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FROM: 1st SOS (DO/IA Col Bowden/2750)

11 January 1972

SUBJECT: SARCO Report, Gunfighter 82

TO: 56th SOW (DO)

1. This report covers the activities of the SAR forces during the successful SAR for Gunfighter 82 and 82B, 17-18 December 1971. All times are Thailand local. The SAR was declared by Jack at 2120. Initial report was that there were two survivors down near Mu Gia Pass. Nail 13, the area FAC, was acting as On-Scene Commander. Weather was reported as 3/8 scattered, bases 13,500' (6-8,000MSL). The cloud layer was east of the survivors and moving west. Nail 51 (Pave Nail) went directly to the area and assumed On-Scene Command at 2245.

2. The reported positions of the survivors varied widely until 0030, 18 Dec 71, when a good fix was obtained by Nail 51. Nail 13 initially reported the survivors were in the kharst east of the valley which runs north-south through Mu Gia. When Nail 51 arrived in the area he attempted to locate the survivors by flying over them and asking the survivors to tell him when he was directly overhead. He then located this position using Loran. On his first attempt one of the classic errors in this type of search occurred when the survivors identified another OV-10 as being directly overhead. Nail 51 soon realized his fix was wrong and used UHF DF to refine his initial position. A good fix was obtained at 0030 of WE 7248 4898. A slightly refined fix of WE 735 505 was obtained at 0145 and continued to be used throughout the night. Until the 0030 fix the only thing known for sure was that the survivors were down in dense jungle and had no signs of activity around them. Based on this information interdiction strikes were begun on the road network, well clear of the survivors.

3. Immediately after arriving at the Command Post, I contacted Blue Chip, with Jack and Joker listening in, to:

a. Request area denial munitions. BLU-52, CBU 42 (anti personnel mines), and CDU 14 (gravel) were requested to be loaded and placed on Quick Reaction Force (QRF) alert.

b. Explain that it was essential to isolate the objective area to prevent movement of vehicles and AAA into the immediate area.

c. Advise that when the survivors positions were pinpointed they could expect the On-Scene Commander to start calling for area denial munitions to cut off all access to the survivors immediate area.

d. Recommend that TFA retain control of Sector 2 and work directly with the On-Scene Commander to control ordnance.

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c. Ask for release of all Para Mail sorties to the SAR to act as On-Scene Commanders during the night and as On-Scene FACs during the day.

4. At this point the results of the SAR working group which met on 16 December at NKP became apparent. I was repeatedly talking to the other members of the working group. Only brief conversations were needed to reach understanding due to our common knowledge and the general consensus of opinion on what should be done at night during a SAR. I cannot over-emphasize the results of this conference. To the best of my knowledge this was the first concerted effort to immediately use large scale night strikes in direct support of a SAR. It went very smoothly.

5. At 2255, Lt Col Thompson, TFA, called to confirm the survivors location. We agreed that TFA should retain control of Sector 2 and put in ordnance on the roads. Until the survivors were pinpointed, ordnance drops were restricted to the road network well clear of the survivors positions. After the survivors were located, strikes would be put in on known AAA sites near the survivors location and area denial weapons would be used to isolate the survivors from the road network. From this point on TFA controlled the interdiction campaign. The only difficulty occurred about 0030 when TFA advised me that Ting was turning back ordnance. I contacted Jack, TFA contacted Blue Chip, and Maj Bristol (Mail Coordinator) talked direct to the On-Scene Commander. We all emphasized the need to interdict the area. Within 30 minutes ordnance was going in and continued throughout the SAR.

6. At 2300, Col Moore, Commander, 40th IRRS, discussed the possible use of the Limited Night Recovery System (LIRS) with Jack. Two IRRS aircraft, Jolly Green 32 (low) and 30 (high), took off at 0340L. Jolly Green 32 aborted, 30 became low, and 52 launched as high. After arriving in the objective area the IRRS aircraft decided not to attempt a pickup due to terrain, exposure to SAMs/AAA, and uncertainty as to the survivors exact position. These Jollys held until daylight and made the pickup.

7. Sandys 01, 02, 03, and 04, launched at 0510 and arrived on scene at 0540. At 0617, Sandy 01 sighted Alpha's parachute but was unable to pinpoint Bravo. Both survivors still reported no movement in their area. Gunfighter 82 Alpha was hung securely in a tree. He attempted to lower himself but the tree lowering device jammed after lowering him a few inches. Bravo was on the ground. The Sandys expended no ordnance.

