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FROM: Det 6, 38ARRS

16 April 1969

R/30

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative Report (Mission 3-008-12 Apr 69) (U)

TO: Det 6, 38ARRS (C)
38ARRS (38C)
3ARRGp (JSARC)

SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO
YEAR INTERVALS.
DECLASSIFIED ON 31 Dec 75

1. (U) This report is submitted IAW ARRM 55-2/3ARRGp Sup 1, dated 11 Apr 68.
2. (C)(Gp-4) Det 6, 38ARRS was notified by JSARC at 1015Z (1815L) 12 Apr 69 of a downed RF-4C (Sage 13). Pedro 95 launched at 1824L. Pedro 97 launched at 1850L.
3. (U) Pedro 95 proceeded toward coordinates 11°40'N, 107°45'E, ultimate destination was 11°46'N, 107°49'E. Pedro 95 RCG experienced radio transmission failure on takeoff. Subsequent transmissions were handled by the RCGP.
4. (U) Weather at launch and enroute was clear. However, upon arrival at scene weather had deteriorated to broken clouds down to the 4,000 feet level, obscuring mountains in the pick up area.
5. (C) (Gp-4) When Pedro 95 first launched, the exact location of Sage 13 had not been determined. Sage 13 made initial contact with a C-130, Romeo Alpha (with his survival radio beeper) approximately 0915Z (1715L). About the same time Sage 29 heard Sage 13's beeper and also proceeded to the general area. Romeo Alpha remained in a high orbit and Sage 29 began a search at low level. Sage 29 finally located Sage 13's parachute. Sage 29 was able to point out to Romeo Alpha Sage 13's position. By this time Sage 29 was BINGO fuel and had to depart, but Spad 01 came on the scene. Romeo Alpha was able to point out the parachute to Spad 01. By this time the weather had moved in to obscure Romeo Alpha's view but Spad 01 was able to maintain visual contact. Spad 01 encountered the same deteriorating weather conditions but was nevertheless able to pinpoint Sage 13 when Pedro 95 got into the area. Deteriorating weather conditions and approaching nightfall combined to produce premature darkness. These conditions coupled with a very small target (parachute hung in trees about 25 to 30 ft below level of jungle canopy) made it more difficult. Spad 01 demonstrated outstanding airmanship as on-scene commander by maneuvering his aircraft in the twilight under low clouds to maintain visual contact with the parachute.
6. (C) (Gp-4) Romeo Alpha remained in orbit until after Sage 13B (navigator) had been picked up and continued to render invaluable assistance even after the pick up. Pedro 95 was unable to home in to the general search area because of unreliable ADF equipment (AN/ARA 25) Romeo Alpha supplied the necessary bearings. Had these bearings not been correct Pedro 95 would have



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been delayed in arriving in the general search area and the mission would have undoubtedly been aborted. Pedro 95 arrived in the general area at 1910L. Sky conditions were broken down to the 4,000 ft level. Spad 01 then had to locate Pedro 95 and direct him through clouds, around and over hills and finally into the very narrow gorge where Sage 13B was located. This consumed 10 minutes and it was now totally dark.

7. (C) (Gp-4) Pedro 95 was able to maintain visual contact only by hovering next to the side of the mountains. Every time the flood lights or landing light were turned on the crew was blinded by the lights reflecting off the clouds. Spad 01 finally directed Pedro 95 into the primary area. Upon arriving in the gorge Sage 13B was finally able to contact Pedro 95 direct. However, the jungle canopy was too dense and too high for him (Sage 13B) to see and direct us to his location. Spad 01 told Sage 13B to pop a night flare. Two flares were popped, but neither was seen by Pedro 95 even though we were within 100 meters of Sage 13B. Pedro 95 passed directly over Sage 13B twice. Each time Spad 01 gave corrections until the search area was narrowed down to 50 meters. Finally we had to turn on the lights in hopes of finding the parachute. At this time Sage 13B was able to see our lights and guided Pedro 95 directly overhead. We got a break in the weather and for the next 15 to 20 minutes the gorge was free of clouds. Our flight engineer spotted the parachute first. Pedro 95 came to a hover next to the chute. Neither the FE, pararescueman or RCCP were able to locate Sage 13B. He had lowered himself 130 feet to the jungle floor and had gone into hiding. He had to make his way back up to the chute (tree lowering device) in order for us to see him through a small hole in the jungle canopy. While the RCCP maintained a hover the copilot was busy searching, monitoring instruments, providing terrain clearance, talking to Sage 13 and looking for a way out once we had the survivor on board. The PJ was likewise busy maintaining terrain clearance, searching, and standing at the ready with his M-16 and M-79. Giving precise and minute directions to the RCC, the FE was able to position the helicopter over the survivor and guide the hoist down through 150 ft of tangled three layer jungle canopy in the shortest possible time. Sage 13B allowed the hoist to touch the ground and then proceeded to get on, at 1925L. The FE brought Sage 13B up without difficulty, turned him around as required and pulled him in the door. Sage 13B's knowledge and handling of the forest penetrator enabled him to expedite the pickup and limited greatly the time required to hover. Once aboard we queried him as to the location of Sage 13A (the pilot). He thought Sage 13A might have landed across the gorge from him (about 150 meters across and 300 feet higher). We hovered around to the other side and were able to locate the still smoldering wreckage but didn't see any signs of life. After a 5 to 10 minutes search Pedro 95 had finally reach BINGO fuel.

