

26 MAY 72

Air Force Pedro saves Marines from sea



"The young boy at Goose Bay that tried to commit suicide for some theological reasons — I think that was the most gratifying rescue I made."

DA NANG AFIL, RVN — An HH-43 Pedro of the 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron plucked two U.S. Marine Corps A-4 crewmembers from the South China Sea.

The Pedro, piloted by Capt. Robert R. Ames, was launched when the Marines, Capt. William E. Ransbottom and CWO 2 Bruce E. Bolts, radioed that they were losing hydraulic pressure and would attempt an emergency landing here.

The Pedro was prepared to extinguish a blaze and rescue the aircrew should they crash off-base.

However, as the A-4 slowed below 140 knots, Captain Ransbottom could not maintain control of the aircraft and eject.

Captain Ames said that at that point he left his 1,000-pound fire suppressor kit at the end of the runway and followed the crippled aircraft to a point 10 miles out to sea, approximately 8 miles southeast of Da Nang.

We saw the aircraft impact in the water," Captain Ames said, "and about two minutes later we picked up the chutes."

The Pedro aircraft commander said it had to be one of the fastest overwater pickups ever. One crewmember was out of the sea within three minutes, and within three more, the second Marine was aboard.

Members of the Pedro crew in addition to Captain Ames were: Capt. Michael F. Schmidt, Copilot; Staff Sergeants David C. Newman, and Michael J. Kondask, fire-fighters; and Sgt. Larry Johnson, medical technician.

Mr. PJ talks rescue

scuba was introduced in 1960 and it put pararescue into a broader field for recovery.

MNS: At first, when you jumped in an ocean rescue, you didn't have scuba gear?

KLMIS: Right. Our water capability was very limited because of lack of equipment, exposure suits and training. Actually, our water capability up to 1960 was almost nil. Very few rescues were accomplished then. We tried to get the person needing help to help himself rather than have air rescue assistance.

MNS: You mean you just pushed the lifeboat out the door?

KLMIS: In 1960, when the recovery program in NASA was introduced, we were asked to come up with a prototype method to handle the water recovery. Rescue initiated the organized scuba capability in 1960 to support the Mercury Program. We came up with designed equipment and procedures. Fortunately, we had some of the old troops in the system and they were used to the maximum of their ability to come up with this capability. We finally solidified all the equipment and put it into standard Air Force stock issue.

MNS: Let's get back to your early career. What was your first assignment after rescue school?

KLMIS: After completing the pararescue training in 1948, my first assignment was Goose Bay, Labrador.

MNS: You did a lot of Arctic jumping?

KLMIS: We did a dropping of para-docs, Arctic recovery missions of stranded people and we jumped in crashes, if somebody was stranded in the mountains, we'd go back with the docs to pick them up because in the Arctic, if you don't have equipment, you won't last long. Jumping into the water was out of the question. The year 1949 was when I jumped from the helicopter up there.

MNS: Do you still remember the first rescue mission?

KLMIS: We jumped in a crash up in either Dakota or Canada. Rescue to us at that time was not necessarily just parachuting. You could go out and pick up people by any means. For instance, the young boy at Goose Bay that tried to commit suicide -- I think that was the most gratifying rescue I made because I got there in time to pick this kid out of the cold water.

MNS: How do you feel after a rescue like that?

KLMIS: Oh, it's fantastic. Really, it's real nice because it's all worthwhile. I think that's really what makes rescue guys go.

MNS: Did you feel the same way after your last rescue as you did after your very first one?

KLMIS: Yes, it gave me a sense of accomplishment, a purpose. You have to have a driving interest in this work. This is the thing that keeps you together. It's like going into combat every time.

PJ returns to states

after 50 months in SEA

After 50 months, three Distinguished Flying Crosses and 22 Air Medals, SSGT. Charles D. Morrow, a pararescuer (PJ) with the 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, is leaving Southeast Asia for a tour in the states.

The sergeant is a veteran of more than 1,000 combat hours. In all, Sergeant Morrow has 1,500 flying hours in the H-3, HH-53 and C-130 aircraft.

Sergeant Morrow is credited with saving eight lives. He has participated in 50 combat rescue missions, 14 of which he was part of the pick up crew.

"The greatest thing about my job," observed the Sergeant, "is that every time I've picked up a crewmember, a family was united. It really does give a guy a fantastic feeling," he said.



