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51

FROM: Capt. Thomas Niquette (RCC Crown 2)

81

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative for **Sophmore 50** (Navy P-2V) Mission # 02-03-15

TO: Commander
39 ARRSQ

1. This report is submitted IAW ARRS Manual 55-1 and 3ARRGP Supp 1 to ARRS Manual 55-1.

2. On 27 February 1968 at approximately 0506Z, Metric Flight (F-4) called Crown 2 on SAR UHF (364.2) and reported that a Sophmore 50 (Navy P-2V) had gone down. He reported seeing six good chutes and was picking up multiple beepers. Metric Lead gave the position as 1658N 10604E. This plotted out to be the 107° radial, 83 miles channel 89; 279° radial, 61 miles channel 109, and 065° radial, 87 miles channel 99. Metric stated he had voice contact with two of the downed crew members. At this time Crown 2 gave the above information to Compress and simultaneously had the SAR forces launched. Also Crown 2 called Invert to get a tanker for Metric Flight so they would be able to maintain surveillance of the area until the arrival of the SAR forces. Cricket (ABCCC) was contacted and high performance RESCAP was requested. Cricket stated he had some Nail FAC's (O-2's) in the area that might be able to help. They were Nail 54, 71 and 48. Metric Lead gave the weather in the SAR area as scattered to broken at about 7,000 feet. At approximately 0615Z, Nail 54 contacted Crown 2 and reported he was in the area and could see four chutes on the ground. Also at this time Hobo 20, 21 and 23 (A-1's) contacted Crown 2 and stated the were 15 minutes from the area moving in that direction. At 0620Z Cricket called and said he had a Lock Ace Flight of 4 Navy A-4's inbound for Crown 2's control. Lock Ace arrived at 0622Z to relieve Metric who was enroute to the tanker. Cricket also gave Crown 2 Icon Flight (4 F-100's), Phantom Flight (2 F-4's) and Vagas Flight (4 F-4's) as additional RESCAP.

3. At 0526Z, Queen reported to Crown 2 that Jolly Greens 10 and 25 had been launched from Cigar and were enroute to the scene. However, they would be needing escort. Crown 2 contacted Hobo 20 and directed him to provide escort for the Jollys. At 0527Z Jolly Green 37 and Sandys 5,6,7,8 were launched from channel 89. Crown 2 asked Nail 48, who had moved out of the scene, where a safe area to hold the Jolly Greens until the area had been checked out by the Sandys. Nail 48 stated the 105° radial, 57 miles of channel 89 was the safest area. Crown 2 passed this to all SAR forces. Compress launched Sandy 3 and 4 from channel 70 to assist in the effort. At approximately 0530Z, Nail 54 called Crown 2 and stated he had voice contact with four of the down crewmen. He also had six chutes in sight. At 0542Z Jolly Green 67 was launched and reported airborne from channel 70. At 0555Z, Misty 31 (F-100 FAC) stated he was in the area and available if needed. At 0600Z Jolly Green 20 was launched from channel 89. Crown 2 requested more than the usual number of Jolly Greens because of the area and the number of downed crew members. At 0611Z Sandy 5 cleared Jolly Green 10, 25 and 37 into the area with their escort. The Jollys all had to drop their tanks to hover at the altitude in the area which was from 2,000 to 3,000 feet. Crown 2 asked Compress to have Crown 3 at channel 70

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to stand by to launch to take over the mission if Crown 2 had to refuel the Jolly Greens.

4. At 0638Z Jolly Green 10 picked up the first man. At 0647Z Jolly Green 37 picked up the second. Again at 0650Z, Jolly Green 10 got another one. Jolly Green 37 picked up his second man at 0645Z. At 0705Z Jolly Green 25 picked up one and at 0709Z Jolly Green 37 picked up his third man. At this time all Jolly Greens were getting very low on fuel. Jolly Green 10 and 37 began proceeding toward channel 89 and Jolly Green 25 toward channel 103. Since Jolly Green 37 was unable to make 89 without refueling, Crown 2 descended and refueled 37 at the predetermined point of 105° radial, 57 miles channel 89. As Jolly Green 37, 10 and 25 departed the scene, Jolly Greens 20 and 67 escorted by Sandys 3 and 4 arrived and entered the SAR area under the control of Sandy 5. Just prior to refueling Jolly Green 37 Crown 2 briefed the scrambled Crown 3 on the mission and aircraft involved. At this time Crown 3 took command of the mission. At 0808Z Jolly Green 20 picked up one more man. At 0830 all forces were RTB'd since no further sightings or contact could be made with the last two survivors reported to be aboard Sophmore 50. Also Jolly Green 67 took ground fire in the area of the P-2V crash site. After all forces, including Crown 2, had been RTB'd Crown 3 remained on station.

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5. The ~~time~~ crew members aboard Sophmore 50 were recovered as follows: Jolly Green 37 picked up 3, Jolly Green 10 2 survivors and Jolly Green 25 and 20 picked up one each. All were reported to be in good shape with no serious injuries. Two crew members were listed as missing. However, it had been reported by one survivor that all crew members had bailed out. Later that day voice contact was possibly established with the eighth survivor, no recovery was made however.

6. The following crew members were aboard Crown 2:

RCC	Niquette, Thomas H.	Capt
CP	Brandt, Larry J.	Capt.
NAV	Rogers, Donald E.	Capt.
FE	Nelson, Charles A.	MSgt
FE	Clements, Robert D.	SSgt
RO	Richardson, Charley W.	SSgt
LM	VERRET, Charles J.	MSgt

for Larry J. Brandt
THOMAS H. NIQUETTE, Captain, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

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Mission Narrative 02-03-15 (27 Feb 68)

94

12 March 1968

The Crown 3 alert crew was scrambled at 0643Z and airborne at 0705Z from Udorn RTAB. Briefing was done over HF by Crown 2, then working a mission. Sophtmore 50, a Navy P-2 was down in approximate position 092/72/CH89 (331)30 CH85. At this time 5 of 9 crewmembers had been picked up, and Crown 2 was going to refuel J.G. 37 and 25. Since he would be too low for communications, Crown 2 turned the mission over to Crown 3. J.G. 10 also working on the mission. J.G. 10 had 2 SOB: J.G. 37 Had 3 SOB: J.G. 25 had 1 SOB, experiencing trouble considered landing CH85, later landed CH103 no drop tanks, one UHF radio; his survivor was the 3rd pilot reported crewmembers bailed out from 5000' feet, aircraft heading 032. J.G. 25 refueled at CH103, took survivor to CH94. The survivor reported seeing considerable blood in radio compartment of the a/c or he exited. J.G. 37 and 10 returned CH89 escorted by Sandy 7,8. J.G. 67 and 20 enroute from 89, Sandy 3,4,5,6 in area. J.G. 67 and 20 arrived, escorted by Sandy 3,4. J.G. 20 picked up survivor at 0741Z. This survivor was last to exit a/c, reported all were out. At 0804Z, JG 67 hit by ground fire, leaking fuel, pulling out of the area. All forces left area led by Nail 21, O-1 FAC aircraft. Rescap during this time was Ikon flight, 4 F-100s. Nail 21 remained in the area to recheck for beeper/voice. At 0831Z, an F-4 reported seeing 2 parachutes 5 mi SE of area where the majority of the survivors had been picked up. JG 67 leaking hydraulic fluid as well as fuel, planning to land at CH89. Sandy 3 and 4 met JG 36 and 17 and returning to SAR scene. Sandy 1 and 2 inbound from CH 70. Sandy 5 and 6 to refuel for scramble at CH89. 0847Z beeper heard by high alt aircraft. Intermitten beeper heard from this time on. All Cap A/C and Cricket and Hillsboro receiving beeper- Hillsboro taking DF cuts on it. Sandy 7,8 assumed to west of site in safe area orbit with JG 36 and 17. Sandy 3,4 RTB. AT 1011Z, Rustic flight (Udorn F-4) made voice contact with Sophtmore 50. JG 36/17 and Sandy 7,8 moved up to crash site to be close for pickup. The survivor advised Rustic he was in an open area, no cloud coverage. 1043Z Nail 21 had visual contact with the survivor. 1100 to 1105 JG 36 moved into survivor's area-survivor reported he heard the helo-JG36 reported possible visual, requested survivor pop a smoke, no smoke seen. JG 36 moved out to dump fuel. JG returned to hover, did not see survivor, lowered hoist and at 1124Z, reported he had lost his penetrator. JG 17 dropped tanks and attempted to move into survivors area, but could not locate survivor, and all forces pulled out at 1135Z because of darkness and loss of all contact (voice and beeper) with the survivor. Opinion of Jolly Green 36 about this-when he lowered penetrator, survivor dropped radio started for the chopper. The penetrator sheared from the a/c, and it was too dark for survivor to find radio again. Both JG reported low fuel, however would be able to make CH89 with AR. Crown 3 landed 1301Z at CH 70

