

[REDACTED]

will. And, we tried to glean something out of it, to help somebody else in the future. More and more, as we looked at it, we saw that it was the man who knew the SAR procedure techniques, and knew his equipment - he was the one who always had the best and fastest pickup.

[REDACTED]

Early debriefs revealed that downed crewmembers had only a sketchy knowledge of how to vector RESCAP or rescue helicopters over their position, or how to FAC for the fighters in suppressing ground fire. These procedures were stressed in the course, and at the end of 1971 were an integral part of the curriculum, with extensive classroom work and a final field exercise using the Lensatic compass and URC-64 radio to vector HH-3E helicopters in over the simulated survivor's position. ^{52/}

That Jungle Survival School training was effective was attested by the many debriefs in which the JSS was credited with being the difference between being recovered, or being killed or captured. Not atypical was the narrative given to the JSS class of 30 December 1971 by Captain Lester O'Brian, an F-4 backseater from Udorn RTAFB, Thailand. He recalled: ^{53/}

. . . I was sitting here about three weeks ago. I graduated from this course about the third of December. Three weeks ago I was sitting over there in Seat Number Nine. I was listening to the guys talk, and taking it in, but it was sort of like, 'Well okay, that's well and good, but hell, that'll never happen to me.' But I got to my unit at Udorn, and on my fourth mission I had to punch out.

. . . Everything I did, from that point on, it was something somebody said from some survival school saying, 'Now this is what you do.' First of all, I did just what they said, and looked up to check

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

my canopy. I had no holes in it or anything, but my two main lines were twisted, so I just grabbed them and gave a twist and they straightened out.

. . . I stepped out [of the harness] and, just like the guys said, I wanted to run like hell as soon as my feet hit the ground. So again, I went back to the only thing I had to go on, what the guys here at the survival school had said. So I did what Sgt Martino there always preaches, and I reached down and got my canteen out and washed the taste of fear down my throat.

The Captain was shot down on December 20th and was rescued the following day, after spending the night under a fallen log in the jungle. His survival school training had negated any fear he might have of the jungle, and in fact, he slept most of the night in his hideaway. ^{54/}

Captain O'Brian's two and a half weeks with his unit before going down in enemy territory was by no means a record. The record was held by a young man who graduated from the school and went on to his unit in South Vietnam that evening. Next morning he was shot down, wounded by small arms four times while evading a VC company, suffered through a failed rescue attempt and had to again become part of the jungle, evaded another group of VC, and finally helped in a successful rescue attempt although wounded. His wounds required that he be medevacuated to the Clark AB Hospital, from which he called the school 23 hours and 10 minutes after leaving class. ^{55/} He had put into use the training received in the course and wanted to let the instructors know how much it had helped him.