

Det 9, 38ARRSq Hist, Apr - Jun 69

9-12

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT 3

MISSION NARRATIVE 9-38-004, 11 JUN 69

1. Det 9, 38ARRSq was notified at 11/1345Z and launched at 11/1425Z. No difficulties encountered.

2. Ground fire was observed three different times enroute to the target area. Ground location on first observation was 070/10NM, 2nd observation was 070/32NM, 3rd observation was 070/45NM, CH 107, Pleiku. Pedro 83 (high bird) observed the 2nd ground fire and notified Pedro 98 that we were being shot at from our seven o'clock position. Pedro 98 turned off the nav lights and took evasive action to the southeast.

3. Weather at launch time was 4500' overcast, 10 miles visibility, winds 220/10. Enroute weather became approximately 6500' broken, 10 miles visibility. Light rain showers were encountered with multi-layered low scattered clouds. Target area had 6500' scattered to broken, clear below. Patchy fog was encountered in the valleys.

4. Peacock GCI received radio transmissions from Hawkeye 28 on 243.0 at approximately 11/1330Z, and called Det 9, 38ARRSq on the telephone to relay information. We were informed that Hawkeye 28 was in contact with a beeper at approximately 270/35, Pleiku. The AC requested additional information as to type aircraft down, number of persons on board, enemy action in the area, condition of personnel on the ground, and other aircraft in the area. Peacock said they would call us back. The AC contacted Pleiku tower and requested them to contact "Spooky" aircraft overhead to get any further information and bearing on Hawkeye 28 since both were monitoring the guard transmissions. Peacock called and informed us that the target area was 070/47NM and that the objective was an Army patrol in critical condition. Hawkeye 28 told Peacock that the patrol could not last throughout the night. Contact with the patrol was broken due to poor radio contact but Hawkeye 28 was assured that there were three critically wounded on the ground. Hawkeye 28 requested a hoist and jungle penetrator plus UHF homing capability and medical assistance. The general area of the patrol was known, however the exact location could not be determined due to lack of UHF homing equipment on Army aircraft. No other hoist and penetrators were available. Several flare ships and gunships were in the area and ground fire had not been encountered in the immediate target area. Pedro 98 and 83 launched as low and high bird and Peacock gave vectors to Hawkeye 28. Pedro 98 contacted Hawkeye 28 and set up an intercept using UHF homing. It was possible to see flares in the target area twenty five miles prior to the objective. The tactics used enroute were Pedro 98 at 5500' MSL and Pedro 83 at 6000' MSL and one-half mile in trail. Pedro 83 used rotating beacon only and Pedro 98 used all nav lights until the ground fire started. Arrival in the target area was at 11/1455Z

