

**AFEHRI File 19-5-1-4**

**Research Materials/Source Documents**

**FILE TITLE: Air Force Cross Recipient: Sgt Michael E. Fish**

**Reviewed by:**

**AFEHRI Representative** G. Akin date 26 OCT 97

**EPC Representative** Yessie date 13 Nov 97

**Scanner Operator** Suzanne date 15 NOV 97

**APPROVED BY:** Gary R. Akin

**GARY R. AKIN, CMSgt, USAF**

**Director**

**Air Force Enlisted Heritage Research Institute**



DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
ASSIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_

106781 USAF - U.S. Air Force pararescuer Sgt  
Michael E. Fish is presented the  
Air Force Cross by Secretary of the Air Force  
Robert C. Seamans Jr. 16 Jan 1970. South Viet-  
nam. (Photo by Sgt William F. Diebold, USAF)

U. S. AIR FORCE PHOTO

FISH, MICHAEL E.

"The President of the United States of America, authorized by Section 8742, Title 10, United States Code, awards the Air Force Cross to Sergeant Michael E. Fish for extraordinary heroism in military operations against an opposing armed force as an HH-43B helicopter Pararescue Specialist during a rescue operation near Tuy Hoa Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, on 18 and 19 February 1969. During this period, with complete disregard for his personal safety, he was voluntarily lowered through intense hostile ground fire to treat and rescue four seriously injured Army UH-1 helicopter crew members, whose helicopter had been downed by hostile fire in a remote, mountainous, densely-jungled canyon. He elected to remain on the ground overnight, fully realizing that he faced attacks by the hostile forces which completely surrounded him, and for more than fifteen hours, he treated and cared for the pilot, who was trapped inside the wreckage, until he could be freed...."

70  
19-5-1-4  
BT

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

36

Mission Reports  
SGT MICHAEL FISH - Air Force  
CROSS

OPENING/CLOSING/SUSPENDING
MISSION NUMBER: 11-38-9 18 FEB 1969
SUBJECT: USA (HH-1/GRND TEAM)
HH-43B

PRIORITY

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\* [REDACTED] \*  
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PT 00150  
PTTCZYUW RUSQSNA4656 0530550-CCCC--RUCIEUA.  
ZNY CCCCC

? 2 FEB 69 06 37 SAVES  
Eca  
CLOSING  
11-38-9-9049  
19 Feb.  
Minus 3 Save

P R 220532Z FEB 69  
FM 3ARRGP TSN AB RVN  
TO RUCIEUA/ARRS AROOPCR SCOTT AFB ILL  
RUMLJHA/DET 11 3BARRSQ TUY HOA AB RVN  
INFO RUHHABA/41ARRWG HICKAM AFB HAWAII  
BT

C O N F I D E N T I A L 3JSARC  
SUBJ: RESCUE MISSION 11-38-009-9049  
REF A DET 11 RESCUE CLOSING REPORT 191934Z FEB 69  
REF B ARRS/AROOPCR 202115Z FEB 69 (NOTAL DET 11)

1. FOR ARRS. ON 18 FEB PEDRO 05 RECOVERED (SAVED) THREE ARMY AIR-  
CREW MEMBERS AND DUSTOFF 38 RECOVERED ONE NON-AIRCREW AND ONE  
DECEASED AIRCREW MEMBER. ON 19 FEB PEDRO 05 MADE ONE ACR AND ONE  
NON-ACR AND PEDRO 24 MADE TWO NON-ACR, ALL ARMY PERSONNEL. MARDI  
GRAS 138 (ARMY UH-1) RECOVERED ONE DECEASED ONON-AIRCREW AND THE PJ  
FROM PEDRO 05 WHO HAD REMAINED ON GROUND OVERNIGHT.
2. FOR DET 11. THE RECOVERY OF THE FIREMAN OFF PEDRO 05 BY PEDRO  
24 ON 18 FEB AND THE RECOVERY OF THE TWO FIREMEN FROM PEDRO 05 ON  
19 FEB ARE NOT CONSIDERED SAVES. THE PAREESCUAMAN RECOVERED BY  
MARDI GRAS 138 IS AN ARMY SAVE NOT INCLUDED IN ITEM 14 TOTALS.

PAGE2 RUSQSNA4656 [REDACTED]  
REQUEST YOU SUBMIT A CORRECTION TO ALL ORIGINAL ADDRESSEES OF REF A  
CHANGING ITEM 14 TO READ 10/10/10/8/0/2 AND ITEM 19H TO READ  
SEVEN (7) ARRS COMBAT SAVES VICE TEN SAVES. GP-4

BT  
#4656

NNNN#

Classified by *3ARRGP*  
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO  
YEAR INTERVALS.  
DECLASSIFIED ON *31 Dec 75*

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PRIORITY

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\* [REDACTED] \*  
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11-38-09

