

56 SOW
Apr - Jun 72 vol. 3
1 SOS 1-31 May 72
K-WG-56-HI

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strikes. A last light pick-up attempt by the Jollys were shot off by 12.7mm on the run in. The next morning strikes were made on the remaining gun positions and the Jollys made a successful pick-up.

On 2 May Stinger 41 was shot down by several 37mm guns near An Loc in South Viet Nam. Sandys 05/06 (Lt L. C. Smith, Capt Morgan) launched from Bien Hoa and directed the quick pick-up of six survivors with Jolly Greens while an Army helicopter rescued a seventh survivor.

On 11 May Ice Bag 04 (F-105) was shot down about 60 miles southwest of Hanoi. There were two survivors but by the time the Sandys reached the area Bravo advised that Alpha was being chased by villagers. Alpha never came up on the radio again. Bravo then reported people nearing his position and the Sandy began taking small arms fire. They attempted to silence the small arms but the job was complicated because they couldn't determine the exact location of the survivor. Darkness came before the ground fire could be fully suppressed. The rescue effort the next day was hampered by a lack of available ordnance, numerous MIG calls and encounters, and bad weather. Several times the Sandys were ready to try a pick-up when they were chased out of the area by MIGs. Two MIG-19s were seen less than one half mile from the Sandys. The only ordnance available to suppress the ever increasing ground fire was that carried by the Sandys. It was finally decided to try a first light effort the next day using only A-1's to suppress ground fire but the launch

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100-200 yards from the Stinger.⁷³

(S) On 2 May, Stinger 41 was flying a daylight support mission over An Loc. Multiple 37mm hits blew off the right jet and disabled the right reciprocating engine. Immediate bailout would have meant certain capture and probable death for the crew. The aircraft commander elected to try for safer territory and steered the rapidly descending gunship toward the Southwest away from the city. Delaying as long as possible, the AC finally gave the bailout order. Still, some crewmembers received ground fire while descending in their parachutes. The last to escape was the copilot who ran as hard as he could to the rear of the aircraft and pulled his lanyard as he leaped from the door. A Sundog FAC later stated that the copilot was "in the treetops" when the chute finally blossomed. The seven surviving crewmembers were picked up shortly by Army and Jolly Green helicopters. The bodies of the other three crewmembers were recovered on 6 May.⁷⁴

(S) Early in May the SA-7 "Strella" made its debut in the Vietnamese skies. Because of its mobility and accuracy, this missile had more impact on Stinger operations than any other weapon in the NVA arsenal. A no fly line was drawn across Quang

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid. Also see Aircraft and Personnel Losses, this volume, pages 59 and 60.

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DCC ^{B15}

approximately 10 km north-northeast of Kontum in Military Region II (25 165 013). Working with ground controller, "Seesaw 14", the crew of Stinger 56 sighted and attacked four enemy tanks and an enemy troop concentration, destroying one tank and damaging the remaining three. The crew was additionally credited by Seesaw 14 with 50 - 60 KBA.

3. On 1 May, Stinger 32, piloted by Capt Charles Packman, was working with ground controller "Slingshot" north of the Plainnes des Jarres in the Barrel Roll (UH 0503). After firing at the controller's direction and departing the area, Slingshot radioed the crew that he counted 100KBA.

4. On 25 June, Stinger 43, piloted by Capt Charles Polack, was sent to a position on the Mekong River in Cambodia to locate a site containing a suspected concentration of enemy barges. Arriving on site after navigating through intense cloud coverage the crew came upon an estimated 200 enemy barges. After receiving clearance from the Seventh Air Force Tactical Air Control Center the crew damaged 18 and destroyed seven of the barges before expending the entire ammunition load. The attack started one large fire, one medium fire, six small fires and one large explosion. This was the largest number of enemy watercraft damaged and destroyed in a single mission.

D. (U) Battle Losses AC-47

1. On 2 May, Stinger 41, piloted by Capt Terrance Courtney was on a mission over An Loc when the aircraft, #826, was