# 1991

# HISTORY OF THE 20th SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQUADRON



# 1991

History of the 20 Special Operations Squadron

MAJCOM: AFSOC

Location: Hurlburt Air Field (Eglin field 9)

Wing: 1 Special Operations Wing

Type Aircraft: MH-53J

# Hours : UNK

# Sorties: UNK

Passengers: UNK Cargo: UNK lbs. Expended 7.62: UNK rds 50 CAL: UNK

Commander: Lt. Col. Richard L. Comer

Senior Enlisted: Chief Master Sergeant John D. Selfridge

Personnel Strength (Min/Max): UNK Officers UNK Enlisted

Commentary: 1991 saw the 20th continuing vigilance in the deserts of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Early in January the war in Kuwait became more than a waiting game. According to General Schwartzkopf the 20th had the distinction of "starting the war". Several missions were flown for SAR activities as well as special operations.

Significant Missions: 21 January 1991. captain Tom Trask, Major Michael E. Homan, Tsgt James A. Peterson, Jr., Tsgt Gregory Vanhyning, Msgt Timothy B. Hadrych, and Sgt Craig Dock flew through numerous hazards at nap of the earth levels into the Iraq desert to rescue Navy Lt. Devon Jones. This marks the first successful combat SAR since the Vietnam war.

Significant Awards:

Air Force Cross:
Distinguished Flying Cross:
Purple Heart:
Silver Star:
Bronze Star:
Air Medals:

BIOGRAPHY

OF

LIEUTENANT COLONEL RICHARD L. COMER

Lieutenant Colonel Richard L. Comer is the Commander of the 20th Special Operations Squadron, 1st Special Operations Wing, Hurlburt Field, Florida.

Lieutenant Colonel Comer was born in Gastonia, North Carolina. He is a 1973 graduate of the Air Force Academy and attended undergraduate helicopter pilot training until June 1974.

After transitioning to the HH-53 at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, he spent 1975 in the 40th Air Rescue and Recovery Squadron at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Base, Thailand. He continued in H-53s in assignments to Sembach Air Base, Germany, (1976-1978), and Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, (1979-1980). He attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill from 1981-1982, graduating with a Master's Degree in English Literature. He had a follow-on assignment as assistant professor of English at the Air Force Academy from May 1982 to December 1985.

Returning to flying in 1986, he requalified in the H-53 at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, and arrived at the 41st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron at McClellan Air Force Base, California, in June 1986.

Lieutenant Colonel Comer arrived at the 20th Special Operations Squadron in May 1987, and served as assistant operations officer and operations officer before assuming duties as the squadron commander in June 1990.

He was promoted to lieutenant colonel in September 1989.

Lieutenant Colonel Comer is a command pilot with 3,000 flying hours. His decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the Aerial Achievement Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Combat Readiness Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the National Defense Service Medal, the Southwest Asia Service Medal, and the Humanitarian Service Medal.

Lieutenant Colonel Comer is married to the former Stephanie Bushnell of Colorado Springs. They have a son, Warren, and a daughter, Melanie.

CHRONOLOGY OF DESERT STORM MISSIONS

17 Jan 91 H+22 min 4 x MH-53Js led initial strike of DESERT STORM Eager Anvil - Led 8 x __H 64 to open a corridor in EW
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 0367 - 3.6, 0356 - 3.6, 1630 - 3.8, 0369 - 3.7

19 Jan 91 Moccasin 04 & 05 Flew 130NM into Iraq searching for a shotdown F-16 (Stroke 65) pilot near Tallil AB in heavy fog at night using Pave Low unique equipment. Searched for 20min, then diverted to another location for 30 more min. ___ ACS informed that they were detected so they returned to base.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 0930 - 5.2, 0369 - 5.2

21 Jan 91 Moccasin 04 & 05 rescued F-14 pilot near AA Assud AB Slate 46 MOC 05 spent 6 1/2 flying _____ in enemy territory. Picked up survivor A-10 destroyed enemy truck attempting to close with slate 46; performed air refueling w/BOA 22.

27 Jan 91 First known US/UK joint helicopter combat mission 1 MH-53 lead 1 UK CH47 to search for & rescue a beleaguered UIC SF team north of Baghdad. They searched for 40 min and flew for 4.0 hours, but found nothing.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 1630 - 6.6

6 Feb 91 2 x MH-53Js departed form King Fahd with Navy Seals and Combat Rubber raiding craft to infiltrate by SOF Duck two Navy Recon & Surveill teams 11 NM offshort from Kuwait City.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 0369 - 3.6, 0930 - 5.0

7 Feb 91 4 helo joint formation level by 2 MH-53Js. First covert infiltration of elite SF into Iraq, first 50,000 lb emergency war plan gross weight mission, first air refueling by helos behind enemy lines, first infil of US SF vehicles into Iraq. 5 hrs.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 5797 - 3.7, 0367 - 4.5

10 Feb 91 6 Ship joint helo formation, 3 MH-53Js lead one slick helo & 2 gunships to insert 3 vehicles and SF team members behind enemy lines. One rehearsal prior to mission.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 0930 - 5.0, 0367 - 4.3, 5797 - 4.3

12 Feb 91 1 MH53 lead 1 MH600 and 2 MH3 9 miles offshore from Kuwait City to insert a seal recon & surv team.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 0356 - 3.9

13 Feb 91 5 ship joint helo formation lead by 1 MH-53J, 2 helos were gunship escorts. Inserted elite SF personnel & vehicles deep into Iraq. Helos spent 23 min on ground-longest any helicopter

remained on ground prior to G-day. MH53 lead directed gunships to proceed to seek and destroy enemy SSMs.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 5797 - 5.0

17 Feb 91 6 ship joint helo formation. 1 MH53 led 2 heavy lift C1-147s and 2 gunships to insert elite SF personnel and vehicles behind enemy lines. They spent 2 1/2 hours in enemy territory and air refueled on the return trip in Saudi airspace. Rehearsal on 15 Feb.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 5797 - 4.4

19 Feb 91 4 ship joint helo formation. 1 MH-53 lead 1 slick & 2 gunships 130 NM into Iraq for covert infiltration of elite SF personnel, resupply, and exfil of personnel. Enroute wx was poor 53s radar failed. MH53 mission commander diverted gunships 60NM north to interdict enemy SSMs. Air refuel on return trip in Saudi airspace.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 5795 - 5.5