9-13

Det 9, 38ARRSq Hist, Apr - Jun 69

whereupon the flight climbed to 7000' and 7500' respectively. The other aircraft in the area were at 6500' and below in a clockwise orbit. Pedro 98 was vectored into the general area by Hawkeye 28 and became mission commander. Pedro 98 requested additional flare ships, "Spooky", and gunships, and descended to 2500' after gunships and O-1 aircraft had made several passes without picking up ground fire. Pedro 98 used the loud hailer requesting a beeper, penflare or light for positive identification. Pedro 98 made repeated passes at varying altitudes from 1000 to 2500 feet before beeper contact was established. Pedro 83 and the PJ onboard Pedro 98 picked up a beeper on Guard, but Pedro 98 was not able to home in on it so 83 gave 98 vectors into the general area of the beeper. Starlight 13 (Huey Gunship) preceded 98 in a descent and after several loud hailer transmissions, a flashlight and a broken URC-10 transmission were received from the ground party. Starlight 13 made positive identification and marked their position by flying directly over them. The location of the survivors was approximately 100 yards uphill and west of a river bed and southeast of a small stream. The hills in the general area were approximately 3000' in elevation. Pedro 98 descended and established an orbit over the objective to ascertain if he was going to receive any ground fire. After two passes with no hostile action, 98 established a hover at approximately 75' above the ground with the wheels just in the top of the trees. At this time, flare ships fired three flares to assist in lighting the area. Pedro 98 wanted to use the landing light to illuminate the objective and position the aircraft, but the landing light burned out. After establishing a hover and receiving no ground fire, the flood lights were used. The flood lights were required as the flares caused erratic shadow movement which made hovering extremely difficult. The penetrator was grounded and two persons immediately climbed on. They were familiar with lowering the seats, but they did not attempt to use the straps to secure themselves. Pedro 98 elected to pull them up without this safety feature due to known extensive enemy action in the area. The PJ covered the rear position and then assisted the FE to hoist the survivors aboard. When the first two survivors were aboard, the penetrator was immediately lowered for two more persons. The second group of two was hoisted aboard without incident. Since Pedro 98 had now picked up four survivors and was becoming power limited, Pedro 83 was called in to pick up the remaining two survivors. Pedro 83 began a descent at this time and Pedro 98 started to move out. About this time the flares began to burn out and the flareship called in "out of flares." The area became very dark, but fortunately another flareship began dropping flares. Pedro 98 climbed out to 3500' as Pedro 83 dropped into position. 83 had some difficulty finding the other two persons because the first four had kept the light with them when they recovered. Starlight 13 vectored Pedro 83 into position and

Det 9, 38ARRSq Hist, Apr - Jun 69

9-14

the remaining two persons were recovered. While 98 and 83 were in a hover, Starlight 13 made 360 degree passes around their position and gunships orbited to the west and east of the two ridge lines to provide cover. The time of the recovery operation was twelve minutes, and both aircraft departed at 11/1535Z. Hawkeye 28 (0-1) declared minimum fuel and departed the area immediately after Pedro 83 started his departure from a hover. Starlight 13 passed off both aircraft to Starlight 27, due to his 20 minute fuel light coming on, and Pedro 98 and 83 followed 27 to LZ English and discharged the recovered personnel at 11/1600Z. One of the soldiers mentioned that it was his first patrol in SEA and that he had been praying for rescue for six hours. Three patrols had been in the same area all day and had made repeated contact with the enemy. One NVA regiment was estimated to be in the area. This estimate seemed to be true since the gunships picked up ground fire from the west side of the mountain while the rescue was being made on the east side. The other two US patrols reported numerous trails with booby traps along them.

5. Both aircraft were now refueled at LZ English. Immediately after refueling, English began receiving rocket and mortar rounds. Pedro 98 and 83 made an immediate departure for Phu Cat. Enroute, ground fire was again encountered at an altitude of 4000' and 4500'. The position lights were turned out and the altitude increased 1000' but ground fire persisted. Fortunately, a flare lit up the area from which the ground fire was coming and it ceased. Pedro 98 and 83 decided to RON at Phu Cat due to weather enroute to Pleiku.

6. After talking to the six rescued personnel, it became apparent why they were reported wounded. They had been patrolling a trail and had come under fire from the enemy. They reported on their field radio that they had been hit. Shortly thereafter, they came under fire again and reported being hit a second time. Their radio was damaged so no further contact was possible with their controls. They then started escape and evasion procedures and after three hours set up a defensive position and their parent unit started the search mission to extract them from the area. The survivors stated that they had heard the loud hailer but were reluctant to use the URC-10 or light, fearing they would give away their position to the enemy.

