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Date	Mission #	Sortie Length	Total A-1 Time	Total Com
20 May	78	4.5		

299.8

233.0 A-1H 139-665

My journal entry for 20 May 1972

Sandy 10 on [Capt] Ron Smith's wing... SAR for Bowleg 02 ...Worked with [Maj] Zeke Encinas and [1Lt] Lance Smith in the SAR area which was 35 nm west of Hanoi, north of Banana Valley...Tex [Brown] and his lead had found the survivors and had them nearly ready for pickup when Ron and I arrived... We suppressed some ground fire prior to the pickup and I emptied my LAU-3s on a group of hootches [fighting positions] where we were taking fire... I laid a smoke screen [with CBU-22] at the "execute" call... Bowleg 02B stopped talking just prior to execute and was captured... Zeke and Lance brought the Jolly in and Ron set up a right hand daisy chain with everyone else left... [After the pickup] we egressed south, then west... We emptied the rest of our ordnance on some additional ground fire just south of Banana Valley...We all cleaned our wings on the way home to save gas... I was lowest of the four [Sandys] on gas so I also jettisoned my SUU-11 gun pod (\$18,000)... I landed at NKP with less than 100 pounds (15 gallons) of fuel remaining... DFC

Press Coverage of the Bowleg 02 SAR

Bowleg 02 SAR Map

Mission background:

The F-4D #65-0600, of the 432 TRW departed Udorn at 1102, 20 May 72, in a flight of four [Bowleg] flying MiG Cap for other F-4's on a strike mission near Hanoi. At about 1220, shortly after reaching the target area, the flight was engaged by a MiG-21 aircraft. A MiG fired a missile at Bowleg [top] [bottom]

02, Lt Markle took evasive action, but was hit and both crewmembers ejected. Both crewmembers established communications with the SAR forces. At about 1730, shortly before Lt Markle [Bowleg 02A] was rescued, Capt Williams [Bowleg 02B] transmitted that there were people in his immediate vicinity. A short time later, Lt Markle heard a single shot from a small caliber weapon, and two seconds later heard what sounded like a flare being fired. There was no further contact with Capt Williams.

This mission was my second close to Hanoi and the tension was high. Bowleg 02 was number 2 in a flight of four F-4D Phantom IIs from the 555 TFS who were on a MiG sweep. Just 10 days earlier, First Lieutenant John Markle (Bowleg 02A) had a MiG 21 kill while flying with the "A" team of MiG hunters from the Triple Nickel at Udorn. This group included soon to be USAF aces Steve Ritchie, Chuck Debellevue, and Jeff Feinstein. On this day, Markle and his pitter (WSO), Capt Jim Williams were down and we were there to try and get them out.

I was reminded by Ron Smith that Zeke's wingman was Lance Smith, not Tex Brown (sorry guys). Smith's recollection of this SAR gives another perspective of the rescue. In addition, John Markle also provides his insight with his recollection of the events pertaining to his rescue.

Since the flight time to the SAR area was an hour and twenty minutes each way (that's two hours and forty minutes of just going and coming), we had to act quickly once in the area in order to pull off the rescue. part of the problem with this particular SAR is that just as other Sandys would get ready to attempt a rescue, they would not have a safe margin of fuel reserve and would have to leave empty handed. Ron Smith reminded me that to circumvent this problem, we launched as a four ship so that we all would arrive with the same fuel state and would hopefully be able to orchestrate a pickup.

There was a considerable amount of resistance in the SAR area as might be expected so close to the North Vietnamese capital. Virtually all Sandys were at lease fired upon and several took hits. There were also SA-2s
[top] [bottom]

launched in the general direction, but I suspect that the fighters covering the SAR overhead were the ones being targeted.

Generally we returned to base with the SUU-11 minigun, the 300 gallon centerline fuel tank, the 150 gallon fuel tank on the right stub, and the LAU-68 reusable rocket launchers on stations 5 and 8. But for this mission, I cleaned them all off since I was so low on fuel. They didn't call them drop tanks for nothing.