19 Feb 91 4 ship joint helo formation. 2 MH53s led 2 MH53s for Navy Seal recon & surv at Jazirat Kubbar Island 17 NM off coast of Kuwait City.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 1630 - 2.2, 0356 - 2.2

22 Feb 91 4 ship joint helo formation. 2 MH53s & 2 MH3s for Navy Seal & Kuwaiti Resistance infil at Jazirat Kubbar Island. 2 rehearsals.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 0356 - 2.3, 0369 - 2.5

23 Feb 91 2 MH53s inserted US Army 3d SF surv & recon team 150 NM into Iraq.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 1630 - 6.1, 0930 - 6.0

23 Feb 91 3 ship MH53 helo formation insert 3d SF recon & surv team deep into Iraq only 10 NM from elite Republican Guard elements. One team was compromised and one helo emergency exfiltrated them. 2 1/2 hours behind enemy lines.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 0356 - 11.6, 0364 - 10.6, 0369 - 10.9

24 Feb 91 6 ship joint helo formation. 2 MH53 2CH47 2 gunships flew behind enemy lines in vicinity of active enemy airfield H-3 to insert elite SF long range recon personnel & vehicles. Crews coordinated diversionary airstrikes and EW (ECM) flew through poor wx and heavy dust obscuring visibility. Flew at EWP 50,000 lbs and air refueled behind enemy lines.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 5789 - 4.1, 5797 - 4.8

26 Feb 91 7 ship joint helo formation. MH53 Yankee G1 carried main force & elite SF on the first joint air land direct action mission to

neutralize enemy communications facility. Encountered heavy AAA on target that was neutralized by coordinated tucair strike. Encountered AAA on egress. Flew 4 hrs and air refueled in Saudi air space.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 5795 - 4.7

27 Feb 91 2 ship joint helo formation. Flew over 200 miles into Iraq to resupply elite SF team. MH53 had hydraulic problems which _____ engineer repaired on the ground in Iraq. Longest helicopter penetration into Iraq.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 0367 - 6.0

27 Feb 91 10 ship joint helo formation. 3 MH53 flew into KCIA to reinforce coalition forces. Flew through poor wx and into a hot LZ. Air refueled on return trip.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 0358 - 6.2, 0364 - 6.2, 0356 - 6.0

27 Feb 91 9 ship joint helo formation. 3 MH53 led formation at heavy weight through poor visibility from burning Kuwaiti oil wells through unknown threat to infiltrate reinforcements into Kuwait International Airport. Hot infil and mines and obstructions at airfield. First coalition aircraft to land KCIA.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 0356 - 6.0, 0358 - 6.2, 0364 - 6.2

28 Feb 91 6 ship joint helo formation. 4 MH53 led to reinforce troops SOCCENT in KCIA. Enroute aircraft had fuel transfer problems which flight engineer repaired in_____ by switching probe extension and tank transfer electrical connections.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 5789 - 5.4, 0930 - 4.4, 0358 - 4.8, 0369 - 4.5

28 Feb 91 2MH53 were the first aircraft to land at the US embassy in Kuwait City to infiltrate troops to secure the US mission.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 0356 - 5.3, 0364 - 5.3

28 Feb 91 2 MH53 flew a total of 3 sorties for 6 hours in the KTO in 1/2 mile visibility in unknown threat to search for a shot down US fighter pilot. Flew out of King Fahd and Kuwait City.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 5789 - 1.6, 0930 - 1.6

28 Feb 91 8 ship joint helo formation. 1MH53 led a mission into NW Iraq to emergency exfil an elite SF recon force and vehicles. Spent 10 minutes on the ground. Over 3 hours behind enemy lines.
Tail # - Acft Flt Tm: 5795 - 4.2

1 MAR 91 Resupply - FARPS SF vehicle 20 on ground rotor shutdown /engines on

3 Mar 91 6 ship joint helo formation. 1 MH53 flew almost 200 miles into Iraq to exfiltrate elite SF recon team & vehicles.

20 AMU HISTORICAL REPORT FOR JAN 91

1. ACCOMPLISHMENT:

A: WEAPONS SYSTEM PERFORMANCE: ~~N/A~~ MH-53J - 82.5% Analysis 4-7230

B: OPERATIONAL DEPLOYMENTS:
03-11 JAN 91 BILAT OCEANIA, VA 17 PEOPLE
DESERT SHIELD 76 PEOPLE

C: LOCAL AND HIGHER HQ EXERCISE: N/A

D: SPECIAL PROGRAMS: N/A

E: SUGGESTION PROGRAMS: N/A

F: PARTICIPATION IN FUND DRIVES: N/A

G: AFTO FORM 22 SUBMISSIONS:
APG FLIGHT CONTROL RIGGING ERROR ROEKER
ADD CAUTION TO TOWING CHECKLIST----------TSGT ROEKER

H: AWARDS:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| SUPPORT | QUALITY ASSURANCE EVALUATIONS | |
| | CTKS | 1 OUTSTANDING |
| | | 1 SATISFACTORY |
| | | 0 UNSATISFACTORY |
| | TEST EQUIPMENT | 1 OUTSTANDING |
| | | 0 UNSATISFACTORY |
| | SUPPORT PERSON OF THE MONTH | TSGT GRAY |
| SPECIALIST | AIC McMURRY AND SSGT REMILLARD REPRESENTED THE SGD IN THE BASE AWARDS COMPETITION IN AIRMAN AND NCO POSITION. | |
| APG | SSGT MARTIN MOORE AGS-NCO OF THE MONTH | |

2. EFFECTIVE USE OF MAINTENANCE RESOURCES:

A: INCREASED UNIT SELF SUFFICIENCY:

| | |
|---|---|
| SUPPORT | LOCAL PURCHASE OF 4 EA. 4000 WATT GENERATORS TO ENHANCE OUR MOBILITY PACK OUTS |

B: IMPROVED MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF AF ASSETS:

| | |
|---|---|
| | BUILT A SECURE STORAGE AREA WITHIN THE MOBILITY SECTION TO STORE PILFERABLE ITEMS. |
| STAFF | REMOVED AND REPLACED DOOR ON ROOM 16A<br>REMOVED AND REPLACED TILES IN ROOM 15 |
| SPECIALIST | THE SPECIALIST "B" FLIGHT ELECTRICIANS CONTINUED ASSIST THE AIR FORCE IN SAVING MONEY BY SUBMITTING FOUR MATERIAL DEFICIENCY REPORTS 1 SUPERVISORY PANEL AND 1 REFUEL CONTROL PANEL |