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SUPREP  
23 FEB 69 07 28

PT 00172  
OTTEZYUW RUMUJHA0009 0540704-EEEE--RUCIEUA.  
ZNY EEEEE  
O 230621Z FEB 69  
FM DET 11 38THARRSQ TUY HOA AB VIETNAM  
TO RUEFHQA/CSAF/AFCP/AFXPFH  
RUCIEUA/ARRS/ARSCP/SCOTT AFB ILL  
RUHHABA/41ST ARRG/41CP/HICKAM AFB HAWAII  
RUSQSN/3RD ARRG/USARC/TAN SON NHUT AB VIETNAM  
INFO RUCEAAA/USAF ALTERNATE CP/MAXWELL AFB ALA  
RUSQSN/7AF DOTO/DO/DP/DI/BDPMP/CP/TSN AB VIETNAM  
RUWTFJA/USAFMPC/AFPMSC/RANDOLPH AFB TEX  
RHMSMVA/MACV/SAIGON VIETNAM  
RUEBAAA/ARDC/ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND MARYLAND  
RUMSNH/4TH SOS/NHA TRANG AB VIETNAM  
RUMSNH/281ST AHC/NHA TRANG AB VIETNAM  
ZEN/309TH TFS/39TH ARRSQ TUY HOA AB VIETNAM  
RUMSNH/E 20TH CO/NHA TRANG AB VIETNAM  
RUMLNHD/183RD RECON/DONG BA THIN AAF VIETNAM  
RUMLNHH/91ST ARMY MED EVAC HOSP/PHU HIEP AAF VEITNAM  
RHMSMVA/COMUS MACV/NORTH FLD AAF VIETNAM  
RUMLNHH/28TH ROK BRIGADE/PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM  
RUMLNHH/173RD ABN BRIGADE/PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM

PAGE 2 RUMUJHA0009 UNCLAS E F T O  
RUMLNHH/134TH AHC/PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM  
ZEN/31ST TFW C/TUY HOA AB VIETNAM

BT  
UNCLAS E F T O 38-11-D  
SUBJ: RESCUE MISSION 11-38-009-9049  
REF DET 11 RESCUE CLOSING REPORT 191934Z FEB 69  
1. CHANGE ITEM 14 TO READ 10/10/10/8/0/2  
2. CHANGE ITEM 19H TO READ SEVEN (7) ARRS SAVES, US ARMY, NO  
REFUELLING  
BT  
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IMMEDIATE

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PT 00026  
ZTTCZYUW RUMLUHA0070 0491350-CCCC--RUCIEUA.  
ZNY\_CCCCC

18 FEB 69 14 01

Z O 181328Z FEB 69  
FM DET11 38ARRSQ TUY HOA AB VIETNAM  
TO RUEFHQA/CSAF/AFCP/AFXPFH  
RUCIEUA/ARRS/ARSCP/SCOTT AFB ILL  
RUHHABA/4IARRWG/41STCP/HICKAM AFB HAWAII  
RUSQSN/3ARRGP/JSARC/TAN SON NHUT AB VIETNAM  
INFO RUCEAAA/USAF ALTERNATE CP MAXWELL AFB ALA  
RUSQSN/7AF/DOTO/DO/DP/DI/BDPMP/CP/TAN SON NHUT AB VIETNAM  
RUWTFJA/USAFMPC/AFPMSC/RANDOLPH AFB TEX  
RHMSMVA/COMUSMACV  
RUEBAAA/ARDC/ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND MD  
ZEN/31TACFTRWG/C

Classified by Det 11 300000P  
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO  
YEAR INTERVALS.  
DECLASSIFIED ON 31 Dec 75

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~:/JOPREP JIFFY/38-11 D

- SUBJ: RESCUE 009/180145Z FEB 69
1. RESCUE OPENING REPORT 18 FEB 69
  2. 11-38-009-18 FEB 69
  3. SEARCH AND RESCUE, DOWNED UH-1E, CALL SIGN UNKNOWN 5 PERSONS ON BOARD
  4. TUY HOA TOWER/DET 11 38TH ARRSQ/180830Z

PAGE 2 RUMLUHA0070 C ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ L

5. NOT ACCOMPLISHED
6. 1/HH-43B/180830Z
7. LAUNCHED PEDRO 05/180845Z
8. 12 DEGREES 45 MINUTES NORTH/109 DEGREES 01 MINUTES WEST
9. NOT A FACTOR
10. DET 11 38TH ARRSQ
11. 39TH ARRSQ, NUMEROUS AIRCRAFT CALL SIGNS: CUTIE 11, TONTO 42, HERB 31, DEVIL 6, DEVIL 20, DUSTY 31 AND 32, DUSTOFF 38, SEAHORSE 22 CROWN 6 UNITS UNK.
- 12 - 18 N/A
19. D. 39TH ARRSQ, DET 11 38TH ARRSQ, 134TH AHC, 180TH AHC  
H. ONE MAN LEFT TRAPEED IN HELICOPTER. PARARESCUEMAN LEFT ON GROUND WITH FOUR US ARMY TROOPS BECAUSE OF DARKNESS. PLAN TO EXTRACT ALL PEOPLE AT FIRST LIGHT. FOUR OF THE DOWNED CREWMEMBERS RECOVERED SUCCESSFULLY. PEDRO 05 TRANSFERRED THREE PATIENTS TO SPIDER 240. TAKEN TO 91ST MED EVAC HOSPITAL PHU HIEP AAF BY DUSTOFF 83 AND SPIDER 240.

