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3ARRGp History, Oct - Dec 1972

Chapter V

MISSION SUPPORT

5-1. (U) 3ARRGp Key Personnel:

Colonel Cecil N. Muirhead	CC
Lt Colonel James J. Krajicek	DO
Lt Colonel Anthony J. Pannella	JROC
Lt Colonel John W. Sniagowski	XP
Captain Andrew B. Comrie	SE
MSgt Robert C. Martin	1st Sgt

5-2. (S) Combat Loss: On 27 December 1972, an HH-53C of the 40ARRSq was destroyed by escort A-7 Sandies after being abandoned on a ridge in Laos. The aircraft had been badly damaged during a rescue attempt and was losing fuel and unable to refuel. Unable to reach a secure area, the aircraft was landed on a ridge and the crew extracted.

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(1) the higher speed increased the survivability of this RESCORT aircraft, and (2) its navigation system was very effective in locating survivors¹²⁶ and leading the Jolly Greens to them.

(C) Jackel 33. On 22 December 1972, Jackel 33, an F-111 from Takhli¹²⁷ RTAFB, was downed by unknown causes¹²⁸ 17 miles southwest of Hanoi.

After several days delay due to weather, SAR forces attempted to rescue the Jackel 33 crew on 27 December during a LINEBACKER II mission. The task force consisted of 13 A-7 Sandys, four Jolly Greens, two HC-130 Kings, and¹²⁹ 32 F-4s.

(C) Upon reaching the objective area, Jolly Green 01 began ingress 18 miles from the survivor. With the aid of a smoke screen set up by two Sandys, the Jolly Green reached the rescue area without encountering enemy defenses. As the Jolly Green neared one survivor, enemy gunfire came from all directions. Using miniguns and automatic rifles to engage the enemy, the helicopter hovered over the survivor and dropped the penetrator. The survivor got within five feet of the penetrator but was blown off his feet¹³⁰ by the helicopter downwash.

(C) At this time, the copilot of the Jolly Green was wounded and five or six enemy soldiers attempted to run under the aircraft. The helicopter had been in a hover for over 60 seconds and the enemy was still firing from all directions. There was blood all over the cockpit from the copilot's¹³¹ wound. With the situation hopeless, the pilot left without the survivor.

(C) During egress, the aircraft experienced stability and control problems and was low on fuel. An attempt to refuel with King was unsuccessful.

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due to damage to the refueling probe. The pilot made an emergency landing in Laos and immediately received fire from nearby villagers. Jolly Green 03 recovered the Jolly Green 01 crew. Attempts to salvage equipment from Jolly Green 01 were unsuccessful due to enemy ground fire, and Sandy aircraft¹³² destroyed the downed helicopter.

(C) The Jackel 33 mission was a bitter disappointment because the Jolly Green had come so close to rescuing the survivor. Jolly Green 01 was the 3d ARRG's third and last aircraft loss in combat between 1 April 1972 and 30 June 1973. The other two were lost on the Bat 21 Mission and¹³³ in a rocket attack at Da Nang.

(C) Spectre 17. On 21 December 1972, Spectre 17, an AC-130 Gunship, was downed over Laos. Because of enemy activity in the rescue area, the crew of Jolly Green 32 decided to attempt a night rescue using the NRS.

(C) After take-off, Jolly Green 32 contacted Spectre 07, who had voice contact with two survivors, and requested that the survivors have their strobe lights with IR covers, radios, and flares ready for immediate use. Using the LLLTV and illumination from the moor, Jolly Green 32 proceeded towards the survivors at 400 feet AGL. The Jolly Green crew detected a strobelight, and as the aircraft turned towards the survivors, the strobe was picked up on the LLLTV. Using the LLLTV, the pilot hovered the HH-53 near the first survivor who was then brought on board.