C: ZERO OVERPRICING PROGRAMS: N/A

3. INNOVATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS:

A. IMPROVE MISSION CAPABILITY: N/A

B. IMPROVED WORK MOVEMENT:
SSGT BOGDANSKI, SGT HUESMAN CONSTRUCTED BASKETBALL GOAL FOR THE DO DMU

C. SUPPORT TO PERSONNEL AND COMMUNITY:
SSGT REMMEL ELECTED HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICES CHAIRMAN FOR THE HURLBURT RED CROSS CHAPTER.
MSGT McDONALD VOLUNTEERED AS COUNSELOR FOR FLORIDA STATE INDOOR GAMES AT TALLAHASSE 1,2,3 FEB WITH MOORE THAN 1200 PARTICIPANTS.
SSGT K.QUEBEDEAUX AND CREW, SSGT M.MOORE, SSGT R.CROCHET, SSGT T.KNIGHT AND SSGT R.THOMAS REMOVED AND REPLACED THE ROOF OF DEPLOYED PERSON SSGT KELLY AT THEIR RESIDENTS IN NAVARRE.
SSGT K.QUEBEDEAUX AND CREW, SSGT M.BOWERS SGT J.HAZELWOOD SGT D.HENSON A1C D.KORNELY AND A1C R.SMITH AGAIN HELPED THE SPOUSE OF DEPLOYED PERSON TSGT B.VORHIES IN A MOVE TO BASE HOUSING.

D: SELF HELP PROGRAMS:
INDIVIDUALS PAINTED CHIEF OLMSTEAD OFFICE WALLS AND REPLACED HIS DOOR, SUPPORT BUILT CARGO NET HANGERS TO DECREASE CLUTTER AND IMPROVE ACCOUNTABILITY.

E. SAFETY PROGRAM: N/A

F. TRAINING PROGRAMS:
APG:
MH-53 FTD,TSGT L.ROEKER, SGT F.BISHOP, SGT SEDGLET, TSGT B.WHITEHEAD
SSGT C.ISOM, SGT J.MOORE 08.JAN-15 FEB
A8DR CLASS, SSGT T.KNIGHT 01 JAN-15 FEB
AFDS CLASS, SSGT H.RANKIN 13 FEB-22 FEB
T.O GENERAL, A1C M.DAVIS AND SGT D.JONES 28 FEB-01 MAR
NCOA TSGT J.MOORE GRADUATED 13 FEB
NCOLS SSGT W.WHILDEN GRADUATED FEB

SPECIALIST:
TERRAIN FOLLOWING AVOIDANCE FTD SSGT ALDRIDGE AND SSGT PATTON
C-12 COMPASS FTD, A1C GRAHAM, A1C McKENZIE AND AMN BANKS
AFDS FTD SRA OLSEN, SRA COOPER AND A1C FOSTER
MH-53 APG FTD SSGT MONROE,SGT NEWEL AND SGT RICHARDSON
NEW PLAN TO EDUCATE SSGTs ON DIFM, RPC AND TNG BEGAN
NCOA TSGT GARZA
NCOP SRA OLSEN
NCOP SRA COOPER

G. UNIQUE COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMS: N/A

H. COMMUNITY PROJECTS: N/A

I. HUMANITARIAN ACTIONS: N/A

4. OTHER INFORMATION:
J :
A1C COMPTON PROUD PARENTS OF (SAMANTHA NICOLE COMPTON)
8 POUNDS 5 OUNCES 20 1/2 INCHES BORN 21 FEB AT EGLIN AFB
NEW ARRIVAL AMN RICKY D. RIEVES AND DORA RIEVES CREWCHIEF

APG PROMOTION FOR FEB 91:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| TSGT J.L.SULIVAN | A1C K.KORNELY | A1C M.COMPTON | A1C M.BOLLES |
| SRA K.QUIGLEY | A1C M.NORRIS | A1C D.CLEATON | A1C B.KREBS |
| A1C L.FOLLIS | A1C W.PALUMBO | A1C M.DAVIS | |

20 AMU HISTORICAL REPORT FOR FEB 91

1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

A. WEAPON SYSTEMS PERFORMANCE:
MC RATE : 73.3 %
IN TIME DEPARTURE RATE 84.2%

B: OPERATIONAL DEPLOYMENTS:
VACAPES, OCEANA VA, 2 ACFT, 21 INDIVIDUALS, 5 DAYS
FEB 02 91 INDIVIDUAL DEPLOYED TO DESERT STORM
FEB 04 91 5 INDIVIDUALS DEPLOYED TO DESERT STORM
FEB 06 91 INDIVIDUAL DEPLOYED TO DESERT STORM
FEB 08 91 2 INDIVIDUALS DEPLOYED TO DESERT STORM
FEB 11 91 INDIVIDUAL SSGT REEP TDY TO KEESLER AFB FOR STS REVIEW
FEB 14 91 4 INDIVIDUALS DEPLOYED TO DESERT STORM TO MODIFY ACFT (LARS)
FEB 15 91 10 INDIVIDUALS DEPLOYED TO DESERT STORM
FEB 16 91 2 ACFT DEPLOYED TO DESERT STORM
FEB 27 91 2 ACFT DEPLOYED TO POPE AFB
FEB 27 91 9 INDIVIDUALS TO POPE AFB, 5 DAYS
TOTAL AT THIS DATE DEPLOYED TO DESERT STORM 98 INDIVIDUALS

C: LOCAL AND HIGHER HQ EXERCISE: N/A

D: SPECIAL PROGRAMS: N/A

E: SUGGESTION PROGRAM: N/A

F: PARTICIPATION IN FUND DRIVES:
100% CONTACT FOR AIR FORCE ASSISTANCE FUND

G: AFTO FORM 22 SUBMISSIONS:
MH-53J TAIL PYLON FOLDING

H: AWARDS:
TSGT GREENE 1st SCW NCO OF THE YEAR
SSGT CRAIG 20 AMU NCO OF THE MONTH
A1C NORTH 20 AMU AMN OF THE MONTH
SSGT SYLVIA 20 AMU SUPPORT PERSON OF THE MONTH
QUALITY ASSURANCE:
HOME STATION CHECK ACFT 0358 14 FEB OUTSTANDING 97.78
ACFT 1631 20 FEB OUTSTANDING 94.04

2. EFFECTIVE USE OF MAINTENANCE RESOURCES:

A. INCREASED UNIT SELF SUFFICIENCY:N/A

B: IMPROVED MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF AF ASSETS:
SPECIALIST:
FIRST VOLUNTARY WEEKEND SHIFT HAD POSITIVE EFFECT ON MORALE
SUPPORT:
17 FEB TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT SHIPPED OUT TO SUPPORT DESERT STORM
18 FEB TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT SHIPPED OUT TO SUPPORT MODIFICATIONS OF DEPLOYED ACFT SUPPORTING DESERT STORM
27 FEB TOOLS AND TEST EQUIPMENT SHIPPED OUT TO SUPPORT POPE

C: ZERO OVERPRICING PROGRAMS: N/A

OVED MISSION CAPABILITY: MSgt Alred submitted a suggestion to improve mobility personnel reporting for communication navigation personnel and developed program to increase the efficiency of tracking enlisted PERFORMANCE report due dates and reporting officials.