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11-30-69

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PT 01183  
 ZTTCZYUW RUMLJHA0075 0502003-CCCC--RUCIEUA.  
 Z CCCCC  
 Z 191934Z FEB 69  
 FM DET 11 38ARRSQ TUY HOA AB VIETNAM  
 TO RUEFHQA/CSAF/AFCP/AFXPFH  
 RUCIEUA/ARRS/ARSCP/SCOTT AFB ILL  
 RUHHABA/41ARRWG/41CP/HICKAM AFB HAWAII  
 RUSQNSA/3ARRGP/JSARC/TAN SON NHUT AB VIETNAM  
 INFO RUCEAAA/USAF ALTERNATE CP MAXWELL AFB ALA  
 RUSQNSA/7AF/DOTO/DO/DP/DI/BDPMP/CP/TAN SON NHUT AB VIETNAM  
 RUWTFJA/USAFMPC/AFPMSC/RANDOLPH AFB TEX  
 RHMSMVA/COMUSMACV  
 RUEBAAA/ARDC/ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND MD  
 RUMSNH/4TH SOS NHA TRANG AB VIETNAM  
 RUMSNH/281AHC NHA TRANG AB VIETNAM  
 ZEN/309TH TFS/39ARRSQ TUY HOA AB VIETNAM  
 RUMSNH/E 20CO NHA TRANG AB VIETNAM  
 RUMLNHD/183RECON/DONG BA THIN AAF VIETNAM  
 RUMLNHH/91 ARMY MEDEVAC HOSPITAL PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM  
 RHMSMVA/COMUSMACV/NORTHFIELD  
 RUMLNHH/28 ROK BRIGADE PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM  
 RUMLNHH/173ABN BRIGADE PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM

19 FEB 69 22 01

PAGE 2 RUMLJHA0075 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
 RUMLNHH/134AHC PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM  
 ZEN/31TACFTRWG TUY HOA AB VIETNAM  
 BZ

Classified by *AD 11 2004*  
 SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
 SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
 AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO  
 YEAR INTERVALS.  
 DECLASSIFIED ON *11 Dec 75*

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION I OF II JOPREP JIFFY/38-11D

- SUBJ: RESCUE 009/1405Z 19 FEB 69
1. RESCUE CLOSING REPORT 19 FEB 69
  2. 11-38-009-18 FEB 69
  3. THRU T. N/A
  6. 2/HH-43B/180830Z
  7. LAUNCHED PEDRO 241010Z
  8. N/A

9. A. VFR CEILING UNLIMITED  
 B. WEATHER VFR DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS NIGHT OPERATIONS SUSPENDED  
 DUE TO EXTREME DARKNESS, HAZE AND LOW CLOUDS

10. DET 11 38TH ARRSQ/JSARC
11. CUTIE 11 26TH ROK REGIMENT PHU HIEP AAF/TONTO 42 173RD ABN  
 BRIGADE PHU HIEP AAF/ HERB 31 28 ROK BRIGADE MACV NORTH FIELD AAF/  
 DEVIL 06, 20, 35, 38 134TH AHC PHU HIEP AAF/DUSTY 31, 32 309  
 TFS TUY HOA AB/SEAHORSE 22 E-20TH COMPANY NHA TRANG AB/CROWN 06,07  
 39TH ARRSQ TUY HOA AB/JOKER 54,59 48TH AHC NINH HOA

Usaf	ASN	NEES
THH	THH	11 30
	THH	11 48
	11	

PAGE 3 RUMLJHA0075 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
 AAF/MARDI GRAS 138,714 281ST AHC NHA TRANG AB/SPADER (UH-1 UNIT)  
 UNK UNK/ SPOOKY 41 42, 43 4TH SOS NHA TRANG AB/BLUESTAR 240  
 48TH AHC NINH HOA AAF/ DUSTOFF 38 91ST ARMY MED EVAC HOSP PHU HIEP AAF/  
 12. 134TH AHC PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM *Army*  
 13. DET 11 38TH ARRSQ/HOIST  
 14. 13/13/13/11/0/2

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15. ALL WITH EXCEPTION OF GROUND RESCUE FORCES TAKEN TO 91ST MED EVAC ARMY HOSPITAL PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM. REMAINDER TAKEN TO TUY HOA AB VIETNAM

16. DET 11 38TH ARRSQ/11.3 HOURS/13 SORTIES/39TH ARRSQ 4.4 HOURS/ 1 SORTIE/NOT AVAILABLE FOR OTHER ASSISTING AGENCIES

17. APPROXIMATELY 87 PERSONNEL/4 - 0-1/6 - UH-1C/2 -F-100/2 - HC-130P/5 - UH-1F/2 - HH-43B

18. A. PEDRO 05 (MISSION 1/18 FEB 69) RCC: NICHOLSON, DANIEL A CAPT/RCCP WOHLNICK CHARLES T CAPT/PJ EVANS RICHARD E SGT/PJ FISH MICHAEL E SGT/FF REEVES NORMAN F. SSGT (3 SAVES)

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PEDRO 24 (MISSION 1/18 FEB 69) RCC: FOGG HENRY P CAPT/RCCP WHITNEY EDGAR R MAJ/FE KING LEROY W SSGT/FF MCALLISTER ROBERT A SSGT/ (1 SAVE) PEDRO 05 (MISSION 1/19 FEB 69) RCC NICHOLSON DANIEL A CAPT/RCCP WHITNEY EDGAR R. MAJ/FE MARGAGLIANO THOMAS B TSGT/ FE

PAGE 4 RUMLJHA0075 C ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ L  
KING LEROY W SSGT/FF MCALLISTER ROBERT A SSGT/ (4 SAVES)