8. (U) In the meantime Pedro 97 had launched from Bien Hoa and Pedro 04 had launched from Phan Rang. Pedro 04 was only about 5 minutes out from the primary search area and Pedro 97 was about 10 minutes away when Pedro 95 had to pull out. By this time the weather was completely closed in.

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Pedro 95, Det 6, 38ARRS, Bien Hoa AB
RCC: Capt Thomas R. Scharf,
RCCP: Capt Edward L. Coleman,
FE: SSgt Gary D. McGrew, AF [REDACTED]
RS: Sgt Roland C. Schmidt, AF [REDACTED]

BRAVO

Pedro 97, Det 6, 38ARRS, Bien Hoa AB
RCC: Capt Walter D. Murphy,
RCCP: 1st Lt John F. Kolar,
FE: Dell C. Cady, AF [REDACTED]
RS: TSgt David D. Rhody, AF [REDACTED]

GCA: 1877 Comm Sq, Bien Hoa AB
Approach Controller: TSgt Robert W. Super,
Assistant Approach Controller: Sgt John F. O'Connor,
Radar Maint Specialist: Sgt Robert A. Smith,

Thomas R. Scharf

THOMAS R. SCHARF, Capt, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

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9. (U) Pedro 95 climbed to 5,000 ft and took up a heading for home. Once again we called on Romeo Alpha, this time for bearings to Bien Hoa. Romeo Alpha also had BINGO fuel and had to land but not until he had directed us within range of Bien Hoa Radar. They were able to give direct headings to Bien Hoa and thereby conserved our remaining fuel. Pedro 97 landed at Bien Hoa at 2030L with about 300lbs of fuel.

10. (C) (Gp-4) The best of coordination existed between all parties, not the least of which was Sage 13B. Radio discipline was excellent. Time of pickup about 1925L. Pedro 95 departed pickup area about 1935L after a short search for Sage 13A. There was no reported enemy action in the recovery area. Rescuer was in excellent shape suffering only a minor lip laceration. Density altitude was about 6,200 feet. One combat aircrew save credited to ARRS. There were three sorties and 6.3 hours logged by Pedro aircraft.

Additional Information

Rescuer: Capt Charles E. Mattern,

16TAC Recon Sq, TSN AB, RVN.

Romeo Alpha: USAF C-130, 15SOS Nha Trang AB

AC: Maj Ronald V. Frazen,

CP: Capt Cleveland J. Hones,

Nav: Capt Harold E. Tuttle,

Loadmaster: SSgt Oda C. Underwood

Radio Operator: MSgt Odie Hill

Spad 01, 5SOS Pleiku AB

AC: Maj Niel E. Lucas,

Nav: Maj Glen L. Robertson,

Sage 29, 16TAC Recon Sq, TSN AB

AC: Lt Col Robert Hubbard (Commander)

Nav: Lt Noel Miyamasu, FV3181805

Pedro 04, Det 1, 38ARRS, Phan Rang AB

RCC: Maj Jimmy D. Gammon,

RCCP: Capt William D. McColl.

FE: SSgt Roger D. Crites,

MT: SSgt Joseph L. Befeo,

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12 APR 69 ~~PT GET BATTERY FOR RT CO TOMORROW~~
~~OBINER~~ ~~TO TODAY - HQ3 PICKED UP AT T.S.N.~~
~~Saturn~~ on 1st Gear & acft checked;
18:10 Scrambled on RF-4C - Drivers punched out
to the Northwest about 70 miles we made contact
with on scene commander. About 5 min ^{out} ~~Spd~~ got
in touch with us & directed us to 1 survivor who

was in good shape. Area was tall trees, mountains,
ous, heavy cloud cover getting worse by the minute
very dark, no apparent enemy even though there
was quite a bit of acft activity in Area. Possibility
of going back out tomorrow morning to
look for other pilot. Was not feasible to remain
& search - weather, light, Fuel, Radios Bad & getting
worse! Mission Time: 2 Hrs 20 min. First mission
during my extension. About Fing time! I finally
got rid of those 2 bles of booze I've been carrying
around in my med kit! Pickup had one & I'm
having one mixed with 7-up & ice, pretty good!

