

DECLASS

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9/14

MISSION NARRATIVE 2 JUNE 1966

Following scramble at 0750 local, we proceeded on the 090° radial of channel 89 for approximately 25 miles, intercepted the 100° radial for 65 miles, then turned to intercept the 089° radial of channel 89. We received clearance from crown 61 to cross the border into North Vietnam. The first coordinates received were 1723N, 106 09E but later were confirmed further east. This location is very close to where Honda Lead was shot down on 1 June 1966 and subsequently rescued by a Jolly Green. This area however, was located further east and in a well known heavy flak area. The aircraft Honda 3, F-105, was shot down by an extremely heavy concentration of automatic weapons fire. The rescue force was vectored to the general area by Honda Lead and other aircraft still in the area. Honda Lead stated that he saw a good chute and gave us the general location of the downed flyer. Sandys 31 and 32 arrived in the area about 0840 local, and Jolly Green 54 arrived about 0859 local. The downed pilots beeper was working and he could transmit but not received on his URT-10. Sandy's aircraft 31 and 32 located the chute, with aid from other fighters in the flight. Jolly Greens remained a few miles west of the location, since Ford aircraft reported heavy flak. Nash Flight also advised us of heavy flak concentrations in the pickup area and a few miles north of the area. We heard Ford 3 advise Ford that he was picking up flak in the general area of the anticipated pickup area. Sandy 31 pinpointed the parachute and dropped a white phosphorous bomb to help us locate the exact area. He advised us that up to that point he had not received ground fire or flak bursts. As we started in, the downed pilot provided a red smoke signal from his survival flare. We could see the smoke coming out the tops of the trees. While maneuvering into the area, we had to cross a road leading parallel to the pickup area and could see many trucks parked alongside the road. We again had to cross the same road to get into the immediate area but did not observe fire from the road. At this time we had Sandy escort. We then flew at a low level into the jagged karst area, covered with tall trees about 200 feet high. The downed pilot was located in a ravine about halfway up the side of the karst. His beeper was working intermittently and he could transmit, but could not receive our transmissions. He called to us as we came over for the first time to perform a low reconnaissance and determine the best pickup procedure. As we passed over him, we picked up heavy ground fire from beneath the chopper. An immediate right turn was made to locate the firing, however, we could not determine the location because of the heavy foliage and undergrowth. Honda 3 advised us of ground fire below his position on the side of the karst. We withdrew out of the ravine and, as we gained altitude, heavy concentrations of flak enveloped us. We again descended rapidly into the ravine to avoid the flak, but were quite concerned about flying at low altitude because of the ground fire. With flak above and ground fire below we proceeded straight ahead. After clearing the area, the Sandys made a few passes over the pilot, but did not encounter flak or ground fire. We then decided to determine just where the ground fire was in relation to the downed pilot. I advised Airman Crites and Stevenson to man their weapons and attempt to spot the location of the ground fire near the downed pilot, so that we could inform Sandys.

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED

Or Changed to DECLASS  
By Authority of GDS  
By RE (date) 12/1/77

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Hq ARRS SC No. 662115

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DOWNGRADED  
11V AFR-275-2

As we entered the area and passed over the pilot, we again picked up automatic weapons fire from below. The area where the pilot was located was in a horseshoe shaped canyon or ravine and, as we made a steep 180 degree turn, we again picked up flak. We left the area and asked Sandy to clean up the area about 100 yards below the pilot. The Sandys provided excellent support and we attempted to enter again. When we entered this time we again received flak on the way in and passed over the pilot quite discouraged in not being able to get to him. We then asked Sandy 31 and 32 to escort us in so that they could help locate the ground fire. Again we entered the area and Sandy advised us that again we were picking up flak and to keep low. Bango Alpha arrived to help suppress the heavy concentration of flak. The Sandys expended rockets and machine gun fire in the pickup area when we passed over the pilot for the sixth time, made a 180 degree turn and returned to him. At this point we were below a ridge line, and the AAA guns could not level on us. We dropped our auxiliary tanks and had the hoist out and lowering. We approached the area with caution and came to a hover expecting additional ground fire. Honda 3 was still in a somewhat inaccessible position and in the area of tall trees. The penetrator would not drag through the trees, and had to be raised and lowered three times to get to the exact position of the pilot. He climbed aboard the tree penetrator and we remained in a hover with about 200 feet of cable out. We didn't want to drag the survivor through the tall trees therefore, we remained in a hover until the pilot was inside. During the pickup, while the pilot was 100 feet in the air, fighters passed on either side to suppress fire. The pickup was accomplished at 0905 local and we decided to follow Sandy's advice to stay low and fast. Of course that left us somewhat vulnerable to groundfire, if any. However, we remained low and thus avoided further flak bursts. The trip back to channel 89 was uneventful and we landed at 1020 local.

*AMAZING*

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- a. Time from notification to launch: 12 minutes. We were refused runway clearance by the tower operator who stated Base Operations had told him to stop the rescue scramble.
- b. Difficulties encountered enroute: None
- c. Weather 6000 broken 8 / 10, isolated CB's. Weather in target area 5000 broken over 10 miles visibility.
- d. Cooperation & coordination of support, escort, rescap, and on-scene coordinator: Very good.
- e. Radio discipline: Quite saturated at beginning of mission, improved as mission progressed.
- f. Difficulty in locating objective: Some difficulty due to area involved. Heavy growth of jungle terrain, very tall trees and vines.

2.

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Downgraded at 3 year intervals  
Declassified after 12 years.  
Hq ARHS DL NO. 662115-1

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g. Enemy action in target area: Heavy flak and moderate small arms fire from unknown source. The flak was suppressed by fighter bombers and the Sandys apparently suppressed the small arms fire.

h. The downed crewmember was uninjured, had bruises and scratches, but was able to get onto his penetrator-seat by himself.

i. Method of recovery: Hoist, penetrator-seat, hampered by foilage and thick growth of tall trees and vines.

j. Crew coordination: Excellent and as briefed.

k. Suggestions: Suggest a modification of the hoist be made as soon as possible to increase the speed of lowering and returning. It takes over three minutes to extend 240 feet of cable and even longer to retrieve it. During a hoist pickup in a combat zone such as this, it requires more than 5 minutes in a hover, while extremely vulncrable to snipers and other small arms fire. Also, suggest a better communications set-up between Compress, Rescue Alert and control tower so that scrambles may be expedited.

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL RESCUED: John D. Whipple, Captain, , 333 Tactical Fighter Squadron

LOW BIRD (JOLLY GREEN 54)

RCC, Captain Robert D. Furman  
RCCP, Captain Dale V. Hardy  
HM, A1C Robert E. Crites  
PJ, A2C Franklin Stevson

HIGH BIRD (JOLLY GREEN 58)

RCC, Major Salam Stearman  
RCCP, 1stLt Dennis W. Stiles  
HM, SSgt Theodore M. Youngblood  
PJ, A2C William D. Brotton

*Robert D. Furman*  
ROBERT D. FURMAN, Captain, USAF  
Rescue Crew Commander

DOWNGRADED  
11V AF3-205-2  
12 MAY 80

GROUP-4  
Downgraded at 3 year intervals  
Declassified after 12 years.

5. CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED  
Or Changed to UNCLASS  
By Authority of CD  
By [Signature] (Date) 13 May 75

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SC No. 662115