8. Phase Bravo was started at 0622. The Sandys flew a protective daisy chain but expended no ordnance. At 0640 Bravo's smoke was spotted and he was picked up by Jolly Green 30 at 0640. Jolly Green 30 then went to Alpha's parachute and lowered a PJ to assist him. The PJ and survivor became entangled in parachute shroud lines but were cut loose by the PJ while going up on the penetrator. At 0657, Alpha was on board and the rescue was complete. All SAR forces exited the area and returned to NKP. There was no enemy opposition during the pickup. Mail 07 held over the Sandys and relayed radio calls.

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9. Recommendations: Night SAR activity should follow the same general pattern used in this SAR. Specifically:

a. TFA should retain control of the SAR area if this is an area they can work effectively.

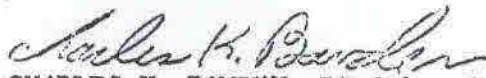
b. Night ordnance delivery should be used continuously to interdict the area. Ordnance delivery should be restricted only by uncertainty as to the survivor's position and minimum safe distance from the survivor.

c. Maximum use of the OV-10 Pave Nail aircraft should be made both day and night. The combination of Loran, laser, visual FACING, and availability at NKP for continuing detailed briefing on the SAR procedures and techniques makes use of the Pave Nail invaluable.

d. Jolly Greens should outline the LIRP whenever terrain, weather, and enemy threat permit. Joint planning and training between the Jolly Greens, Pave Nails, and Spectres are necessary to most effectively utilize this capability. This is especially true in locating the survivors exact position. Present capability to pinpoint a survivor at night is not adequate.

e. The SARCO does not have adequate radio receivers to effectively monitor the progress of the SAR. This prevents the Sandys, Pave Nails, and Jolly Greens from being briefed on the most complete information available before the takeoff. Brief, complete communications between the SAR forces is a continuing problem. Better briefings before takeoff would be a significant help in this area.

f. The SARCO should continue to act aggressively to influence the conduct of a SAR. The SARCO's qualifications, and access to information are unmatched by any other individual. He briefs all crews (except the initial alert crews) prior to launch and discusses their plans with them. He debriefs returning crews and gets recommendations from them. He has detailed intelligence data from Wing Intelligence and TFA. He is well qualified to recommend the use of ordnance and delivery systems.


CHARLES K. BOWDEN, Lt Colonel, USAF
SARCO

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DATE: 12 Dec 71

MISSION NUMBER: 10-3-046-17 Dec 71

AIRCRAFT DESIGNATION: King 27

MISSION OBJECTIVE: F-4 Gunfighter 82

LOCATION: 1728N 10941E

NOTES: 2 Combat Credits to Jollie Team

King 41 airborne 08 70 1419Z to 08 71. 1437Z we were notified by JACK that Gunfighter 82 was downed in Mugia pass. We received word that a Spectre aircraft was near that location. After contacting him we learned that he was NFB for battle damage and that Nail 13 was in contact with the survivors. We got Nail 13 up on 282.8 and he got the survivors up on that frequency. Nail 13 started getting DF cuts on A and B and passed position as 087/76/89 (area between passes in high karst). We requested MIG CAP border clearance, Ironhand and Elint. Nail 16 replaced Nail 13 as OSC and refined position in that general area and determined that A and B were in good condition. I alerted JACK to have Jollies stand by for possible NKS at 1518Z because of the relatively good position between the passes in the high karst. At approximately this same time our "package" aircraft started checking in on Invert's discrete frequency. Coach and Dollar flights (MIG CAP), Bison (Ironhand), Tailback (Elint). Nail 51 replaced Nail 61 as OSC and continued to refine position of A and B. He determined that A was in a tree facing east in the high karst and A did not know B's position but they could hear each other on the radio. Nail 18 replaced Nail 51 as OSC and changed position to 075/61/89 then 073/63/89, a position west of the pass, not between passes as previously given. URM position was Wn72484895. Nail 18 determined that A and B had ample radios and batteries and reconfirmed good conditions. Nail 31 became OSC at 1234Z. By this time, Headshed had become convinced that A and B were in high ground away from Mugia several miles and wanted to close the pass with Jingle even though we disagreed that the position wasn't pinpointed well enough to drop anything. Headshed had Jingle holding high on Gunfighters with Owl 03 to fast PAC them into the pass. Headshed pressed us to okay Jingle in the pass and Nail 31 agreed finally that it would be okay. At 1913Z Owl 03 and Gunfighter put in Jingle on D-29 along the road to the north. Nail 31 was observing from the northwest and reported a SAM launch at 1916Z. His position was 3 miles NW of D-29 (Mugia). He described the projectile as having a red flame.

