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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
37TH AEROSPACE RESCUE AND RECOVERY SQUADRON (MAC)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96337



REPLY TO
ATTN: 370

8 MAY 1968

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative Report (1-3-46, 3 May 1968) Classified by

SUBJECT TO ~~SECRET~~ DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO
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TU: 370
3rd ARRGp (USARV)
IM: 100

1. (U) This report is submitted in accordance with ARRS 55-2/3 ARRGp Sup 1, dated 15 Jul 1967.

2. (C) At 0947Z, 3 May 68, Jolly Green 07 departed DaNang for a position located at 270/47/77. A Special Forces team was reported to be surrounded by enemy forces and extraction was directed by 7AF. JG 07 was joined by JG 04 and Spad 13. Spads 11 and 12 departed DaNang and proceeded directly to the rescue area. Weather was good with scattered to broken overcast with tops at 5000'. Enroute, JG 07 was advised by Queen that the ground party consisted of a total of seven men, with one wounded and one KIA. JG 07 was also advised that Covey 221 was in the area and had contact with the ground party (Call sign Top Cat). In addition, two Spads, call sign 01 and 02 from Channel 107 were also in the area attempting to pinpoint the survivors. Because of known 37mm emplacements enroute, JG 07, 04, and Spad 13 had to circumnavigate to the scene causing some delay. At 1027Z, JG 07 arrived in the pick up area and was instructed to hold to the south. Covey 221 confirmed that he had visual contact with the team and their position pinpointed. Top Cat informed Covey 221 that they had expended all of their smoke flares and had no signalling devices left except an orange and white panel. The ground team was located on an extremely steep mountain side, at the bottom of a deep depression between two ridge lines approximately 3000' MSL. Ground fire was reported by Top Cat who assisted the Spads by directing their ordnance delivery. At 1035Z Covey 221 stated that the pick up area appeared clear enough for JG 07 to go in. JG 07 acknowledged and asked if the Spads had sterilized the area. Covey's answer to the affirmative was interpreted as a go-ahead. Because of the known hostile fire in the area, JG 07 and Top Cat agreed that it was best if the one KIA be left behind. With this decision made, JG 07 elected to make a medium speed recon pass over the pick up area. During the last 100 yards, two pen gun flares were sighted. JG 07 pulled off and confirmed that they had been fired by Top Cat. Top Cat reported that they had found several pen-flares and a couple of smoke flares on the KIA. JG 07 then made a slow speed pass over the area still trying to positively locate the survivors. The flight engineer spotted the panel but it was too late for JG 07 to execute a hover. During the second approach JG 07 received ground fire, with no hits, some distance from the pick up area. The decision was then made to go in on the third pass and the tips were jettisoned in the approximate area of the previously experienced ground fire. JG 07 was directed into the pick up area by the

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flight engineer and came to a hover upslope and short of the panel facing east. Power was applied but the aircraft began to settle. The RCC aborted the hover and broke off to the right, down slope. Five hundred pounds of fuel was dumped. No ground fire was experienced. JG 07 again initiated an approach and as the aircraft established a positive hover at 1040Z over the panel, ground fire was seen, heard and hits were felt by the crew. The RCC sighted muzzle flashes directly below him and on the ridge at his 11 o'clock position. The flight engineer then notified the RCC that the PJ had been hit and requested the aircraft break off. JG 07 immediately broke off and, taking evasive action, avoided further hits by ground fire. The PJ had been hit in the left thigh. After discussing the wound with the flight engineer, the RCC elected to abandon the extraction attempt and seek medical assistance for the PJ. The flight engineer administered medical aid to the PJ and treated him for shock. The PJ remained conscious and JG 07 arrived at DaNang at 1135Z. After the departure of JG 07, the other SAR forces remained until 1115Z when they were directed to RTB because of darkness.