(C) The Jolly Green began the search for the second survivor. Five minutes later his strobe light was located. As Jolly Green 32 approached the second survivors, the radar altimeter picked up a large tree and the

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Jackal 33 Bravo
An Overdue Briefing
by
Charles J. Rouhier

I was a Jolly Green Giant Flight Engineer (FE) participating in the failed rescue of Jackal 33 Alpha, Capt. Robert Sponeyberger, and Bravo, Lt. William W. Wilson December 23 - 27, 1972. In January 1973 I went TDY to Takhli for a conference with the 474th TFW F-111 unit. They asked me to present a briefing on the events of the 26 December 1972 rescue attempt of 33 Bravo at the end of the session. At the completion of the other briefings no one brought up my briefing and I did not volunteer. I believe there was a couple of reasons for this: First, I was a snooty kid of 20 at the time and had never spoken before a large crowd before. It scared the hell out of me. Second, it bothered me tremendously that we came so close to rescuing Wilson, but we just were not good enough. There was a lot of guilt over that mission and I did not feel like talking about it.

With the departure of the F-111's from the Air Force (A.F.) inventory it's time for this long overdue briefing. To the Aardvarks who were at Takhli in 1973 I apologize for shirking my duties at that conference.

Jackal 33, crippled by Triple-A over downtown Hanoi on the night of 22 December 1972 exited the target area on a single engine. The crew limped to the first ridge line west and ejected about 17 miles from the edge of Hanoi. I am still not sure of the exact location. If memory serves, 33 Alpha's capture was sometime on the 24th or 25th. On the 24th I was the FE on Jolly 2, Alpha High. Little did we know this mission foretold the events of coming days. The primary hydraulic flight control system failed shortly after crossing the border into North Vietnam (NVN) and a fire started in the left forward electronics bay when the Tacan failed. We aborted and RTBed to Nakhon Phanom (NKP). The remainder of the force continued, but could not penetrate due to weather. SAR forces were in the area again on the 25th, but weather again prevented a rescue.

The night of the 26th the weather cleared sufficiently to allow a rescue attempt on the 27th. We woke about 0300 for briefings and preparations. Included in the rescue package, as I recall, were four HH-53C's, two HC-130's and eight A-7D Corsairs. Additional support was provided by other units for MIGCAP, SAM suppression, tankers for the fast movers and AEW. I was the FE on Jolly 1, Alpha Low, on this day. Alpha High was Jolly 2, Bravo Low, Jolly 3 and Bravo High, Jolly 4.

The crew of Jolly 1 was:

- Capt. Richard D. Shapiro -- Pilot
- Capt. Miguel A. Pereira -- Copilot, "Bear" to those who knew and loved him.
- Sgt. Charles J. Rouhier -- Flight Engineer
- A1C Robert W. Jones -- Pararescuemen (PJ), Ramp
- TSgt. John R. Carlson -- Pararescuemen (PJ), Left window
- Combat Cameraman -- Sorry. I do not remember his name.

We departed NKP before first light and proceeded north past Udorn. We crossed into Laos between Vientiane and Pak Sane and proceeded North East around the Plaine-des-Jarres to a holding point just west of the NVN/Laos border. Systems problems kept me busy and I am not sure of our exact route. Just after passing into Laos we test fired the miniguns. The window gun failed to operate and I spent the next several hours trying to fix the problem. I salvaged parts from the door weapon to repair it. Losing the door weapon is not a problem since the hoist precludes its use. Once we reached our holding point another problem manifested itself. The upper ramp door kept detaching itself and falling on the ramp PJ's head. Normally, FE's disable the ramp hydraulics during a combat mission and the up-locks keep the door in place. This time it did not work and hydraulic power remained on to the ramp. This is a risk since the utility hydraulic system supplies this and other non-essential systems. Disabling these systems mitigates the effects of battle damage.

Sandy's 1 (Lead), 2, 3, and 4 proceeded to the survivor's area to pinpoint his location and suppressed the ground fire. We spent considerable time orbiting waiting for the Sandy's to make the area safe enough for a rescue. The North Vietnamese Army (NVA) had at least two 51 cal's in the area and a considerable number of troops. We were confident the NVA knew the location of 33 Bravo and we were heading into a flak trap.

