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4. Only 20 minutes of light remaining so the remaining time was used to positively pinpoint the survivors and identify areas of enemy gunfire in preparation for the first light effort that was to come. Sandy 06 gave the bed-down instructions to both survivors telling them Hammer FAC's would be overhead all night and they, the survivors, should stay off their radios unless they had something important to say. Regular 1/2 or one hour check-ins would only place a needless drain on the radio batteries as well as increase the possibility of enemy capture. Sandys 06/05 remained overhead until the first night FAC, Hammer 79, arrived at which time they RTB'd channel 09.

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7. Sandy 03/04 launched at 0438 as the initial lows and Sandy 05/06 were off at 0447 to escort the Da Nang JG's. Sandy 03/04 arrived on scene at approximately 0545, 10 minutes prior to first light. (Atch 7) They received a briefing from Hammer 40 and assumed on-scene command at first light. The weather was marginal with Alpha's position completely obscured. Bravo's position had no sooner been located than it too was obscured by a low overcast. Repeated attempts were made to find a way under the clouds but were futile. During this period Hammer 40 requested ordnance to suppress some HMG fire that had been observed. Hammer 48 directed strikes against these positions. Around 0645 the weather improved enough for Sandy 03 to go down and locate the survivors. (600' overcast) Alpha was located and contacted. During several passes over his position Alpha reported artillery fire each time. Sandy 03/04 remained in the area until approximately 0830 when they RTB'd due fuel. Sandys 05/06 arrived from the JG orbit and 05 assumed on-scene command after being briefed by 03. (Atch 8) The

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weather continued to improve and after pinpointing the survivors positions 05/06 determined what areas gunfire was coming from. Sandys 07/08 arrived approximately 0900 and 07 assumed command after briefing by 05. 05/06 then expended their ordnance in the areas of known gunfire and RTB'd. (Atch 9)

8. Sandy 07/08 continued the process of trolling for gunfire and through coordination with the survivors was able to identify areas that needed sanitizing. Working with Hammer 54, 07 would locate and mark, and 54 would FAC in fast movers with napalm. All ordnance was directly on target and the area immediately around the survivors was clear. Sandy 07 began his planning for a pickup, estimating this would be possible within an hour. An ingress-egress route was picked and trolled. Rocket or mortar fire was sighted along this route and once again Hammer 54 was utilized to direct strikes of Snake and Nape in the area. The delivery was outstanding; and "the whole area was in flames." At this time 07 requested 4 Smoke aircraft to screen off a ridgeline that was thought to conceal a 23mm emplacement. Shortly thereafter King notified 07 that 4 fast mover Smokes were on the way. Sandy 09 was brought down from the JG orbit and briefed on the plan. Sandy 09 then trolled the route from the holding point and when he received no ground fire, returned to the JG's and briefed them. At this time Sandy 10 had to RTB due to a center-line fuel tank that would not feed. He was replaced by Sandy 11 from NKP. The survivors were then briefed on the plan by Sandy 07 and told to have their smoke flares ready to fire. Hammer 54 was briefed where to lay the smoke. Everything was ready. All forces were brought up on survival channel D and the Smoke birds executed. Sandy 07 and 08 marked the IP and too far points and 07 directed 09 and 11 to bring the Jolly down the chute. Alpha was directed to pop his smoke which the Jolly saw immediately. The JG moved into the hover while Sandys 08 and 09 and 11 ran a daisy chain around him suppressing any possible gunfire. Sandy 07 held high over the pickup point directing the operations. Alpha was picked up and the JG directed towards Bravo. Bravo was told to pop his smoke and again the Jolly saw it immediately. The Jolly moved right in and Bravo was picked up in minimum time. The entire force then exited the area with the Sandys laying down ordnance. The JG departed out over friendlies and RTB'd channel 77. Sandy 07 was very low on fuel at this time and had to divert to channel 103. All other Sandys RTB'd channel 89. (Atch 10)

9. Forces generated for the first light effort were Sandys 03 through 12 and Smoke 41 through 44. Sandys 01/02 were scrambled from Ubon but did not reach the scene in time to be utilized. (Atch 11).

10. Some problems experienced on other SAR's repeated themselves here. Sandy lows must be firm in insisting that King hold all assets on frequencies other than those Sandy Low is using. Also King is going to have to stop the practice of communicating with Queen/Jack on VHF. Radio clutter from these two causes were major problems for the Sandys on the first day. When King attends the first light briefing, there isn't any problem.