We cruise climbed on the way home and I was given the lead so as to minimize fuel consumption since I was the lowest on fuel of the four of us. NKP tower cleared both the runway and the parallel taxiway in case that runway should suddenly become unavailable for use. I landed straight in on the runway and shut down in the dearm area since my gauge showed zero fuel remaining.

The difference between the amount of fuel added by ground crews after landing and the total capacity of the internal tank was 98 pounds. In a jet this would have been critical, but in a recip, I maybe could have flown around, oh maybe another 5 minutes!!

The Skyraider gave us all confidence. It could take lots of punishment and could give it out too. And of course it didn't hurt to have the Jolly Green Giants near by either. SOP was to pick up the guy who was on the ground the shortest time because the longer a person was on the ground, the harder it was to get him out. A real confidence builder to say the least.

This mission was inside Route Pack 5 and qualified those of us who flew on this mission as members of the Red River Valley Fighter Pilots Association (the River Rats). For obvious reasons, the membership in this organization is mostly fast mover drivers.

Awards and decorations were funny (odd, not ha ha). A lot of it had to do with how aggressive the awards and decs officer was. If the missions weren't written up well, or not at all, forget it. At the time, awards and
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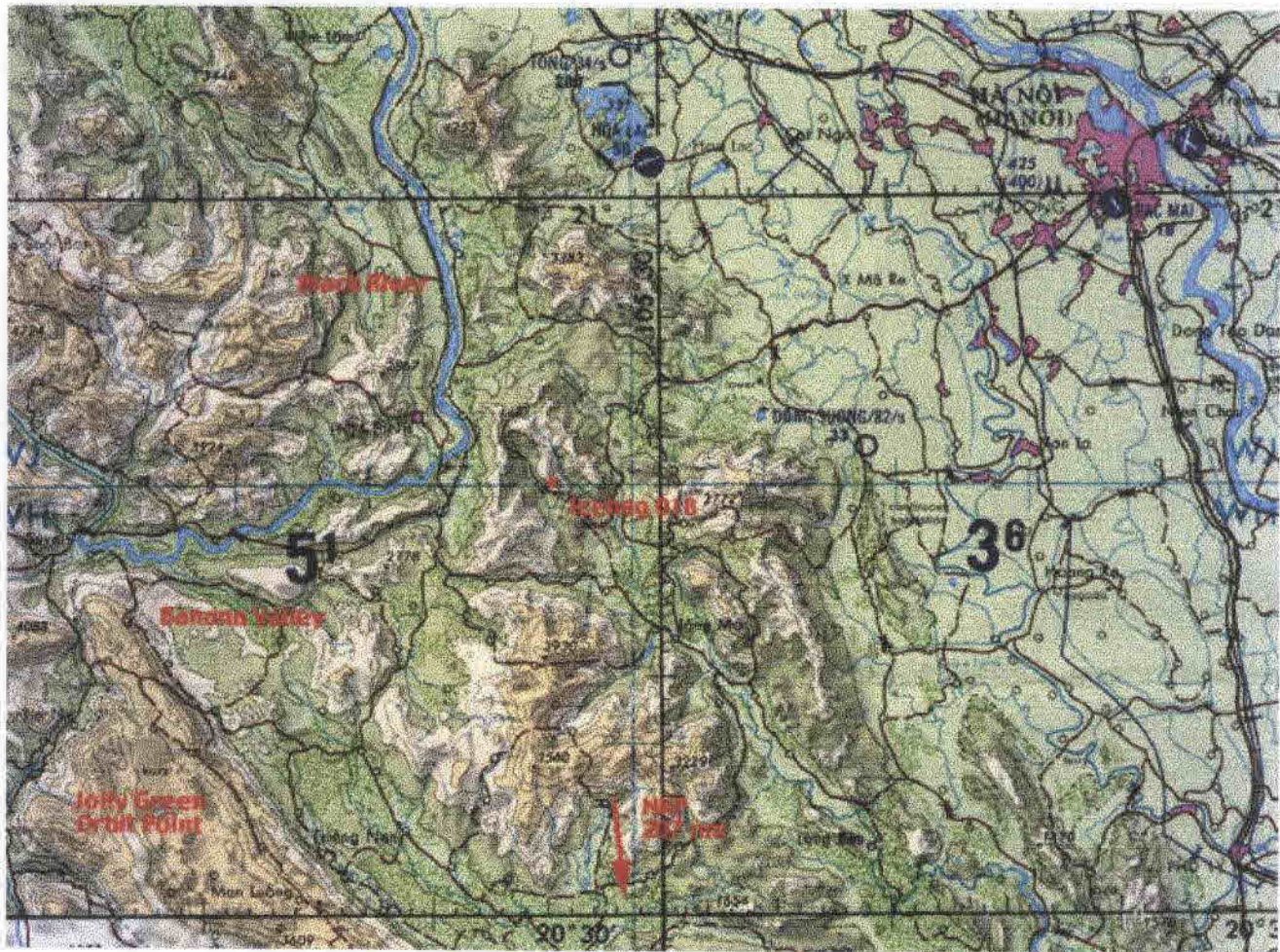
decorations were the least of our worries. Since I was part of the SAR package on a pickup of a MiG killer 35 nm from Hanoi, I guess it rated a DFC. Oh well. Each of us that flew over there knew when we did a good job, and when we were just along on the mission. Suffice it to say, I flew better missions which were totally unrewarded (with medals) and the reward was in the self-satisfaction of a job well done. (key the violins!)

