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Mission Narrative - 20 Oct 66

Jolly Green 02 (Low Bird) and Jolly Green 36 (High Bird) were scrambled from Nakhon Phanom at 0030Z. Take-off was accomplished at 0034Z and both helicopters proceeded to coordinates 16°/58 N, 105°/53 E, where two F-4C pilots (Avenger 3) had ejected. Enroute to the scene, a revised position of 99°/79 N.M. from TACan Channel 89 was received, which later proved to be more accurate than the original coordinates. The Jolly Greens were escorted to the area by Sandy 07 and 08. Sandys 2 and 3 were on the scene when we arrived at 0120Z, and through use of UHF/DF and visual sightings on the Sandy aircraft, we determined the general location of the downed pilots. Voice contact on guard channel was made and Jolly Green 02 established a hover over the rear seat pilot. His parachute was entangled in the top of a 200 foot tree, which the rotor wash came dangerously close to untangling from the limbs. The survivor had difficulty transferring from his parachute harness to the jungle penetrator, and this increased the time required for the pick-up. Intense ground fire from nearby automatic weapons was heard and could be felt hitting the helicopter from the left side before the pilot could position himself on the penetrator. Ordinance was requested from Sandy 5, but since the exact location of the second downed pilot was unknown, he deemed it inadvisable to expend ordinance. The tail of the helicopter was turned into the on-coming ground fire and the pick-up continued. The survivor was wounded in two places while being raised on the hoist. The pick-up was completed after 8 minutes of hovering. Immediately after take-off with the survivor on board, the transmission oil pressure dropped to zero and the warning light illuminated. Flight was continued for approximately six miles.

Jolly Green 36 had established an orbit on the 100°/74 N.M. radial of Channel 89 while Jolly Green 02 dropped below the cloud deck to effect the recovery. Visual monitoring of Jolly Green 02 was impossible because of the clouds and he was last observed on a heading of 140°. As Jolly Green 02 disappeared from view, Sandy 05 reported ground fire in the vicinity of the survivors. Shortly afterwards, Jolly Green 02 also reported ground fire during his pick-up effort on the ^{rear} seat man. Approximately three minutes later, 02 reported that he had zero transmission oil pressure, that he was going to land, and requested that Jolly Green 36 come down and try to pick them up. 36 immediately began a circling descent, visually located 02 upon breaking out below the cloud cover, and maneuvered into a trail position approximately one-half mile behind, and above 02. 02 was observed at approximately 500 feet altitude, descending, and heading for a clearing. Jolly Green 36 observed a village located on the edge of 02's intended landing area and so advised him. 02 acknowledged and continued to fly at approximately 100 feet above the trees to another clearing about one half mile further away where he executed his landing and shut down. Jolly Green 36 dropped his tips,

DOWNGRADED
IAW AFR-205-2

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS
DD DIR 5200.10

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ARDC 663380

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Hq ARRS SC No. 663343

66-AD-1273

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142

began dumping fuel during the approach, and landing which was about 25 yards from 02. Dense elephant grass separated the two aircraft. Ground fire was again encountered by 02 as the crew-members evacuated their aircraft. Two crew-members received superficial wounds from bullet fragments, (The Flight Mechanic and Paramedic). When the four helicopter crewmen and the survivor had boarded, a maximum performance take-off was made, climbing to 2000 feet above the terrain. During the climb out, ~~Jolly Green 36~~ ^{KING} directed Sandys 07 and 08 to destroy Jolly Green 02. Sandys 07 and 08 rolled in on the downed helicopter and when it was last seen, dense white smoke was rising from it. Upon request, Sandy 05 and 07 victored 36 into the area of the back seat pilot and around several populated areas. A Nail aircraft orbiting the downed pilot spotted his location for 36 by pointing with his left wing. This marking saved valuable time in locating the survivor because of the large number of white parachutes throughout the entire area. Voice communication with the survivor was established but only 50% of his transmissions were readable. As 36 came to a hover over the trees, ALC Ward saw several armed men start from the jungle into a clearing about 75 yards away. He leveled his M-16 and fired from the hip at the men. All men disappeared immediately, but ground fire continued throughout the pickup. The firing of the M-16 in automatic made without prior warning from ALC Ward led 36 to believe he was under fire from beneath the aircraft and 36 departed the scene. This mistake was discovered and 36 returned to the area where the pickup was made at approximately at 0300Z. Sandy 05 advised a departure heading and all aircraft began a return to Channel 89.

During the return flight and join-ups, Sandy 08 was unaccounted for. Sandy 05 was encountering engine difficulties at the same time. Wreckage of Sandy 08 was discovered in the recovery area by unknown aircraft. Additional SAR effort was impossible by Jolly Green 36 because of fuel state (750 lbs) and recovery was made at Channel 89 at 0405Z. Weather generally was good throughout the mission. Cloud conditions in the pick-up area were 3500 AGL broken and visibility 10 miles.

Radio discipline was good except by the fighter aircraft flying high cover. Unnecessary radio chatter on UHF on the scene was excessive.