Delony, Billy G. Capt, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

PLT Cruickshank
NN Sander
FE Puryear
FE Ortiz
RO Ward
IM Jones

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FROM: Capt. Thomas Niquette (RCC Crown 2)

81

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative for Sophomore 50 (Navy P-2V) Mission # 02-03-15

TO: Commander
39 ARRSQ

1. This report is submitted IAW ARRS Manual 55-1 and 3ARRGP Supp 1 to ARRS Manual 55-1.

2. On 27 February 1968 at approximately 0506Z, Metric Flight (F-4) called Crown 2 on SAR UHF (364.2) and reported that a Sophomore 50 (Navy P-2V) had gone down. He reported seeing six good chutes and was picking up multiple beepers. Metric Lead gave the position as 1658N 10604E. This plotted out to be the 107° radial, 83 miles channel 89; 279° radial, 61 miles channel 109, and 065° radial, 87 miles channel 99. Metric stated he had voice contact with two of the downed crew members. At this time Crown 2 gave the above information to Compress and simultaneously had the SAR forces launched. Also Crown 2 called Invert to get a tanker for Metric Flight so they would be able to maintain surveillance of the area until the arrival of the SAR forces. Cricket (ABCCC) was contacted and high performance RESCAP was requested. Cricket stated he had some Nail FAC's (O-2's) in the area that might be able to help. They were Nail 54, 71 and 48. Metric Lead gave the weather in the SAR area as scattered to broken at about 7,000 feet. At approximately 0615Z, Nail 54 contacted Crown 2 and reported he was in the area and could see four chutes on the ground. Also at this time Hobo 20, 21 and 23 (A-1's) contacted Crown 2 and stated the were 15 minutes from the area moving in that direction. At 0620Z Cricket called and said he had a Lock Ace Flight of 4 Navy A-4's inbound for Crown 2's control. Lock Ace arrived at 0622Z to relieve Metric who was enroute to the tanker. Cricket also gave Crown 2 Icon Flight (4 F-100's), Phantom Flight (2 F-4's) and Vagas Flight (4 F-4's) as additional RESCAP.

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to stand by to launch to take over the mission if Crown 2 had to refuel the Jolly Greens.

4. At 0638Z Jolly Green 10 picked up the first man. At 0647Z Jolly Green 37 picked up the second. Again at 0650Z, Jolly Green 10 got another one. Jolly Green 37 picked up his second man at 0645Z. At 0705Z Jolly Green 25 picked up one and at 0709Z Jolly Green 37 picked up his third man. At this time all Jolly Greens were getting very low on fuel. Jolly Green 10 and 37 began proceeding toward channel 89 and Jolly Green 25 toward channel 103. Since Jolly Green 37 was unable to make 89 without refueling, Crown 2 descended and refueled 37 at the predetermined point of 105° radial, 57 miles channel 89. As Jolly Green 37, 10 and 25 departed the scene, Jolly Greens 20 and 67 escorted by Sandys 3 and 4 arrived and entered the SAR area under the control of Sandy 5. Just prior to refueling Jolly Green 37 Crown 2 briefed the scrambled Crown 3 on the mission and aircraft involved. At this time Crown 3 took command of the mission. At 0808Z Jolly Green 20 picked up one more man. At 0830 all forces were RTB'd since no further sightings or contact could be made with the last two survivors reported to be aboard Sophomore 50. Also Jolly Green 67 took ground fire in the area of the P-2V crash site. After all forces, including Crown 2, had been RTB'd Crown 3 remained on station.

~~seven~~

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6. The following crew members were aboard Crown 2:

RCC	Niquette, Thomas H.	Capt
CP	Brandt, Larry J.	Capt.
NAV	Rogers, Donald E.	Capt.
FE	Nelson, Charles A.	MSGT
FE	Clements, Robert D.	SSgt
RO	Richardson, Charley W.	SSgt
LM	VERRET, Charles J.	MSGT

for Larry J. Brandt
THOMAS H. MIQUETTE, Captain, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
37TH AEROSPACE RESCUE AND RECOVERY SQUADRON (MAC)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96337



REPLY TO
ATTN OF:

370

SUBJECT:

MISSION NARRATIVE REPORT (2-3-15, 27 Feb 68) (U)

1 March 1968

TO:

37C

3rd ARRGp (JSARG)

IN TURN

Classified by

SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO
YEAR INTERVALS

25 MAR 1971

1. (U) This report is submitted on LAWRSM 55-2/37d ARRGp Sup 1-dated
15 June 1967. IAW AFR 205-2

2. (S) Jolly Green 10 (Low) and 25 (high) were scrambled from Marine Quang Tri at 0515Z, 27 Feb 68. The rescue objective was the crew of Sophomore 50, a Navy P-2V, located at 1658N/10604E. Weather was 4000 feet overcast, so both Jolly Greens climbed to VFR and proceeded direct to the scene. At approximately 0610Z, Jolly Greens 10 and 25 arrived on scene and were instructed by Nail 54 (a FAC O-2) to hold until Sandys (A-1Es) enroute to the area arrived. There were numerous aircraft (O-2s and A-1Es) orbiting the area. At 0630Z Jolly Green 10 entered the pickup area and proceeded to smoke as directed by Sandy 5. JG 25 maintained overhead orbit awaiting instructions. The survivor was located on the north-east side of a karst outcropping in thick jungle growth. The first hover was established but was broken off because the survivor was not immediately located and JG 10 was in full view of a hut about 200 yards away. A go-around was made and Sandy 5 again pointed out the location of the survivor. A second hover was established and pickup was made at 0638Z without incident. JG 10 was then directed to the south side of the karst outcropping for a second pick-up. A hover was established over a parachute and the survivor was located approximately 25 yards away on the side of the karst along the tree line. Because of the karst outcropping it was impossible to hover directly over the survivor. The survivor was directed by hand signals to move toward the helicopter. JG 10 was hovering within sight of a small village so a go-around was made to decrease exposure. A second hover was established, the penetrator was lowered and the survivor was recovered without further delay. JG 10 departed the area with minimum fuel and was instructed to RTB. Nail 48 vectored JG 10 to NKP, avoiding possible AAA positions and automatic weapons fire. JG 25 was directed by Sandy 5 to the south end of the karst outcropping for the pickup of a third survivor. The chute was suspended approximately 300 feet from the bottom of a cliff. JG 25 came to a hover alongside the empty parachute harness, and observed the survivor 100 feet higher up the steep cliff where he had climbed with the intention of getting on top of the karst, not realizing there was 100 feet of vertical to overhanging cliff above

Downloaded on 3 Year

Intelligence Classified A

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him. A pick-up was impossible from his present position because of the steepness of the cliff. JG 25 maintained a hover alongside the survivor and motioned him to descend to his starting point where the cliff jutted sufficiently to allow a hover for pickup. The survivor got into position, the penetrator was lowered and the pickup was completed at 0705Z. Because of the excessive hovering time while the survivor descended, fuel state made RTB mandatory. JG 25 was given a vector to Channel 85 and departed the area for Quang Tri. Immediately after receiving the vector, all radio contact was lost and not reestablished until reaching Marine Quang Tri. A GCA to Marine Quang Tri was completed at 0755 for refueling. JG 25 departed Marine Quang Tri at 0810Z with the survivor and arrived at DaNang at 0900Z.

3. (U) Weather in the pickup area was good. Crew coordination was excellent. No ground fire was encountered.

4. (C) The names of the survivors were Lt Bernard Walsh, , USN, and ARD3 George C. C. Wing, , USN. The name of the third survivor is unknown.

