

Pararescueman at the Ready

He's All Things to Men in Trouble

MORON, Spain (Special) — Pararescuemen of the worldwide Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service (ARRS) are all things to all men in trouble. Precision parachutists, skilled medical technicians, and survival experts, they are also highly qualified scuba divers.

Each man who wears the distinctive maroon beret — and will on a moment's notice risk his life to live up to the motto "That Others May Live" — is carrying on a tradition that dates back to 1943. While searching over the famed "hump" in the China-Burma zone for a downed C47 with 21 persons aboard, then Lt. Col. Don Flickinger and two medical corpsmen volunteered to paratroop into the then uncharted jungle.

For a month the men cared for the injured survivors with the aid of natives. One of the survivors of that mission was news commentator Eric Sevareid, who later wrote of the men who risked their lives to save his own: "Gallant is a precious word; they deserve it!"

Much has happened since then. New techniques had been developed along with new and better equipment. Each pararescueman is issued approximately \$2,000 worth of gear to perform his life saving duties. The cost of his training is about \$80,000, expensive unless one considers the fact that one save of a downed fighter pilot — whose estimated cost of training is about \$400,000 — pays the training costs of five pararescuers.

Training includes several schools. First is the parachutist school at Ft. Benning, Ga., then Scuba School at the U.S. Naval Underwater Survivors School, Key West, Fla., and on to sur-

vival training at the U.S. Air Force Advanced Survival School, Fairchild AFB, Wash.

If he is still in the program at this point, the pararescuemen will leave for medical school at Sheppard AFB, Tex., to attend the rescue and survival medical technicians course for four weeks. Finally he goes to the Pararescue Technician School at Eglin AFB, Fla., which includes 10 days at the U.S. Army Ranger Mountain Climbing School at Dahlenega, Ga.

It takes a big man to make the grade — someone like Sgt. Duane D. Hackney, who received the Air Force Cross for heroism in Vietnam.

Pararescuemen in Vietnam

have been credited with hundreds of saves, and are among the most decorated airmen of the conflict.

Moron Air Base pararescuemen of the 67th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Sq also have received dozens of medals and awards for heroism.

Fulfilling the worldwide responsibility of the rescue service, teams of rescuemen are standing by around the clock every day of the year, ready to deploy any time, anywhere.

Training and retraining of the pararescuemen is thorough and never ends. Yet theirs is also a waiting game. Most of the men spend an average of 140 days of each year away from home station, in addition to their 75

days of 24-hour on-base alert.

The teams are rotated, and every effort is made to keep aircrews trained, but also rested and ready during the long hours of alert duty.