a. At 2353Z, 3 May 68, JG 22 and 04 were scrambled from DaNang for another attempt to extract the Special Forces team located at 270/46/77. JG 22 and 04 were escorted to the area by Spad 13. Spads 11 and 12 from DaNang proceeded directly to the area. Enroute, weather was marginal due to thunderstorms necessitating circumnavigation. JG 22 and 04 arrived in the area at 0035Z, 4 May, and were directed by Spad 13 to hold south and east of the pick up area. At this time, JG 22 was informed that there were only three remaining survivors, 2 Americans and one South Vietnamese. One of the surviving Americans was the one reported the previous day. Communication with Top Cat was established on Fm and was excellent. SAR forces continued to suppress the area because of ground fire reported by Top Cat. At 0100Z, Spad 11 informed JG 22 that in his opinion, the area appeared acceptable for the pick up. JG 22 acknowledged and contacted Top Cat. Because of power limitation, JG 22 informed Top Cat that only two men on the hoist could be accomplished successfully and further recommended that the wounded American and the South Vietnamese survivor be extracted first. Top Cat acknowledged. JG 22 again elected to execute a low recon, high speed pass over the area with no visual contact being made. While circling for the second pass JG 22 noticed ground fire coming from the valley. JG 22 executed the second low-recon, low-speed pass and this time the signal panel was sighted by the flight engineer. The tips were jettisoned over the area of the previous ground fire in the valley and a third pass was executed. Through a combination of directions received by the RCC from the flight engineer and Top Cat, the aircraft was hovered downslope, forward and to the left of the panel facing west at 0110Z. The flight engineer called directions requiring the aircraft be hovered backward, raised, and corrected to the right because of the severity of the slope. The flight engineer had difficulty penetrating the trees with the penetrator due to the swaying of the trees from the rotorwash. With the rotor tip path plane three feet from the tree tops and the tail rotor the same distance, over 230 feet of cable was required to reach the survivors. No ground fire was experienced up to this time. Top Cat reported that two of the survivors

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were getting on the penetrator and again asked if ~~three~~ were possible. JG 22 stated no. A power check was called by the flight engineer who was then instructed to bring up the survivors. As the survivors began to clear the tree tops, ground fire opened up. The PJ sighted an enemy downslope and opened fire, knocking out that position. The flight engineer continued to operate the hoist and called "clear of the trees." JG 22 immediately pulled off. The PJ informed the RCC that the aircraft was hit and fluid was spraying in the cabin area. The flight engineer and PJ brought the survivors into the cabin. It was at this time that they discovered that the survivors had been severely hit. The Vietnamese was killed instantly by a shot in the back of the head. The PJ and flight mechanic applied first aid to the American, who appeared to still have a pulse. Further investigation revealed that he had received a shot in the chest and five penetrations in the lower portion of his body. Both the PJ and flight mechanic applied compresses to stop the bleeding. The PJ then administered mouth to mouth resuscitation in an effort to get the patient to breathe. A quick assessment of the aircraft was made and all systems appeared normal. The flight engineer isolated the fluid leak as a utility hydraulic line and effectively limited the leakage by use of vise grips. JG 22 notified Spad 11 that he had experienced ground fire and aircraft hits and elected to abandon further attempts and RTB to DaNang as quickly as possible. Both the PJ and FE continued to administer mouth to mouth resuscitation but with no success. Queen was notified that both survivors appeared dead. JG 22 elected to land at DaNang rather than NSA. JG 22 landed at DaNang at 0140Z with no further difficulties.

b. Additional Remarks:

(1) SAR Coordination: The command and control of the SAR effort by Spad 11 was outstanding and contributed to easing many difficulties in the execution of the mission.

(2) Crew Coordination: Crew coordination of JG 07 and 22 was excellent. Particular praise must be given to the flight engineer. His directions for hovering and operation of the hoist in an extremely difficult and hostile environment were outstanding. His early detection, isolation and repair of a severed hydraulic line precluded the possibility of additional hazards to the crew. The effort of the rescue specialist (JG 22) to save the life of the American, and his refusal to give up cannot be overstated. He continued until he himself became exhausted. The navigation and handling of the communications by the Co-pilot was indeed outstanding and greatly relieved the RCC.

(3) Fire Suppression: Because of the location of the Special Forces team, it would have been an impossible task for the SAR forces to eliminate all ground opposition. The only way for the ordnance to reach the enemy forces would have been to fire up the ravine in line with the friendly forces and this would probably have eliminated them as well. The enemy forces were too close to the friendly forces and were well protected by the terrain. There is every indication that the enemy forces were directly under the aircraft when the survivors were being brought up on the hoist. The only effective way to alleviate enemy opposition was for the friendly forces to change their position.

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3. (C) At 0940Z, 3 May 68, Jolly Green 04 was scrambled from DaNang AB as high bird for Jolly Green 07. The mission objective was six members of Top Cat, a U.S. Army special Forces team located at 270/47/77. JG 07 and 04 arrived in the area at 1027Z. Cover was provided by Spad 01, 02, 11, 12, 13; Black Widow flight (3 Huey Cobras helicopter gunships); and Covey 221. JG 07, as low bird, made the first attempt to pick up the team and took automatic weapons fire wounding the pararescuer. JG 04 assumed low bird at this time and advised Queen to send another Jolly Green for backup. At the same time the escort aircraft continued to lay in suppressive fire around the team. After approximately ten minutes JG 04 was advised by Covey 221, Top Cat and a Spad that the area appeared sterile and another attempt could be made. JG 04 dumped fuel to 1500 pounds, the amount calculated to safely pick up four people at 3000' elevation, at a temperature of 30°C. After dumping fuel to the amount needed to pick up a portion of the ground party and committing JG 04, an approach was established. At this time Brown 4 said JG 04 was not cleared to go in and that 7AF and JSARC had RTB'd all Jolly Green aircraft. JG 04 requested that the decision be reconsidered based on an on-scene evaluation by Spads, Coveys, Top Cat, and Jolly Green. JG 04 waited 5 minutes for clearance to go in but due to shortage of fuel had to RTB. At this time both 7AF and JSARC directed that all Jolly Green's RTB. JG 04 landed Channel 77 at 1140Z.