5. (U) Crew members of Jolly Greens:

JOLLY GREEN 10

RCC Capt Jerry M. Griggs
RCCP Lt Col Gerald B. Lowe
FE SSgt Gordon T. Greever
PS Sgt Martin E. Roepstorff
AP SSgt Paul E. Hagerty

Jerry M. Griggs
JERRY M. GRIGGS, Captain, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

JOLLY GREEN 25

RCC Major Joe B. Green ✓
RCCP Major Stuart H. Hoag ✓
FE SSgt Paul D. Kreider
RS Sgt Michael L. Walker

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at 3 year
interval
a 100 years

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Downgraded to CONFIDENTIAL

85 MAR '07

IAW AFR 203-2

FROM: 1-370

(Date)

SUBJ: Mission Narrative Report (2-3-15, 27-29 February 1968) (U)

TO: 1-370 W

3rd ARRGp (JSARCA)
IN TURN~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

12 MAR 1968

1. (U) This report is submitted in accordance with ARRSN 55-2/3ARRGp Sup 1, dated 15 June 67.

2. (S) At 1224L, 27 February 1968, Jolly Green 20 and 37(L) were scrambled from Channel 89 to recover the downed crew of a Navy P2V, Sophomore 50, down at 107/83/89. At launch Jolly Green 20 encountered maintenance difficulties that delayed its departure until 1258L. Unescorted, Jolly Green 37 was directed to proceed to an orbit point at 110/57/89 and rendezvous with Sandy's 7 and 8 and Nail 48. Since the area in the immediate vicinity of the survivor's was well defended Nail 48 volunteered to guide Jolly Green 37 into the area. Through the efforts of Nail 48 they arrived on the scene unopposed. In the area, Jolly Green 37 was joined by Jolly Green 10 (Da Nang), Sandy's 5 and 6, and Nail 54 (who had been in the area since ejection and had a good idea of the locations of the majority of the survivor's). A total of eight survivor's were reported to be on the ground. At the onset, Sandy's 7 and 8 were attempting to direct both Jolly Green helicopters to survivor's on the ground but the difficulty was considerable due to the large volume of traffic on all frequencies utilized by the SAR force. The type of survival radio used by the downed navy crewmembers contributed tremendously to the communications confusion. The Navy survival radio emits a continuous beep unless the "speak" or "listen" switch is depressed. Because some of the survivor's were burned around their hands, it was not always possible for them to depress this switch. The result was a continuous beeper tone on UHF. Furthermore, our FM radio was of little use since the Sandy's new FM sets are not compatible with those installed in the HE-33. The only reliable source of communication available to us was VHF, which was extremely congested. Due to the efforts of the Sandy's and the cooperation of the Jolly Green helicopters, all beepers on the ground were tracked down and the survivor's recovered. Jolly Green 37 made its first recovery at 1320L without difficulty. The second survivor, however, was hanging upside down in a tree and it was necessary to send the Pararescue Specialist down the hoist to assist him. He was successfully recovered at 1347L. Sandy lead then directed 37 to the third survivor who was in an easily accessible area. By 1354L he was on board and because of a low fuel state at this time, Jolly Green 37 had to depart the area. Air refueling was completed with Crown 2 and Jolly Green 37 landed Channel 89 at 1503L. Jolly Green 20, airborne at 1258L, was joined by Sandy's 3 and 4 at 1343L and by Jolly Green 67 (Udorn) at 1351L. These forces had been directed to remain in orbit. The weather was clear with visibility limited by a light haze at altitude. At 1400L, the orbiting SAR force was cleared to the position of the downed aircraft (107/83/89); they reached the crash site at 1451L and were joined by Sandy's 7 and 8 and Nail 54. The Nail and Sandy

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ARDC # 680691

JGM

GROUP 4

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DECLASSIFY AFTER 12 YEARS

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aircraft began a search of the area and within a few minutes a strong beeper was detected about five hundred yards from the downed aircraft. Jolly Green 20 was directed to the beeper's position by the Sandy aircraft and immediately obtained voice contact with the survivor. Unfortunately, as the survivor attempted to give directions to Jolly Green 20, his survival radio would transmit the beeper signal as soon as he released his transmitter switch. This effectively blocked out all communication between the SAR aircraft and the survivor. The beeper was finally silenced by the survivor and a successful pick-up was made by Jolly Green 20 at 144LL. The large number of white flare chutes hanging from trees in the area and the fact that the Navy back-pack parachute utilizes a white chute canopy, made searching for other survivor's extremely difficult. At 1504, Jolly Green 67 reported hostile ground fire and the SAR force was directed to return to base. As Jolly Green 20 was exiting the area, the Sandy aircraft observed 10-15 burst's of 37mm fire at the six o'clock position of the withdrawing helicopters. Immediate evasive action was taken by the SAR force with no apparent damage sustained by any aircraft. After landing, however, it was found that Jolly Green 20 had sustained a small arms hit in the leading edge of one of its main rotor blades. Jolly Green 20 and 67 landed at Channel 89 at 1600L. Meanwhile, Jolly Greens 36(L) and 17 had been scrambled by Compress at 1530L to assist in the recovery of the Sophomore 50 crew. Both Jolly Greens were airborne at 1535L and estimated the area of the crash site at 1630L. Enroute the Jolly Greens were picked up and escorted by Sandy's 3 and 4. About 25 minutes out, the Sandy's were instructed to hold the Jolly's at 047/55/99. After arriving in orbit at 1640L Sandy's 1 and 2. Sandy's 7 and 8 joined Jolly Greens 36 and 17 in orbit at 1610L. At approximately 1640L Jolly Green 36 advised Crown 3 that the Jolly Greens were still at least 25 minutes out of the area, and darkness would be a factor in the recovery if anyone else was located on the ground. At this time Sandy's 1 and 2 had voice contact with another survivor, Crown 3 relayed this information, and at 1705L Sandy's 7 and 8 and Jolly Greens 36 and 17 were cleared to proceed into the area. An indirect course was required to detour a heavy concentration of anti-aircraft weapons. Both the Jolly Greens and Sandy's were orbiting at 10,500 and 11,000 feet and did not descend until clear of the anti-aircraft weapons. Until darkness, the weather was not a factor in the mission. Both Jolly Green 36 and 17 had the cockpit windows fog up in the rapid descent and this considerably hampered visibility (in addition, the copilot's front window was badly scratched, further restricting visibility on that side of the aircraft). At 1735L Jolly Green 36 joined Sandy 2 and was escorted by him into the area. Jolly Green 36 could not spot the survivor's smoke, but Sandy 3 directed the helicopter into a hover directly over the flare. The forest penetrator was lowered into a very small clearing in which the Pararescue Specialist saw a life raft and what appeared to be a signal panel. The source of the flare appeared to be very close to the clearing, but after hovering approximately five minutes the survivor had still not reached the penetrator. He called on guard asking the Jolly to move down hill towards him. Jolly Green 36 came into a hover lower on the slope over a second smoke flare. The penetrator was lowered into the dense jungle undergrowth and was left on the ground for 5 minutes until the survivor requested the Jolly to move up slope. For the next 15 minutes the flight engineer on Jolly Green 36 and the survivor