7. Crew members involved in this mission were:

Pedro 98

AC Clark, W.F., Captain
CP Gordon, R.C., Major
FE Soderboom, C.F., SSgt
PJ Holloway, H.J., SSgt

AC Herr, J.T., Captain
CP May, A.A., Captain
FE Barnes, F.M., Sgt
PJ Arvidson, L.E., Sgt

Det 9, 38ARRSq Hist, Apr - Jun 69

9-6

On 3 Jun 69 Detachment 9 received word via Guard Channel that an Army OV-1, Headhunter 12, had been shot down 9 NM Northeast of Pleiku City. Pedro 98 flew to the area, which was considered hostile since at least 60 NVA Soldiers were estimated to be in the area. Elliot 20, a USAF Forward Air Controller, cleared Pedro 98 into the site since 98 had a hoist and a PJ. The aircraft hovered over the dense jungle canopy as the PJ was lowered to the ground. The pilot was KIA and the observer was missing. The observer was later picked by an Army Huey with a rope. No save was recorded. Mission # 9-38-003 3 Jun 69.

On the night of 11 June, Detachment 9 received a call from Peacock (GOI) advising that an Army patrol was cutoff and surrounded by NVA regulars 47 NM Northeast of Pleiku AB. Pedro 98 and Pedro 83 launched and flew to the general area using flares in the area for enroute navigation. Since no ground fire was evident in the immediate area, both aircraft went in and six patrol members were hoisted up from the jungle. The soldiers rescued were Bill Wilkinson, Frank Kohari, James Gibson, Richard Horch, Arthur Woodley, and Reginald Salinas. Ranks were unknown and all were assigned to "C" Company, 13th Infantry division. Six combat saves were recorded. Mission # 9-38-004 11 Jun 69.

On 13 June Detachment 9 launched Pedro 98 to help the 225th Aviation Company locate a downed OV-1, Blackhawk 19. The downed aircraft was located ten miles Northeast of Dak To near the top of a 5000' peak. All crew members were presumed dead so an Army team of five was hoisted down into the jungle to check the wreckage. There were no survivors and no saves were recorded. Total saves for the quarter were seven.

97 R/8
13 Jun 69 9

FROM: DET 9, 38ARRSq/AC/CAPT CLARK

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative Report 9-38-69-4, 11 Jun 69

TO: 9-38C

3ARRGP (J9ARC) *LEV*

IN TURN

1. Det 9, 38 ARRSq was notified at 11/1345Z and launched at 11/1425Z. No difficulties encountered.

2. Ground fire was observed three different times enroute to target area. Ground location on first observation was 070/10NM, 2nd observation was 070/32NM, 3rd observation was 070/45NM, CH 107, Pleiku. Pedro 83 (high bird) observed the 2nd ground fire and notified Pedro 98 that we were being shot at from our seven o'clock position. Pedro 98 turned off the nav lights and took evasive action to the southeast.

3. Weather at launch time was 4500' overcast, 10 miles visibility, winds 220/10. Enroute weather became approximately 6500' broken, 10 miles visibility. Light rain showers were encountered with multi-layered low scattered clouds. Target area had 6500' scattered to broken, clear below. Patchy fog was encountered in the valleys.

4. Peacock 601 received radio transmission from Hawkeye 28 on 243.0 at approximately 11/1330Z, and called Det 9, 38ARRSq on telephone to relay information. We were informed that Hawkeye 28 was in contact with a beeper at approximately 270/35NM, Pleiku. AC requested additional information as to type aircraft down, number of persons on board, enemy action in the area, condition of personnel on the ground, and other aircraft in the area. Peacock said they would call us back. AC contacted Pleiku tower and requested them to contact "Spooky" aircraft overhead to get any further information and bearing on Hawkeye 28 since both were monitoring the guard transmissions. Peacock called and informed us that the target area was 070/47NM and that the objective was an Army patrol in critical condition. Hawkeye 28 told Peacock that the patrol could not last through out the night. Contact with the patrol was broken due to poor radio contact but Hawkeye 28 was assured that there were three critically wounded on the ground. Hawkeye 28 requested a hoist and jungle penetrator plus UHF homing capability and medical assistance. The general area of the patrol was known, however the exact location could not be determined due to lack of UHF homing equipment on Army aircraft. No other hoist and penetrators were available. Several flare ships and gun ships were in the area and ground fire had not been encountered in the immediate target area. Pedro 98 and 83 launched as low and high bird and Peacock gave vectors to Hawkeye 28. Pedro 98 contacted Hawkeye 28 and set up an intercept using UHF homing. It was possible to see flares in the target area twenty-five miles prior to the objective. The tactics used enroute were Pedro 98 at 5500' MSL and Pedro 83 at 6000' MSL and one-half mile in trail.