King 27 had arrived in the area to relieve King 41 and had received a partial briefing when we got a cargo compartment overheat at 1942Z. We descended because of loss of pressurization and briefed King 27 on what

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GROUP 1

Downgraded at 3 year intervals.
Declassified at or 12 yrs.

was happening. At approximately 1730Z King 27 and King 41 NIB to CH 70. Just prior to this we told them to expect first light effort, not N&S. JACK told us that the Jollies would launch at 2000 for a first light effort. The FAC's were advised not to turn down any ordnance sent to him by Headshed. They had turned down some CBU 19/50 as not necessary.

King 27 was notified to launch at 1730Z. King 27 blocked at 1722 discovered a visible prop leak on #1 engine, returned to the PAD and discovered it was a sticky substance so the engines were started and takeoff accomplished at 1800Z. We started monitoring the SAK as soon as we got radio contact. We arrived on scene CH 89 at 1935Z. We assumed AMC duties at 1950Z. Nail 41 came into the area and was running strikes into the area while Nail 31 monitored the area around the survivors. Nail 41 started having trouble with his UHF radios and RTB'd. Headshed continued to supply the ordnance. The Ironhand, MIG CAP, and Elint aircraft checked in with King for instructions. We advised them to stay above 250 at the request of Nail 31 so they would not interfere with strikes in the pass. Nail 31 was on scene alone and we requested a replacement FAC for him. Nail 31 advised that Nail 25 was coming up to relieve him. I assume coordination was being completed thru secure radios between Headshed, the Nails and other secure radio equipped aircraft. We were provided the resources thru Headshed and passed them to the FAC in a smooth manner during the whole SAK. The double FAC concept works very well. We were obviously bypassed on some of the coordination between the strike FAC's requirements and Headshed. Here again secure UHF radios or secure FM radios were required. JG 32 and 30 departed 89 at 2040. 32 had maintenance problems and RTB'd to 89. JG 52 took 32's place. The Sandies did not launch until later since they don't have night capabilities. JG's reported in the holding pattern at 2150Z, the Sandies at 2240. Nail 31 had advised that the weather was closing in and would be good for about 1 1/2 hours. We requested second flight of JG be launched (JG 32 and 62). At 2311Z Sandy 02 went in for a look. Nail 25, a night FAC, assumed on scene from Nail 31. The Sandies sighted some chutes but decided they were not personnel chutes because the color was all white. Sandy 01 pinpointed the Alpha man and tried to get the Alpha man to lower himself off the tree. The 82A man could not lower himself so he was given instructions to pop the day end of his flare when Sandy 01 gave the instructions. The recovery phase was started and the Bravo man came up frequency. At 2339Z Sandy 01 cleared the area, got a definite position and decided to pick him, Bravo first. The same instructions were relayed to him and JG 30 was vectored into the 82B's area and the Bravo man was advised to pop his smoke. The smoke was sighted and Bravo man was picked up at approximately 2350Z. JG 30 was vectored to the 82A man and the A man was advised to pop the day end of his flare. The Alpha man was located but some difficulty was encountered with the parachute risers, cutting them free from the survivor. The Alpha man was on his way up the hoist at 2355Z. He was on board at 2357Z. The Jollies and Sandys RTB'd to 89. ETA to 89 was 0025Z. Refueling was not required so King 21, the tanker, was released. All forces were released at 17/2400Z except for MIG CAP which stayed with us until 0020Z and were released at that time.

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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: The operation of coordinating the pick up with Sandy 01, 02, and 03 and 04. The operation was smoothly run and coordination was excellent between all parties during the entire operation. The need for secure radio was not as apparent on this mission as it would be on one where the Nails will not be able to contact Headshed and NKP direct. I strongly recommend we (King) be equipped with secure UHF and secure FM radios.

King 27 Crew Members

AMC Major Arthur T. Provencio
CP 1LT Thomas I. Parks
CP Capt Robert J. Hager
NAV Capt Dale M. Condie
RO TSgt Larry B. Alford
FE SSgt Raymond M. Siegler
FE SSgt Robert B. Underwood, Jr.
LM SSgt Charles S. Alexander

SAH Forces Used

Jolly Green 30, 52
Sandy 01, 02, 03, 04
Nail 13, 16, 18, 31, 25, 07, 49, 51
Invert
Headshed

King 41 Crew Members

AMC Capt David J. Preston
CP 1LT James F. May
NAV Capt Frank W. Young
RO SSgt Rosco Williams
RO TSgt Ruark, Lester L.
FE TSgt Harry E. Fielder
LM SSgt Rex D. Stephens