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attempted to talk the aircraft into a hover directly over his position. At each attempt the penetrator had to be raised and lowered to permit the helicopter to move. The area involved was a very steep slope with exceptionally dense undergrowth and it appeared the survivor could not move to the penetrator. When the survivor said the aircraft was directly over his position the Jolly Green lost radio contact and the Sandy's had to relay all transmissions. Furthermore, darkness was seriously hampering the effort; the aircraft had all lights on but the undergrowth prevented the flight mechanic from seeing the penetrator. The survivor asked the Jolly Green to move back, and while raising the penetrator to reposition the helicopter, the cable snapped. At this time all radio contact with the survivor was lost, and he was not heard from for the remainder of the mission. Jolly Green 17 was called in to attempt a pickup and arrived in the area at 1830L. It was too dark for Jolly Green 17 to enter a hover because of the rugged terrain, and at 1840L Jolly Greens 36 and 37 advised against further efforts. Both Jolly Green 36 and 17 returned to Channel 89 landing at 1950L. On 28 February Jolly Greens 17 and 20, and Sandy's 5,6,7 and 8 were launched at 0530L to search the area where Jolly Green 36 had lost a forest penetrator at 1820L on 27 Feb 68. Radio contact with the survivor was not reestablished and, due to the ruggedness of the terrain and extremely dense foliage and undergrowth, it was not possible for the SAR force to locate the exact area. The Jolly's and Sandy's returned to Channel 89, landing at 1025L. Another briefing was conducted at 0430L on 29 Feb and the following SAR forces were involved: (1) Jolly Green 20 with 4 members of the ground team on board, (2) Jolly Green 37, also with four ground team members, (3) Jolly Green 36, (4) Sandy's 5,6,7 and 8, (5) Nail 77 with one ground team member. Jolly Green 20 was low. During the briefing a decision was reached that if the exact location of the last sought after survivor's could not be found, the ground team would not be put on the ground to search for that crew. An alternate area was designated (XD203867) near the crash site of Sophomore 50, and the ground party was to work this area with the hope of locating the two missing Navy crewmembers. Jolly Greens 20, 37 and 36 were airborne at 0610L, estimating the primary area at 0730L. The weather enroute was scattered to broken, cloud bases 6,000 feet MSL, tops at 8,500 feet, and 3-5 miles visibility in haze. Jolly Green 37 accomplished the navigation to and from the area; it was necessary to circumnavigate several areas of heavily concentrated anti-aircraft weapons positions enroute. Sandy's 5 and 6 and Nail 77 were already in the area when Jolly Greens 20, 37, and 36, and Sandy's 7 and 8 arrived. The weather in the area was marginal. Low clouds completely covered the specific area, but there were large breaks to the south and southwest. Jolly Green 20 and Nail 77 descended in a clear area, and attempted to work under the clouds. Jolly Green 37 and 36 and all Sandy's orbited high with TACAN fixes. Jolly Green 20 was able to get within two miles of the suspected position of the survivor, but was unable to get close because the cloud bases were at 2,500' (29.92) while the survivor's elevation was an estimated 2,600 to 2,700'. At 0805L Jolly Green 20 decided the weather would not permit working in the primary area, and the SAR force moved to the alternate. The weather in this area was better, with low scattered clouds near the crash site of Sophomore 50. Clearance was received to put the team on the ground at a predetermined point (XD203867) approximately 1.5 kilometers from the crash site. Jolly Green 20 selected a clearing at the base of a large karst, landed, and discharged ground team members.

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Jolly Green 37 came in directly behind Jolly Green 20, picked up automatic weapons fire (he took 3 suspected 30 caliber hits in the aft section of the helicopter, apparently causing no internal damage) and broke off from his approach. Sandy 5 and 6 came in and suppressed the ground fire, after which Jolly Green 20 landed and picked up the ground team; Jolly Green 20 did not pick up any ground fire and took no hits. At 0910L the SAR force navigated through the anti-aircraft weapons positions, and returned to Channel 89, landing with approximately 40 minutes of fuel remaining. Crown 1 cooperated in every way with the Jolly's for air refueling, and remained with them until they landed at Channel 89 at 0955L. Another briefing of the personnel involved was held at 1230L, and at 1355L Jolly Green 17 (low), 37, and 16 took off from Channel 89 for the primary area. Sandy's 3 and 4 escorted the Jolly's; Nail 40 who was already in the primary area, advised that the weather was good. The ground team was again aboard Jolly Green 17 and 37. The weather was overcast with the cloud layer's up to 9,500' and 3 to 5 miles visibility. Once in the area at 1505L the weather was good, and not a factor in the mission. Jolly Green 17 and Nail 40 conducted a low altitude search while the rest of the force orbited high enough to hold TACAN fixes over the area. The exact suspected coordinates fell in the area bounded by XD4076 and XD4778. Eventually, Jolly Green 17 and Nail 40 were joined by Jolly Green 37 and Sandy's 5 and 6 conducting an unsuccessful low altitude search; furthermore the burning crash site which had been seen by Nail 54 on the evening of 27 February (it was 3 to 4 miles west or slightly southwest of the survivor, and visible while hovering over the survivor) could not be found. At 1631L Jolly Green 37 was within 30 minutes of Bingo fuel and approaching darkness would have made it inadvisable to discharge the ground team without a positive position. The SAR force returned to base, landing Channel 89 at 1730L. The personnel on Jolly Green 17 recommended no further search be conducted committing such a large SAR force to the area, even though the cooperation of the Sandy's, Crown, Nail's, and ground personnel was excellent during the entire period from 27 February till 29 February. A further recommendation for multiple pick-ups where the survivor's are separated from each other, is that each Jolly Green and Sandy working together utilize a discreet VHF frequency. An HF frequency could be used by all the SAR forces in the area for common communications and a complete understanding of the overall situation. It is strangely recommended that the Navy adopt the standard Air Force survival radio, the RT-10.

3. (C) The names of the survivor's were (all from U.S. Navy Observation Squadron VC-67, NKP RTAFB):

a. By Jolly Green 37:

LT RICHARD E. JACOBS

AT 1 ROGER L. ARNTZEN

ADR 3 ANDREW G. ZDEBSKI

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b. By Jolly Green 20:

A01 RALPH L. GONZALES JR.

4. (U) Jolly Green crew members were:

27 FEBRUARY 1968

JOLLY GREEN 37(L)

RCC 1st LT JAMES H. PLATT
RCCP MAJOR DEAN H. WILLIAMS
FE SSGT HARVEY KEYES
RS MSGT CLARENCE R. BOLES ✓

JOLLY GREEN 36(L)

RCC CAPT HENRY C. CONANT
RCCP LT COL ROYAL A. BROWN
FE SGT NARCISO A. OTERO
RS SGT MICHAEL R. FRABONI

28 FEBRUARY 1968

JOLLY GREEN 17(L)

RCC MAJOR EDWARD B. RUSSELL
RCCP CAPT JAMES E. OLIVER
FE SSGT CARL L. WARMACK
RS SGT PATRICK F. ALLAIRE

29 FEBRUARY 1968 AM

JOLLY GREEN 20(L)

RCC CAPT HENRY C. CONANT
RCCP LT COL ROYAL A. BROWN
FE SSGT COY W. CALHOON
RS SGT MICHAEL R. FRABONI

JOLLY GREEN 20(H)

RCC CAPT HARRY W. WALKER
RCCP MAJOR MILTON S. WASHINGTON
FE TSgt ALBERT P. PARKER
RS SGT PETER S. HARDING

JOLLY GREEN 17(H)

RCC MAJOR WILLIAM J. JOHNSON III
RCCP MAJOR PAUL M. REAGAN
FE SSGT RAYMOND J. PRICE
RS SGT JULES C. SMITH

JOLLY GREEN 20(H)

RCC MAJOR DALE L. ODERMAN
RCCP CAPT GEORGE W. GREER
FE SGT NICKEY D. BERRY
RS SGT JOSEPH M. DUFFY

JOLLY GREEN 37(H)

RCC MAJOR FREDERICK C. FAUST
RCCP MAJOR PAUL M. REAGAN
FE SSGT RAYMOND J. PRICE
RS SGT JULES C. SMITH

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CONT'T 29 FEBRUARY 1968 - AM

JOLLY GREEN 36

RCC MAJOR EDWARD B. RUSSELL

RCCP CAPT JAMES E. OLIVER

FE SSGT CARL L. WARMACK

RS SGT PATRICK F. ALLAIRE

29 FEBRUARY 1968 - PM

JOLLY GREEN 17(L)

RCC CAPT HENRY C. CONANT

RCCP LT COL ROYAL A. BROWN

FE SSGT COY W. CALHOON

RS SGT MICHAEL R. FRABONI

JOLLY GREEN 16

RCC CAPT HARRY W. WALKER

RCCP CAPT RONALD MCKINLEY

FE SGT NARCISO A. OTERO

RS SGT J.T. LOMBARD

Richard E. Adams
RICHARD E. ADAMS, Major, USAF
Operations Officer

JOLLY GREEN 37(H)

RCC MAJOR FREDERICK C. FAUST

RCCP MAJOR PAUL M. REAGAN

FE SSGT RAYMOND J. PRICE

RS SGT JULES C. SMITH

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FROM: Det 2, 37ARRS/Maj. Donohue/2787

6 March 1968

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative Report (2-3-15, 27 Feb 68) (U)

TO: Det 2, 37ARRS (O)
 Det 2, 37ARRS (G)
 3rd ARRGp (JSARG)
 IN TURN

1. (U) This report is submitted in accordance with ARRS 55-2 and 3ARRGP Supplement 1, dated 15 June 1967.

