a mission to recover six Army troops. They were located at 11°33'N-106°09'E, approximately 53 miles northwest of Bien Hoa. They had discovered an enemy base camp and numerous troops numbering from 90-350. The team was surrounded and in great danger of being captured or annihilated. They had been run out of a clearing which was their recovery point and the only suitable one for the Army helicopters. Therefore they had to evade into the dense jungle growth where it was not possible for the Army to make the pickup.
2. Two HH-43's, Pedro 97 and 95 departed Bien Hoa Air Base at 0105Z. The contact in the area was Issue 05, a FAC aircraft who did an outstanding job of coordinating with the gunships and the LRRP team. The weather at launch time and enroute was clear with 20 miles visibility. Pedro 97 and 95 arrived in the area at 0150Z. Radio contact was made with the FAC on 305.1 and he informed us that there were only five people to pickup. He stated the Army gunships would be in the area in approximately 10 minutes and we could begin the operation at that time. Pedro 97 and 95 orbited until the flight of six US Army Huey Gunships arrived at 0200Z. The FAC advised that everything was ready for the pickup attempt and the patrol would mark their position as soon as the gunships commenced their suppressive fire. The patrol was still under cover; they had requested that two men be recovered on the first pickup and the remaining three on the second pickup. At 0200Z the patrol marked their position with yellow smoke and Pedro 97 descended to a hover above the pickup point which was near the center of a bomb crater. During the entire hoist operation the Huey gunships were putting a heavy concentration of suppressive rocket, grenade and mini-guns fire into the areas on each side and in front of the hovering helicopter. The fire was extremely accurate and was within 50 yards of the Pedro aircraft. After 97 retrieved the first two, 95 then came in to recover the remaining three. Before the last man was lifted from the ground he set off a smoke grenade to mark the pickup point as the target for the orbiting strike aircraft. Due to the location of the site in relation to a known VC base camp, the Pedros were constantly exposed to the possibility of heavy enemy ground fire from a bunker and tunnel complex approximately 100 yards north of the pickup point. The Long Range Recon Patrol had reported heavy concentration of automatic weapons fire and we were later informed that F-100s had taken ground fire the night before while on a strike mission. The LRRP had evaded the enemy throughout the night. One member stated that they were very close at times. They had just about given up hope of being extracted. Two attempts were made by Hueys but due to the dense foliage, high trees and after damaging two sets of rotor blades they abandoned the mission.

The recovery operation was completed at 0220Z. Immediately after the helicopters cleared the area, the strike aircraft started their attack. The success of the mission was due in part to the gunships highly effective and accurate fire power, which we felt was the main reason we apparently drew little or no ground fire from the numerous unfriendlies in the immediate area.

3. The LRRP team was flown to Tay Ninh. The Commander of the LRRP unit emphasized that had it not been for the Pedro aircraft with their hoist and penetrator, the patrol would have probably been lost to the enemy and it would have been their first such loss. The two helicopters refueled and returned to Bien Hoa at 0345Z. A total of four sorties and 4+40 hours were flown by the two aircraft. The crew members making the recovery were:

Pedro 97

Capt James A. Darden Jr., RCC ✓
1/Lt Jon C. Long, RCCP
SSgt Donald S. Kearton, FE
ALC Terrence A. Treutel, RS

Pedro 95

Capt Charles W. Burrige, RCC
LtCol Robert J. Kavanagh, RCCP
Sgt Robert A. Sloat, FE
ALC Gunther Bahrenburg, RS

FOR THE COMMANDER

James A. Darden Jr.

JAMES A. DARDEN JR., Captain, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

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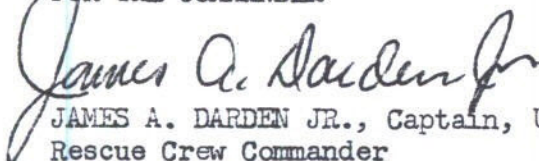
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FOR THE COMMANDER



JAMES A. DARDEN JR., Captain, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

Narrative Mission Report

(6-38-66-3 Dec 67)

1. At 0835L on 3 December 1967, the Joint Search and Rescue Center notified this unit of a mission which involved the recovery of six members of an Army Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol located approximately 53 miles northwest of Bien Hoa. They had discovered an enemy base camp and a force of 90 to 350 hostile troops. The patrol had been surrounded and notified their headquarters there was no possible escape route. Due to the dense jungle in which they were evading, a hoist recovery would be required.
2. Two HH-43F's departed Bien Hoa at 0905L. By 0935 contact was established with Issue 05, a Forward Air Controller over the pick up area who did an outstanding job of coordinating the mission. At 0950L Pedro 97 and 95 arrived on scene. They were advised by 05 that Army gunships would arrive within ten minutes to provide suppressive fire. With the arrival of the gunships at 1000L, the rescue operation began.
3. Pedro 97 assumed a hover at tree top level just above the patrol which had marked its position with smoke. As the hoist and forest penetrator started down, the gunships began heavy application of suppressive fire. Their rockets, grenades and minigun fire were laid down within 30 meters of the helicopter and were directed primarily at a tunnel and bunker complex just north of the pick up site.
4. Issue 05 had advised there were only five troops to be recovered and that Pedro 97 recover two and 95 the remaining three. Pedro 97 hovered in position for ten minutes while the first two men were lifted aboard. Pedro 95 then moved into position to complete the operation. As the last

(6-38-66-3 Dec 67 Cont.)

man was lifted from the ground, he ignited a red smoke grenade to mark the pick up point as the target for a flight of F-100's that were orbiting above. When the helicopters had cleared the area the fighters began the final strike.

5. The recovery operation was completed at 1020L. The success of the mission was due in large part to the highly effective and accurate fire power of the gunships and it was felt their suppressive fire prevented the two helicopters from being downed by hostile fire.

6. The recovered personnel were flown directly to Tay Ninh West Airfield where they rejoined the 25th Infantry Division. The HH-43's refueled and returned to Bien Hoa terminating the mission upon arrival at 1145L.

CREWMEMBERS

PEDRO 97

Captain James A. Darden	RCC
1st Lt Jon C. Long	CP
SSgt Donald S. Kearton	FE
A1C Terrence A. Treutel	RS

PEDRO 95

Captain Charles W. Burrridge	RCC
Lt Col Robert J. Kavanagh	CP
Sgt Robert A. Sloat	FE
A1C Gunther Bahrenburg	RS

PATROL MEMBERS

SSgt Larry Goods
E3 James I. Thompson
Sp/4 Russell Woodrum

Other two names not available

Det 6 38 ARRS PJ Daily Log
June 1967 - March 1971

	3 Dec
* 45	12/27/71 Assumed Alert 0700 All survival gear checked Today we pick up five LRP 12 miles north of Tamin Field bird picked up Two, second bird picked up Three. it was a real good mission,

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