4/24

Atch 12

Pedro 83 used rotating beacon only and Pedro 98 used all nav lights until the ground fire started. Arrival in the target area was at 11/1455Z whereupon the flight climbed to 7000' and 7500' respectively. The other aircraft in the area were at 6500' and below in a clockwise orbit. Pedro 98 was vectored into the general area by Hawkeye 28 and became mission commander. Pedro 98 requested additional flare ships, "Spooky", and gunships, and descended to 2500' after gunships and O-1 aircraft had made several passes without picking up ground fire. Pedro 98 used the loud hailer requesting a beeper, penflare or light for positive identification. Pedro 98 made repeated passes at varying altitudes from 1000 to 2500 feet before beeper contact was established. Pedro 83 and the PJ onboard Pedro 98 picked up a beeper on Guard, but Pedro 98 was not able to home in on it so 83 gave 98 vectors into the general area of the beeper. Starlight 13 (Huey Gunship) preceded 98 in a descent and after several loud hailer transmissions, a flashlight and a broken URC-10 transmission were received from the ground party. Starlight 13 made positive identification and marked their position by flying directly over them. The location of the survivors was approximately 100 yards uphill and west of a river bed and southeast of a small stream. The hills in the general area were approximately 3000' in elevation. Pedro 98 descended and established an orbit over the objective to ascertain if he was going to receive any ground fire. After two passes with no hostile action, 98 established a hover at approximately 75' above the ground with the wheels just in the top of the trees. At this time, flare ships fired three flares to assist in lighting the area. Pedro 98 wanted to use the landing light to illuminate the objective and position the aircraft, but the landing light burned out. After establishing a hover and receiving no ground fire, the flood lights were used. The flood lights were required as the flares caused erratic shadow movement which made hovering extremely difficult. The penetrator was grounded and two persons immediately climbed on. They were familiar with lowering the seats, but they did not attempt to use the straps to secure themselves. Pedro 98 elected to pull them up without this safety feature due to known extensive enemy action in the area. The PJ covered the rear position and then assisted the FE to hoist the survivors aboard. When the first two survivors were aboard, the penetrator was immediately lowered for two more persons. The second group of two was hoisted aboard without incident. Since Pedro 98 had now picked up four survivors and was becoming power limited, Pedro 83 was called in to pick up the remaining two survivors. Pedro 83 began a descent at this time and Pedro 98 started to move out. About this time the flares began to burn out and the flare ship called in "out of flares". The area became very dark, but fortunately another flare ship began dropping flares. Pedro 98 climbed out to 3500' as Pedro 83 dropped into position. 83 had some difficulty finding the other two persons because the first four had kept the light with them when they recovered. Starlight 13 vectored Pedro 83 into position and the remaining two persons were recovered. While 98 and 83 were in a hover, Starlight 13 made 360 degree passes around their position and gunships orbited to the west and east of the two ridge lines to provide cover. The time of the recovery operation was twelve minutes, and both aircraft departed at 11/1535Z. Hawkeye 28 (O-1) declared minimum fuel and departed the area immediately.

after Pedro 83 started his departure from a hover. Starlight 13 passed off both aircraft to Starlight 27, due to his 20 minute fuel light coming on, and Pedro 98 and 83 followed 27 to LZ English and discharged the recovered personnel at 11/1600Z. One of the soldiers mentioned that it was his first patrol in SEA and that he had been praying for rescue for six hours. Three patrols had been in the same area all day and had made repeated contact with the enemy. One NVA regiment was estimated to be in the area. This estimate seemed to be true since the gunships picked up ground fire from the west side of the mountain while the rescue was being made on the east side. The other two US patrols reported numerous trails with booby traps along them.