PEDRO 24 (MISSION 1/19 FEB 69) RCC: AUSTIN, WILLIAM F CAPT/RCCP DOWNING MORGAN A MAJ/FE MARTIN RALPHAEL C SSGT/PJ EVANS RICHARD E SGT/ (2 SAVES) PEDRO 05 (MISSION 2/18 FEB 69) RCC: NICHOLSON, DANIEL A CAPT/RCCP WOHLNICK CHARLES T CAPT/PJ EVANS RICHARD E SGT/ (0 SAVES) PEDRO 05 (MISSION 2/19 FEB 69) RCC NICHOLSON DANIEL A CAPT/RCCP WHITNEY EDGAR R MAJ/FE MARGAGLIANO THOMAS B TSGT/PJ FISH MICHAEL E SGT/(0 SAVES)

3 ACR  
4 ACR/  
5 Non-Crew

B. PERSONNEL SAVED: ROSE VICTOR L WO-2 281ST AHC NHA TRANG AB/ BAILEY VAN D E-7 CO. 20TH INFANTRY LRP NORTH FIELD AAF/ NORRIS JIM (NMI) E-4 281 AHC NHA TRANG AB/MARTIN FRANK W WO-1 281 AHC NHA TRANG AB/SARLER GEORGE II PFC E CO. 20TH INFANTRY LRP NORTH FIELD AAF/CHEEK RICHARD L SP-4 UNIT UNK/ FISH MICHAEL E SGT DET 11 38TH ARRSQ TUY HOA AB/REEVES NORMAN F SSGT 31ST CES TUY HOA AB/MCALLISTER ROBERT A SSGT 31ST CES TUY HOA AB/ MARGAGLIANO THOMAS B TSGT DET 11 38TH ARRSQ TUY HOA AB/ TWO SAVES MEMBERS OF THE 20TH INFANTRY LRP NORTH FIELD AAF NAMES UNKNOWN

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12

19. A THRU G SELF EXPLANATORY

H. TEN (10) ARRS COMBAT SAVES NO REFUELLING.

DET 11 38TH ARRSQ WAS NOTIFIED 180830Z BY TONTO 42 THAT A UH-1 HAD

PAGE 5 RUMLJHA0075 C ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ L

CRASHED 225 DEGREES 25 MILES FROM TUY HOA AB, 5 PERSONNEL WERE ON BOARD AND TRAPPED INSIDE. PEDRO 05 WAS REFUELLED AND SCRAMBLED AT 0845Z GUNSHIPS WERE NOTIFIED. MORE THAN 50 ENEMY FORCES WERE KNOWN TO BE IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA, AND WERE NOT A FACTOR IN CAUSING THE CRASH. THE HELICOPTER HAD CRASHED INTO DENSE MOUNTAINOUS JUNGLE WHILE ATTEMPTING TO EXTRACT A LONG RANGE PATROL (LRP) WHICH WAS IN DANGER OF BEING OVER RUN BY THE ENEMY. HELICOPTERS IN THE AREA REPORTED NEGATIVE GROUND FIRE. PEDRO 05 HOVERED OVER THE WRECKAGE MAINTAINING A HOVER FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR.

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12 ON GR

SSGT REEVES AND SGT FISH WERE LOWERED TO THE GROUND WITH A CRASH ENTRY KIT, MEDICAL KIT AND METAL CUTTING POWER SAW (WHICH FAILED TO CUT). THERE WERE FIVE PERSONNEL INJURED IN TH CRASH AND 5 LRP'S

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Remainder  
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10 + 2 - 3 = 9 - 2

AT THE SCENE. SGTs FISH AND REEVES REMOVED THE THREE MOST SERIOUSLY INJURED MEN, PLACED THEM INTO THE SEMI-RIGID LITTER AND SECURED TO THE HOIST. SGT EVANS DIRECTED THE HOVER BETWEEN THE 100 FOOT TREES AND OPERATED THE HOIST THROUGH A VERY SMALL OPENING THROUGH THE DOUBLE TREE CANOPY. WHEN SGT EVANS ADVISED THE RCC THAT THE PATIENTS REQUIRED IMMEDIATE TRANSFER TO A HOSPITAL AS THEIR CONDITION WAS EXTREMELY GRAVE, PEDRO 05 DEPARTED THE SCENE LEAVING FF AND PJ ON THE GROUND. PEDRO 05 LANDED

12 (A)  
- 3 (SAI)  
9  
6

PAGE 6 RUMUJHA0075 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

IN A CLEARING APPROXIMATELY 5 MILES AWAY FROM THE SCENE AND SGT EVANS TRANSFERRED THE PATIENTS TO A UH-1, SPADER 20, WITH THE AID OF TWO CREWMEMBERS, FOR TRANSFER TO THE 91ST ARMY MED EVAC HOSPITAL AT PHU HIEP AAF. DURING THIS TIME DUSTOFF 38 RECOVERED ONE LRP AND ONE DECEASED MAN, LEAVING 4 LRPS, ONE PILOT PINNED IN THE COCKPIT BY THE RIGHT FOOT, THE FIREFIGHTER AND THE PARARESCUE SPECIALIST ON THE GROUND. DUSTOFF 83 DEPARTED FOR FUEL. PEDRO 05, THE ONLY HOIST EQUIPPED AIRCRAFT, RETURNED, HOVERING OVERHEAD AN ADDITIONAL TEN MINUTES. WHEN CONTACT COULD NOT BE ESTABLISHED WITH THE GROUND, AND FUEL BECAME CRITICAL, PEDRO 05 DEPARTED FOR TUY HOA AIR BASE. PEDRO 24 WAS ENROUTE TO THE CRASH SITE, ARRIVING TEN MINUTES LATER. TUY HOA APPROACH CONTROL VECTORED THE PEDROS TO AND FROM THE SIGHT. DURING THESE RECOVERIES GROUND FIRE WAS ENCOUNTERED AND THE ARMED HELICOPTERS APPLIED SUPPRESSIVE MINIGUN AND .50 CALIBRE FIRE, KILLING 3 ENEMY PERSONNEL APPROXIMATELY 200 YARDS FROM THE CRASH. PEDRO 24 HOVERED OVER THE CRASH SITE, BRINGING SSGT REEVES UP ON HOIST. THE HELICOPTER WAS HOVERING AT MAXIMUM POWER (1600 FOOT ELEVATION) AND COULD NOT CARRY ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL. THE REMAINING PERSONNEL ATTEMPTED TO FREE THE TRAPPED PILOT. PEDRO 24 DEPARTED THE SCENE AS DARKNESS FELL, LEAVING SGT FISH, THE PILOT AND 4 LRP S