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In addition Sandy Low must get the survivor up on a different channel other than guard as soon as possible. The interference from area towers, fast-mover flights using it as common for joining-up, MIG warnings, ARC lights, etc. severely hamper communications.

11. On the second day of the SAR, Queen was asked by Jack on several occasions to update the Bingo times of the on-scene Sandys. Due to limited assets and reaction time this is vital. Queen/Jack/King must respond to this request because the fuel time for Sandys can vary from 3-5 hours depending on type of activity. This oversight caused Sandy 03 and 07 to be dangerously low on fuel when recovering at NKP and Quang Tri. In addition the practice of launching maximum assets for a first light effort is not realistic. The on-scene Sandys also recommend that the fast-mover variety of Smoke be used as a last resort only. It was described as looking like that used by skywriters and wholly inadequate for the type of screen needed.

12. The name of the game from here on out is MANAGEMENT of resources. We have gone from 70 odd A-1's on station to an average of 24. Downed American aircrews no longer have 1st priority on airframes as is evidenced in this S/R. The remaining aircraft must be judiciously scheduled until such time as the OSC decides an attempt is feasible. Then, and only then, should maximum forces be committed. The Sandy Low OSC is the only one that is qualified to make this decision, not TEEPEE/JACK/QUEEN/KING/JOKER. Premature utilization of our limited resources could be fatal for the survivors.

WILLIAM J. HAGAN, Lt Colonel, USAF
RCO

- Atch 1 SARCO Log
2 Hammer Statement
3 Flying Schedule
4 Statement for Sandy 09/10
5 Statement for Sandy 05/06
6 Statement for Hammer 32/33
7 Statement for Sandy 03/04
8 Statement for Sandy 05/06
9 Statement for Sandy 07/08
10 Statement for Sandy 09
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SARGO LOG

1012 Blue Chip pulled 2 - H models (my next Sandy lows) for the CD barrel roll.

1015 Maint has 4 acft but Sgt Moore cannot get them to concentrate on on acft that I have to get up for my #2 JG escort. (Sandy 09 replacement)

1030 Asked Jack to reconfirm Bingo for 07/08 as 1200L

1045 Bingo confirmed as 1130. Asked Jack to launch 01/02 from UBN as Sandy low.

1115 Sandy 01/02 launched

1151 Cobra 23 Alpha picked up by JG 65

1156 Cobra 23 Bravo picked up by JG 65

1205 Sandy 09 and 11 escorted JG to CH 103 where they were released - Survivors were recovered into CH 77.

1240 Sandy 07 landed at CH 103 because of shortage of fuel. RTB to MKP 1 hr later.

1437 SAR Terminated by Queen

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SARGO LOG

26 Feb 1971

0415 Sandy 03 - 1st launch for 1st effort. (Sandy on generator, so Sandy 07 acft and pilot substituted for Sandy 05)

0450 07 (FAC) OSC with King

0525 Hammer 40 (OSC)

0530 King switched plan of checking in on 127.7 and receiving 123.1 for Sandy low and reversed it so we could monitor the Sandy low operation (Queen apparently only has 127.7)

0550 King established first radio contact day with 23/B

0553 King established first radio contact day with 23/A

0600 Jolly Green 65/67 at holding pt 10NM E of survivor.

0610 Sandy 03 OSC, (Stone) weather is D.S. Bingo Time 0200

0730 Req Bingo Time for 03 again (ans 0200)

0756 Launched 07/08 to replace 03/04 and become Sandy low

0815 Sandy 03/04 are calling Bingo now! There will be insufficient time to get 07/08 there so I suggested move JG escorts 05/06 (Roberts) to OSC temporarily.

0820 Launched 09/10 as JG escorts

0830 Sandy 05 OSC, WX improving, will attempt to pinpoint survivors.

0900 Sandy 05 has position of survivors w/I 10 Meters and briefing replacements 07/08.
Radio contact with Stone says trail WX is bad enough for cover so acft can go direct to scene.

0905 Sandy 07 (Rentz) OSC

0925 Sandy 10 (Col Rouch) can't get his C/L tank to feed - new Bingo for him is 1030. Wanted to launch 11/12 immed. to replace 09/10.

0955 Sandy 12 aborts (no radio)

1010 Sandy 10 got his fuel feeding again but then it quit again - asked Jack to get him released and leave 8-9 with Jolly's - need acft - neg from King.