C. SUPPORT TO PERSONNEL AND COMMUNITY:
Special Olympics Track and Field : 1 MARCH 91
Msgt McDonald, Toberman, Alred
Tsgt Jackson, Greene,
SSgt Wengert, Crochet, Hamilton, Brown, Cassella, Morris, Weisenberger
Sgt White, Roia, Newell, Henson, Wemyss
AIC C Davis III, R. Smith, C. Roberson, K. Terry, R. Rieves

Special Olympics Golf Tournament: 13 March 91
Msgt McDonald
SSgt Quebedeaux, Weisenberger
Sgt Allison
AIC G. DRURY, J.JAMES W. PALUMBO, K. TERRY, C. Davis III

D. SELF HELP PROGRAM: N/A

E. SAFETY PROGRAM: N/A

F. TRAINING PROGRAM:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| TSGT ROEKER | SUPPLY TRAINING BLOCK III | 13 MARCH 91 |
| SSGT KNIGHT | TURBOSHAFT ENGINE COURSE | 5 MARCH 91 |
| SGT JONES | T.O. GEN | 1 MARCH 91 |
| AIC DAVIS | T.O. GEN | 1 MARCH 91 |
| SGT HENSON | SUPERVISOR SAFETY CRS 8 | 28 MARCH 91 |
| SGT BECQUET | | |
| SSGT WHILDEN | | |
| SGT REMMEL | | |

UPGRADED TO 5 LEVEL 45751
AIC AUGUSTINE AIC PAGE C. DAVIS C. ROBERSON

G. UNIQUE COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS: N/A

H. COMMUNITY PROJECTS: N/A

I. HUMANITARIAN: N/A

4. OTHER INFORMATION:
NEW ARRIVALS:
APG AMN VAFEADES, JUBAL
BOHNER, DAVID
JOHNSON, DAVID
ADKINS, GREGORY
PECIALIST * AIC LONGSTREATH

OMOTIONS : SSGT QUEBEDEAUX

MSgt. McDonald.

DST totals
8/16 - 132
20 - 33
165

20 AMU HISTORICAL REPORT MARCH 91

1. ACCOMPLISHMENT:

A: WEAPON SYSTEMS PERFORMANCE
MC RATE ********** 72.4
ON TIME DEPARTURE RATE**** 91.9
HOME STATION CHECK ******* 0356 OUTSTANDING 7 MAR 98.12
5797 OUTSTANDING 26 MAR 96.08

SPECIALIST** With the return of several aircraft from Desert Shield we were tasked with the removal, reinstallation, and operational checks on over 100 line replaceable units. Coordinating with the 834 CRS we were able to accomplish all these maintenance actions within one week.

B: OPERATIONAL DEPLOYMENTS
09 MAR * 24 INDIVIDUALS RETURNED FROM THE GULF. (DESERT STORM)
23 MAR * 19 INDIVIDUALS, 3 ACFTS DEPLOYED TO POPE AFB FOR THE QUARTERLY EXERCISE.
28 MAR * 18 INDIVIDUALS (NO AIRCRAFTS) DEPLOYED TO POPE AFB FOR BILAT EXERCISE.
28 MAR * 2 INDIVIDUALS (MRT) DEPLOYED TO ROBINS AFB FOR THE MAINTENANCE RECOVERY OF A/C 4993
33 INDIVIDUALS ARE STILL DEPLOYED IN SUPPORT OF OPERATION DESERT STORM

C: LOCAL AND HIGHER HQ EXERCISE: N/A

D: SPECIAL PROGRAM: MEMORIAL SERVICES GUNSHIP CREW SPIRIT 03 8 MAR 91
BASE VICTORY PARTY 25 MAR 91

E: SUGGESTION PROGRAM : N/A

F: PARTICIPATION IN FUND DRIVES: N/A

G: AFTO FORM 22 SUBMISSIONS: MH-53J TOWING CHECKLIST

H: AWARDS:
SPECIALIST * The AIR r Force Good Conduct Medal was awarded to Tsgt Garza, Ssgt Folzman, Ssgt Zumbo, Sra Souther and Sra Cooper. Tsgt Yarbough was awarded a 3 day pass for an outstanding score on his CDCs. A1C Nitzel and AIC Silver both received letters of appreciation for performing an additional duty in superior manner. Ssgt Bogdanski received a certificate of recognition for professionalism. AIC Nitzel graduated from NCO prep school. Congratulations to Sgt Oliver AND Sra Pataky on their recent promotions. Finally , at the monthly recognition board Sgt Nevell was nominated for nco of the Month, AIC Kopchik won the 20 AMU Airman of month, while Sgt Oliver competed for the maintenance professional award.
SUPPORT * Ssgt Rose Fair won NCO of the Month for March 91
Ssgt Rose Fair was chosen as Support Person of the Month
CREWCHIEF * Crewchief of the Month Sgt Ted Klamerus

FFECTIVE USE OF MAINTENANCE RESOURCES:

INCREASED UNIT SELF SUFFICIENCY:
4 MAR 91 FAX MACHINE FULLY OPERATIONAL IN THE MOBILITY OFFICE

g. Other Information:

1. New Arrivals: (APG BRANCH) MSgt Terry Steiner, Amn Kevin Pizzino, Amn Raul Trujillo, Amn Toby White. (SPECIALIST BRANCH) SMsgt Mast, A1C Longstreath, Amn Bowen, Amn Vasquez, and Amn Williams.

2. Returnees From Deployment: (APG) MSgt Luckey, SSgt Bell, SSgt Wilson, Sgt Bell, SrA Pella, SrA Seaquist, A1C Scott. (SUPPORT) SSgt Muller, Sgt Lopez, and Sgt Thompson. (PRD) Msgt Teller, Tsgt Messer, and TSgt Mullen.