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choice whether or not to deploy the seat kit when coming in for a tree landing. I happened to hang onto mine. I decided a long time ago that I was not going to deploy the kit because I didn't want to have the life raft catch in the trees and having me hung upside-down in the trees.

A scant two weeks later, the RF-4C backseater began his experience in much the same way (this one over South Vietnam, however) and ended it in a successful recovery. In the interim period, a momentary lapse created a few uncomfortable moments, until he assessed his situation and determined how to get out of it. From that moment on, he did an excellent job in contributing to one of the rare night recoveries in SEA records. The Captain described part of his experiences as follows: ^{78/}

.../After the aircraft commander ordered him to eject/ I ejected when the altimeter read 7,000 feet. I was disoriented due to the heavy weather, but I think the aircraft was right side up. I assumed the aircraft was right side up. I took the bailout position...my helmet was secure and the visor was down...I used the primary system.

I remember my head being thrown back by the wind-blast. The visor shattered and tore away from the helmet. I was still disoriented because I was tumbling forward and in the clouds. I don't recall seat separation. The first thing I remembered to do after ejection was to separate from the seat but it was already gone. That's when I felt the opening shock of the chute. The shock was moderate. I couldn't see the /chute/ canopy because I was in the clouds. I could barely make out the ground until I was about 1,000 feet above it. I deployed the seat kit; almost immediately the oscillation stopped. /Author's note: More frequently, the opposite appeared to be the case; the parachute oscillations increased upon seat kit deployment./

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...The descent didn't take long. I could see I was going to land in the trees so I tucked my head and covered my face with my arms. I drifted slightly and the survival kit caught in the tops of the trees. The chute pulled me from a vertical to a horizontal position. The chute snared itself and I was hung by the chute and the survival kit just as if I were in a hammock...I made sure the chute could support my weight before I released the kit. I lowered myself to the ground using the tree lowering device (PLD)... That piece of equipment really came in handy. Without it I would have been stuck up in the trees. I had to leave the seat kit up there in order to get down.

The Captain bailed out late in the afternoon, and it was dark before the Pedro (HH-43) arrived on the scene. By voice vector and strobe light, helicopter-positioning by its sound, he brought the helicopter in to his position. In a lightly contested area, the Pedro risked using his landing lights, saw the survivor, and dropped the penetrator to extract him. ^{79/}

Boxer 22 Bravo and Wolf 06 Alpha

Two of the most spectacular evasions and recoveries in the SEA conflict were so similar that they gave the observer a head-shaking feeling of deja vu - "I feel that I've been here before." They also illustrated the sound evasion and SAR principles developed over the period of conflict. Both crewmembers were shot down near Ban Phanop, a karst-studded, crater-pocked valley about ten miles south of Mu Gia Pass, one of the primary infiltration routes from North Vietnam into Laos. (See Project CHECO report, "Rescue at Ban Phanop.")

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60. (U) Author's observation, JSS, 30 Dec 71-3 Jan 72.
61. (S) 2nd Air Division Evasion and Escape Newsletter, 9 Jun 1965.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. (S/NF) Project CHECO Report, "Search and Rescue in SEA, 1961-66," published 24 Oct 66. (Hereafter cited as "SAR in SEA, 61-66.")
67. (S) Project CHECO Report, "USAF Search and Rescue, Jul 66-Nov 67," published 19 Jan 68. (Hereafter cited as "USAF SAR, 66-67.")
68. Ibid.
69. (S/NF) SAR in SEA, 61-66.
70. (S) PACAF Evasion and Recovery Report No. 305. (Undtd) Recovery effected 12 Jan 70. Recoveree: Capt Lawrence C. Johnson, 374 TAW.
71. (C) PACAF Evasion and Recovery Report No. 290. (Undtd) Recovery effected 6 Aug 69. Recoveree: Lt Roger P. Busico, 31st TFW.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid.
74. (S) PACAF Evasion and Recovery Report No. 275. (Undtd) Recovery effected 29 Mar 69. Recoveree: Lt Ronald D. Stafford, 388th TFW.
75. Ibid.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid.
78. (C) PACAF Evasion and Recovery Report No. 278. (Undtd) Recovery effected 12 Apr 69. Recoveree: Captain Charles Mattern, 460 TRW.
79. Ibid.

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