5. Both aircraft were now refueled at LZ English. Immediately after refueling, English began receiving rocket and mortar rounds. Pedro 98 and 83 made an immediate departure for Phu Cat. Enroute, ground fire was again encountered at an altitude of 4000' and 4500'. The position lights were turned out and the altitude increased 1000' but ground fire persisted. Fortunately, a flare lit up the area from which the ground fire was coming and it ceased. Pedro 98 and 83 decided to RON at Phu Cat due to weather enroute to Pleiku.

6. After talking to the six rescued personnel, it became apparent why they were reported wounded. They had been patrolling a trail and had come under fire from the enemy. They reported on their field radio that they had been hit. Shortly thereafter, they came under fire again and reported being hit a second time. Their radio was damaged so no further contact was possible with their control. They then started escape and evasion procedures and after three hours set up a defensive position and their parent unit started the search mission to extract them from the area. The survivors stated that they had heard the loud hailer but were reluctant to use the URC-10 or light, fearing they would give away their position to the enemy.

7. Crew members involved in this mission were:

Pedro 98

AC Clark, W.F., Capt
CP Gordon, R.C., Major
FE Soderboom, C.F., SSgt
PJ Holleway, H.J., SSgt

Pedro 83

AC Herr, J.T., Capt
CP May, A.A., Capt
FE Barnes, F.M., Sgt
PJ Arvidson, L.E., Sgt

William F. Clark
WILLIAM F. CLARK, Capt, USAF
Aircraft Commander

Tough man
4/124



NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION, Headquarters Seventh Air Force
TAN SON NHUT AIR BASE Republic Of Vietnam
APO San Francisco 96307

11 JUN 69

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

1585

PLEIKU PEDRO'S RESCUE STRANDED ARMY PATROL

PLEIKU AB, Republic of Vietnam (7AF) -- Two HH-43 Pedro helicopter crews from Pleiku Air Base, flew through darkness and monsoon weather recently to snatch a U.S. Army patrol from the grasp of an estimated NVA regiment.

The Pedros of Detachment 9, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, were scrambled to aid the patrol after they had become cut off and surrounded in Billy Barrain 47 miles east of Pleiku.

Also aiding in the successful rescue operation was an AC-47 Moonshine Flareship of the 9th Special Operations Squadron at Pleiku. The Moonshine crew dropped flares throughout the operation.

Piloting the lead helicopter was Captain William F. Clark, 34, Waco, Tex. "We lifted off from Pleiku at about 10:30 p.m., and headed for the search area near An Hoa," recalled Clark. "Several times enroute we had to alter course due to hostile ground fire. We could see ground flashes in the search area from about 25 miles out and it was really shaping up into a busy night," he said.

When the Pedros arrived over the search area, U.S. Army UH-1 Huey

- MORE -

helicopter gunships and a U.S. Army O-1 Bird Dog observation aircraft were already attempting to locate the patrol.

The Air Force chopper crews used their radio homing equipment to pinpoint the troops on the ground and then gave instructions to the patrol with the aircraft's loud speakers.

"We told them to give us some identification. They finally came up with their 'beeper' distress signal and a flashlight signal.

The patrol was located on the side of a hill near a river bed in dense triple-canopy jungle. Throughout the rescue operation the sound of gunfire could be heard as the Army gunships engaged enemy forces just over the hill. The wavering light of flares from the orbiting flareship made hovering difficult. Captain Clark ordered the chopper's flood lights turned on to aid visibility despite the increased danger of exposure to enemy fire.

Captain Clark hovered his helicopter 75 feet above the ground with its wheels in the tree tops, while the flight engineer, Staff Sergeant Charles F. Soderboom, 26, Wichita, Kan., lowered the forest penetrator seat to extract the waiting soldiers.

"Two men immediately climbed aboard the penetrator," said Sergeant Soderboom. "Within minutes we had the other patrol members aboard and Captain Clark lifted off."