2. (C) At 1220L, 27 Feb 68, Det 2, 37ARRS was requested to prepare an aircraft for a rescue mission. No aircraft was on home alert as two Jolly Greens were on alert at a forward operating base. At 1240 Jolly Green 67 departed from CH-70. Sophomore 50 was reported down with nine (9) aboard at 106°/90 off CH-89. Jolly Green 67 proceeded to 106°/57 off CH-89 and joined in orbit with Jolly Green 20 and two Sandys at 1350. At 1400 Jolly Green 67 and 20 were cleared into the crash area where six (6) pickups had already been made. At 1415 with Jolly Green 67 acting as high bird, Jolly Green 20 moved into the position marked by Sandy and Nail. After a short period Sandy cleared Jolly Green 67 down to help in the search. Jolly Green 20 spotted the survivor and made the pickup at 1440. Jolly Green 67 and 20 then searched the area for other survivors. The two helicopters each investigated four (4) different parachutes which turned out to be flare chutes. At 1455 Sandy cleared Jolly Green 67 into the crash site to check the wreckage for bodies. Approximately one-half mile from the wreckage in a small valley, at 60K and 100' altitude Jolly Green 67 experienced a volley of small arms fire and hits. At this time a PJ was at the hoist ready for lowering. The ground fire was not observed visually. Jolly Green 67 pulled in power and accelerated to 140 knots, ducked over a ridge to mask an escape route and proceeded to climb to altitude. Immediately after taking the hits Jolly Green 67 informed Sandy of the ground fire and Sandy strafed the area. While climbing to altitude Jolly Green 67 assessed the damage and noticed fuel fumes and a stream of hydraulic fluid blowing back over the ramp area. The search was then called off as there were no more beepers. Jolly Green 67 and 20, two Sandys and a Nail proceeded to CH-89 at 8000'. Jolly Green 20 was requested to examine Jolly Green 67 for damage. Hydraulic fluid was observed streaming from the upper left side. Jolly Green 67 experienced neither a drop in hydraulic pressure or fuel quantity. The helicopter continued to handle properly. At 105°/80 off CH-89 Sandy called break left as the flight was picking up 37MM fire. Following the Nail aircraft, Jolly Green 67 and 20 performed evasive action as the Sandys strafed the roads. The flight then continued on from DE 65 with no further ground fire. Jolly Green 67 joined Jolly Green 20 and landed at CH-89 at 1600. After shutdown Jolly Green 67 assessed the battle damage. Seven hits were identified. Two hydraulic lines were completely shot out in the accessory Gear Box section which

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could have led to eventual utility hydraulic system failure. The system did have enough fluid to lower the gear but pressure was lost on the APP. One round lodged in the fuel probe in the electronics compartment beneath the pilot. Another round went completely through the tail rotor drive shaft. The crew of Jolly Green 67 remained at CH-89. Repairs were effected on 28 Feb 68 and the helicopter departed CH-89 at 1515 and landed at CH-70 at 1610 with no further incidents.

3. (U) There were no survivors picked up by Jolly Green 67.
4. (U) Crew of Jolly Green 67 was as follows:
 - a. RCC, Frederick M. Donohue, Major,
 - b. RCCP, Leone S. Russo, 1st Lt,
 - c. FE, Jack L. Hartman, SSgt,
 - d. RS, Jack B. Hoover, Sgt,
 - e. RS, Donald C. Johnson, Sgt,

Frederick M. Donohue
FREDERICK M. DONOHUE, Major, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

2-370-0005

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37th ARRSq Hist, Jan-Mar 1968

8.

search was continued for the F-8 pilot with negative results.

(10)(C) 1-3-17, 25 Feb 1968. At 0555Z Jolly Green 07 and 10 were scrambled from Quang Tri to a point twenty three (23) miles northeast of Saravane, Laos, to recover the pilot of a USAF F-100. Escort was provided by a USAF FAC O-2 and two (2) USAF A-1Es. The area contained heavy concentrations of hostile 37mm AAA and numerous heavy automatic weapons positions. An Air America helicopter attempted to pick up the survivor but was driven from the area by hostile fire. At 0633Z, after suppression of the enemy fire by the A-1Es, Jolly Green 07 entered a hover over the downed pilot. The survivor, Capt Bernard E. Flanagan, FV3065735, was suspended upside down by his parachute harness in a tree, however, the Flight Engineer was able to swing the forest penetrator under the parachute canopy to the pilot. In spite of this difficulty and the heavy automatic weapons fire sustained while in the hover, Jolly Green 07 was able to complete the pickup in less than five (5) minutes. Inspection of the aircraft after landing at DaNang revealed two (2) automatic weapons hits in the fuselage.

(11)(S) 2-3-15, 27 Feb 1968. At 0515Z Jolly Green 10 and 25 were scrambled from Quang Tri to ASSIST in the recovery of a USN P-2V aircrew downed by hostile fire north of Saravane, Laos. Escort was provided by numerous USAF A-1Es and USAF FAC O-2s. Jolly Green 10 recovered Lt Bernard Walsh, 659546, USN and ARD3

GROUP 4

Downgraded at 3 year
intervals; declassified
after 12 years

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37ARRS Hist, Jan-Mar 1968

9.

George C.C. Wing, 9190017, USN; Jolly Green 25 recovered a third crewman, name unknown.

(12)(U) 1-3-18, 6 Mar 1968. At 0635Z Jolly Green 03 and 04 were scrambled from Quang Tri to attempt the recovery of eleven US marines aboard a CH-46 which crashed twenty-six (26) miles southwest of Hue Phu Bai, RVN. At 0700Z the Jolly Greens arrived in the area and were advised the enemy gun position that downed the H-46 had been silenced by our fighter bombers. Jolly Green 04 descended when voice contact was established with two of the survivors near the crash site and hoisted them aboard. Due to their deep state of shock, attempts to query these two survivors as to the position of the others were unsuccessful. Shortly after pickup, Jolly Green 04 was forced to depart the area because of minimum fuel. At 0755Z Jolly Green 03 entered a hover near the crash site and managed to spot two more survivors. These two survivors were also recovered using the hoist and Jolly Green departed the area at 0810Z because of minimum fuel. At this time Jolly Green 28 arrived in the area and lowered Sgt Martin E. Roepstorff, the pararescueman, by hoist, to search for more survivors. The search was continued until 0915Z when Sgt Roepstorff and two US Army Special Forces personnel inspected the area by an Army UH-1 were taken aboard Jolly Green 28 to avoid their being captured by enemy units closing in on the crash site.

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SUMMARY TABLE OF RESCUES

DATE	RESCUE NUMBER	SURVIVOR	TYPE AIRCRAFT	SERVICE	LOCATION	JOLLY GREEN CREW	UNDER ENEMY FIRE
3 Jan	218	Maj Pattee	T28	USAF	Laos	Maj Ferrell Lt Sichterman Sgt Grau ALC Taylor	No
6 Jan	219	Capt Brownlee	F-105	USAF	Thailand	Capt Walker Capt Canfield Sgt Otero Sgt Boles	No
6 Jan	220	Maj Gustafson 76th Mission 2nd pickup	F-105	USAF	Thailand	Lt Platt Capt Greer Sgt Keyes Sgt Lombard	No
16 Jan	221 222	Maj Lewis Lt Kelly	F4	USAF	NVN	Capt Greer Capt Canfield Sgt Warmack Sgt Harding	No
18 Jan	223	Capt Stovin	F4	USAF	NVN	Capt Conant Capt Greer Sgt Cole Sgt Allaire	Yes
28 Jan	224	Capt Brown	T28	USAF	Laos	Capt Otsini Capt Greer Sgt Warmack Sgt Harding	No
2 Feb	225 226 227	Lt JG Jacobs AP2 Forbski AT1 Arntzen	P2V	USN	Laos	Lt Platt Maj Williams Sgt Keyes Sgt Boles	No
27 Feb	228	AP1 Gonzales	P2V	USN	Laos	Capt Walker Maj Washington Sgt Parker Sgt Harding	Yes