3. Outbound Personnel: (APG) SSgt Giordano, SSgt Knight, SSgt McGee, SSgt Prichett, Sgt Jones, Sgt Pratt, A1C Hall, and A1C Maddox. (PRD) MSgt Yockey. (SUPPORT) SSgt Sylvia. SSgt Simms, SSgt Monroe.

4. Miscellaneous Information: Capt Mcpharlin moved to Squadron Supervision. Capt Massa became OIC. 1Lt Singer became Assist OIC. SMSgt Ellis moved to EMS Propulsion Branch. SMSgt Mast assigned Specialist Branch Chief. SMSgt Middleton assigned Production Branch Chief. (S)MSgt Luckey assigned Asst Prod Branch Chief. (S)MSgt McDonald assigned APG Branch Chief. MSgt Jones and MSgt Ortiz are retiring. SSgt Moore assigned to QA. SrA Pina became a QTP instructor. A1C Cleaton assigned to Support. A1C Dalmas and A1C Morgan assigned to -21. A1C Giffords wife gave birth to a baby son. A1C Augistine's wife gave birth to a 11 lb 7 oz baby girl, Natalie Marie on 12 April.

CARL T. RAGLAND JR., MSgt, USAF.
20 AMU Historical Manager

.op
.mt0

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
834TH AIRCRAFT GENERATION SQUADRON (AFSOC)
HURLBURT FIELD, FLORIDA 32544-5000

FROM: MAAMH (MSgt Ragland-4-7385) 3 May 91

SUBJECT: April Historical Report

TO: MAAMH (Lt Singer)

1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

a. Weapon System Performance:
MH-53J Mission Capable Rate---76%
On-Time Departures-----86%

b. Operational Deployments:

| Mission | Location | #Personnel | Dates |
|---|---|---|---|
| Desert Calm | Classified | 33 | continuing |
| Bilat | Pope AFB, NC | 06 | 8-23 APR |
| Desert Calm/Swap | Classified | 08 | 8 April |
| Air Show | McDill AFB, FL | 02 | 12 April |
| Bilat/Swapout | Pope AFB, NC | 03 | 15 April |
| Desert Calm/Swap | Classified | 11 | 25 April |

c. Local And Higher HQ Exercises:

AMU Self-Inspection started 29 April 1991

d. Special Programs:

Specialist section has organized a Morale Committee for planning recreational activities and organizing fund raisers for the section.

e. Suggestion Program: Pneudraulic Shop made two suggestions during the month of April. The first was to carry APP accumulators in the tail number bins. The second was to reroute the position of engine start quick disconnects to avoid interfering with the avionics rack.

f. Participation In Fund Drives:

AFA 100% of the personnel returning from Desert Calm has been contacted. MSgt Abbott was the squadrons POC.

g. Afto Form 22 Submissions:

One submitted for Nose Landing Gear Wheel and tire Inst-

h. Awards:

Daedalian Award for 1990.(APG) Amn of the month was A1C Drury. C/C of the month SSgt Sears. John Levitow Honor Grad and Mac Professional Image Award was SrA Hess. SrA Quigley was given a gold card by Col Stevens and he also received 2 Z.D. certicicates. TSgt Vorheis received 3 Z.D. certificates and TSgt Sullivan also received 5 Z.D. certificates for April. (SPEC) Sgt Huseman was promoted to SSgt on April 1. Sgt Rasic was placed on the Deans list at Troy St. Univ. for the Winter Quarter. SSgt Patton and Sgt Fields were members of the Squadrons Base Championship Bowling team.(SUPP) Sgt Lopez Support person of the month. Section received a Laudatory report from QA from performance during the Bilat TDY to POPE.(SUPV) 1Lt Singer received a certificate for outstanding support of CFC and a letter of appreciation. AFGCM awarded to Sgt Kibodeaux, Sra Bragg,and SrA Long. A1C Bednar awarded the 20 AMU professional of the month. Sgt McFadden received an NCO appointment certificate. SSgt Sears awarded Maint Professional of the month. A1C Bahls awarded Specialist of month.

2. EFFECTIVE USE OF MAINTENANCE RESOURCES

a. Increased Unit Efficiency: Spring cleanup started 29 April.

b. Improved Mission Capability: Mobility section received an upgraded phone (STU "3") to enhance operations.

c. Community/Humanitarian Projects: TSgt Brooks conducted CPR class for the child care center 27 April 1991.

d. Improve Work Environment/Self-Help: Landscaping;added red stones and hedge bushes to the front entrance to the AMU.

e. Safety Program: AMU safety inspection conducted 10-30 April with no major discrepancies noted. Six vehicle inspections were conducted all receiving an outstanding rating.

f. Training Program: SSgt Crochet selected to attend NCOL. SSgt Quebedeaux and Sgt Eble are attending NCOL. SSgt Capps, SSgt Rankin, and SSgt Salinas completed ABDR class. Sgt Neuhart, A1C C. Davis, A1C M. Davis, A1C Roberson, A1C Laughlin are attending APG FTD. Amn Johnson, Amn Adkins, and Amn Reeves are attending QTP. A1C Page completed T.O. Gen Class. SrA Hess and SrA Long are attending NCO Prep. SSgt Wengert deployed to to Lowry AFB for Lantern Pod Training. TSgt Henry is presently attending NCOA. Sgt Rasic currently attending a GPS conference at Kirtland AFB. Specialist section revised their training prog -ram to increase effectiveness. A1C Bolles, A1C Kennedy, and A1C Silverio volunteered to become Mobility augmentees.