Numerous white parachutes in trees in the area of the downed pilots caused difficulty in pin-pointing the downed pilot's location. It is impossible to differentiate between a personnel chute and a flare chute from the air. Since the size cannot be determined when the chutes are hanging from the limbs of a tree.

TIME: 00128Z
DOWNED PILOT: 1st Lt. Joseph E. Merrick
RECOVERY AREA: 099°/79 N.M.
RADIO PROCEDURES: Excellent
CREW COORDINATION: Excellent

JOLLY GREEN - 02

RCC - Major Adrian D. Youngblood
RCCP - 1st Lt. Edward G. Burford
HM - A2C Gary R. Meyer
PJ - A2C Thomas C. Davis

ADRIAN D. YOUNGBLOOD, Major, USAF
RCC

TIME: 00142Z
DOWNED PILOT: Major Lacey Breckenridge
RECOVERY AREA: 099°/79 N.M.
RADIO PROCEDURES: Excellent
CREW COORDINATION: Excellent

JOLLY GREEN 36

RCC - Captain Leland T. Kennedy
RCCP - 1st Lt. Elmer C. Lavender
HM - SSgt Raymond Godsey
PJ - ALC Robert J. Ward

DOWNGRADED

IAW AFR-205.2

ARDC 663380

Hq ARRS SC No. 663743

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3d ARRGp Hist, Oct-Dec 66

Det 2-3-117-20 Oct (RCC Narrative)

(C) (GP-4) Jolly Green 02 (Low Bird) and Jolly Green 36 (High Bird) were scrambled at 0030Z. Take-off was accomplished at 0034Z and both helicopters proceeded to a point SW of Dong Hoi, where two F-4C pilots (Avenger 3) had ejected. Enroute to the scene, a revised position was received, which later proved to be more accurate than the original coordinates. The Jolly Greens were escorted to the area by Sandy 07 and 08. Sandys 2 and 3 were on the scene when we arrived at 0120Z, and through use of UHF/DF and visual sightings on the Sandy aircraft, we determined the general location of the downed pilots. Voice contact on guard channel was made and Jolly Green 02 established a hover over the rear seat pilot. His parachute was entangled in the top of a 200 foot tree, which the rotor wash came dangerously close to untangling from the limbs. The survivor had difficulty transferring from his parachute harness to the jungle penetrator, and this increased the time required for the pick up. Intense ground fire from nearby automatic weapons was heard and could be felt hitting the helicopter from the left side before the pilot could position himself on the penetrator. Ordnance was requested from Sandy 5, but since the exact location of the second downed pilot was unknown, he deemed it inadvisable to expend ordnance. The tail of the helicopter was turned into the on-coming ground fire and the pick-up continued. The survivor was wounded in two places while being raised on the hoist. The pick-up was completed after 8 minutes of hovering. Immediately after take-off with the survivor on board, the transmission oil pressure dropped to zero and the warning light illuminated. Flight was continued for approximately six miles. Jolly Green 36 had established an orbit while Jolly Green 02 dropped below the cloud deck to effect the recovery. Visual monitoring of Jolly Green 02 was impossible because of the clouds and he was last observed on a heading of 140°. As Jolly Green 02 disappeared from view, Sandy 05 reported ground fire in the vicinity of the survivors. Shortly afterwards, Jolly Green 02 also reported ground fire during his pick-up effort on the rear seat pilot. Approximately three minutes later, 02 reported that he had zero transmission oil pressure, that he was going to land, and requested that Jolly Green 36 come down and try to pick them up. 36 immediately began a circling descent, visually located 02 approximately one-half mile ahead and below. 02 was observed at approximately 500 feet altitude, descending, and heading for a clearing. Jolly Green 36 observed a village located on the edge of 02's intended landing area and so advised him. 02 acknowledged and continued to fly at approximately 100 feet above the trees to another clearing about one half mile further away where he executed his landing and shut down. Jolly Green 36 dropped his tips, began dumping fuel during the approach, and landing which was about 25 yards from 02. Dense elephant grass separated the two aircraft. Ground fire was again encountered by 02 as the crew-members evacuated their aircraft. Two crew-members received superficial wounds from bullet fragments, (The Flight Mechanic and Paramedic). When the four helicopter crewmen and the survivor had boarded, a maximum performance take-off was made, climbing to 2000 feet above the terrain.

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3d ARRGp Hist, Oct-Dec 66

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Det 2-3-121-26 Oct (RCC Narrative)

(C) (GP-4) While standing strip alert on 26 Oct 1966 word was received from Compress at 1130L that a mission was to be performed that afternoon by the Jolly Greens and that the briefing would be given by representatives who were enroute. Beginning at 1220L, the briefing was given which included the following background information: A 9 man team was discovered by enemy forces on the morning of 25 Oct 1966. At least one of the team was killed. The team apparently split up and were taking E and E action carrying a radio with a very weak battery. The last transmission received was about noon on 25 Oct. The briefer assumed that the team was out of food and in grave danger of being killed and/or captured. The weather in the search area was, at briefing time, very poor but forecasted to improve in the afternoon. Mission planning called for first aircraft (42 Zulu) to depart first to check weather and initiate the search with Sandy's 04 and 05 to escort him and if visual sighting was made Sandy 04 to be low lead. Their departure time to be at 1315L. Jolly Green's 36 and 52 were to depart about 30 minutes later escorted by Sandy's 06 and 07.