a. At 2340Z, 3 May 68, JG 04 was scrambled again from DaNang as high bird for JG 22. The objective was the three members of Top Cat team still alive at the same location. Escort was provided by Spads 11, 12, and 13. Black Widow flight (6 Huey Cobras), Coveys 221 and 669, and various high performance aircraft were already in the area. JG 22 and 04 arrived in the area at 0035Z, 4 May and held approximately five miles away while the Spads, Black Widows and Coveys worked the area over. After twenty minutes Spad 11 cleared JG 22 in and JG 22 picked up two people, one of whom was known to be WIA already. JG 04 then heard JG 22 report he was taking ground fire, his aircraft had been hit and he was coming out. JG 22 report his crew was uninjured and the two people were aboard. JG 22 said he was taking the wounded back. JG 04 then assumed low bird. The one remaining member of Top Cat team on the ground advised everyone he was moving down the hill about twenty meters. The Spads and Black widows made many runs with rockets, miniguns, white phosphorus and 20mm cannon fire around the survivor. Black Widow reported he flew over the survivor at 50 knots and neither he nor Top Cat detected any ground fire. At this time Spad 11 cleared JG 04 in for the pick up. JG 04 dumped fuel down to 1500 pounds and made his approach along the ridge on a heading of east. This placed the left side of the helicopter toward the 70° slope. Since the survivor had no flares or other signaling devices, JG 04 had considerable difficulty pinpointing his exact location in the thick jungle and had to go around on the first pass. As JG 04 passed over at approximately 50 knots the Co-pilot and flight engineer spotted the man waving a map. Also both reported ground fire from a 'moll behind the helicopter. JG 04 turned south, climbed and called a Black Widow in on the enemy position. Black Widow made two passes and on the second pass said he had received no ground fire so JG 04 went into a hover over the survivor and had considerable difficulty holding

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his position because of the steep slope and 100 foot trees. In approximately two minutes the flight engineer directed the pilot to a stable hover and advised he was lowering the hoist. At this point the entire crew heard automatic weapons fire hitting JG 04, and the aircraft started to settle. The PJ spotted muzzle flashes and people on the left from up slope and returned fire with his M-60 knocking out that enemy position, however, JG 04 was still taking hits. JG 04 attempted to break right and away as the flight engineer stood in the doorway clearing the hoist. Finally he was forced to shear the cable as the aircraft continued to settle. The pilot applied power and heard the rotor RPM drop. The co-pilot observed one engine losing power and immediately pushed both emergency fuel controls to the stops. Also the primary servo system was put at this time. The ROC applied right cyclic as far as the stick would move but the aircraft continued moving forward, down and left. As the aircraft struck the tops of the trees the ROC yelled the power was back up and came on the controls with the ROC. With this extra help the pilots managed to level the helicopter and it bounded out of the trees once, back in again, and then through translational lift. During the climbout JG 04 cautiously retarded the emergency fuel controls and assessed the damage as follows: A severe 1 to 1 beat; hydraulic fluid leaking from both sides of the aircraft; primary servo pressure zero; aux servo pressure very slowly decreasing; and the left cabin plexiglass by the co-pilot's leg was shattered and missing. JG 04 advised Spad 11 and Queen that a landing would have to be made as soon as possible. Spad 11 advised JG 04 to follow him into LZ Luoy, an A Shau valley forward gun position. The Spad took the most direct route around A Shau landing strip and down the valley. All three Spads continually weaved under and around JG 04 while in this high AAA threat area. Spad 11 vectored JG 04 to the LZ. JG 04 landed at 0215Z with just 2000 PSI aux hydraulic pressure.

b. Weather was a factor on both days. On 3 May darkness was setting in as the attempt was in progress. On 4 May there were ceilings of 5500' MSL forcing the Jolly Greens to hold at low altitude over hostile territory and restricting the use of any high performance aircraft. The terrain was extremely rugged. The survivor was on a 70° slope in a V shaped gully 100 meters from the crest of a long ridge. This restricted the cover aircraft's ability to lay ordnance in close enough to the survivor to knock out the enemy.