We refueled several times waiting for the call from Sandy Lead. If I remember right, about thirty minutes after our last refueling we got a call (we thought from Sandy Lead) to make the rescue. We turned east and crossed the border into North Vietnam at maximum speed and very low altitude. I believe two Sandy's escorted us while the other two stayed with the remaining Jollies in the holding area. We observed numerous bunkers being built into the sides of the mountains as we ingressed. At one point we passed a NVA truck barreling down a mountain road. The driver's surprise to see us lower than him almost caused him to drive off the cliff. To this day, I believe if I would have waved at him he would have. As we reached the Black River the Sandy's laid a smoke corridor across the river to screen us from a 57mm site to the North west. Several rounds of 57mm passed behind us as we crossed. Sandy 5 announced our arrival in the area to which Sandy Lead responded with something along the lines of "What the hell are you doing here?" We were setup and should have authenticated the call. Murphy was clearly along in spades on this mission. The North Vietnamese sucker us in with the call. Whoever he was, his English was very good.

We ended up passing over 33 Bravo's area at about 150 knots since Sandy Lead was not ready to pinpoint his location. We flew around the mountain and this put us briefly over the plains with Hanoi barely visible in the distance. We came back around the mountain from roughly south. From the time we entered 33 Bravo's area we were taking heavy small arms and 51 cal. At some point during this time the copilot took two small arms' rounds through the right elbow. Nobody was aware of this for sometime. One of the Sandy's also reported we were losing a lot of fuel from our left side. As we came back around the mountain Shapiro was trying to slow up the Jolly. The Sandy's were calling for Bravo to pop smoke, telling us to slow down, and trying to suppress the ground fire we were taking. We overshot the survivor again and had to perform a hovering turn to

get back into the area. Twice we passed directly over a 51 cal site. The second time over the ramp PJ silenced it. I never saw this weapon, which surprised Bob Jones at the debriefing. Locating 33 Bravo was more important to me than looking for bad guys. The smoke from Bravo's Mk13 had dissipated by the time we got into a hover over his general area. Locating him proved difficult due to the high, blowing elephant grass. I am not sure how long we were in a hover looking for him. It seemed like hours, but was probably only minutes. The whole time we were taking a lot of hits. We could see the NVA moving in on us the entire time. Only the ramp minigun was firing. At the debriefing Bob Jones reported NVA under the Jolly firing into the bottom of his gun tub. The window minigun was not firing and I was beginning to think Carlson was hit. I eventually heard him firing his CAR-15.

I finally spotted 33 Bravo about our 2 o'clock making his way to the Jolly. I directed the pilot over his position and set the penetrator down about three feet from him. He was reaching for the penetrator when our rotor wash knocked him backwards. He was getting up when the pilot pulled power and exited the area. Even though we were taking numerous hits I was not aware of any critical damage to the Jolly. I pulled the penetrator into the helo, turned and scanned the instruments. Everything appeared to be working, at least from the instruments not shattered by ground fire. There were many holes through the various cockpit windows. I asked Shapiro why we left. He said he had just then heard Bear report being hit. It was the first any of us knew of Bear's injuries.

Our fuel state at this time was critical and fuel would not transfer from the drops even though everything appeared to be working electrically. The Sancy's were giving us directions to exit the area. I applied a tourniquet to Bear's arm and directed the closest PJ to attend the copilot. I manned Carlson's minigun only to discover it had failed again. That's why there was no firing from his side. With Bear out of the seat I jumped in to assist the pilot. All of this occurred prior to re-crossing the Black River. The Sandy's were a tad late laying the smoke and we were on the front edge of the screen as we crossed. No one noticed if the 57 fired at us or not.