THE RESCUE FORCE IS READY

An HH-53 Super Jolly Green Giant helicopter of the 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, 3rd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group, is escorted on search and rescue operations over South East Asia by A-1 Skyraiders. The A-1s also provide protective fire cover in hostile areas while the helicopter picks up downed aircrews. (USAF Photo)

SURVIVOR
NAME RANK
SSAN ORIGIN

DATE	CREW	JO #	SAVE #		SAVE LOCATION	TYPE SA
08 MAY 72	KNUTSON DAKE GARCIA WAGNER MARSH	65	840	CW03 CASTONGUAY JAMES J. UNKNOWN VMFA 212	330/17/103	COMBAT
26 MAY 72	DAKE BRUNER PINA STEPHENS ARLON		842	UNKNOWN	WEST OF KHE SANH	COMBAT 2
JUNE 1972						
12 JUNE 72	KORPER LAND SEALANDER WILSON WAGNER	65	843	WO1 MARTIN, SAM. 196 INF BRIG.	SOUTH WEST OF CH 69.	1 COMBAT
15 JUNE 72	SCOTT MORRIS PINA FRIEDRICH Young	64	844	UNKNOWN VNAF	283/13/69	1 COMBAT

Dry spell broken for 'Pedro' rescuers

The end of a long dry spell for the Pedros of the 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron (ARRS) at Da Nang came early May 26 with a "feet wet" pickup of two crew members from a U.S. Marine A-4.

Capt. Robert R. Ames, 25, Parma, Ohio, and his four-man crew launched their HH-43 Huskie helicopter in response to an in-flight emergency early that morning.

A Marine Corps A-4 was on final, declaring lost hydraulic pressure. The Pedros were prepared to extinguish a blaze and rescue the two crew members should they crash off base.

As the aircraft slowed below 140 knots, the Marine pilot was losing control and elected to bail out at sea.

Captain Ames said, at that point, he left the 1,000-pound fire suppression bottle at the end of the runway and followed the crippled A-4 to a point 10 miles out to sea, approximately eight miles southeast of Da Nang.

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CAPT. ROBERT R. AMES

Dry spell broken...

(Continued from Page 1)

"We saw the aircraft impact in the water," he explained, "and about two minutes later we saw the chutes."

The Pedro aircraft commander said it had to be one of the fastest pickups ever. One crew member was out of the water within three minutes and within three more, the second Marine was aboard.

The feet wet pickup marked the first save for the Da Nang Pedros since June 1971. It added two more names to the more than 1,100 persons saved by the local Pedro detachment since 1965.

Capt. William E. Ransbottom, the A-4 pilot and CW02 Bruce E. Boltz, the rear-seater, smiled their gratitude at the Pedro crew as they were picked up.

In on the save with Captain Ames were Capt. Michael F. Schmidt, 29, Austin, copilot; fire fighters SSgt. David C. Newman, 24, Cuero, Tex., and SSgt. Michael J. Knodash, 27, Graham, Wash.; and medical technician Sgt. Larry Johnson, 21, Morganton, N.C.

DA NANG AFLD, RVN—An HH-43 Pedro from the 37th ARRSq here plucked two U. S. Marine Corps A-4 crewmembers from the South China Sea in one of the fastest "feet wet" rescues reported in Southeast Asia.

Piloted by Capt Robert R. Ames, the Pedro launched with a Fire Suppression Kit when the Marines radioed that they were losing hydraulic pressure and would attempt an emergency landing here. However, as the battle-damaged A-4 slowed below 140 knots, the pilot could not control the aircraft and was forced to fly out over the sea and eject.

Capt Ames left the FSK at the end of the runway and followed the crippled aircraft to a point at sea, approximately eight miles northeast of Da Nang, where the Marines ejected. The Pedro flew to the probable splash-down area and, as the first pilot surfaced and started swimming for his raft, he found a forest penetration seat, with flotation collar, just to his right where it had been lowered from the HH-43. He placed himself on the penetrator and was hoisted aboard the rescue helicopter—less than one minute after entering the water. The other Marine was hoisted to safety three minutes later. The rescue gave the Da Nang Pedros the first saves of the year and added two more men to the more than 1,100 persons saved by the SEA Pedros since 1965.

Other members of the HH-43 crew were Capt Michael F. Schmidt, copilot; SSgts David C. Newman and Michael J. Kondash, firefighters; Sgt Larry Johnson, medical technician, and SSgt John Szczecina, crewman.