Sar Forces Not Used

King 21, 23
JG 32, 62
Moonbeam

Arthur T. Provencio

ARTHUR T. PROVENCIO, Major, USAF
Aircraft Commander/Airborne Mission Commander

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SANDY 03/04

18 December 1971

As Sandy 03/04, Capt Foss and I took off as Jolly Green escorts on the first light effort for Gunlighter 82. We proceeded to the initial holding point, maintaining altitude separation until we were able to visually acquire the Jollys, at which time we set up an orbit around them. Sandy 01/02 were holding close to the survivor's position, as were Nail 25 and Nail 07. As first light, Nail 25 led Sandy 01 to the survivor's area and Sandy 01 immediately sighted 82A. He began trolling the area for possible reception but was unable to expend as 82B had not been located yet. 82A was able to talk to the Sandys and Sandy 01 decided to make a pick up and then continue searching for 82B. As we started moving the Jolly into the area, 82A called Sandy 01 and said he could hear 82B calling. We stopped the Jollys and held approximately three miles west of the survivor's position while Sandy 01 began searching again for 82B. Everytime Sandy 01 would fly over 82A, 82B would say "you're right over me." It was evident that the two were located very close together, and as 82A's smoke was plainly visible, Sandy 01 again called for the Jolly Green to start his run in while directing 82B to pop his smoke. The Jolly quickly saw the smoke, approximately 100 yards from 82A's position, and moved into the hover. We entered the daisy chain around the Jolly as he picked up 82B, then moved directly to 82A and made the second pick up. As he headed out of the area Sandy 01/02 and Sandy 03/04 continued to escort until the Jollys were across the river.

George E. Throckmorton
GEORGE E. THROCKMORTON, Capt, USAF
Sandy 03

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GUNFIGHTER 02A/B
SANDY 01/02

18 December 1971

On 18 Dec 71, I was Sandy 01 on a first light SAR effort for Gunfighter 82 Alpha and Bravo. The SAR forces briefed at 0330L and Sandy 01/02 took off at 0510L. We arrived on scene and briefed with King and Nail 25. At first light, Nail 25 took me over the known survivors' position and I established contact with 02 Alpha. Alpha was hung in a tree and his tree lowering device was inoperative. I briefed Alpha on his duties with his radio and smoke. We could not locate Bravo so I decided to brief the SAR forces and pick up Alpha. As I was about to execute the pick up, Bravo came up on the radio. I still could not locate Bravo but I knew he was very close to Alpha. So I decided to bring Jolly 30 in on Alpha's position and direct the Jolly over the Bravo's position. I executed Sandys 02/03/04 and Jolly 30. As the SAR forces were approaching Alpha's position, I asked Bravo to pop his day smoke. Bravo's smoke came up about 50 meters from Alpha and Jolly 30 headed straight for it. Jolly 30 hovered and picked up Bravo and directed the Jolly over to Alpha position. We picked Alpha up and exited the area. During the complete SAR effort, Nail 07 assisted me in relaying radio traffic. Nail 49 continued to pour ordnance on Mu Gas Pass and Delta 30. This kept the AAA and SAM threat down. Sandy 02 did an outstanding job of controlling communication between the King aircraft, Nail 07/49, and Jollies.


ROGER L. YOUNGELOOD, Capt, USAF
Sandy 01

18 Dec 71

trailing any ground fire. There was no reaction to the search by Sandy 03, and Jolly Green 45 was led to the other side. Sandy 03 and 04 orbited toward Beta. Alpha was in a position to see smoke but no smoke appeared, and Alpha could not hear the helicopter. The search again started with the survivor continuing to give directions to 03 that would lead him to where the clouds were on the treetops. The chutes were nowhere in sight now. The Jolly Green was instructed to hover as close as he could to the edge of the clouds in the direction of Alpha and Beta. The chute from a stable position close to the ground. As he moved in the clouds lifted from 50 to 100 feet, but not enough to see the chute or survivor. The sound of the helicopter engines proved to be the key factor, and Alpha was able to talk the Jolly Green in to his location. The rescue was made with the Sandy ready to provide fire power if required.⁶⁶

(C) Bravo came up on radio while the Jolly Green was in a hover over Alpha. He gave a vector to bring the Jolly Green over his position, and soon he too was picked up. By the completion of Bravo's rescue, Alpha's previous position was again obscured in the clouds and the overcast was again thickening. All forces returned to base after a difficult but successful run.⁶⁷

(C) Throughout the two day DIA effort no contact was made

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

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FACIA 10th ARRSq (DO)

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SUBJECT: RCS: ARRS V-6 Report

TO: 3rd ARRCp (JRCC)

