

SECRET

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DET 1, 40th ARRS CY 4/69 = HH-3's NKP

CHAPTER II

Operations and Training

Operations

(S) (GP 3) The good weather and resultant clear skies of the dry season brought a marked increase in combat activity during October, November and December. Our activity increased proportionally. Detachment One made fourteen combat saves, one non-combat rescue and one medical evacuation during this period. Det 1 was tasked with maintaining 15 minute alert two days out of three, flying the last two and a half hours of daylight on airborne alert in the November Orbit area, with the 40th ARRS from Udorn taking the third day. On that third day the 40th ARRS would send two HH-53s to this station at first light and they would be on 15 minute alert until the last two and a half hours of daylight, when they would fly airborne alert in the November Orbit area and recover at their home station. Det 1 was on 30 minute back-up alert on this day. Det 1 was also tasked with one of its HH-3E's on 45 minute alert during the hours of darkness for in-country rescues and medical evacuation missions. Due to mechanical difficulties encountered with the HH-53 and battle damage incurred on two HH-53s during the Boxer 22 mission, Det 1 HH-3Es were often required to fill in for the HH-53s on that third day.

(S) (Gp 3) Det 1, 40 ARRS was the scene of operations and staging area for three significant missions during this quarter. Our HH-3E, Jolly Green 19, attempted to make a pickup of Knife 61 and 62, downed by hostile ground fire at Muong Phine, Laos on 6 Oct. He received extensive damage from hostile ground fire as he was attempting to land there to rescue the aircrews and was forced to depart the area and return to base. Two HH-53s from 40th ARRS here on back-up alert were launched and after delivery of considerable ordnance by Sandy and Hobo aircraft, were able to effect a rescue of the eight aircrew members and a large number of indigenous personnel. They recovered here at our base. Two of the recovered aircrew had been wounded.

(S) (Gp 3) On the second significant mission HH-53s from the 40th ARRS at Udorn were launched from our station to back-up 37th ARRS HH-3Es engaged in a mission on Misty 11 on 24 Oct. HH-53s were staged out of our facilities here during that SAR mission. This mission is covered later in Combat Saves.

(S) (Gp 3) The third significant rescue effort and the most extensive and costly to date was the Boxer 22 mission on 5, 6 and 7th of Dec. Our HH-3Es, Jolly Green 37 and 09 were the initial Jolly Greens to go on the mission. The two Boxer 22 pilots were downed near Ban Phan Hop, Laos, a very heavily defended area near the North Vietnamese border. HH-53s, Jolly Green 76 and 72 were launched from Udorn directly to a near-by holding point to back-up Jolly Greens 37 and 09. HH-53s, Jolly Green 77 and 69 were sent to be staged out of this base, but were needed prior to landing here and continued on to the SAR area. Jolly Green 37 started in for a rescue attempt, but was called off due to intense antiaircraft fire. Jolly Green 09 then made an attempt at a rescue but received intense ground fire and hastily evacuated the area.

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He over-stressed the transmission and engines and returned to base on that account. Jolly Green 17, one of our HH-3E's, was launched at this time to join Jolly Green 37, however Jolly Green 37 returned to base with Jolly Green 09. Jolly Green 76 made the next attempt, but received heavy ground fire, killing one of his crew members and causing him to depart the area and return to base. HH-53's, Jolly Greens 68 and 79 were launched, now to be airborne backup. Three HH-3Es from 37th ARRS, Jolly Greens 03, 27 and 15, and two A-1Hs, Spad 13 and 14, all from Da Nang RVN arrived here to supplement our forces in this intensifying mission. HH-53, Jolly Green 69, was next to try, but received a direct hit from large caliber antiaircraft and Jolly Green 77 escorted him back to our base. HH-3Es, Jolly Green 03 and 27 were launched to go to the SAR area at this time. Jolly Green 17 and 72 were holding near the SAR area and reported being fired on by 37MM antiaircraft guns. Jolly Green 79 went in for an attempt but received hits from ground fire and departed. Jolly Green 68 went in next and had the survivor in sight, but was driven off by ground fire before he could attempt to pick-up. Jolly Green 72 now went in for an attempt, but was also driven off by ground fire. Darkness prevented any further attempt this day and the survivors were told to dig in for the night.