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7 (ARK)  
- 1 (SAVE)  
6

PAGE 7 RUMUJHA0075 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

ALONE. AFTER REFUELLING PEDRO 05 RETURNED TO THE AREA BUT CONTACT WITH HELICOPTER FLARE AND GUNSHIPS AND THE GROUND PARTY COULD NOT BE ESTABLISHED. EXTREME DARKNESS, LOW SCUD AND HAZE OVER THE MOUNTAINS REQUIRED INSTRUMENT FLIGHT. AT 7500 FEET. PEDRO 05 RETURNED TO BASE AT 1205Z. AN AC-47 ORIT WAS ESTABLISHED OVER THE SITE. CONTACT WAS ESTABLISHED WITH THE LRP TEAM, WHO DIRECTED FLARE DROPS THROUGH THE NIGHT. SGT FISH ADMINISTERED AID TO THE PATIENT AND ASSISTED IN ESTABLISHING A PERIMETER DEFENSE. HOSTILE FORCES COULD BE HEARD MOVING IN AN EXTREMELY CLOSE PROXIMITY TO THE CRASH SITE THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT. PEDRO 05 AND PEDRO 24 DEPARTED TUY HOA AT 2220Z ENROUTE TO THE CRASH SITE UNDER RADAR VECTOR ARRIVING OVER THE SITE, IT WAS NECESSARY TO DELAY APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES FOR ARRIVAL OF THE UH-1 GUNSHIPS, DELAYED FOR MAINTENANCE. CROWN 07 ARRIVED ON SCENE AND WHEN THE ARMY HELICOPTERS DID NOT DRAW HOSTILE FIRE OVER THE CRASH, PEDRO 05 WAS CLEARED TO GO IN. AS THE HOVER WAS ESTABLISHED TSGT MARGAGLIANO, SSGT MCALLISTER AND ADDITIONAL HEAVY DUTY CRASH ENTRY EQUIPMENT WERE LOWERED TO THE GROUND. PEDRO 05 DEPARTED THE SITE WHILE GROUND PERSONNEL ATTEMPTED TO FREE THE MAN, IN ORDER TO

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+ 2  
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WAITER AT A HIGHER ALTITUDE AND CONSERVE FUEL. PEDRO 24 RETURNED TO

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HH 43 13/11.3  
HC13CP 2/4.4 +

4	0-1
6	UH-1C
2	F100
2	HC13CP
5	UH-1F
2	HH 436
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PT 01204  
ZTTCZYUW RUMLUJA0076 0502003-CGCC--RUCIEUA.

Z CCCC  
Z 191934Z FEB 69  
FM DET 11 38ARRSQ TUY HOA AB VIETNAM  
TO RUEFHQA/CSAF/AFCP/AFXPFH  
RUCIEUA/ARRS/ARSCP/SCOTT AFB ILL  
RUHHABA/41ARRWG/41CP/HICKAM AFB HAWAII  
RUSQNA/3ARRGP/JSARC/TAN SON NHUT AB VIETNAM  
INFO RUCEAAA/USAF ALTERNATE CP MAXWELL AFB ALA  
RUSQNA/7AF/DOTO/D0/DP/DI/BDPMP/CP/TAN SON NHUT AB VIETNAM  
RUWTFJA/USAFMPC/AFPMSC/RANDOLPH AFB TEX  
RHMSMVA/COMUSMACV  
RUEBAAA/ARDC/ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND MD  
RUMSNH/4TH SOS NHA TRANG AB VIETNAM  
RUMSNH/281AHC NHA TRANG AB VIETNAM  
ZEN/309TH TFS/39ARRSQ TUY HOA AB VIETNAM  
RUMSNH/E 20CO NHA TRANG AB VIETNAM  
RUMLNHD/183RECON/DONG BA THIN AAF VIETNAM  
RUMLNHH/91 ARMY MEDEVAC HOSPITAL PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM  
RHMSMVA/COMUSMACV/NORTHFIELD  
RUMLNHH/28 ROK BRIGADE PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM  
RUMLNHH/173ABN BRIGADE PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM

Classified by 1138 AQ/50  
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DECLASSIFIED ON 31 Dec 75

PAGE 2 RUMLUJA0076 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
RUMLNHH/134AHC PHU HIEP AAF VIETNAM  
ZEN/31 ACFTRWG TUY HOA AB VIETNAM