DATE: 18 Dec 71

MISSION NUMBER: B-03-046

FLIGHT DESIGNATION: Jolly Green 30

MISSION OBJECTIVE: (F-4) Gunfighter 82 ALPHA and BRAVO

LOCATION: MU GIA Pass, 105-45E, 17-40N

SAVES: Two (2) Combat Saves

At 0240L, Jolly Green 32 (Low) and Jolly Green 30 (High) departed MKP for the attempted night recovery of Gunfighter 82 Alpha and Bravo (F-4). JG 32 aborted shortly after takeoff due to a large torque split and a malfunctioning camera, and JG 30 became Low and JG 52 was launched as High. After arriving at the initial holding point, we were notified that Alpha was hanging in a tree and Bravo was on the ground under a multible canopy of trees. Due to the location of the survivors, Alpha's inability to use his stobe light, the close proximity of MU GIA Pass, the SAM threat, and the increased altitude required for a night recovery search, I made the decision to wait until first light for the rescue attempt. Nail 25 (OV-10 Pave Nail) was on scene at this time and had established the approximately location of both survivors. In addition, he and the other Nail FACs had been directing ordinance in the vicinity that silenced most of the enemy activity in the area. Nails 07 and 49 and Sandys 1,2,3 and 4 (A-1s) launched with us and Nail 25 and 07 and Sandy 1 had the survivors pinpointed prior to first light and at first light spotted the chute of Alpha. A search for Bravo was then started and even though he was never spotted visually, it was decided that an attempt could be made on Bravo and that he would be picked up first. At 0640L we started our run in on Bravo and with Sandys 2,3, and 4, as escort in a daisy chain, Sandy 1 directed Bravo to pop his smoke and smoke was observed approximately 200 yards south east of Alpha's chute at the base of a vertical karst formation. The karst and trees made it impossible to hover into the wind so a down wind hover was established in the vicinity of Bravo's smoke and my number 1 PJ, SSgt Brown was lowered to the ground to search for the survivor. The PJ descended 200 feet for Bravo as he was closest to the Pass and the on scene Commander wanted him picked up first to reduce vulnerability from rapidly improving light conditions. The aircraft at this time was exposed to a large valley with a river at the bottom. The PJ was especially exposed at this time until he entered the canopy of the trees. After arriving on the ground, the PJ conducted a search for Bravo since Bravo had been unable to see the PJ descend into the trees. Bravo was found in minimum time and the pair were retrieved into the helicopter by ALC Liles, Flight Engineer/Hoist Operator, at 0652L. We then proceeded over to Alpha's position. He was located 200 yards northwest of Bravo's position approximately 150 feet from the top of the karst formation in a small ravine.

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after 25 years

I offered my Co-pilot, Major Rosten, the pickup and he immediately accepted. Again a down wind hover was necessary and the hover established above Alpha. The PJ (SSgt Brown) again exposed himself to the valley and descended to assist 82A. His chute was hanging in a dead tree approximately 150 feet from the ground. When the PJ was about 20 feet below the helicopter, the top of the tree in which the survivor was located snapped off and fell beside the survivor. The PJ continued descent to Alpha and because of the pendulum action and the speed of descent he and the jungle penetrator became entangled in the tree, parachute and shroud lines. Pulling himself through the tree in an attempt to reach Alpha, he became inverted. He continued to Alpha in the inverted position and successfully snapped a device into the survivor's parachute harness, and began to cut him loose. The hoist operator seeing that the PJ was inverted, began to slowly bring the PJ and Alpha up. SSgt Brown wisely used his knife to cut away the shroud lines and chute. At times there were extreme pressures on SSgt Brown because the chute was still secure to the tree and he had lines between himself and the penetrator. Had he not been able to cut away the chute and consequently the tree, great injury and damage could have been inflicted upon the survivor, himself and the helicopter. The PJ could not use his radio because the antenna had broken when he became entangled. The quickness on the part of the PJ and the deftness of the hoist operator, ALC Liles, were directly responsible for the recovery of 82A. With the hoist in the full up position, the survivor was still a few feet below the door, my other two PJ's, MSgt Schmidt and Sgt Williams, along with ALC Liles, exposed themselves to great danger and hostile activity by reaching down and out of the helicopter to retrieve Alpha at 0700L. With the survivors safely on board, Sandy 1 gave us an egress heading and told us to keep it on the trees. We departed with the Sandys and Nails and kept it on the deck for approximately 3 miles and then climbed to a safe altitude and proceeded back to MRP arriving at 0730L.

Other Comments:

1. Even though we were in the immediate vicinity of MUGIA Pass, Nail 25 had received all of the ordinance he had requested (in sharp contrast to the Ash Can 01 SAR on the 10th and 11th of Dec 71) and had silenced all of the big guns in the area. He was on scene most of the night and had done an excellent job.
2. Nail 07 did excellent work. Paye Nail is an invaluable asset to the SAR effort.
3. King did an excellent job on coordination of ordinance request.
4. Nail 49 and the other sector FACs gave excellent assistance in suppressing enemy activity.
5. This was probably as close to a classic SAR as possible.