A first light effort was planned for the morning with two HH-53s, Jolly Green 77 and 72 going first and HH-3Es, Jolly Green 03 and 27 airborne as backup. Radio contact was made with Boxer 22 rear seater, but contact with the man out of the front seat was lost. Ordnance was put in all morning by both jet aircraft and Sandys before deciding to have the Jolly Greens attempt a rescue again. It was almost noon before Sandy One felt it was safe enough to bring in the Jolly Greens. Jolly Green 77 was the first to try on the second day but was hit and lost part of his control system and was forced to leave the area. Jolly Greens 68 and 15 were launched to be airborne backup now. Jolly Green 72 went in for a try, but due to poor visibility in the smoke, he struck a tree with his rotor blades and incurred enough damage that he had to return to base. Jolly Green 19 was launched to take the place of Jolly Green 27, who escorted Jolly Green 77 to this base. Jolly Green 68 made the next attempt with negative results, being driven off by ground fire. Jolly Green 76 was launched into the cycle at this time and Jolly Green 07 followed shortly. The survivor was being shot at and mortar rounds were landing near his position. He reported that there were people getting near him. More ordnance was delivered and Jolly Green 03 went in to attempt a pickup, but received hits from ground fire and was forced to depart without making the rescue even though the survivor had him in sight. Jolly Green 68 had returned to base and been repaired and was launched again to the SAR area. Jolly Green 76 went in for a last light attempt and was driven off. The survivor was advised to dig in for another night. Early the next morning the SAR forces were again in contact with the survivor and identified him properly. Jolly Green 77 and 76 were launched as the primary recovery aircraft with Jolly Green 25 and 27 airborne backup. After considerable amount of ordnance had been put in, Jolly Green 77 went

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in for a try but the visibility was too poor in the smoke and he aborted the attempt, however he reported that he didn't receive ground fire, which was a good sign. Jolly Green 77 went out and air refueled with King and after more ordnance had been put in and the smoke cleared away from the survivor, was able to go in and finally pickup the survivor. This terminated the longest and most difficult rescue effort yet attempted.

Combat Saves

(C) Maj Ted L. Smith in Jolly Green 19 started off the month with the rescue of Laredo 01. Laredo 01, an F4, was hit by antiaircraft fire and was trying to make it back to Udorn RTAFB Thailand for an emergency landing, but was unable to make it all the way. He did manage to fly the crippled aircraft into friendly Thailand. Major Smith was an instructor pilot on a training flight with two pilots and an engineer on board. He was monitoring his radios and heard of the damaged aircraft heading to Udorn, which was near his position. He vectored toward the course of Laredo 01 and came into the bailout area, as the pilots of Laredo 01 were forced to eject by this time. With the directions heard from King 1, Major Smith was able to locate the survivor, Capt Ronald Gielegem and hoisted him on board. A helicopter from another unit was also in the area and made the pick-up of the other pilot who bailed out of Laredo 01.

Jolly Green 19

IP Major Ted L. Smith
P Capt Joseph R. Brown+
P Capt John J. Livengood+
FE Sgt Ronnie L. Painter

(S) (GP-3) On 8 Oct, an F4, Boxer 61, was hit over Southern Laos and the rear pilot ejected and was rescued by the 40th ARRS from Udorn. In the process of locating the Boxer 61 survivor, two FAC aircraft, Nail 07 and Nail 78 were involved in a midair collision. Nail 07, an OV-10, bailed out immediately and was rescued by the 40th ARRS from Udorn. Nail 78, an O2, was able to fly to Savannakhet Laos, but due to the severe damage incurred during the midair collision, was unable to control the aircraft during the landing phase and crashed on the airfield there. Jolly Green 37 and 17 launched and proceeded to Savannakhet, Jolly Green 37 was detained by mechanical difficulties, but Jolly Green 17 proceeded on and Jolly Green 37 caught up later. Jolly Green 17 arrived at Savannakhet shortly after the crash and picked-up the two survivors, one of them being a local national observer. The other man was the pilot, 1Lt James C. Searcy, [REDACTED], from the 23rd TASS.

+ TDY from the 40th ARRS at Udorn.