

DECLASSIFIED

251

8

~~SECRET~~

39th ARRSq Hist., Apr-Jun 68

was knocked out but made it to the Gulf of Tonkin to bail out and became a "routine" pickup for the Jolly's. At 0625Z, approximately seven hours after the renewal of effort on the ninth, Jolly Green 31 picked up Master and took him to Quang Tri. This huge effort required 120 sorties for a successful conclusion.¹¹

Success is not an absolute, thus Crown and the rescue forces had to measure themselves as much by what they could not do as what they could. And on many occasions the obstacles to success were insuperable. One such occasion was also on 9 June 1968 during the attempt to rescue Hellborn 215, a Marine A4 pilot who had been shot down south of Tchepone, Loas, near the Loas-RVN border. All day the rescap forces bombed and strafed the area around the downed man who could be seen sitting on the ground beneath his parachute hanging in a tree above him. He had a broken leg and a badly injured arm, and reclined crookedly under his chute-umbrella while wave after wave of fighter-bombers tried to clear the area around him of hostile forces. Each time the Jolly's would go in to attempt a pickup, the enemy who had retreated into their holes during the hose-down would come out and fire on the rescue chopper.

11. Mission Narrative (Master 01) (S) Page 92

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

258

~~SECRET~~

9

39th ARRSq Hist., Apr-Jun 68

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

In the afternoon one Jolly was shot down exploding on impact killing the entire crew. Crown 1 was replaced by Crown 2; both worked feverishly to insure rescue forces cycled in smoothly, instructions passed concisely and accurately, tankers were available for the fast movers, and helicopters positioned for the instant prosecution of and opportunity. After a few hours voice contact was lost with Hellborn, apparently unconscious. Another Jolly was hit and limped north to Khe Sanh. A riot gas attack was attempted by the Spads A1E's. The Jolly's went down through the gas with a pararescueman poised to go down the hoist line to retrieve the man. As soon as the chooper neared the ground, automatic weapons fired from batteries less than 200 meters from Hellborn's position. Frustrated, the rescue forces pulled out. The survivor, still under his parachute, was mute spectator to the drama in which he was the central character. The fighter bombers continued to assault the ground with a tremendous variety of ordnance and delivery techniques, but as light faded so did hope. Just after dark, the Commander of 7AF ordered the SAR forces to return to their respective bases, and prepare for a resumption in the morning. Hellborn 215 was never seen or heard from again.¹²

12. Mission Narrative (Hellborn 215) (S) Pages 95, 96

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

RESCUE MISSION NARRATIVE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
SECRETDECLASSIFIED 347
95

HELL BORNE 215 MISSION NUMBER 1-3-63

Crown 01 was on orbit for air refueling of Jolly Green at Tango orbit when word was received from Cricket control at 0226Z that Hellborne 215 A-4 was downed by ground fire. His position was recorded as 220/27/69 SAR forces were scramble at 0230Z and due to Mission 1-3-61 Freq 271.9/142.7 was assigned as SAR primary. SAR forces consisted of: Crown 01, Jolly Green 23 low/22 Spad 01/02 escort. Additional forces consisted of gunships callsign Scarface 6-1 6-2, FACs Covey 265 Trail 35, 33, 36. Position updated at 0248 to 260/36/69 by Covey 265. Highest elevation in area 4000ft. Crash site wx 5000 sc to broken. 3100 - 3200 feet. Au Shau valley. Chute spotted by FAC survivor under chute with broken right leg and left arm. Voice contact excellent with survivor. Survivor requested immediate medical aid unable to board penetrator without help. Ground fire in area was reported to be 50 cal small arms and AAA. Bunkers and trucks spotted in the immediate area. by FAC Trail 35. On scene control Covey 265 Crown 01 airborne mission control. Jolly Green and Spads held northwest of site until suppressed ground fire in the area and safe for entry. Hellborne flight 522 Ring Neck 528 and Gun-fighter flight 7 & 8 sullivan flt expend ordinance CBU, napalm under FAC direction. 0340Z Jollys and Spads in area. Covey 265 reported no ground fire. 0350Z 0400Z survivor getting smoke ready for use in pickup. Planned drop of PJ to aid pilot. First attempt draws ground fire on Jolly 22 and Jollys Spads and gunships egress from scene. Site where ground fire was observed is strafed and bombed. Second attempt made after reorganization at 0425Z with Jolly Green 23L/22 preceded by Spad 01/02 and flanked by Scarface 6-1/6-2 at 0426A, Jolly Green 23L reported hit by ground fire and verified by Spad 01 as on fire. JG 23 crashed and burned immediately. Observed by Spad 01 with no survivors - no beepers. SAR forces directed to egress and hold. to NW. Jolly Green 22 low on fuel RTB Jolly 24 enters area and is joined by Jolly Green 28 Spad 02 is also hit at 0445Z and is RTB to Channel 77. with Spad 01. More strikes are directed in by FAC and Crown 01 coordinates ingress and egress routes with Jollys 28/24 gunships Seaworthy 4-1, 4-2 Sandy 9,10 arrived area at 0540Z and orbit with Jolly and gunships. Sent to guard freq and told to work with Trail 33 to familiarize themselves with area. After repeated strikes forces are committed to SAR attempt at 0545Z. Jolly 28L/24 High 22 backup holding Seaworthy 4-1 left of Jolly 28 and Seaworthy 4-2 right side Sandy 9,10 to lead in just ahead of force and arrive over scene just prior to Jollys. Headings into and out of area not concurred in. Crown 01 coordinates will all FAC's and decide on 150° in/220° out. Fast movers Cheetah and Chippie strike gun emplacement discovered earlier by Jolly 22. Forces enter 0607Z make pass into area Jolly 28 receives fire as Trail 36 lays smoke on ridges. Forces are directed by Crown to egress immediately. Jolly 28 lose 1 engine and is vectored out of area by Trail 33 to Khe Sahn with Sandy 9 & 10 Seaworthy 4-1. 4-2 in escort. Voice contact with survivor is lost at this time and not regained. False smoke signal was spotted on ridge during rescue attempt. Crown 01 request additional gunships, continues use of fighter strikes, holds SAR force high. 0657Z mission control is coordinated with Crown 02 and relinquished. Crown 01 remains until 0715Z for any assistance RTB's at that time. Mission narrative continues with Crown 02.