Det 4, 3ARRGp Historical Input 1 Apr - 30 Jun 72

Appendix II

SARS in which Det 4 has participated

<u>MISSION</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>SAVES</u>
SPECTRE 22	1 Apr	15 combat
BAT 21	2 Apr	1 combat
BLUE GHOST 39	2 Apr	-
BLUE GHOST 28	2 Apr	2 combat
PAVE NAIL 38	3 Apr	1 combat
VAMPIRE 46	4 Apr	1 non-combat
JOLLY GREEN 67	6 Apr	-
COVEY 282	7 Apr	-
BENGAL 502	9 Apr	1 combat
MUSKET 01	9 Apr	2 combat
COSMIC 16	20 Apr	1 combat
VAMPIRE 50	22 Apr	1 combat
SCORPIAN 115	29 Apr	-
COACHMAN 22	29 Apr	4 combat
RED HAWK 6	29 Apr	4 combat
ICERAG 04	11 May	-
GOPHER 01	11 May	-
BOWLEG 02	20 May	1 combat
OWL 14	23 May	-
OYSTER 01	1 Jun	1 combat
LOVER 03	1 Jun	2 combat
RITAOT	13 Jun	-
cathay airlines convair 880	15 Jun	-
SPECTRE 11	18 Jun	3 combat
HOB0 82	18 Jun	-
SAMUY 7	20 Jun	1 combat
NICKEL 102	20 Jun	1 combat
WHEELER 03	21 Jun	-
SALTER 04	24 Jun	-
CHAPPAKAWA SKY	24 Jun	1 non-combat
CHAPPAKAWA MOON	24 Jun	1 non-combat
LOUGY 03	24 Jun	-
LAREDO 17	25 Jun	-
DOLBY 01	27 Jun	-
TROY 04	27 Jun	-
VALENT 03	27 Jun	1 combat
VALENT 04	27 Jun	1 combat
COVEY 27	30 Jun	1 combat



The Players

Icebag 01A - [Maj William Talley](#) (not on tape) (POW, released in 1973)

Icebag 01B - Major James P. Padgett (POW, released in 1973)

Sandy 01-02 - Captain Don Morse and Lt Byron Hukee

Sandy 03-04 - Major Don Milner and ??

Jolly Green

Laredo 17 - F-4 'Fast FAC'

Nail 39 - OV-10 FAC from NKP

[Play Icebag 01B Tape](#)

<http://www.skyraider.org/skyassn/sartapes/icebag1/icebag1.htm>

1/22/99

(20 minutes 33 seconds, 1.2 mb)