4. (C) Jolly Green 24 was scrambled by Queen at 0100Z, 4 May, to assist JG 22 and 04. An orbit was established at 9000' above an overcast at 0220Z at 220/35/69 while awaiting instructions from the mission controller. Queen then directed JG 24 to proceed to TaBat (248/54/69) to pick up the crew of JG 04. JG 24 landed at 0334Z, and assisted the crew of JG 04 in preparing their aircraft for later recovery. JG 24 took off at 0430Z. Due to a rotor head damper malfunction, a forced landing was made immediately. No injuries were sustained by any of the crew or passengers. JG 24 was then prepared for recovery and all personnel were returned to Bellang by JG 21 and 33.

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5. (C) JG 33, after recycling from the morning orbit, departed Ch 77 for TaBat at 0540Z to pick up the crew of JG 24 and to transport a Skyerane sling for JG 24. Spads 11 and 12 accompanied JG 33 as escort and all aircraft climbed to 9500 MSL. Radio contact was established with Hue approach control who gave radar vectors around artillery enroute to TaBat. Hue approach vectored JG 21 and 33 to a rendezvous prior to descending into the A Shau valley. JG 33 followed JG 21 through a break in the clouds into the valley. Both Spads descended with the JG's. JG 33 broke out about three miles south of TaBat and followed JG 21 into the downed aircraft. A low approach was accomplished and fuel dumped to insure hover capability. JG 33 landed about 100 meters from the downed aircraft between bomb craters. The area was reported mined and several dud bombs and CBU canisters were lying around the area. A situation report was passed to Ground and the engines and APU were shut down while guns and equipment were loaded. JG 04 was prepared for transport by the Skyerane. The crew of JG 04 had been taken to Hue Phu Tai by JG 21. Because of the exposed position of JG 04 and the difficulty involved in preparing JG 24, it was decided to prepare JG 04 for lift out. The three FE's did an outstanding job in stripping JG 24 and preparing it for hoisting even though they were handicapped by inadequate equipment and a bare minimum of tools. The equipment and crew were loaded and the aircraft prepared for hoisting in minimum time. JG 33 and JG 21 departed TaBat at 0745Z and received radar vectors through friendly artillery enroute to Hue. Both aircraft refueled, and the crew of JG 04 was on-loaded and JG 33 and 21 proceeded to DaNang. The flight was terminated at 0715Z.

6. (U) Names of individuals recovered by JG 22 are unknown.

7. (U) Crew members were:

JOLLY GREEN 07

Major John W. Robey	RCC
Capt Ronald G. Spray	RCCP
Sgt Alvin A. Malone	FE
Sgt Walter White III	RS

JOLLY GREEN 22

Major John W. Robey
Capt Ronald G. Spray
Sgt Alvin A. Malone
Sgt James D. Locker

JOLLY GREEN 04

Capt John B. McTasney	RCC
Capt William B. Byrd Jr.	RCCP
SSgt Gordon T. Greever	FE
Sgt Robert D. Baker	RS

JOLLY GREEN 24

Major Donald G. Simpson
Capt Richard C. Yeend
SSgt Robert H. Baldwin
Sgt Ricky D. Hindman

JOLLY GREEN 33

Lt Jack C. Rittichier(USCG)	RCC
Capt Robert L. Hicks Jr.	RCCP
SSgt Jimmy L. Dodgen	FE
Sgt Martin E. Roepstroff	RS

JOLLY GREEN 21

Capt Jon E. Hannan
Capt Don W. Niegard
SSgt Samuel G. Adams
A1C Douglas J. McGill

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8. (U) Additional aircraft were:

Spad Flight (A12's)

5 May: Spad 11 - Pilot Major James Reeves
Spad 12 - Pilot Capt John Hayes
Spad 13 - Pilot Capt Gene McGinnis
4 May: Spad 11 - Pilot Major James Reeves
Spad 12 - Pilot Major William Constantine
Spad 13 - Pilot Capt John Hayes

Rescap:

Covey 321 and 669 (C-2 F43's) 2
Black Willow Flight (Huey Cobras) 6
King See Flight (H-34, VNAF) 2
Flatfoot Flight (F-4's)
Fastdraw Flight (F-4's)

9. (U) Final Remarks: After completion of the SAR effort it was learned that the remaining team member was successfully extracted by an ARW H-34 using a McGuire rig. Location of the survivor during the extraction is unknown.

Ronald G. Spray

JOHN W. ROBEY, Major, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

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