BT  
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ FINAL SECTION OF II JOPREP JIFFY/38-11D  
TUY HOA AIR BASE FOR FUEL TO PROVIDE OVERLAPPING COVERAGE WITH  
PEDRO 05. HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS PATROLLED THE AREA FOR HOSTILE  
ACTIVITY, WHEN PEDRO 05 HAD 10 MINUTES FUEL TO BINGO REMAINING,  
THE MAN WAS FREED. PEDRO 05, WITH SSGT KING AS HOIST OPERATOR,  
RECOVERED THE INJURED PILOT, ONE LRP, TSGT MARGAGLIAN AND SSGT  
MCALLISTER. DURING THIS PERIOD THE INTENSITY OF GROUND FIRE INCREASED  
FROM APPROXIMATELY 200 YARDS IN ALL DIRECTIONS. THE GUNSHIPS APPLIED  
SUPPRESSIVE MINIGUN AND ROCKET FIRE. NO AIRCRAFT REPORTED HITS.  
PEDRO 05 DEPARTED WITH CRITICAL FUEL, LANDING WITH THE FUEL LOW  
LIGHT ON AT THE 31ST USAF DISPENSARY TUY HOA AIR BASE. THE  
PATIENT AND LRP WERE OFFLOADED FOR EXAMINATION BY A FLIGHT SURGEON  
WHILE THE HELICOPTER REFUELLED AT THE RESCUE ALERT HELIPAD. AS  
PEDRO 05 DEPARTED THE CRASH SITE MARDI GRAS 138 AN ARMY UH-1 ASSUMED  
A HOVER AND BEGAN TO RECOVER PERSONNEL WITH A FOREST PENETRATOR.  
THE PARARESCUEMAN AND ONE LRP WERE RAISED SIMULTANEOUSLY  
ON THE DEVICE. THE LRP WAS WEARING FULL FIELD GEAR. DURING THE

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PAGE 3 RUMLUJA0076 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
ASCENT THE SAFETY STRAP ON THE FOREST PENETRATOR SLIPPED UPWARD, OFF  
THE TOP OF THE MAN'S KNAPSACK. SGT FISH ATTEMPTED TO HOLD THE MAN  
ONTO THE FOREST PENETRATOR. AS THEY REACHED THE AIRCRAFT THE TOP  
OF THE LRP'S PACK CAUGHT BENEATH THE LANDING SKID. SGT FISH  
ATTEMPTED TO SIGNAL THE HOIST OPERATOR TO STOP THE HOIST,  
TO NO AVAIL. THE LANDING SKID PULLED THE LRP FROM THE RESCUE

FLASH

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P 01204

DEVICE. HE FELL TO HIS DEATH 100 FEET BELOW. MARDI GRAS 138 RECOVERED THE LRP AND DEPARTED FOR PHU HIEP AAF. PEDRO 24, WHO HAD ARRIVED ON SCENE 10 INUTES EARLIER, EXTRACTED THE REMAINING TWO LRPS FROM THE SCENE, TAKING THEM TO 91 ST MED EVAC HOSPITAL. PEDRO 05, ONCE REFUELLED, TRANSPORTED THE INJURED PILOT TO THE 91ST HOSPITAL AND RETURNED SGT FISH TO TUY HOA AIR BASE. MISSION TERMINATED 190130Z.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
DETACHMENT 11, 38TH ARRSQ (MAC)  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96316



REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: 38-11 C

21 February 1969

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative Report (11-38-009-18 Feb 69)

TO: 3rd ARRGp *JG*  
APO 96307

THRU: 38th ARRSq *JG W*  
APO 96307

*114*

1. This report is submitted IAW ARRSM 55-2. 3rd ARRGp Supplement 1, 15 April 1968.

2. At 1630L Tonto 42 notified Detachment 11 that Mardigras 715, an Army UH-1 helicopter, had crashed 225 degrees, 25 miles from Tuy Hoa Air Base. Five personnel were believed trapped in the wreckage. Pedro 05 was refueled and scrambled at 1645, Crew; Nicholson, Wohlneck, Evans Fish and Reeves. UH-1 gunships had been requested from Phu Hiep AAF, 5 miles south of Tuy Hoa AB. Pedro 05 was vectored to the vicinity of the wreckage by Tuy Hoa Approach Control. The HH-43B located other aircraft in the area and was vectored over the downed aircraft, which crashed near the bottom of a steep, densely jungled mountain canyon at the 1600 foot elevation. It had been downed by ground fire while attempting to extract a 5 man long range patrol (LRP) which had requested to be picked up, as they were certain their position would be overrun during the night by the numerous Vietcong in the immediate area.