Jolly Green 30 Crewmembers (Low)

AC	Major Clyde E. Bennett	SS
CP	Major Donald L. Rosten	SS
HM	ALC William T. Liles	DM
RS	MSgt Daniel L. Schmidt	SS
RS	SSgt William E. Brown	SS
RS	Sgt Dennis C. Williams	SS
AP	ALC Patrick A. Alexander	SS

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after 12 years

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Jolly Green 52 Greenwings (H10)

AC Major Kenneth E. Harrold
CP L/C Anthony E. Holland
HM SSgt Jerrold T. Dearman
RS Sgt John S. Lackeas
RS ALC Charles D. McGrath

Other SAR Forces:

Sandy's 1, 2, 3, and 4

Mail's 25, 07, and 49, and other Mail FAC's

King 21, 27, and 41

Plus many, many strike aircraft

CLYDE E. BENNETT, Major, USAF
Aircraft Commander

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GUNTIGHTER 82

(C) On 17 December, an F-4, Guntighter 82, was shot down in the vicinity of Mu Gia Pass very near the location of the Arkan 01 shootdown, and a SAR was declared. Both Guntighter 82 Alpha and Bravo reported themselves to be uninjured and with no enemy activity detected in their area despite their proximity to Mu Gia Pass.⁴⁴

(C) An OV-10 aircraft, Dove Mail 51, equipped with special electronic gear, was sent to the area. He assumed on-scene command at 2245. Mail 51, in conjunction with Mail 13, who had been working in the area, proceeded to locate the precise coordinates of the survivors by flying over them and requesting notification when the aircraft was overhead. The exact position at time of notification was obtained by precision LORAN fixing. A position was soon obtained but found to be inaccurate since the plane overhead upon notification was not the one that contained the LORAN equipment. Efforts continued to obtain a precision fix with other aircraft keeping away from the area to avoid confusion. At 0030 local, on the morning of 18 December, the position of the survivors was accurately located in the jungle away from the route structure of the pass.⁴⁵

(C) Based somewhat on lessons learned during the Arkan 01

44. SARMO Report for Guntighter 82, 11 Jan 72, (Doc 16).
45. Ibid.

SAR, a SAR working group had met on 16 December at 0100 to plan and coordinate the use of techniques and equipment to most effectively achieve SAR objectives. Many of the techniques discussed less than two days before were now brought into play by, in many cases, people from different organizations who had participated in the conference.⁴⁶

(C) With the positions of the survivors located and confirmed, heavy air strikes were put in on the road structure and known AAA positions which might hamper the rescue efforts. Area denial weapons were used to isolate Gunfighter 82 Alpha and Bravo from the roads from which the enemy would most logically approach. Heavy air strikes continued throughout the SAR, not only to neutralize the offensive capability of the enemy in the area, but also to preclude his bringing in additional AAA or ground forces which could be directed against the SAR forces or the survivors.⁴⁷

(D) Late on the 17th, a joint decision was made by JACE and the 40th Air Rescue and Recovery Squadron to attempt a pickup at night through use of the Limited Night Recovery System (LNRS) by the Jolly Greens. Accordingly, Jolly Greens 30 and 32 took off at 0340; however, 32 aborted and was replaced by 52. After they arrived in the pickup area a decision was made to hold until first light since the terrain, survivors' exact location, and AAA and SAM situations were all unknown to both crews.⁴⁸

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

(C) At 0510 a team of four A-1s was dispatched, 01, 02, 03, and 04. They reached their objective at 0530 and were welcomed by KING and Hall 19 who were at the scene. Hall 19 joined Sandy 01 to the survivors' position where 01 immediately located the parachute of Alpha who was suspended in a tree. Sandy 01 then scouted the area for enemy ground fire with 02 providing protection overhead. The rest of the SAR force held their place to the north. A reaction from the ground was encountered and Sandy 01 started a search for Bravo while Alpha tried to lower himself to the ground with the tree lowering device contained in his parachute harness. The lowering device jammed after moving only a few inches. Alpha gave up the effort to lower himself, but reported that each time Sandy 01 flew over his position Bravo reported him overhead also. It was decided that the two must be in close proximity.⁴⁹

(C) At 0622 it was decided to bring in Jolly Green 30 to Alpha's position since Bravo, while not yet located, was in the same area. Jolly Green 30 was called in while the Sandys flew a protective chain of potential fire power around him. Bravo was asked to pop his day smoke, and at 0643 he was located about 50 meters from Alpha. He was picked up within five minutes without any difficulty.⁵⁰