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SARCO LOG

25 Feb 1971

- 1430L - Jack called - SAR declared - A Navy F-4, Potato Masher 665 down at 260/43/103. Two good chutes were observed and radio contact has been established with both survivors. Generate 4 Smokes.
- 1440L - Sandys 05/06 to launch and proceed to area to escort Da Nang Jolly Greens. Sandys 09/10 scrambled from 77.
- 1445L - Hobo 32/33 RTB'd from BR due WX. Divert to SAR effort per JACK/BLUE CHIP.
- 1450L - Advised Jack to check ARC LIGHT Schedule with Blue Chip. Have a couple that could cause trouble.
- 1445L - 3 Huey Cobras in area.
- 1508L - Sandys 07/08 redeploying from Bien Hoa diverting to scene.
- 1512L - Hammer 04 On-Scene-Commander (OSC). Reports tanks in area and moving towards survivors position. Weather 5000' scattered visibility good. Mach mach ZPU, small arms plus tanks reported. Call sign of downed aircraft now reported as Cobra 23, F-4D out of Phu Cat.
- 1536L - King 26 directed launch of King 27.
- 1545L - Sandy 09/10 in area. Sandy 09 OSC.
- 1605L - Smoke 41/42 cocked. Sandy 10 RTB'd channel 103 with battle damage, holding hands with Hammer 62.
- 1610L - Sandy 10 looked over by other aircraft and is returning to scene. Jettisoned tanks.
- 1621L - SAR forces being pulled back due TPQ alert for 270/33/103. Centralized control prevents aborting missions endangering friendlies.
- 1625L - Smoke 43/44 cocked and Ground alert.
- 1635L - Sandy 10 RTB'd 77 due to low fuel. (No external tanks)
- 1730L - Sandy 09 hit in external tanks and streaming fuel. RTB'd 77. Jettisoned tanks.
- 1745L - Smokes and Sandys released from ground alert.
- 1755L - First light effort. Survivors being bedded down.
- 1805L - Hammer FACS will be overhead all night.

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- 1822L - Sandys 05/06 ETA 89 1845 local. King 21 will be airborne control for first light and will arrive 89 0215-30 local for briefing. Tail # 220, pilot Maj Diloranzo. Will require 20,000# JP-4.
- 1910L - Sandy 09 down @ 77. At least nine entry holes in aircraft, one size of football. Sandy 10 will RTB 89 in AM. Fast mover Smokes on alert at 77. Sandy 09 says it will take a lot of Smoke for an attempt.
- 1920L - 2255 local established for first light time. WX forecast 4000' broken 9000' overcast 5 NM GPH. Patchy GF dissipating by 0300L.
- 1950L - Jack - 4 JG's will be launched from Da Nang.
- 2050L - Called Blue Chip with request for napalm. Maj Stinson at the Chip.
- 2200L - Lt Col Bryant, Blue Chip, called and wanted to know why we needed relief from all our normal fragged sorties for the SAR. Tried to explain how short of airframes we were. He said OK but would pursue in future. Also said he didn't think we'd get our request on wall to wall napalm as it wasn't in the frag. Might get us some mixed loads.
- 0040L - Called Jack - Hammer 04, 46, 62 will be the on-scene FACS tomorrow. Sandys 03/04 will launch at 2145 local and 05/06 at 2155 local. The smokes and NKP JG's will be CD.
- 0145L - Still can't get ordnance line-up out of Blue Chip. King 21 estimating block time on the hour. Candlestick 21 and Hammer 79 were heard calling, "Beeper Beeper come up voice."
- 0215L - Received call signs and TOT's for fast mover strikes. No ordnance loads given.
- 0300L - Briefed first wave.

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FROM: 1 SOS (CG)

9 Mar 71

SUBJECT: SARCO Report for Cobra A & B

TO: DO

1. A successful rescue was conducted on 26 Feb 71 for two crewmembers of Cobra 23. The aircraft, an F4D out of Phu Cat AB, RVN, went down at approximately 1415L 25 Feb 71, on the 260° radial for 43NM of Channel 103. This report covers those activities relating to the Sandys during the rescue effort. All times are Thailand local.

