

Sergeant Michael E. Fish

Pararescueman Sgt Fish was lowered through intense hostile ground fire into a mountainous, densely-jungled canyon near Tuy Hoa AB, Vietnam on February 18, 1969. His mission was to care for and rescue four seriously injured Army helicopter crewmembers whose aircraft had been downed by enemy fire. Sgt Fish chose to remain on the ground overnight, facing attacks by enemy forces surrounding him. For over 15 hours, he treated the pilot, who was trapped in the wreckage, until he was freed. Back to recipients list.

Sergeant Michael E. Fish

Incident date: 19 February 1968

Aircraft position: Pararescue Technician

Place of incident: 25 miles Southwest of Tuy Hoa AB, Republic of Vietnam

Unit: Detachment 11, 38 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron

Location of unit: Tuy Hoa AB, Republic of Vietnam

Synopsis: On 18 February 1969, Sergeant Fish's detachment was notified of a downed U.S. Army UH-1 helicopter that had crashed 25 miles Southwest of Tuy Hoa AB, RVN. The report also said there were five people trapped inside. "Pedro 05," an HH-43 helicopter, launched immediately with Sergeant Fish as Pararescue Technician. Once on scene, the aircraft lowered Sergeant Fish and a fire-fighter to the ground from a 100 foot

hover. The area was hostile and sporadic gunfire was evident. A U.S. Army gunship helicopter provided air cover for the personnel on the ground. Sergeant Fish and the fire-fighter were able to free three personnel immediately. They were hoisted aboard "Pedro 05." Because of the seriousness of their injuries, they were transported to a clearing 5 miles away where they were transferred to an awaiting Army helicopter. Another Army helicopter was able to pick up one deceased member and another survivor while "Pedro 05" was away making the transfer. "Pedro 05" had to return to base due to a low fuel state, leaving Sergeant Fish and the fire-fighter on the ground. "Pedro 24," another HH-43, arrived shortly before dark and hoisted the fire-fighter aboard. Sergeant Fish volunteered to remain overnight with the last survivor, who was still trapped in the wreckage. The next day, 19 February 1969, both HH-43 helicopters returned to the scene at dawn. Again, sporadic ground fire was present in the area. "Pedro 05" lowered the Flight Engineer and a fire-fighter equipped with crash access equipment to the ground. Within 15 minutes the trapped survivor was freed and "Pedro 05" hoisted him aboard. A U.S. Army UH-1 recovered Sergeant Fish and a deceased USA ground team member. "Pedro 24" retrieved the final two ground team members, returning to base, and closing the mission. (6:--)

Sergeant Fish received the Air Force Cross for his heroism that night. The enemy tried to infiltrate the area but they were repeatedly repelled. Sergeant Fish was later recognized for his