(C) With Bravo on board Jolly Green 30 went to Alpha's

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

parachute and lowered a PJ on the single parachute to aid in extracting Alpha from the parachute net area. Both Alpha and the PJ soon became entangled in the parachute but were cut loose by the PJ as the penetrator was slowly raised. Alpha was brought on board at 0657 and the entire force exited without having expended any ordnance or encountering any enemy fire. It was a successful SAR conducted in a hazardous area where mistakes might well cause disaster. The SAR conference conducted just two days earlier had served in good stead.⁵¹

51. Ibid.

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18 DEC 71

FALCON 66-71-75

(C) A SAR was declared at 1400 hours on 18 December 1971 when Falcon 66 was shot down by a MIG while flying MIG CAP for a D3Z mission in the vicinity of San Nera, Laos. Falcon 67, wingman of Falcon 66, reported that he saw two chutes open as Falcon 66 went down but that no beepers were heard and no radio communications established. Falcon 67 returned to his base without refining the location of the chutes he had seen.⁵²

(C) Sandys 03 and 04 had launched at 1230 on a routine mission to the Barrel Roll. Fifteen minutes after takeoff they were notified by KING of the SAR for Falcon 66 and were directed to a location 102 miles at 045 degrees from BANG on ground 138. This was in the area southeast of San Nera. Upon their arrival at the designated location contact was made with an ARV American aircraft with the call sign "Arthur" who was searching for the survivors. The Sandys and Arthur split up the area and continued the search. They were soon joined by Nail 04 who was assigned to remain near San Nera and listen for some communication from the survivors.⁵³

(C) Shortly after the arrival of Nail 04 a beeper was heard by both the Nail and the Sandys. It was traced to an area southeast of San Nera and voice contact was established shortly

52. SARNO Report for Falcon 66/71/75, 19-Dec 71, (Dec 17).
53. Ibid.

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thereafter. In addition, the search was continued for the 7th Group. It was decided that Falcon 74 and 75 and 76 had been searched for Falcon 66, but that 71 had run out of fuel and had been forced to eject. Since no word had been received from Falcon 66, the search then moved on to locate the last survivor, Falcon 70. With the search, the Mail, and Arthur searching, the location of Falcon 70 was, at 1625, determined as a short nine miles southeast of 8-10-10. Visual conditions were poor with broken to overcast conditions prevailing. Sandy 63, however, decided to go under the low clouds to try to locate the chutes by visual search rather than by radio calls. While at low altitude under the clouds his aircraft developed difficulty, indicated by an oil warning light, and he was required to jettison low altitude and return to base with Sandy 64. As some contact was then passed to Mail 14. 54

(C) Mail 14 continued to talk with Bravo so as to confirm his location. During these conversations Alpha also identified himself as being down in the same general area and able to communicate. The search by Mail 14 and Arthur was joined by Mail 09, however, due to the location close to the border of North Vietnam, operations were hampered by numerous SAM and MIG warnings. At 1648 Mail 14 refined the survivors' position to be UF 6202. The weather at that time was poor but workable, and no

54. T144.
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ground fire was normal in the area. A decision was made for a pickup before dark was made.⁵⁵

(C) Jelly Greens 52 and 56 were called into the area from where they had been holding near Lima Site 32. They departed from the site at 1730 with a new team of Sandy 01 and 02 inbound also. The weather closed in and darkness arrived and by 1800 conditions made it impossible to continue with the pickup. It was decided to wait until first light in the morning. The Jelly-Greens and Sandy's returned to RHP for the night and Lima 07 remained on-scene secured.⁵⁶

(D) During the search of the afternoon no word had been received from Falcon 66, and hope of rescue of that crew began to fade. By mid afternoon a third Falcon aircraft was also identified as missing. Falcon 75, the wingman of 74 had not only run low on fuel, but had lost navigational aids as well, and at last contact had departed the San Nam area heading over North Vietnam for the sea in hope of a "West Net" rescue. When he departed the area he was known to be almost out of fuel. By evening no contact had been established with the crews of either Falcon 66 or 75.⁵⁷

(E) As darkness came the two survivors reported they could hear people moving around them. The inhabitants of the area were known to be hostile, and it became essential to isolate the two crewmen until rescue could be made in daylight. The use of RHP-02 and CDF-11 was approved, and a protective ring was applied around

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

and on the area of the survivors, directed by the Jolly Green commander. While it served its purpose, it was to cause problems the next day.⁵⁸

(C) MIGs entering the area on several occasions forced the Nails to jettison their ordnance and take evasive action. In spite of those difficulties the Nails directed the application of the area denial munitions around Falcon 74 Alpha and Bravo and heard ordnance on hostile positions and known enemy gun locations.⁵⁹

(C) The first night SAR effort was carefully planned during the night to utilize two Jolly Greens and four Sandys. The Jolly Greens were to hold in a safe area over Lima Site 32 so as to be near the pickup site when needed. Other Sandys and Nails were programmed to assist in refinement of the search.⁶⁰

(C) Before dawn on the 19th, a four plane formation of Sandys and Nails launched from HAF in time to arrive over the crash site at the end of darkness. Weather in the area was worse than the day before, with a solid low cloud deck. At first light Sandy 01 went under the clouds and after many very low passes located 74 Alpha in a position barely visible under the clouds. Bravo reported that he was close by, but that the clouds were right on the treetops in his location. The Jolly Greens were called in and Jolly Green 62 went under the clouds to make the rescue. He was guided to 74 Alpha and went into hover over him.