3. When Pedro 05 arrived at the scene one hoist equipped UH-1H, call sign Dustoff 83, was hovering over the crash and several UH-1F slicks were flying in the immediate vicinity. They reported no groundfire. Cutie 11, a forward air controller flying an O-1, was controlling the mission. Pedro 05 approached up the valley to the site, turning 180 degrees to be facing out of the valley during the recovery. A hover was established approximately 175 feet above the ground, with surrounding trees extending above the rotor blades. A tree was ten feet directly below the helicopter. Sgt Fish and Sgt Reeves were lowered individually to the ground by Sgt Evans, followed by the pararescue medical kit, the crash entry kit and a gasoline powered crash entry saw, which proved to be inoperative. In order to lower personnel and equipment to the crash through the six foot hole in the double tree canopy it was necessary to hover with the rotor blades within two feet of a tree on the right side. SSgt Reeves and Sgt Fish splinted the first man, with two broken legs and two broken arms, and placed him in the semi-rigid litter. He was hoisted aboard by Sgt Evans, who was required to remove him from the semi-rigid litter, which was also required for recovery of the second and third victims who also had extensive injuries. The semi-rigid litter was left on

Classified by *11 38 ARRSQ*  
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ DOWNGRADED AT TWO  
YEAR INTERVALS.  
DECLASSIFIED ON *11 Dec 75*

*Arch 7'*

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the ground for use by Dustoff 83. The hover during the recovery was further complicated by hostile fire from the surrounding hillsides and the turbulent rotor wash from a dustoff UH-1 hovering near the HH-43B. The RESCAP gunships fired their door guns and miniguns at the enemy positions, 100 to 200 yards distance. Due to the serious condition of the survivors on board, Pedro 05 departed the scene to a clearing approximately five miles from the base of the mountains. An Army UH-1 helicopter landed alongside. Two crewmembers assisted Sgt Evans in transferring the patients aboard the UH-1 for transportation to the U.S. Army evacuation hospital at Phu Hiep AAF. During this transfer Dustoff 83 picked up one LRP team member and one deceased crewmember with the semi-rigid litter. Pedro 05 returned to the crash after Dustoff 83 had departed with low fuel. The forest penetrator was lowered to the ground and for ten minutes the HH-43B hovered while Sgt Reeves and Sgt Fish worked to free the trapped co-pilot. Due to their concentrated efforts they could not monitor the radio and could not hear the loudhailers because of the noise from the helicopter. Pedro 05 reached bingo fuel and was forced to leave the four LRPs, the trapped co-pilot and the two rescue crewmembers. Gunships continued to suppress the enemy small arms and automatic weapons fire. Pedro 05 landed at Tuy Hoa Air Base at 1855L.

4. Pedro 24 was delayed taking off on the mission as it was undergoing maintenance and had one set of blades removed. The rotor blades were re-installed and the helicopter was test hopped. Pedro 24, Crew; Fogg, Whitney, King and McAllister, launched on the mission at 1810, and was vectored to the crash site by Tuy Hoa Approach Control. Upon arriving at the crash site, radio contact was made with an Army gunship and he pointed out the exact location of the downed helicopter. The wreckage was extremely hard to see due to the terrain and foliage. Because of the high gross weight of the helicopter and the high density altitude, Pedro 24 was required to use almost all available power to hover above the trees. By taking full advantage of the wind and lowering the helicopter into a small opening in the trees, enough power was available to pick up one man, the firefighter who had been deployed by Pedro 05. Just prior to the hoist pickup an Army gunship spotted several enemy moving toward the sight. The orbiting gunships strafed the enemy position and were credited with four enemy killed less than 200 meters from the crash site. When the firefighter had been safely hoisted aboard, Pedro 24 experienced a loss of radio communications. During this time the RESCAP gunships departed the area due to low fuel, leaving Pedro 24 with no cover for approximately ten minutes. Pedro 24 landed at Tuy Hoa at 1935L. While enroute to Tuy Hoa, Pedro 24 passed Pedro 05 who was enroute to the scene.

5. Pedro 05 re-launched at 1900L, Crew; Nicholson, Wohlneck and Evans. Tuy Hoa Approach Control provided radar vectors to the scene. Pedro,05 orbited at 7500 feet over the mountains awaiting a rendezvous with a UH-1 flare ship and gunships. Extreme darkness and lack of visual references due to haze and low clouds necessitated instrument flight. The rendezvous was unsuccessful and Pedro 05 returned to base at 2005L. Preparations were made to attempt

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the recovery at first light. Heavy duty equipment for cutting and bending the metal in the helicopter was obtained because the normal crash entry kit was insufficient. The additional equipment included two chain hoists, another gasoline powered circular saw with metal cutting blade, miscellaneous pry bars, and a hydraulic jack.

6. After Pedro 24 departed the crash, Sgt Fish and the four remaining LRPs continued to attempt to free the co-pilot's foot, working in the semi-darkness with a flashlight. It became apparent that nothing further could be done that night because of the noise which the efforts produced, plus the man's cries of pain. Sgt Fish administered morphine to ease the pain and quiet the man so their exact position would not be compromised. He made the man as comfortable as possible, covering him with a blanket. Throughout the night Sgt Fish and the LRPs remained beside the pilot and maintained a constant guard for the enemy, who could be heard all night moving in very close proximity. Enemy personnel constantly moved about in a creek bed 30 yards downhill from the wreckage. Sgt Fish checked his patient frequently through the night and treated him for shock. Doctors credited his actions during the night for saving the man's life. An AC-47 was stationed continuously overhead to drop illumination flares over the ground team. The LRP team fully anticipated having their position overrun that night. At one point the LRPs heard extremely close sounds and fired point blank into the darkness. Sgt Fish advised the rescue aircraft of the enemy action upon their arrival the next morning, and assisted in the removal and rescue of the co-pilot when additional help arrived.

