



THE PURPLE HEART is presented to TSgt Raymond S. Weddel at the AF Academy Hospital by Lt. Gen. Thomas S. Moorman, Academy Superintendent. Sergeant Weddel, a paramedic, was struck in the left leg when his helicopter was hit by ground fire near Da Nang, Vietnam, while attempting to rescue four wounded Marines and the crew of a downed chopper. The lower part of the sergeant's leg had to be amputated.

JOLLY GREEN ATTEMPTS TO SAVE DOWNED CREW OF PEDRO 96

On 8 May 67, the first re-fueling training mission to take place in SEA with HH-3E and HC-130P was being conducted in the South China Sea. The mission was aborted to attempt rescue of crew of PEDRO 96. The Jolly Green was driven off by ground fire after SGT Weddel was wounded.

RCC Maj William O Mayfield
RCCP Capt Carlton Damonte
FE SSGT Earl E. Chambers
RS TSGT Raymond S. Weddel
RS ALC John C. Jeffers

THE LAST DAY FOR PEDRO 96 8 May 1967

While attempting to extract a group of four wounded Marines southwest of Da Nang, PEDRO 96 came under sniper fire and was shot down. Maj Hoyer broke his foot against the rudder pedal and SGT Resos broke his elbow against the aircraft armor plate while operating the hoist. All four crewmembers received the Silver Star for their heroic actions.

RCC Maj John J. Hoyer RCCP 1Lt Al Jacox

RS TSGT Philemon S. Resos & SSGT John F. Tober

PEDRO 96 downed, May 1967

Our mission on this day was to extract some wounded Marines who had been involved in a firefight with the VC about 12 miles southwest of Da Nang. My crew for the day was First Lieutenant Al Jacox as co-pilot, with S/Sergeant John Tobey and T/Sergeant Phil Resos as PJs. We arrived over the scene of the battle, and hovered between 150 and 200 ft above the jungle floor. There were four wounded Marines down there and we lowered the penetrator and began hauling them in. Three of the Marines were aboard and we had the fourth one (and Sergeant Tobey) on the cable about 40 ft above the ground, when the chopper suddenly shuddered.

A VC sniper had raked the HH-43 engine with machine-gun fire and we were about to fall out of the air. I yelled at Sergeant Resos "Get them back down on the ground!", and he started to lower the wounded Marine and Sergeant Tobey back to the jungle floor. PEDRO 96 started to nose forward and lose altitude. As we settled into the tops of the trees, I threw the controls hard to the left in an attempt to keep the falling helicopter from crushing the two men on the ground. As we fell through the trees, the rotor blades

A pararescueman (otherwise known as a parajumper or PJ) is lowered from a 38th ARRS HH-43F Huskie on the jungle penetrator during a rescue near Bien Hoa in January 1966. The HH-43F was the first helicopter in-theatre to be equipped with this valuable tool.

disintegrated, sending pieces in every direction. Sergeant Resos was still hanging part way out of the back of the helicopter as we dropped through the trees. The chopper hit the ground with a thunk, slamming Sergeant Resos into the inside of the helicopter. His arm got caught between the sliding armour plate door and the frame, nearly severing it. My legs and feet got tangled up in the rudder pedals, and I had multiple breaks in my ankle and foot, plus a broken lower leg bone.

As we extracted ourselves from what remained of PEDRO 96, the remainder of the Marine patrol whom we had come to save rushed back and helped us get free of the twisted remains of the helicopter. Then we set up a defensive perimeter, since the 'black pyjama gang' was still out there somewhere.

About an hour later, a 'Jolly Green' helicopter out of Da Nang came over and started to make a pick-up. We found out later that the 'Jolly Green' had been training on inflight refuelling with an HC-130P over the South China Sea. By now, the VC had set up a neat little trap, using us as bait. Heavy machine-gun fire raked the 'Jolly Green', wounding T/Sergeant Ray Weddell in the leg. The 'Jolly Green' was forced to pull up and withdraw back to Da Nang to take care of Sergeant Weddell. He later lost that leg.

Soon, a Marine CH-46 arrived on the scene. It, too, was raked by heavy machine-gun fire and had to withdraw. One of the Marine door gunners was hit in the neck and they rushed him back to Da Nang. By this time, it was starting to get dark, and there was now a cloud deck over our position. Darkness would preclude any further attempts at a rescue. We would have to wait for morning.

The night was far from boring. Between treating patients, including myself, and keeping a wary eye out for the VC which were trying to get to us, plus the incessant Marine artillery that was keeping 'Charlie' off of us, it was a very sleepless night. Sergeant Resos manned one of the 50s all night long, even though he was in constant pain.

Early on the morning of the 9th, another Marine CH-46 came in. The VC poured machine-gun fire at the Marine helicopter. But they had an escort, as soon as the VC opened up, a flight of Marine F-8 Crusaders from Da Nang came in and pounded them with 500- and 750-lb bombs and rockets. The Marine chopper kept the CH-46 at treetop level and lowered the first.