One of the Kings (forget which) crossed into NVN to give us gas. We rendezvoused with King and Alpha High. The probe would not extend and we had to plug in to King with the probe retracted. This put us very close to the HC-130 with the drogue flying underneath the rotor blades. Turbulence from our abnormal closeness to the HC-130 caused us to disconnect once. The front of the probe had taken one or more hits and the fuel King was sending us went right into the slipstream. I do not think any of it made it to the tanks. I told the pilot we did not have any more time for this. The left main showed 0 pounds and the right about 250 pounds. I had no idea if they were accurate or damaged. Alpha High picked a landing site on a mountain top for us. I believe we had only reached the border at this time. We took more ground fire as we went in for a fast hard landing. I am not sure if the engines flamed out before or as I shut them down. Alpha High landed about fifty yards from us up the hill. We abandoned the Jolly and got into the High bird. We then left the area and headed home.

Due to the late hour the Sandy's put 33 Bravo to bed for the night. Jolly 3 and 4 along with several Sandy's stayed in the area of our helo for a while. I believe it was Bravo Low that went back in to see if the Jolly was salvageable. While the PJ's were inspecting the helo they came under ground fire from people moving up the mountain from a village in the valley. They abandon the Jolly and the Sandy's destroyed it.

We landed briefly at Udorn to drop Bear off at the hospital. He never came back to the 40th and went directly back to the States. We got back to NKP some thirteen or so hours after we took off, debriefed and went to the hooch. The bombing halted the next day and the Jollies did not attempt another rescue of Jackal 33 Bravo.

I believe Jackal 33 Bravo's capture occurred a couple of days later. I understand assets were directing him to a safer location or possibly into Laos at the time of his capture.

This concludes the briefing of the Jackal 33 Bravo mission. Please accept my sincerest apologies for its tardiness.

Postscript.

I talked to Bear after I got back to the States in April 73. The A. F. medically discharged him and he was pursuing a law degree in New York. He only had about 60% mobility in his right arm from the wounds. I heard in '81 or '82 he had gotten back in the A. F. as a JAG.

I have no idea what happened to Richard Shapiro, John Carlson or the Combat Cameraman. I had no contact with them after I got back.

Bob Jones joined me at the Rescue unit at Patrick AFB, FL for about a year until I separated from the A.F. I do not know what happened to him after that.

From: Rouhier Chuck Contr ASC/SYM <Chuck.Rouhier@wpafb.af.mil>
To: 'Robert LaPointe' <rlapointe@gci.net>
Date: Monday, July 26, 1999 6:30 AM
Subject: RE: Jackal 33 SAR

Bob,

Thanks for the copies. By all means use what I sent you. Did I send you any of the pics from the Russian museum or our little reunion last August? I've been working on a Powepoint presentation of the mission for the CAP cadets I work with. Do you want a copy of it? It has all of the pictures in it. Including the ones from the hill where we abandoned the Jolly. Do you want a copy of the citation? Or anything else?

Chuck

Jolly FE '71-'74

-----Original Message-----

From: Robert LaPointe [mailto:rlapointe@gci.net]
Sent: Sunday, July 25, 1999 2:03 PM
To: Rouhier, Chuck home; Rouhier, Chuck - work
Subject: Jackal 33 SAR

Another land mark was reached today as I completed inputting all material collected into files and databases. One of the last missions I cataloged was the Jackal 33 SAR. Attached are two documents relating to this SAR from the 3 ARRGp history records. I also have the copy of the briefing you prepared and would like your permission to use it and quote you.

I will be returning to Maxwell in the next four months to finish collecting research. The research phase of this project will terminate on 31 Dec 99. Effective Jan 2000 I will take a break from school and work for four months. During this period, the final draft will be produced and sent to the printers prior to June 2000.

Thanks for your help on this project.

Bob

From: Robert LaPointe <rlapointe@gci.net>
To: Rouhier, Chuck home <JollyFE@hotmail.com>; Rouhier, Chuck - work
 <Chuck.Rouhier@wpafb.af.mil>
Date: Sunday, July 25, 1999 10:03 AM
Subject: Jackal 33 SAR

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Thanks for your help on this project.