3 INNOVATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

A: IMPROVE MISSION CAPABILITY: N/A

B: IMPROVED WORK ENVIRONMENT: N/A

C: SUPPORT TO PERSONNEL AND COMMUNITY:

| | |
|---|---|
| SPECIALIST | AIC FAIR RECEIVED A LETTER OF APPRECIATION FROM LT COL GEORGE FOR HIS INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE SUCCESS OF THE FIRST DESERT SHIELD PARTY HELD BY THE BRANCH.<br><br>FLIGHT SUPERVISION CONTINUED TO SOLICIT WRITTEN COMMUNICATION UNDER OPERATION DESERT LETTER POSTAGE PROVIDED BY FLIGHT CHIEFS |
| STAFF | TSGT BROOKS _ FIRE DEPARTMENT VOLUNTEER- ASSISTED IN PUTTING OUT TWO FIRES. ALSO ASSISTED IN A CAR ACCIDENT ON HIGHWAY 98 AND HIGHWAY 87. |
| SUPPORT | SSGT BARRY REMMEL GAVE A DEMONSTRATION ON CWD GEAR AND GAS MASK FOR PONCE DE LEON HIGH SCHOOL |

D. SELF HELP PROGRAMS:

| | |
|---|---|
| STAFF | REMOVED AND REPLACED DOOR ON ROOM 16 A<br>REMOVED TILES IN ROOM 15 |

E. SAFETY PROGRAMS:

| | |
|---|---|
| SPECIALIST | REFLECTIVE BELTS WERE RE-ISSUED AS REQUIRED |

F. TRAINING PROGRAMS:

| | |
|---|---|
| SPECIALIST: | B FLIGHT HAD FOUR AIRMEN COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENTS OF THEIR UPGRADE TRAINING AND WERE AWARDED THE FIVE SKILL LEVEL. |
| APG | 23AF NCOLS SSGT W. WHILDEN<br><br>ABDR TECHNICAN TRAINING COURSE COMPLETION<br>SSGT C. PRICHETT<br>SSGT R. KNIGHT<br>SSGT G. McGEE<br><br>ABDR ASSESOR TRAINING COURSE COMPLETION<br>SSGT C. PRICHETT<br>SSGT G. McGEE<br><br>T.O. GENERAL COURSE COMPLETION<br>SGT J. WILLIAMS<br>SGT E. BECQUET<br>AIC W. PALUMBO<br>AIC R. BENIGNO |

4. OTHER INFORMATION:

SELECTION FOR PROMOTION:

AF SGT QUEBEDEAUX SPECIALIST SGT THOR--HYD
SGT CROCHET

NEW ARRIVALS

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| APG | TSGT VORHEIS | BABY | BOY | JAN 8 |
| | AIC PALUMBO | BABY | GIRL | JAN 18 |
| | AIC BOLLES | BABY | BOY | JAN 19 |

op
.mtO

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
834TH AIRCRAFT GENERATION SQUADRON (AFSOC)
HURLBURT FIELD, FLORIDA 32544-5000

FROM: MAAMH (MSgt Ragland-4-7385) 6 JUNE 91

SUBJECT: May Historical Report

TO: MAAMC (Lt Fuller)

1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

a. Weapon System Performance:
MH-53J Mission Capable Rate---83%
On-Time Departures-----93.3%

b. Operational Deployments:

| Mission | Location | #Personnel | Dates |
|---|---|---|---|
| Desert Calm | Classified | 29 | continuing |
| Capex 91-1 | Pope AFB, NC | 31 | 10-18 May |
| Desert Calm/Swap | Classified | 07 | 15 May |
| Bilat | Dobbins AFB, GA | 40 | 18 May-14 June |
| Desert Calm/Swap | Classified | 07 | 18 May |
| Bilat | Dobbins AFB, GA | 03 | 31 May-14 June |
| Nat Vict Day | Washington, DC | 06 | 31 May-09 June |

c. Local And Higher HQ Exercises: None

d. Special Programs: Welcome home party for "Desert Storm" returnees.

e. Suggestion Program: Specialist Branch submitted two suggestions aimed at reducing costs associated with internal maintenance of the AMU.

f. Participation In Fund Drives: None

g. Afto Form 22 Submissions: Specialist Branch's Guidance and Control shop submitted two suggestions for improving its 1H-53(M)-J series technical order operational test procedures. APG Branch submitted part number changes for the 1H-53(H)B-4 technical order.

3. Outbound Personnel: MSgt Teller deployed to Saudi, MSgt Villarreal is retiring, TSgt Brooks is retiring, Sgt Lopez transferred to Specialist flight, SrA Cooper is departing PCS to Woodbridge, TSgt Sullivan, SSgt Isom Whilden, and Weisenberger, Sgt's Collins and Vonloh all



PCS'd to England. Sgt Arthur and SrA Quigley PSC'd to Korea, Sgt Klamerus PCS'd to Japan, and Sgt Moran PCS'd to Lackland AFB to become a training instructor. SSgt's Carmichael and Rankin and A1C's Bodie and Drury deployed to Desert Calm.

4. Miscellaneous Information: MSgt Abbott assumed responsibility as AMU Snackbar Manager. MSgt select Yingling became the 20 AMU building custodian. MSgt Ragland became the 20 AMU Self-Inspection Manager. SSgt Thacker assumed 20 AMU Vehicle and Safety NCO duties. MSgt Abbott's wife gave birth to a 7 1/2 lb. baby boy named Steven. SSgt Kelly's wife gave birth to a baby girl. SSgt Becquet's wife gave birth to a baby boy.

CARL T. RAGLAND JR., MSgt, USAF.
20 AMU Historical Manager

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
834TH AIRCRAFT GENERATION SQUADRON (AFSOC)
HURLBURT FIELD, FLORIDA 32544-5000

FROM: MAAMH (MSgt Ragland-4-7385) 2 JULY 91

SUBJECT: June Historical Report

TO: MAAMC (Lt Fuller)

1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

a. Weapon System Performance:
MH-53J Mission Capable Rate---74.9%
On-Time Departures-----93.9%

b. Operational Deployments:

| Mission | Location | #Personnel | Dates |
|---|---|---|---|
| Desert Calm | Classified | 35 | continuing |
| Bilat | Dobbins AFB, GA | 40 | --14 June |
| Desert Calm/Swap | Classified | 07 | 11 June |
| Nat Vict Day | Washington, DC | 17 | 03 June-11 June |
| Desert Calm/Swap | Classified | 04 | 27 June |
| Static Display | Pope AFB, NC | 02 | 28 June-02 July |

c. Local And Higher HQ Exercises: None

d. Special Programs: 6 June Sgt Rodriguez participated in the New York victory day parade. 27 June SSgt Noriz attended a all expense paid hometown victory parade.

e. Suggestion Program: None.

f. Participation In Fund Drives: Savings Bond Drive was conducted during the month.

g. Afto Form 22 Submissions: None.

h. Awards: (APG) TSgt Capps received his first oak leaf cluster to his Commendation medal. A1C R. Smith was promoted to SrA below the zone. TSgt's Roeker,Vorheis, and Yingling received line numbers for MSgt. SSgt's Griffin and Bevans received Air Force Commendation medals. SSgt's Griffin and Bevans received AF Achievement Medals. (SPECIALIST) TSgt Yarbough received a line number for MSgt. SSgt Zumbo was promoted to TSgt. SSgt's Johnson and Vicner received Commendation medals. SSgt Sternberg

was selected as NCO of the month for June. SSgt's Hamilton and Thor and A1C Scott received zero defects during the



month. Sgt Iman received Specialist of the month and 20 AMU Maintenance professional of the month. Amn Brantley won Airman of the month for May. (PRODUCTION) TSgt Messer received an Commendation Medal. TSgt's Henry, Matthews, and Messer recieved line numbers for MSgt. (SUPERVISION) Sgt Michelle Tedford received the AF Commendation medal. (SUPPORT) MSgt Williams received the AF Commendation Medal. SSgt Muller selected as NCO of the month for June. SSgt Muller was selected as the Support Branch person of thr month for June.