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Eight Rescued on Two Days

Jim Reeves was all involved in the one.

Rescuemen Match Efforts With Fate

DA NANG—The men involved in rescues at Da Nang had two hectic days recently in which they saved eight aircrew members, including four of their own.

On Oct. 20, all the guns of North Vietnam's Tigre Island couldn't stop one of the most dramatic rescue efforts in the Gulf of Tonkin.

Six Air Force personnel were pulled from the enemy's grasp near the island stronghold about four miles away. The quick re-

sponse of tactical airpower and the courage of Air Force crews made the daring escape possible.

Two days earlier, the rescue team saved two RF-4B Marine crewmembers after they had parachuted into the stormy, windlashed Gulf of Tonkin. The Marine pilots climbed aboard a Jolly Green rescue helicopter of the 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron exactly 23 minutes after they had been forced to bail out.

The Oct. 20 rescue began early in the morning when an F-4 Phantom from the 366th Tactical Fighter Wing was crippled by enemy fire over the southern panhandle of North Vietnam. The two crewmembers headed for the coastline and ejected near Tigre Island.

Jolly Green Giant helicopters from the rescue squadron immediately were vectored to the area to make the pickup. A-1 Skyraider pilots from a detachment element of the 6th Special Operations Squadron were scrambled to direct about a dozen tactical fighters called to provide fire support for the rescue.

As the fighters headed for the rescue site, Communist gunners on Tigre Island opened fire. The first hit blew a chopper's tail off after it had landed to make the pickup.

"Our rescue attempt was over at that time and we became a part of the surviving party," recalled Jolly Green pilots Captains Gerald M. Moore and Laurence C. Davis Jr. Once in their rafts they rowed against the mounting seas away from the enemy fire.

Helping the F-4 pilot — who had suffered serious back injuries — were pararescueman Sgt. Steve T. White of Los Altos, Calif., and the copter's flight engineer, Sgt. Robert T. Anderson of St. Louis.

After facing 10-foot swells and continued enemy fire for almost an hour, two Jolly Greens attempted a multiple pickup. Fighter pilots temporarily suppressed some of the enemy fire and a smoke screen was laid for the descending, zig-zagging choppers.

"The seas were pretty rough and we couldn't land so we had to use the hoist," commented

Maj. Charles Wicker, the rescue crew commander. "Each time we went into a hover, the people on the island started zeroing in on us. I've never made faster pickups in my life, because the enemy was just walking them up to the chopper."

It took only three to four minutes to pick up all six men — four on Major Wicker's aircraft and two on the chopper commanded by Capt. Jerry M. Griggs, Kannapolis, N.C.

Two days earlier, the two Marine pilots were rescued by a Jolly Green scrambled from Quang Tri Marine Corps base, 23 miles from the crash scene.

Making the pickup were Captains Richard D. Griffiths, Pembroke, Mass., and George Stokes, Houston, AIC Robert Cassidy, Mercer, Pa., and Sergeant Anderson who was to play another life-saving role two days later.

*Check,
Major James Reeves was
the Spad Leader on
this mission
Don Wicker*

NK	Capt O'Mara Lt Harris	SSgt Riley A2C Halvorson	87	Lt Glover	30 Sep 66	USAF	NVN	F-4C
NK	Capt Murphy Lt Lyall	SSgt Godsey A1C Kellerman	88	Maj Waxman (Deceased)	1 Oct 66	USAF	NVN	F-4C
NK	Lt Webster Lt Dean	SSgt Riley A2C Hackney	89	Capt Lockhard	2 Oct 66	USAF	LAOS	F-104 Under Fire
NK	Capt Kennedy Lt Harris	SSgt Hall A2C Williamson	90	Lt Garland	5 Oct 66	USAF	NVN	F-4C Under Fire
NK	Maj Youngblood Lt Burford	SSgt Ely SSgt Hunt	91	Maj Taylor	14 Oct 66	USAF	NVN	F-105 Under Fire
2	Maj Youngblood Lt Burford	A2C Meyer A2C Davis	92	Lt Merrick	20 Oct 66	USAF	LAOS	F-4C Under Fire
6	Capt Kennedy Lt Lauvender	SSgt Godsey A1C Ward	93 94 95 96 97	Maj Youngblood Lt Burford A2C Meyer Lt Merrick A2C Davis	20 Oct 66	USAF	LAOS	HH-3E Under Fire
NK	Capt Kennedy Lt Lauvender	SSgt Godsey A1C Ward	98	Maj Brelkerridge	20 Oct 66	USAF	LAOS	F-4C Under Fire
NK	Maj Wood Lt Feigert	A2C Cotter A1C Kellerman	99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106	8 man ground party (class)	26 Oct 66	LAOS	LAOS	