Bob

Picture Attachments:

due to damage to the refu
 in Laos and immediately
 03 recovered the Jolly Gr
 Jolly Green 01 were unsuc
 craft destroyed the down



"Taking fire from everywhere"

By
1st Lt. David T. Rivard
67 ARRSq. Information Officer

"We were taking fire from everywhere and just when we thought we had him, he disappeared." This was the way TSgt. John R. Carlson, now assigned to the 67th ARRSq., RAF Bentwaters, England, recalled a rescue attempt which earned him and the crew of the Jolly Green the Silver Star.

The mission began at first light Dec. 27, 1972 from Nakhon Phanom RTAFB, Thailand. The Jolly Green crew was scrambled to rescue a pilot who had been forced to bailout only 20 kilometers from Hanoi.

Although the mission began at first light, the actual rescue attempt did not take place until 3 p.m. The Jolly Green entered the rescue area across the Black River and flew down a corridor of smoke put down by the Sandys, who also were attacking the guns which protected the area and a MIG field just the other side of a nearby mountain.

The downed pilot was located on the side of a mountain. To make the rescue even more difficult, there were three 51-calibre machine guns located around him. The other pararescueman with Carlson, A1C Robert W. Jones, took out one of the guns on the way in but then heavy ground fire

began from other enemy troops on the ground.

As the pilot, Capt. Richard D. Shapiro, began to maneuver for the pickup, the ground fire became more intense and accurate. "I remember the copilot, Capt. Miguel A. Pereira, shouting he was hit, but alright," said Sergeant Carlson. "At the same time my minigun malfunctioned and I was forced to use my automatic hand weapon."

Sergeant Carlson also recalled that when he was able to get to the cockpit, to attend to Captain Pereira's wounds, he found the wind screen was shattered from small arms hits; and that Captain Shapiro had small arms hits on both sides of the wall beside his head and on the floor.

Within a few seconds of Pereira being hit, the downed pilot was seen running for the Jolly Green. "We could see him coming and then he was gone. The rotor wash had swept him down the hillside and he was not sighted again. It was a tremendous let down to be so close and then to miss getting him out," Sergeant Carlson remarked.

Throughout this short time span of just three minutes, the Jolly Green had taken a tremendous amount of hits. After seeing the downed pilot disappear, Captain Shapiro decided to exit the area.

"With vital controls damaged, Captain Shapiro had to fly right down the side of the mountain to get up enough airspeed to reach altitude. It was as we were exiting at tree-top level that we discovered another problem - our fuel tanks had been hit," recalled Sergeant Carlson. Sergeant Carlson added that probably the most important factor in their getting out was flying directly into the sun; thereby becoming a poor target for the guns.

"Our problems didn't end there," said Sergeant Carlson. "We were losing fuel, and once out of the area we tried for a hookup with a refueler and found that our refueling probe would not extend. Captain Shapiro made several attempts to hookup without the extension, but to no avail. It was then we knew we had to abandon the aircraft."

A mountain top in Laos was chosen as the site to set the Jolly Green down. "As we approached the site," Sergeant Carlson remembered, "we began taking ground fire again. We managed to set the aircraft down and get onboard the backup Jolly Green with no further casualties, and headed for home."

"For their gallantry and devotion to duty" Sergeant Carlson and the crew of the Jolly Green were awarded the nation's second highest award, the Silver Star.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS PACIFIC AIR FORCES
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96353

SPECIAL ORDER
GB-1008

19 NOVEMBER 1973

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT, EACH OF THE FOLLOWING IS
AWARDED THE SILVER STAR FOR GALLANTRY WHILE SERVING WITH
FRIENDLY FOREIGN FORCES ENGAGED IN AN ARMED CONFLICT AGAINST
AN OPPOSING ARMED FORCE ON DATE INDICATED.