2. At 1430L, 25 Feb 1971, A SAR was declared for Cobra 23. (Atch 1) The aircraft was downed by enemy gunfire in the vicinity of D-12, two parachutes had been observed and radio contact had been made with both survivors. The area was extremely hostile with active firefights and continuous airstrikes being put in. Hammer FACs were controlling all activity in the area. (Atch 2)

3. At the time the SAR was declared Jack scrambled Sandy's 09/10 from Da Nang, 05/06 from NKP and directed that Sandy's 03/04 were to remain on ground alert at NKP. 05/06 were to be escorts for Jolly Greens 66/72 which were scrambled from Da Nang. Sandy's 07/08 launched from Bien Hoa on their normal redeploy and were diverted to the SAR along with Hobo's 32/33 who were RTB with ordnance due to deteriorating weather in their target area. These were the forces participating in the first day effort. (Atch 3)

4. Sandy 09/10 arrived on scene at approximately 1600L and after being briefed by Hammer 40, 09 assumed on-scene command. (Atch 4) The weather in the objective area was marginal with heavy rain showers and intermittent low ceilings. Several attempts were made to penetrate the weather in an effort to pinpoint the survivors. Heavy ground fire was observed on all attempts and about the time the general area of the survivors was determined, Sandy 10 was hit by groundfire and exited the area to check damage. The inclement weather prevented full utilization of fast mover strikes however, Hammer 62 put in any he could. Sandy 10 had determined the damage was restricted to his external tanks, which he jettisoned, so he returned to the scene. At approximately 1620L, King ordered all SAR forces out of the area due to a TPQ alert called on guard. At 1635 Sandy 10 had to RTB due to low fuel so Sandy 06 was directed to the scene as low wing. (Atch 5) The effort to pinpoint the survivors continued and as they were located Sandy 09 took several hits in the underside of his aircraft and was streaming fuel from both external tanks. He jettisoned his load and RTB'd Channel 77 at approximately 1730. Later inspection revealed in excess of 10 entry holes in the aircraft with one the size of a football in the right elevator. Sandy 06 assumed on-scene command and 05 was called down to join him. Hobo's 32 and 33 had arrived after being released from their original mission and were assigned to escort the Jollies. (Atch 6) At this time there was approximately

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RETIRED DESTROY

No 0251766 D-8

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COBRA 23 - 25 Feb 71

HAMMER 54

Capt Peter J. Ruppert

064-32-532371

At approximately 1530 I was working a strike just south of Delta 38 when I heard a mayday call on guard saying that Cobra 23 had been hit and was jumping out. The call also included a DME and Radial which was the 260/40 of CH 103. I at the time was on the 275/40 of 103.

I finished the airstrike and proceeded to the 260/40 to see if I could be of assistance. Upon arrival I saw many airplanes in the area so I climbed to 10,500 feet to stay out of the way. There were five additional OV 10's all Hammer Facs, at least I presumed, them to be, about 20 choppers or so and I do not know how many fast movers. Hammer 229 was working a TIC at the time as well as the SAR and I asked if I could be of help. He told me yes since he was out of rockets. I went down and took over for him. I saw both survivors chutes and plotted their position. Hammer 04 was made on-scene commander by King and I continued working the TIC. Hammer 04 RTB'd due to low fuel and H-40 relieved him. I was relieved by H-223. After landing, H-04 and myself went back out to the scene at 6:15 and H-62 along with Sandy 05 and 06 were talking to the survivor. H-62 did not know the exact location so H-04 and myself went into the area and showed Sandy's location. We were then informed by Hillsboro to clear the area to the east since they had heavy artillery going in and could not shut it off. The Sandys and we then held east for approximately 10-15 minutes. By the time we were cleared back in, it was 1900 hours. The Sandys and us made repeated passes over survivors position* but took heavy AAA which came from a tank that sat approximately 300 meters west of the survivors on top of the hill. Both survivors were talking and informed us of a lot of ground fire everytime a Sandy made a pass. The survivors called for CHOP and TWIGGY but Sandy lead told them that it was getting too late and that they should hide themselves, not to worry, that there would be a Fac over them all night, to conserve their radios and use it only if absolutely necessary and that we (Sandys) would be back at first light to pick them up. Cobra 23A's reply was that "we would not be here in the morning". The Sandys RTB'd and H-04 and myself stayed on station until H-79 (the first night Fac) came out and we showed him both survivors' positions and also where the tank was that was shooting at us. H-79 then took over on scene and we (04 & 54) RTB'd. *To Show Sandy's Position Of Survivors.

26 Feb

The first Hammer Fac to launch was H-40 and he arrived on station at 0600. He informed us that the weather was bad and that he had not made contact with the survivors. At approximately 0800 H-40 informed us that they had reestablished contact with both A & B but the weather was still too bad to work the SAR. At 0900 H-40 called us and told us to launch the next Fac for the SAR. I, H-54, launched and arrived on station at approximately 1000am. H-40 RTB'd and Sandy 05 & 06 were on station.