The second Pedro, which had been orbiting above the scene, provided guidance and lookout assistance.

1585, page 3 of 3 pages.

Pararescueman on Captain Clark's crew was Staff Sergeant Howard J. Holloway, 30, Portsmouth, N.H.

Other members of Captain May's crew were Airman First Class Leif E. Arvidson, 20, Camarillo, Calif., pararescueman, and Sergeant Floyd M. Barnes, 22, San Bernardino, Calif.

Crewing the Moonshine flareship were: Major Alan W. Arthur, 35, Mountain View, Mo., pilot; First Lieutenant Ralph L. Hansel, 24, Andover, Mass., co-pilot; First Lieutenant Richard T. Dietrich, 24, Mountville, Pa.; navigator; Staff Sergeant Robert D. Cherry, 29, Pensacola, Fla., flight mechanic, and Staff Sergeant Donald R. Wightman, 33, Spanaway, Wash., loadmaster.

After completion of the rescue operation, both Pedros refueled at a landing zone in the vicinity and returned to Phu Cat Air Base. While at the landing zone refueling, the aircraft and crews came under enemy rocket and mortar fire. Enroute to Phu Cat they again encountered enemy ground fire.

Commenting on the mission, Captain Clark said "This was one of the most satisfying nights of my experience in Southeast Asia. Those Army patrol men were in a tight spot and one of them told me he had been praying for rescuers to arrive. It was his first patrol in Vietnam. They had been under heavy fire twice before we got their call. I'm glad we were able to get them out of there."

- 30 -

NOTE: This item has been cleared for release by MACV.

AND THIS IS THE WAY IT HAPPENED

(USAf PHOTO)

Choppers Rescue Stranded Patrol

PLEIKU — Two HH-43 Pedro helicopter crews from Pleiku AB flew through darkness and monsoon weather recently to snatch a U.S. Army patrol from the grasp of an estimated North Vietnamese Army regiment.

The Pedros of Detachment 9, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, were scrambled to aid the patrol after they had become cut off and surrounded in hilly terrain 47 miles east of Pleiku.

Also aiding in the successful rescue operation was an AC-47 Moonshine flareship of the 9th Special Operations Squadron at Pleiku. The Moonshine crew dropped flares throughout the operation.

Piloting the lead helicopter was Capt. William F. Clark, Waco, Tex. "We lifted off from Pleiku at about 10:30 p.m., and headed for the search area near An Khe," recalled Captain Clark. "Several times enroute we had to alter course due to hostile ground fire. We could see ground flashes in the search area from about 25 miles out and it was really shaping up into a busy night," he said.

When the Pedros arrived over the search area, U.S. Army UH-1 Huey helicopter gunships and a U.S. Army O-1 Bird Dog observation aircraft were already attempting to locate the patrol.

The Air Force chopper crews

used their radio homing equipment to pinpoint the troops on the ground and then gave instructions to the patrol with the aircraft's loud speakers.

"We told them to give us some identification. They finally came up with their 'beeper' distress signal and a flashlight signal."

The patrol was located on the side of a hill near a river bed in dense triple-canopy jungle. Throughout the rescue operation the sound of gunfire could be heard as the Army gunships engaged enemy forces just over the hill. The wavering light of flares from the orbiting flareship made hovering difficult. Captain Clark ordered the chopper's flood lights turned on to aid visibility despite the increased danger of exposure to enemy fire.

Captain Clark hovered his helicopter 75 feet above the ground with its wheels in the tree tops, while the flight engineer, SSgt. Charles F. Soderboom, Wichita, Kan., lowered the forest penetrator seat to extract the waiting soldiers.

"Two men immediately climbed aboard the penetrator," said Sergeant Soderboom. "Within minutes we had the other patrol members aboard and Captain Clark lifted off."

The second Pedro, which had been orbiting above the scene provided guidance and lookout assistance.