DATE? 9 JUNE 1968

AUTHOR?

MAJOR CARUANA

LT. COL KNUDSON

MAJ. PARTEN

R.O. SSGT DAVIS

FG TSGT LEE / ELLER

LM SSGT TAYLOR

DECLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
SECRET39ARRS/C
68-6001

~~SECRET~~

348

9 Jun 68 ⁹⁶

Crown 2, relieved Crown 1 at 0715Z in attempted recovery of Hell Borne 215. Jolly Green 28 was successfully escorted to LZ Stud. Numerous more high performance strikes were put into the area with little or no success. The area seemed to be a strong hold with ample defensive positions for the enemy. CBU-24, MK 82 and CBU 25 were employed to suppress ground fire, however, when Spads and Sandys made passes there was little ground fire, but when JG 31L and 22 made another attempt, heavy ground fire was encountered. The on scene command was passed to Covey 265 while Trail 33 returned for refueling. (0830) Word was received from King that two flights of Marine fighters with napalm and Sandys 5 and 6 with CS were being sent to the scene. A great deal of confusion arose over who was equipped to be in the area if this was employed. Since a pararescueman was required on the ground to assist the unconscious pilot, JG 31, 22 and 24 advised that due to their equipment they would be unable to talk with the PJ. The confusion was finally resolved at 0900 and the plan of attack formulated. The Jolly would approach with Spads and Sandys front and rear, after the gas had been employed along the ridge line. It was decided among the Spads, Sandys and Covey 265 not to follow the gas with the napalm, as planned by King. The gas was laid down and the JGs immediately went in. They took ground fire and egressed the area. At 0925 Queen advised to expend the remaining ordnance and RTB the forces. Sandy 5 was not happy with this decision, nor was Crown. During the passes used in expending Spad reported that he got "a good whiff of the stuff". This possibly indicated that ample time had not been allowed for the gas to take effect or spread sufficiently. It was Crown's opinion that King's idea was to use the gas to drive the enemy from their defenses and the napalm to kill them. Later investigation revealed that in high temperatures this gas changes its chemical compounds and becomes lethal. All forces were RTB at 2000.

[illegible]

- b. Ground fire in area surrounding 260/36/69.
- c. Weather no factor.
- d. Excellent
- e. Good
- f. See narrative
- g. See narrative
- h. Individual helped until he apparently lost consciousness from his injuries.
- i. N/A
- j. N/A
- k. Returned to orbit
- l. Unknown, see Jolly Green record of mission.
- m. Cs and JG protective equipment (masks), poor knowledge of equipment.
- n. Not employed

Crew ^m list attached and narrative.

GROUP-4

Downer died at 3 year intervals.

DECLASSIFIED

William E. Duppe III

~~SECRET~~

39 ARRS/c

68-7-0014

DECLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Following info received from PARRC (Captain Furakawa), 10/0920Z

$\frac{13}{10}$ $\frac{6}{10}$

The following info is contained on UNCLASSIFIED 366 CSG Casualty Report 09/1220Z.

JOLLY GREEN 23 ON A COMBAT MISSION 27 MILES SE OF KHE SANH WAS HIT WHILE ATTEMPTING RESCUE. ACFT WAS HIT BY AUTOMATIC GROUND FIRE AND CRASHED. ALL PERSONNEL MISSING IN ACTION. CREW LIST IS AS FOLLOWS.
(A RECORDS CHECK INDICATES THAT JG 23 is HH-3E #14710 FROM THE 37 ARRSQ AT DANANG).

RCC RITTICHER, JACK
LT. USCG

CP YEEND, RICHARD C., JR.
CAPT.

FE HOLDEN, ELMER L.
SSG.

PJ LOCKER, JAMES D.
SGT.

Classified by _____
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO
YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED ON 31 DEC 74 1

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5800.10

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
DECLASSIFIED