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Atch 1

History - Det 1, 40th ARRSq, Jan - Mar 68

CHRONOLOGY

1968

- 3 Jan - Rescue of Zorro 11 by Jolly Green 20(#218).
- 6 Jan - Rescue of Boswell 3 by Jolly Green 16 and 36(#219, #220).
- 10 Jan - Det 1 visited by Col Freshwater, Vice Commander, 3rd ARRGp.
- 12 Jan - Medical evacuation from L-85 by Jolly Green 17.
- 15 Jan - Jolly Green 20 crashed while on Prevue 1 mission in North Vietnam.
- 16 Jan - Rescue of Hangar 2 by Jolly Green 16(#221, #222).
- 17 Jan - Crew of Jolly Green 20 rescued by Jolly Green 71 of Det 2, 37 ARRS.
- 18 Jan - Rescue of Hangar 1A by Jolly Green 09(#223).
- 23-24 Jan - Maj Orsini briefed the 553rd Reconnaissance Squadron at Korat RTAFB on SAR mission.
- 25 Jan - Det 1 visited by Col Emil Beaudry, Vice Commander ARRS, Col William Misick, Deputy Commander Material, ARRS, and Col Paul E. Leske, Commander, 3rd ARRGp.
- 26 Jan - Col Beaudry presented Silver Stars to 1Lt Privette and Sgt McComb.
- 11, 12, 13 Feb - Maj Orsini briefed 388th Tactical Fighter Wing at Korat RTAFB on SAR mission.
- 27 Feb - Rescue of Sophomore 50 by Jolly Green 37 and 20. (#225-#228).
37 ARRS also took part and rescued three other crew members.
- 28 Feb - Rescue of Bear 1 by Jolly Green 36(#229). This was the 1000th combat rescue made by 3rd ARRGp.
- 29 Feb - The crew of Jolly Green 36, Maj Oderman, Capt Greer, Sgt Berry, and Sgt Duffy went to Tan Son Nhut AB, RVN, for interviews on the 1000th rescue. They were interviewed by the major television networks, for a UPI newspaper story and USAF hometown news releases, and appeared at the Saigon daily Armed Forces briefing for reporters.
- 2-3 Mar - Maj Orsini, Capt Walker, Capt Holt, Lt Platt, and SSgt Keyes interviewed for a National Geographic Magazine article of rescue in SEA.

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R. Miers, recovered the other crew member. No injuries occurred to either of the survivors during bailout or recovery other than minor scratches.

On 18 February 1968 Major John V. Allison again made two more recoveries when two pilots of a battle damaged F-105 had to bail out near Udorn Royal Thai Air Force Base. Their landing gear would not extend. This rescue effort was uneventful except that the rescue was accomplished in semi-darkness and the survivors were so close together with their beepers that it was difficult to get an adequate UHF/ADF Bearing.

Another HH-53B sustained battle damage on 27 February 1968 when Jolly Green 67 was launched to a hostile area to search for, locate and rescue any possible survivors of Sophomore 50 with nine (9) crew members. As Major Frederick M. Donohue was making a low pass over the wreckage, he received several hits. He abandoned the area, had another aircraft assess the damage and, when told he was leaking hydraulic fluid, landed at Naikhon Phanom to await maintenance. No rescues were made.

On 11 March 1968 four HH-53Bs were involved in a very difficult evacuation of several Americans and indigenous troops who were under heavy attack at a forward operating site. The evacuation was successful in that one (1) United States Air Force and fifty-nine (59) indigenous personnel were recovered. During the day all Jolly Green aircraft braved heavy enemy fire; however, no injuries were sustained nor were any hits taken by the rescue aircraft. Commanders of the

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Mission Narrative 02-03-15 (27 Feb 68)

12 March 1968

The Crown 3 alert crew was scrambled at 0643Z and airborne at 0705Z from Udorn RTAB. Briefing was done over HF by Crown 2, then working a mission. Sophomore 50, a Navy P-2 was down in approximate position 092/72/CH89 (331)30 CH85. At this time 5 of 9 crewmembers had been picked up, and Crown 2 was going to refuel J.G. 37 and 25. Since he would be too low for communications, Crown 2 turned the mission over to Crown 3. J.G. 10 also working on the mission. J.G. 10 had 2 SOB: J.G. 37 had 3 SOB: J.G. 25 had 1 SOB, experiencing trouble considered landing CH85, later landed CH103 no drop tanks, one UHF radio; his survivor was the 3rd pilot reported crewmembers bailed out from 5000' feet, aircraft heading 032. J.G. 25 refueled at CH103, took survivor to CH94. The survivor reported seeing considerable blood in radio compartment of the a/c or he exited. J.G. 37 and 10 returned CH89 escorted by Sandy 7,8. J.G. 67 and 20 enroute from 89, Sandy 3,4,5,6 in area. J.G. 67 and 20 arrived, escorted by Sandy 3,4. J.G. 20 picked up survivor at 0741Z. This survivor was last to exit a/c, reported all were out. At 0804Z, JG 67 hit by ground fire, leaking fuel, pulling out of the area. All forces left area led by Nail 21, O-1 FAC aircraft. Rescap during this time was Ikon flight, 4 F-100s. Nail 21 remained in the area to recheck for beeper/voice. At 0831Z, an F-4 reported seeing 2 parachutes 5 mi SE of area where the majority of the survivors had been picked up. JG 67 leaking hydraulic fluid as well as fuel, planning to land at CH89. Sandy 3 and 4 met JG 36 and 17 and returning to SAR scene. Sandy 1 and 2 inbound from CH 70. Sandy 5 and 6 to refuel for scramble at CH89. 0847Z beeper heard by high alt aircraft. Intermitten beeper heard from this time on. All Cap A/C and Cricket and Hillsboro receiving beeper- Hillsboro taking DF cuts on it. Sandy 7,8 assumed to west of site in safe area orbit with JG 36 and 17. Sandy 3,4 RTB. AT 1011Z, Rustic flight (Udorn F-4) made voice contact with Sophomore 50. JG 36/17 and Sandy 7,8 moved up to crash site to be close for pickup. The survivor advised Rustic he was in an open area, no cloud coverage. 1043Z Nail 21 had visual contact with the survivor. 1100 to 1105 JG 36 moved into survivor's area-survivor reported he heard the helo-JG36 reported possible visual, requested survivor pop a smoke, no smoke seen. JG 36 moved out to dump fuel. JG returned to hover, did not see survivor, lowered hoist and at 1124Z, reported he had lost his penetrator. JG 17 dropped tanks and attempted to move into survivors area, but could not locate survivor, and all forces pulled out at 1135Z because of darkness and loss of all contact (voice and beeper) with the survivor. Opinion of Jolly Green 36 about this-when he lowered penetrator, survivor dropped radio started for the chopper. The penetrator sheared from the a/c, and it was too dark for survivor to find radio again. Both JG reported low fuel, however would be able to make CH89 with AR. Crown 3 landed 1301Z at CH 70

Belony, Billy G. Capt, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

PLT	Cruickshank
NN	Sander
FE	Purveyar
FE	Ortiz
RO	Ward
IM	Jones

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68-0033

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MIKE WALKER
ORIGINAL IN MCGILL
MCGILL FOLIO

FUPW SOPHMORE 50 ~~WALKER 23 5185~~
SPR 2 27 62

NOTE BURET FIMBLUM & FATHWES

FIVE = WALKER. JPL

1827G: "Survivor pop three flares", not sure if they were telling him to, or he did.
1830G: JG17 dropped his tanks and moved into area, but could not locate the survivor.
1835G: SANDY's and Jolly Green pulled out of area after contact was lost and it was too dark to work.

On 28 February

0638G: SANDY's 5,6,7,8 and JG17 returned to the area.
0648G: NAIL 54 reported finding two chutes, but reported they were "old".
1145G: CROWN asked "SUMO" to come up on guard, and was answered in Vietnamese.
(Note: SUMO was an RF-4C also lost on the 27th in this same area, which is part of this puzzle, which is explained below.) A closing note for the ZULU day in SAR Log Reads: "Sandy people think they may have talked to SUMO pilot last night while working SOPHOMORE."

On 29 February:

0832G: Two JOLLY GREEN's inserted two six man teams into an area 2.5 miles west of the primary search area due to weather. The teams were to search for the 8th survivor and the SUMO crew.

0823G: The "packages" (teams) were picked up, JG-37 took three hits.