2. EFFECTIVE USE OF MAINTENANCE RESOURCES

a. Increased Unit Efficiency: Personnel from all branches went through the new CAMS supply interface course.

b. Improved Mission Capability: None.

c. Community/Humanitarian Projects: On 27 June SSgt's Sears Weisenberger, Sgt McGuiness, A1c's Pella, and Smith and Amn Rieves supported the Special Olympics East Pass Invitational Billfish Tournamant.

d. Improve Work Environment/Self-Help: Program to recycle all computer paper started by MSgt Jock.

e. Safety Program: None.

f. Training Program: Sgt's Geiser and Strickland, and A1C Drury completed basic CAMS class. Sgt Rammel,A1C Pella, Amn's Rieves and Suita completed general T.O. class. A1C's Bodie, Bach, and Silverio has been upgraded to the 5-Skill level. A1C's Bishop, Kornely, and Krebs are attending H-53 FTD. Amn's Bohner, Suita, Trijillio, and Vafeades completed QTP. Amn's Bastian, Blair, Page, Speight, and White are attending QTP.

g. Other Information:

1. New Arrivals: (SPECIALIST) A1C Floyd Martinez (APG) Sgt Hard and Amn Cheh.

2. Returnees From Deployment: MSgt Yockey , TSgt's Ford, Plotnick, SSgt's McGee, Giordano, Knight, and SSgt Sylvia, Sgt's Dominic, Cedric, and Vega, A1C's Weir, and Maddox.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
834TH AIRCRAFT GENERATION SQUADRON (AFSOC)
HURLBURT FIELD, FLORIDA 32544-5000

FROM: MAAMH (MSgt Ragland 7385) 1 AUG 91

SUBJECT: July Historical Report

TO: MAAMC (Lt Fuller)

1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

a. Weapon System Performance:
MH-53J Mission Capable Rate---78.5%
On-Time Departures-----90.8%

b. Operational Deployments:

| Mission | Location | #Personnel | Dates |
|---|---|---|---|
| Desert Calm | Classified | 26 | continuing |
| Static Display | Pope, AFB NC | 02 | 02 July |
| Load Test | Pope, AFB NC | 01 | 11-13 July |
| JRT | Savannah, Ga | 47 | 15 July-03 Aug |
| MRT | Hunter AFB, Ga | 02 | 28 July |

c. Local And Higher HQ Exercises: JRT to Savannah Georgia which included 7 aircraft and 47 personnel.

d. Special Programs: None

e. Suggestion Program : NONE

f. Participation In Fund Drives: None

g. Afto Form 22 Submissions: APG submitted an AFTO Form 22 to change the present general support work unit codes to allow for easier time accounting for frequently accomplished support general jobs. The current support general work unit codes are not broken down enough to be specific.

h. Awards: (APG) Sgt Shannon Strickland received a plaque for Crew Chief of the month for May. (SPECIALIST) SSgt Casella and Miller promoted to TSgt, SSgt Dunn received an Air Force Achievement Award. Sgt Fincher,Imam, and Newell was promoted to SSgt. Sgt Summers received his certificate of appointment to NCO. (SUPPORT) SSgt Fair as selected as NCO of the month (PRODUCTION) MSgt Ragland received his sixth award of the Air Force Good Conduct medal.



2. EFFECTIVE USE OF MAINTENANCE RESOURCES

a. Increased Unit Efficiency: None

b. Improved Mission Capability: Support section has received three of the ten connexes alloted to increase their mobility commitment.

c. Community/Humanitarian Projects: Participated in the American Red Cross blood drive.

d. Improve Work Environment/Self-Help: Installation of new tile in the main office and maintenance areas of APG section.

e. Safety Program: APG received nine outstanding QA inspection reports and one satisfactory report during July.

f. Training Program: SSgt Wilson was upgraded to seven level status. Amn's Cheh, McNulty, Thibert and AB Smith all successfully completed Q.T.P. this month.

g. Other Information:

1. New Arrivals: (SPECIALIST) A1C Clark, AIC Jones, Murphy and Sheffler, and MSgt's Arian and Rowley. (APG) SSgt Blackman, Sra Minor, and AIC Dial.

2. Returnees From Deployment: TSgt Robinson, and SSgt's Barrow, Casella, Kaski, Lohlien, and Thomas. AIC's Croft and Conarty.

3. Outbound Personnel: Sgt Crum is seperating from the service 31 July. SSgt's Pritchet and Powell are departing PCS. MSgt Villarreal retired. SSgt Martin Moore PCA'd to QA. AIC Mark Bolles PCA'd to -21.

4. Miscellaneous Information: SSgt Quebedeaux was appointed DIFM parts monitor for APG. TSgt Garza transferred from Specialist Section to Support.

CARL T. RAGLAND JR., MSgt, USAF.
20 AMU Historical Manager

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
834TH AIRCRAFT GENERATION SQUADRON (AFSOC)
HURLBURT FIELD, FLORIDA 32544-5000

FROM: MAAMH (MSgt Ragland 7385) 3 SEP 91

SUBJECT: August Historical Report

TO: MAAMC (Lt Fuller)

1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

a. Weapon System Performance:
MH-53J Mission Capable Rate---69.9%
On-Time Departures-----71.4%

b. Operational Deployments:

| Mission | Location | #Personnel | Dates |
|---|---|---|---|
| Desert Storm | Confidential | 32 | continuing |
| Bilat | Oceana, Va. | 19 | 04-11 Aug |
| Bilat | Ft Benning, Ga. | 25 | 16-23 Aug |
| Bilat | Pope AFB, NC. | 23 | 25-30 Aug |
| SKT Rewrite | Randolph AFB, Tx | 01 | 26 Aug-28 Sept |

c. Local And Higher HQ Exercises: 3 Bilats, one DLQ to Oceana Virginia, one Bilat to Pope and one to Fort Benning, Georgia.

d. Special Programs: 15 Aug change of command ceremony for 834 AGS. Lt Col George outgoing, Lt Col Timmons incoming.

e. Suggestion Program : one submitted by SSgt Janssen of the specialist section for the development of a Fuel Dump Switch Gua cover.

f. Participation In Fund Drives: Several volunteers participated in a fund raising car wash for Hispanic Heritage Month.

g. Afto Form 22 Submissions: NONE

h. Awards: (APG) SSgt Bevans selected as NCO of the month.
Sgt McFadden selected maintenance professional of the month.
(SUPPORT) TSgt Garza selected as support person of the month.