7. Pedros 05 and 24 departed Tuy Hoa at 0620L 19 Feb 69, with radar vector to the crash site. Two UH-1H slicks arrived over the area and located the site by radio coordination and a visual sighting on a strobe light. Pedro 05, crew; Nicholson, Whitney, King, Margagliano, McAllister was primary recovery aircraft. Pedro 24, crew; Austin, Downing, Evans and Martin was high ship for the mission. Arrival of gunships was delayed approximately 30 minutes for maintenance. Pedros 05 and 24 orbited the scene until their arrival. Crown 7 coordinated the effort through JSARC. Pedro 05 was cleared into the site once the gunships were on station. Pedro 05 established a hover over the wreckage. Sgts Margagliano and McAllister were lowered to the ground followed by the crash entry equipment. Hostile fire was coming from surrounding hills 100 to 200 yards away. Pedro 24 departed at this time to refuel in order to provide overlapping coverage with Pedro 05. Pedro 05 climbed above 4000 feet to loiter and save fuel while the co-pilot was being freed. The man was free and ready to be picked up approximately 20 minutes later. Pedro 05 returned to recover the pilot with the semi-rigid litter, one LRP, TSgt Margagliano and SSgt McAllister. During the pickup heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire was encountered. One UH-1 was struck by one round, no other reported damage. UH-1 gunships directed suppressive machine gun and minigun fire at the sources of the fire, which continued. Personnel in the cabin of Pedro 05 reported visually sighting enemy forces with guns traversing the hillside approximately 100 yards to the rear during the pickup. Pedro 05 departed the site for fuel. Fuel was insufficient to fly to

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Phu Hiep without refueling. The patient and LRP were taken to the 31st USAF Dispensary at Tuy Hoa while Pedro 05 refueled at the alert pad, landing at 0845L.

8. When Pedro 05 left the crash site Mardi Gras 138, a hoist equipped Army UH-1, began to recover personnel as Pedro 24 was not yet at the scene. Sgt Fish boarded the forest penetrator and one LRP with full field gear sat opposite him, with his legs over those of the PJ. As they ascended they became entangled in a tree. The hoist operator did not observe this. Sgt Fish fended off the branches as he was pulled upward. The safety strap, around the LRP's back slipped upward around his neck and he began slipping downward on Sgt Fish's legs. The LRP and PJ clung desperately to each other and Sgt Fish straightened his legs horizontally to support the man. They were spinning rapidly as they approached the helicopter. The LRP's back pack caught on the skid as they were pulled upward. The man began to slip more. Attempts of Sgt Fish to hold the man and the hoist operator to grab him failed and he was pulled from the forest penetrator, falling to his death. His body was recovered and the UH-1 flew to the 91st Army hospital at Phu Hiep AAF.

9. After refueling Pedro 24 departed Tuy Hoa at 0810L and flew directly to the crash scene. Enroute Pedro 24 had contacted Crown 7 and advised them that Pedro 24 would be in the area within ten minutes and would be able to remain for one and a half hours. Pedro 24 orbited the area for approximately ten minutes while the Army UH-1 completed their pickup. Pedro 24 established a hover over the crash site and began hoisting the remaining two survivors, plus equipment, from the site. No ground fire was received at this time however the pararescueman sighted four Viet Cong coming down a hillside approximately 100 yards to the rear of Pedro 24. After recovering the last two men, the pilot turned approximately 90 degrees to avoid mountains and departed. Pedro 24 received ground fire from extremely close range after traveling about 200 yards from the crash site. Gunships were flying cover and came in to suppress the ground fire. Pedro 24 was not hit and delivered the two survivors to the 91st Army hospital. Pedro 24 returned to Tuy Hoa at 0930L.

10. Pedro 05 refueled and departed Tuy Hoa at 0855L with one LRP and injured co-pilot who had previously been taken to the 31st USAF Dispensary. They were taken to the 91st Army hospital at Phu Hiep AAF. Sgt Fish was brought back to Tuy Hoa on the return flight, landing at 0925L.

Crewmembers were:

18 February  
Pedro 05

	Mission #1
RCC	Capt Daniel A. Nicholson
RCCP	Capt Charles T. Wohlneck
RS	SSgt Norman F. Reeves
PJ	Sgt Richard E. Evans
PJ	Sgt Michael E. Fish

	Mission #2
RCC	Capt Daniel A. Nicholson
RCCP	Capt Charles T. Wohlneck
PJ	Sgt Richard E. Evans

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Mission #1. Pedro 24

RCC Capt Henry P. Fogg  
RCCP Capt Charles T. Wohlneck  
FE SSgt Leroy W. King  
FF SSgt Robert A. McAllister

Mission #1. 19 February Pedro 05 Mission #2.

RCC Capt Daniel A. Nicholson  
RCCP Maj Edgar R. Whitney  
FE TSgt Thomas B. Margagliano  
FE SSgt Leroy W. King  
FF SSgt Robert A. McAllister

RCC Capt Daniel A. Nicholson  
RCCP Maj Edgar R. Whitney  
FE TSgt Thomas B. Margagliano  
PJ Sgt Michael E. Fish

Mission # 1 and 2. Pedro 24

RCC Capt William F. Austin  
RCCP Maj Morgan A. Downing  
FE SSgt Raphael C. Martin  
PJ Sgt Richard E. Evans

Results of the missions were: 7 combat saves, U.S. Army, 4 crewmembers

*Daniel A. Nicholson*

DANIEL A. NICHOLSON, Capt, USAF  
Rescue Crew Commander

APPROVED:

*Morgan A. Downing*

MORGAN A. DOWNING, Major, USAF  
Commander

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