Our problem at JTF-FA is we had assumed one crewmember, who was thought to be dead, was left in the aircraft which crashed and the "8th" survivor, the OP-2E pilot, had parachuted out of the aircraft. Prior to our entry into the area to investigate, we had received several reports of villagers finding the body of pilot on a karst in the area where the SOPHOMORE crew had been rescued, and we assumed it was the body of the pilot. When we finally made it into the area, our team got the same information, and after two investigations, was finally led to the area on a karst where the villagers had seen the body, a search of the area located a knife sheath and some remains. We assumed these remains were those of the pilot, and in the meantime we had found the crash site of the OP-2E aircraft, which we assumed contained the remains of the dead crewmember, and began an excavation of it. When we excavated the site of what we thought was the remains of the pilot, we recovered remains, which were subsequently identified through DNA matching as those of the dead crewmember left on the aircraft; apparently his body had fallen out of the hatch of the OP-2 before it crashed. None of the other crewmembers saw the pilot bail out of the aircraft, which was filled with smoke, so we can not prove he exited the aircraft, and are faced with a continued excavation of the OP-2E crash site. Naturally you ask, what about the aborted rescue attempt for the "8th survivor" (pilot)? The problem is the locations (3) given in the search and rescue log for the aborted rescue are over 15 kilometers southeast of where the other OP-2 crewmembers were rescued and no where near the reported flight path of the OP-2E aircraft, this is supported by the report that RUSTIC first picked up only a weak beeper and it took some time to track it down. The area for the 8th survivor is on the planned mission track of SUMO, the RF-4C that disappeared the same afternoon in this area, and some after action reporting suggests a SUMO crewmember may have been the object of the rescue attempt on the evening of the 27th. We have investigated on the ground in the area of the "8th survivor", but the villagers deny any knowledge of incidents in the area and we have never found the crash site of the SUMO aircraft. Hopefully, we may have someone out there that participated in this operation that can shed some light on this mystery. I appreciate your support and we will continue our efforts to bring back your buddies who were left behind over there.

FROM: Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (Mr. Bill Forsyth)

TO: All Vietnam Veterans, particularly Jolly Green, Crown, Sandy and Nail crews

SUBJECT: The SAR effort for SOPHOMORE 50 and SUMO, 27-29 February 1968

Jolly Green's and Other's

I am the POW/MIA analyst for Laos and Cambodia at Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTFFA) at Camp Smith Hawaii and I would like to ask your help on an MIA case that has become somewhat of a mystery to us. What I am looking for anyone who participated in the SAR effort for **SOPHOMORE 50**, a Navy OP-2E that was shot down in Laos, south of Ban Karai pass/ Ban Laboy Ford, and north of the chokes, while dropping Igloo White sensors on **27 February 1968**.

What I am looking for is:

- 1. Anyone who participated in the rescue attempt for the 8th survivor of **SOPHOMORE 50** on the evening of 27 February 1968 that has details of the incident or recalls the general location.
- 2. Anyone who may have had contact with the survivor; did he identify himself??
- 3. Any **JOLLY GREEN**, **SANDY** or **CROWN** crew who may have talked to the crew of **SUMO**, an RF-4C that disappeared the same day.
- 4. Any crewmembers who escorted the Jolly Greens that inserted teams into the area two days after the incident that might remember the general location of the incident.

BACKGROUND: During the 27 February 1968 recovery effort for SOPHOMORE 50, seven of the nine crewmembers were recovered by rescue helicopters. During the rescue, it was learned one dead crewmember had been left in the aircraft and it was thought the 8th crewmembers, the pilot, had exited the aircraft, although none of his crew actually saw him leave the aircraft. From SAR logs, we have the following details of the unsuccessful rescue of what was thought to be the "8th survivor" **on the the evening of the 27th** and subsequent events:

- 1714G: RUSTIC picked up a weak beeper that was thought to be the 8th survivor.
- 1715G: RUSTIC reported a "loud and clear" contact with the "8th Survivor".
- 1741G: The log entries report RUSTIC, SANDY'S, and NAIL 21 had visual contact with the survivor.

- 1803G: JOLLY GREEN 36 was over the survivor, but had too much fuel and moved off to drop his tanks.
- 1826G: JG36 moved back in, but lost it's jungle penetrator and withdrew.
- 1827G: "Survivor pop three flares", not sure if they were telling him to, or he did.
- 1830G: JG17 dropped his tanks and moved into area, but could not locate the survivor.
- 1835G: SANDY's and Jolly Green pulled out of area after contact was lost and it was too dark to work.

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My E-Mail at home is forsyth@pixi.com; work is forsytwl@hq.pacom.mil.
Thank You Mr. Bill Forsyth

Sandys fired rockets and cannon fire to suppress the fire.

The PJ was dangling on the penetrator at the same time Bear 1 was hanging in his parachute. It took twenty minutes for Sgt Duffy to get the unconscious survivor on the penetrator. Finally both the survivor and PJ were recovered into the Jolly. Two of the four Sandys sustained battle damage while protecting the helicopter. On the way back to NKP, Sgt Duffy treated Capt Basels injuries. This was Maj Oderman's first combat save as aircraft commander of a Jolly.

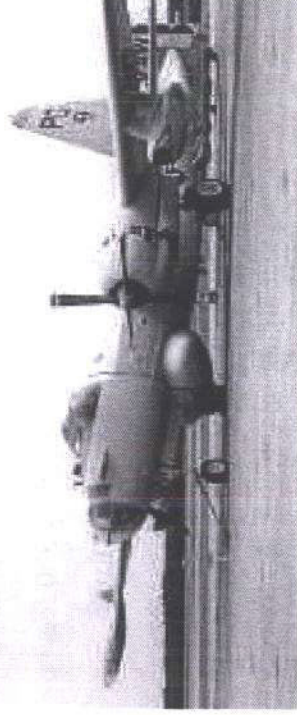
Back at NKP, the entire crew was placed on a C-130 and flown to Saigon. MACV brought in the international press corps and presented the crew for a press conference. All the major U.S. networks were there. The 7th AF Public Affairs officer stated that MACV got a lot of positive press out of the 1000th save. MACV needed some good press. This mission occurred during the Tet Offensive and there had not been much positive press for any military operations. Upon returning to NKP, the

rescuemen told their teammates that they would prefer to fly a mission into NVN rather than do another one of these "dog and pony shows" in Saigon.

Sophomore 50

On 27 February, a USN P-2V was downed over Laos abeam the DMZ. An F-4 pilot reported to Crown 2 that he observed six good chutes, was picking up many beepers and had voice contact with two survivors.

USN P-2V
Neptune Aircraft



USN P-2V Neptune Aircraft

USN Photo

Crown passed the information to the JRCC and requested that the Jollys and Sandys be scrambled. Three USAF O-2 FAC's were in the area directing strikes on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Their call signs were Nail 54, 71 and 48. These

taken any ground fire. As Jolly 20 departed with its latest catch, it fired upon by 37mm AAA gun. Several rounds airburst near the Jolly but it safely egressed the area. At the same time, Jolly Green 67 reported ground fire. The two Jollys were ordered to RTB.

The Sandys began to attack the 37mm gun and silenced it. It was approaching sunset when Sandy 1 obtained voice contact with another survivor. Replacement Jollys and Sandys were inbound and arrived as darkness was settling in. Jolly 36 was escorted by Sandy 2 to the survivors suspected position. The forest penetrator was lowered into a small clearing in which the PJ had spotted a 1-man survival raft. The penetrator reached the ground but the survivor did not appear. After about five minutes of hovering, the survivor radioed that he was down slope and popping a MK-13. The smoke emanated from a heavily vegetated spot in the jungle. The FE recovered the penetrator and the Jolly pilot hover taxied to where they believed the smoke had been seen.

Again the FE lowered the penetrator but this time it disappeared into the jungle trees. He kept running out cable until he felt it go slack. He knew it was on the ground but could not see it. He held on to the cable waiting to feel the survivor shake it from side to side. This would be the signal to begin reeling it up. The survivor radioed again and asked the Jolly to drop the penetrator in another nearby spot. Apparently he was unable to get to the spot on the ground the penetrator was presently at.