SSAN	NAME	DN	P/S
	CAPTAIN		
	PEREIRA MIGUEL A	721227	NAQ JS
	BASIC		
	SHAPIRO RICHARD D	721227	NAQ JS
	BASIC		
	TECHNICAL SERGEANT		
	CARLSON JOHN R	721227	NAQ JS
	BASIC		
	SERGEANT		
	ROUHIER CHARLES J	721227	NAQ JS
	BASIC		
	AIRMAN FIRST CLASS		
	JONES ROBERT W	721227	NAQ JS
	BASIC		

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

JESSIE [Signature] MAJOR USAF
ASST DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

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GP-1008

JACKBL 33 SAR

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF

THE SILVER STAR

TO

CHARLES J. ROUHIER

Sergeant Charles J. Rouhier distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force near Hanoi, North Vietnam on 27 December 1972. On that date, Sergeant Rouhier, a Flight Engineer on an HH-53C Rescue Helicopter, voluntarily flew into a highly hostile and heavily defended area to attempt the rescue of a downed American airman. Despite intense groundfire being directed at his hovering helicopter, Sergeant Rouhier stood in the unprotected crewdoor in order to locate the survivor and then lowered the rescue device. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Sergeant Rouhier has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.



CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF

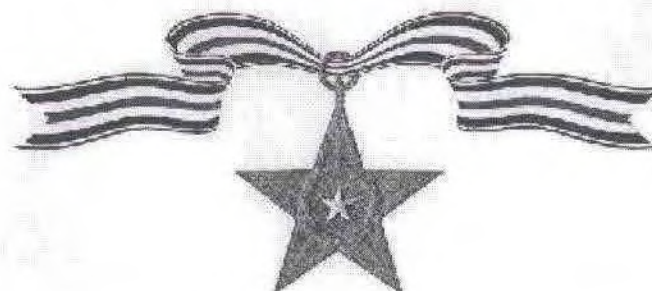
THE SILVER STAR

TO

JOHN R. CARLSON

Technical Sergeant John R. Carlson distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force near Hanoi, North Vietnam on 27 December 1972. On that date, Sergeant Carlson, a Pararescue Technician on an HH-53C Rescue Helicopter, voluntarily flew into a highly hostile area to attempt the rescue of a downed American airman. Utilizing a handheld automatic weapon when his minigun malfunctioned, Sergeant Carlson deliberately stood in the open to defend his hovering helicopter against intense groundfire so that a position above the survivor could be maintained. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Sergeant Carlson has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.





THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AUTHORIZED BY ACT OF CONGRESS JULY 9, 1918
HAS AWARDED

THE SILVER STAR

TO
SERGEANT CHARLES J. ROUHIER
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
FOR
GALLANTRY IN ACTION

27 DECEMBER 1972

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON
THIS 27th DAY OF December 19 72



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS PACIFIC AIR FORCES
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96353

SPECIAL ORDER
GB-1008

19 NOVEMBER 1973

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT, EACH OF THE FOLLOWING IS
AWARDED THE SILVER STAR FOR GALLANTRY WHILE SERVING WITH
FRIENDLY FOREIGN FORCES ENGAGED IN AN ARMED CONFLICT AGAINST
AN OPPOSING ARMED FORCE ON DATE INDICATED.

SSAN	NAME	DN	PAS
CAPTAIN			
583093312	PEREIRA MIGUEL A BASIC	721227	NAOKJS
291387999	SHAPIRO RICHARD C BASIC	721227	NAOKJS
TECHNICAL SERGEANT			
332342231	CARLSON JOHN R BASIC	721227	NAOKJS
SERGEANT			
285926112	ROUHIER CHARLES J BASIC	721227	NAOKJS
AIRMAN FIRST CLASS			
264022076	JONES ROBERT W BASIC	721227	NAOKJS

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

JESSIE [Signature] MAJOR USAF
ASST DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

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