The wounded Marines were the first to take the cable ride. Then it was my turn. The VC had come out of their holes again and were firing at us as we rode the cable back up to the chopper. The CH-46 was hit

several times. Two of the Marine crew were wounded. Sergeant Resos manned the 50 and helped suppress the enemy fire as I rode the cable. As I came up through the jungle canopy, several enemy rounds were very close, some impacting right above me in the bottom of the CH-46.

Those Marine pilots, although taking a lot of fire, kept a steady hover over the hole in the jungle canopy. Finally, as we were attempting to bring the rest of the Marine patrol up, the hoist motor burned out, and we were forced to bring the cable in by hand. As we departed the area, I looked out the back and saw a long trail of vapour – fuel vapour. Evidently, the VC had hit the fuel tanks.

We weren't too far from Da Nang and the Marine base at Marble Mountain. We were taken to the Marine hospital at Marble Mountain. I had previously delivered many casualties to this very same hospital door. As they carried me in on a stretcher, one of the attending Marine corpsmen looked at me and said, "What the hell are you doing here? I've seen you flying one of the choppers bringing in wounded. Now you are one!"

Major John Hoyer

**Commander, Detachment 7, 38th AFRS
Da Nang**

Battalion Hospital.

(4) Mission 1-3-67, 8 May 67. Pedro 96 scrambled from DaNang, RVN to aid four Marines who were wounded 12 miles west of DaNang. Pedro 96 was shot down with minor injuries to the crew. The crew was picked up the next day and aircraft was destroyed.

(5) Mission 1-3-68, 9 May 67. Pedro 95 scrambled from DaNang, RVN on a UH-1B crash. Recovered two bodies and returned to DaNang.

(6) Mission 1-3-75, 21 May 67. Pedro 95 scrambled from DaNang, RVN to aid 5 marines who needed medical evacuation 7 miles north west of DaNang. Survivors recovered and turned over to 1st Marine Medical Battalion Hospital.

(7) Mission 1-3-87, 12 Jun 67. Pedro 95 scrambled from DaNang, RVN on 2 F4B pilots 5 miles east of DaNang. Both were recovered and returned to DaNang.

(8) Mission 1-3-92, 21 Jun 67. Pedro 95 scrambled from DaNang, RVN on an A-4 pilot that was down 5 miles west of DaNang. Pilot recovered and returned to DaNang.

Summary of Missions. Eight actual aircrew recovery missions resulted in the recovery of ten persons, all of which were Marines and two civilian bodies. 216 local base recovery or Fire Suppression missions and 146 miscellaneous support missions were flown.

8. Personnel.

a. Introduction. The 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron at Tan Son Nhut performs all of the administrative and personnel services, assisted by the Detachment's Administrative section at DaNang, except for finance.

b. Assigned Strength. The average strength of the permanently assigned personnel has remained at 14. This number includes 5 officers and 9 airmen. During this period 2 officers and 4 enlisted personnel have been

Stranded Airmen Welcome Marines

The Observer 5 July 1967

Da Nang (USAF) — Four Air Force rescuemen from Detachment 7, 3rd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group, were pulled from the jungle 12 miles southwest of Da Nang by Marine CH-46 Sea Knight helicopters.

They had been shot down the previous afternoon while attempting to evacuate four wounded Marines.

Three of the Marines had been brought aboard the HH-43F. The fourth was 40 feet above the ground riding the hoist with

pararescueman, Staff Sergeant John F. Tobey, Gilbertsville, N.Y.

When the Huskie was hit and began to lose power, Major John J. Hove, Glenns Ferry, Idaho, commander of Detachment 7, and pilot of the chopper, had one thing in mind, to lower the men on the hoist without injury. "Get them down!" he yelled to Technical Sergeant Philemon S. Resos, Honolulu, the pararescueman operating the hoist.

No one aboard the chopper knew they had been hit. They thought they had a power failure.

"We couldn't hear any ground-fire," said First Lieutenant Alfred R. Jacox, Thousand Island Park, N.Y., co-pilot. "We only had a small clearing in the trees to get the hoist through."

Sergeant Resos quickly lowered the two men to the ground as the Huskie started to nose forward and lose altitude. He was still part way out of the back door of the chopper when it hit. An armored plate struck him on the right arm, chipping his elbow and damaging muscles and ligaments.

Two rescue attempts were made that afternoon by Marine HH-46 helicopters and an HH-3E Jolly Green Giant from Da Nang. Heavy groundfire drove them off.

The four airmen spent the night with the Marines where the Huskie went down. All through the night, the Marine commander called in artillery to keep the Viet Cong from setting up firing positions.

The next day, two Marine Sea Knight choppers came to the area to evacuate the airmen and Marines.

As soon as the men were aboard, the Sea Knight drew heavy groundfire until Sergeant Resos and a Marine gunner returned the fire and silenced the enemy position.

The first helicopter left the area, and the second came and picked up the remaining men without opposition.

Major Hove spoke for the crew when he said, "those Marines did a great job. It's good to be back."