The FE reeled up again and relowered the penetrator to the new location he thought the survivor had requested. By now it was pitch black and the Jolly pilot had to turn on his spotlights to obtain a hover reference. The survivor once again asked that the penetrator be repositioned. While attempting to do so, the penetrator became caught in the trees and the cable snapped. At about the same time, the survivor ceased transmitting on his radio. Jolly 36 departed the hover and returned to an orbit position with his high bird. Darkness and a lack of radio contact forced termination of SAR efforts until first light.

men would fly in an massive SARTF, all to rescue one man.

Tet Ends

The Tet Offensive was one of the defining moments of the Vietnam War. This attack shocked US citizens that had been led to believe that we were winning the war and that peace was at hand. The Offensive had an extremely powerful impact on the emotions, opinions and convictions of millions of Americans. It came just before the first primaries for the presidential election and therefore impacted political positions by the candidates. The embarrassment of the occupation of our embassy by VC troops led to political rhetoric about who was to blame and about the general conduct of the war. The embassy takeover was a big story in America. If we could not protect it from the VC, how could we protect anything else in the country? More importantly many citizens began to question the righteousness of the war or Americas ability to win it.

The headline of the March 12 1968 NY Times read “**US is Losing the War in Vietnam.**” This was a simplistic assessment of a complicated situation.

Who won the Tet Offensive? There are two aspects to that question; a military victory and a political victory. **Militarily** the U.S. and ARVN eventually won all the battles and recaptured all of the cities seized by DRV. The Viet Cong was decimated and never recovered to their pre Tet strength. NVA regulars had to reinforce the losses suffered by the VC. The big attack on Khe Sanh either never occurred or failed. NVA casualties at Khe Sanh exceeded 10,000 KIA. The U.S. lost about 500 KIA in and around Khe Sanh. After the Vietnam War ended many North Vietnamese generals said that their Khe Sanh strategy was designed to divert and fix U.S. troops in and around Khe Sanh. That ensured that when the VC attacked all of the major cities in SVN they would not have to contend with the forces that were supporting Khe Sanh.

technology was brought to the field by the NVA. Armor units began to play a role. Radar controlled mobile AAA was introduced along with shoulder fired SAM's. From this point on, the threat to American airmen steadily increased.

Air Rescues biggest missions of the Vietnam War lay in the future. This story is told in volume two of this book. The rescuemen who served in Vietnam from 1964 until the Tet Offensive had developed combat rescue tactics and had been credited with over 1,200 combat saves. They had served bravely and set a high standard for those rescuemen who followed them. All of the rescuemen who had flown in SEA and those who would fly until the 1973 Paris Peace Accords were signed did so for one reason:

“That Others May Live”

¹ Larry Brandt, *39th ARRS Mission Report Mission #2-3-07*, 18 January 1968 and HQ PACAF, *Air Operations in Southeast Asia, Vol XII*, January 1968

² *Report on the War in Vietnam*, 30 June 1968, US Pacific Command

FROM: Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (Mr. Bill Forsyth)

TO: All Vietnam Veterans, particularly Jolly Green, Crown, Sandy and Nail crews

SUBJECT: The SAR effort for SOPHOMORE 50 and SUMO, 27-29 February 1968

Jolly Green's and Other's

I am the POW/MIA analyst for Laos and Cambodia at Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA) at Camp Smith Hawaii and I would like to ask your help on an MIA case that has become somewhat of a mystery to us. What I am looking for anyone who participated in the SAR effort for SOPHOMORE 50, a Navy OP-2E that was shot down in Laos, south of Ban Karai pass/ Ban Laboy Ford, and north of the chokes, while dropping Igloo White sensors on 27 February 1968.

What I am looking for is:

- 1. Anyone who participated in the rescue attempt for the 8th survivor of SOPHOMORE 50 on the evening of 27 February 1968 that has details of the incident or recalls the general location.
- 2. Anyone who may have had contact with the survivor; did he identify himself??
- 3. Any JOLLY GREEN, SANDY or CROWN crew who may have talked to the crew of SUMO, an RF-4C that disappeared the same day.
- 4. Any crewmembers who escorted the Jolly Greens that inserted teams into the area two days after the incident that might remember the general location of the incident.

BACKGROUND: During the 27 February 1968 recovery effort for SOPHOMORE 50, seven of the nine crewmembers were recovered by rescue helicopters. During the rescue, it was learned one dead crewmember had been left in the aircraft and it was thought the 8th crewmembers, the pilot, had exited the aircraft, although none of his crew actually saw him leave the aircraft. From SAR logs, we have the following details of the unsuccessful rescue of what was thought to be the "8th survivor" on the evening of the 27th and subsequent events:

- 1714G: RUSTIC picked up a weak beeper that was thought to be the 8th survivor.
- 1715G: RUSTIC reported a "loud and clear" contact with the "8th Survivor".
- 1741G: The log entries report RUSTIC, SANDY'S, and NAIL 21 had visual contact with the survivor.
- 1803G: JOLLY GREEN 36 was over the survivor, but had too much fuel and moved off to drop his tanks.
- 1826G: JG36 moved back in, but lost it's jungle penetrator and withdrew.
- 1827G: "Survivor pop three flares", not sure if they were telling him to, or he did.
- 1830G: JG17 dropped his tanks and moved into area, but could not locate the survivor.
- 1835G: SANDY's and Jolly Green pulled out of area after contact was lost and it was too dark to work.

On 28 February:

- 0638G: SANDY's 5,6,7,8 and JG17 returned to the area.
- 0648G: NAIL 54 reported finding two chutes, but reported they were "old".

- 1145G: CROWN asked "SUMO" to come up on guard, and was answered in Vietnamese. (Note: SUMO was an RF-4C also lost on the 27th in this same area, which is part of this puzzle, which is explained below.) A closing note for the ZULU day in SAR Log Reads: "Sandy people think they may have talked to SUMO pilot last night while working SOPHOMORE."

On 29 February:

- 0832G: Two JOLLY GREEN's inserted two six man teams into an area 2.5 miles west of the primary search area due to weather. The teams were to search for the 8th survivor and the SUMO crew.
- 0823G: The "packages" (teams) were picked up, JG-37 took three hits.

Our problem at JTF-FA is we had assumed one crewmember, who was thought to be dead, was left in the aircraft which crashed and the "8th" survivor, the OP-2E pilot, had parachuted out of the aircraft. Prior to our entry into the area to investigate, we had received several reports of villagers finding the body of pilot on a karst in the area where the SOPHOMORE crew had been rescued, and we assumed it was the body of the pilot. When we finally made it into the area, our team got the same information, and after two investigations, was finally led to the area on a karst where the villagers had seen the body, a search of the area located a knife sheath and some remains. We assumed these remains were those of the pilot, and in the meantime we had found the crash site of the OP-2E aircraft, which we assumed contained the remains of the dead crewmember, and began an excavation of it. When we excavated the site of what we thought was the remains of the pilot, we recovered remains, which were subsequently identified through DNA matching as those of the dead crewmember left on the aircraft; apparently his body had fallen out of the hatch of the OP-2 before it crashed. None of the other crewmembers saw the pilot bail out of the aircraft, which was filled with smoke, so we can not prove he exited the aircraft, and are faced with a continued excavation of the OP-2E crash site. Naturally you ask, what about the aborted rescue attempt for the "8th survivor" (pilot)? The problem is the locations (3) given in the search and rescue log for the aborted rescue are over 15 kilometers southeast of where the other OP-2 crewmembers were rescued and no where near the reported flight path of the OP-2E aircraft, this is supported by the report that RUSTIC first picked up only a weak beeper and it took some time to track it down. The area for the 8th survivor is on the planned mission track of SUMO, the RF-4C that disappeared the same afternoon in this area, and some after action reporting suggests a SUMO crewmember may have been the object of the rescue attempt on the evening of the 27th. We have investigated on the ground in the area of the "8th survivor", but the villagers deny any knowledge of incidents in the area and we have never found the crash site of the SUMO aircraft. Hopefully, we may have someone out there that participated in this operation that can shed some light on this mystery. I appreciate your support and we will continue our efforts to bring back your buddies who were left behind over there.

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Thank You Mr. Bill Forsyth

Sophomore 50 & Sumo

From: Mr. Bill Forsyth

EMail: work, home

Mission: Sophomore 50 & Sumo

Date: 27, 28 & 29 February 1968

Aircraft: Navy OP-2E & RF-4C

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