58. Ibid.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.

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...to keep the jungle path clear. The ELUH-52's rotor blades started up a cloud over the ground which enveloped the helicopter and objective. It was the ELUH-52 which had been dropped during the night to protect the survivors from hostile intruders. The Jolly Green was forced to withdraw, with the crew suffering from the effects of the ELUH-52. Alpha also suffered from the same ill effects to the degree that he could hardly talk on his radio.⁶¹

(C) The crew of Jolly Green 62 required some time to recover from the ELUH-52. They then put on gas masks and again started towards the objective area. The weather on the morning had deteriorated even more, to the extent that low clouds made protective passes by the Sandy impossible. Jolly Green 62 reached Alpha again and went into a hover at which point a burst of small arms fire took out one of his engines and forced him out of the area. He was escorted to Lima Site 32 by the Sandy 03/04 flight and as he drew near that site additional ground fire was encountered from the surrounding area. Sandy 03 returned fire with his 20mm cannon and mini-guns and Jolly Green 62 was able to make an emergency landing for repairs to the engine.⁶²

(D) Clouds closed in over the survivors after the second pickup attempt, and little could be done for the time being.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

Patrol #11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

(C) Further continued but for the rest of the morning, with no further rescue attempts were made. It was found that the person on-scene command by Sandy 15 who had to return to base for help. He had Sandy 15 and Sandy 33 available, and a Sandy 33 was seen working in a safe area. They were joined by Sandy 39 who was in the area in directing a car of that person in dropping the car on and around the area.

(C) The only person who was a little ago, in

23. 23.11.
24. 24.11.

the unknown. He led Snake 31, and the Green 33 followed him down, leaving Snake 32 on top to direct the others. Conditions under the clouds were poor, with mountain peaks obscured and broken clouds in the valleys, but there were indications that visibility was improving. The Jolly Greens were called in from their holding point at Alpha Site 32, about thirty minutes away. While the Jolly Greens were on the way, Snake 31 tried to locate the objectives under the clouds with the aid of Para Mail 39 over the clouds to guide him to the correct position. Snake 31 was unable to locate Alpha or Bravo, and at 1400 he was required to return to base for fuel.⁶⁵

(C) Sentries 03 and 04 now arrived on the scene, followed shortly by Jolly Greens 55 and 60 who were escorted by Sentries 17 and 18. Mails 09, 32, and 39 were also in the area to assist. Due to previous holding time, the Jolly Greens now had limited time remaining on station and it seemed to be a "now or never" time to make another rescue attempt that day. It was now Sentry 03's turn to go under the clouds to conduct the search. He found conditions much as Snake 31 had described them, with low visibility and clouds in the higher areas. After many unfruitful attempts, often finding himself in dead end canyons but always guided back towards the survivors by Para Mail 09 and his radio watchman, Sentry 03 was required to be extracted by Alpha. The parachutes were located, and Sentry 04 was directed to guide Jolly Green 55 into the area. Mail Sentry 03 made passes to now

65. Ibid.

including any ground fire. Bravo was no nearer to the tower by Sandy 03, and Jolly Green 35 was led to the chutes. While Sandy 03 and 04 circled Bravo, Alpha was unable to pick up smoke but no smoke appeared, and Alpha could not raise the helicopter. The search again started with the survivor continuing to give directions to 03 that would lead him to where the clouds were on the treetops. The chutes were nowhere in sight now. The Jolly Green was instructed to hover as close as he could to the edge of the clouds in the direction of Alpha and look for the chute from a stable position close to the ground. As he moved in the clouds lifted from 50 to 100 feet, but not enough to see the chute or survivor. The sound of the helicopter engines proved to be the key factor, and Alpha was able to talk the Jolly Green in to his location. The rescue was made with the Sandy ready to provide fire power if required.⁶⁶

(c) Bravo came up on radio while the Jolly Green was in a hover over Alpha. He gave a vector to bring the Jolly Green over his position, and soon he too was picked up. By the completion of Bravo's rescue, Alpha's previous position was again obscured in the clouds and the overcast was again thickening. All forces returned to base after a difficult but successful run.⁶⁷

(d) Throughout the two day task effort no contact was made

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.