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note: Times are Vietnam Time

afch 2

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after 1 Sandy 08 relieved 05 & 06 and 07 became on-scene commander. The weather began to clear up quite rapidly and we had about a 8-10,000' overcast. Sandys 07 & 08 proceeded to talk to the survivor and made repeated passes over their approximate position. I asked Sandy 07 if he knew where both survivors were and he said that he knew where Alpha was but not quite sure where Bravo was. I then pointed Bravo's chute out to 07 which he had not seen before. (Oh yes, Alpha had pulled his chute in about a half an hour after he ejected on the 25th and it could not be seen anymore) When the Sandys made the passes the survivors informed them that they were taking ground fire and the approximate position where it came from. The Sandys then began to sterilize the area by making repeated passes. Sandy 07 then showed me where he wanted some airstrikes put and for the next 2½ hours I put airstrikes in around the survivors while the Sandys were working in close proximity of the survivors with their own ordnance. At approximately 1230 Sandy 09 & 10 checked in with the choppers and at approximately 1315 it was decided to go ahead with the pickup. Sandy 07 told me where to lay down the smoke and I then worked Ringneck 957 flight and laid the smoke down. The Sandys (4 of them) then really worked the immediate area over and the chopper (65) was then brought in from the IP. Two other Sandys were laying down CBU on both sides of the choppers route and Cobra 23A was picked up first. After Bravo was picked up the chopper exited the area by means of the same route that he entered. The whole pickup took about 15 minutes. It was a well planned and well executed mission.

PETER J. RUPPERT, Capt, USAF
HAMMER 54

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SAR FOR COBRA 23

STATEMENT OF SANDY--STONE

I departed NKP at 0440 with Sandy 04 to proceed to the position of Cobra 23A and 23B. When I arrived on scene Hammer 40 was working Candle 21 just North of the survivor's position. After first light, I assumed on scene command from Hammer 40. He took me into the area and gave a very comprehensive briefing of the area. The weather over Alpha was right on the ground. Bravo was in the clear. After Bravo's position was located the weather then moved over him and both survivors were under a low overcast. Several attempts were made to get under the weather, but they were all futile. A ridge line North and a ridge line East of the survivors was open and Hammer 40 stated that 51 Caliber fire had been coming from these areas. Nap and high drags were requested and Hammer 48 directed strikes along these ridge lines. Just South of the survivors were two camps of ARVN tanks. The other ARVN units were west of the survivors. About 6:45 the weather over Alpha started to lift so I went South and flew up the road and reached his position. At this time the weather was 600 feet above the road, but the hills on each side of it were obscured by clouds. Cobra 23A reported artillery fire as I would pass over his position. It was probably a mortar or a rocket that was fired at me. The general position of Alpha was determined and I made 5 or 6 passes under the clouds over him and each time reported ground fire. I stayed on scene as long as possible waiting for Sandy 07, but due to low fuel I had to RTB. Sandy 05 who was escorting the Jolly Greens came up and I let Hammer 40 brief him while I returned to base. Sandy 03 and 05 landed at NKP at 0910.

HERBERT H. STONE, Lt Colonel, USAF
SANDY

Atch 7

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SAR FOR COBRA 23

Callsigns - Hobo 32, Hobo 33

Crewmembers - Capt Lorenzen/Maj Donaldson, Col Walsh

Date - 25 Feb 71

On 25 Feb 71, I was scheduled for a mid-tour instrument refresher with Major Donaldson in my right seat and Col Walsh. Our mission was fragged and briefed for the Barrel Roll. About 25 minutes after takeoff, when we were checking in with ABCCC, we were advised that the weather was unworkable in the Barrel and to return to NKP with ordnance. As we approached NKP, we were advised to divert to support the SAR in progress. King 26 gave us a route to a holding point (265/32/103). We had a good view of the "beach" around Delta 45 as we flew King's briefed route to the holding point. As we approached the SAR area, we were assigned to escort Jolly Green 65 and 67 in the vicinity of Quang Tri. We escorted the Jolly Greens until our bingo time at 1800L. At about the same time, the SAR effort was postponed for the evening for darkness. We recovered at NKP, logging 5.5 apiece.

EDWARD V. LORENZEN JR, Capt USAF
HOB0 32

Atch 6

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