2. EFFECTIVE USE OF MAINTENANCE RESOURCES

b. Improved Mission Capability: Support section utilized new mobility deployment containers for the first time during the month of Aug to aid their mobility commitment.



c. Community/Humanitarian Projects: NONE

d. Improve Work Environment/Self-Help: NONE

e. Safety Program: NONE

f. Training Program: SSgt Wilson was upgraded to seven level status. SrA Minor and AIC Bishop was upgraded to 5-levels. SrA Minor and AIC Bishop are attending QTP.

g. Other Information:

1. New Arrivals : (APG) SSgt Blackman , Sgt Ledet, and AIC's Diaz and Rogers. (SPECIALIST) Amn Anton an Electrician.

2. Returnees From Deployment: TSgt Robinson, and SSgt's Carmichael, Kaski, Lohlien , Rankin, Seigel, and Thompson (APG) SSgt Ohanlin, Sgt Marr, and AIC Gann (PRODUCTION) MSgt's Carr,Hager,and Teller and TSgt's Henry and Mullen.

3. Outbound Personnel: SSgt Bronsberg, Sgt Hazelwood, AIC's Bach, James, Laughlin, and Maddox deployed to Saudi. Sgt McGuinness deployed to Woodbridge U.K.(APG) AIC Cleaton deployed to Saudi.(SPPORT)

4. Miscellaneous Information: Sgt Reeves' wife had a 5.8 pound baby girl.

CARL T. RAGLAND JR., MSgt, USAF.
20 AMU Historical Manager

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
834TH AIRCRAFT GENERATION SQUADRON (AFSOC)
HURLBURT FIELD, FLORIDA 32544-5000

FROM: MAAMH (MSgt Ragland 7385) 3 OCT 91

SUBJECT: September Historical Report

TO: MAAMC (Lt Fuller)

1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

a. Weapon System Performance:
MH-53J Mission Capable Rate---64.5%
On-Time Departures-----80.8%

b. Operational Deployments:

| Mission | Location | #Personnel | Dates |
|---|---|---|---|
| Desert Storm | Confidential | 32 | continuing |
| Static Display | Pope AFB, NC | 01 | 04-07 Sept |
| Ferry Aircraft | Kirtland AFB, NM | 01 | 09-13 Sept |
| Bilat | Ft Blanding, Fl | 22 | 15-21 Sept |
| DLQ | Oceanna, Va | 22 | 20-27 Sept |
| JRT | McChord AFB, Wa | 38 | 29 Sept-17 Oct |

c. Local And Higher HQ Exercises: One BILAT to Camp Blanding, Fl., one DLQ to Oceana, Va. and one JRT to McCord AFB, Washington.

d. Special Programs: None

e. Suggestion Program : None

f. Participation In Fund Drives: CFC fund drive in progress.

g. Afto Form 22 Submissions: None

h. Awards: (SUPPORT) SSGT Muller was selected as Maintenance Professional of the month. AIC Terry was selected as Airman of Month. (SPECIALIST) Amn of the Quarter winner AIC King and below the zone winner SrA McMurry. (APG) SrA below the zone winners Drury and Hall. SSgt Bowers was awarded the Commodant award in NCO Leadership School.

2. EFFECTIVE USE OF MAINTENANCE RESOURCES

a. Increased Unit Efficiency: Asssumed the support function of of the deployed, forward operating location at PNAS.

b. Improved Mission Capability: Mobility section received an upgraded computer system to enhance mobility operations of the AMU. AMU organized three Teardown and three Buildup Teams to enhance the response time of the 20 AMU in real world deployments.

c. Community/Humanitarian Projects: Assisted Boy Scout pack # 51 in a wood working project.

to improve building appearance and enhance the working atmosphere.

e. Safety Program: None

f. Training Program: TSgt's Reimer and Zumbo is attending the NCO Academy. SSgt Dunn is attending PME. SSgt's Bogdanski, Booher, Newell and Nuckles was upgraded 7-levels. Sgt Ward attended a Bore-Sight school at Warner-Robbins, Ga. Sgt Zicarelli is presently attending NCO Leadership school. MSgt Toberman and SSgt Kelley attended a SKT rewrite at Randolph AFB, Tx. from 26 Aug-28 Sept.

g. Other Information:

1. New Arrivals : (SUPPORT) AMN Antoine, and SrA Murry. (APG) SSgt's Cochran, Michael, and Mursch. Sgt's Brede, Marks, Ramierez, and Underwood. (PRODUCTION) MSgt Finney, TSgt Moore, SSgt Wilson, and Sgt Husemann. (SUPERVISION) Capt's Mangum and Purvis.

2. Returnees From Deployment: MSgt Ernest, TSgt Simpkins, SSgt Hettinger, Sgt's Caddell and Ebert, and SrA's Graham and Nitzel. SSgt Bronsenberg and AIC's James and Laughlin.

3. Outbound Personnel: TSgt Taylor is retiring and SSgt Casella is going PCS. SSgt Whitehead is going PCS to Kadena. Sgt Allison and Sgt Fields seperared from the service. Sgt Eble PCS'd to Germany.

4. Miscellaneous Information: TSgt Mullen transferred back to HFLT. MSgt Sullivan transferred back to HCNS. SMSgt sel Luckey was assigned as APG Branch chief. MSgt Guiney is now the" B" flight chief. TSgt Robinson was assigned APG "C" flight chief. SrA Anthony was assigned to the Support Section. AIC's Bodie and Rush was assigned to the -21 Section.

CARL T. RAGLAND JR., MSgt, USAF.
20 AMU Historical Manager

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
834TH AIRCRAFT GENERATION SQUADRON (AFSOC)
HURLBURT FIELD, FLORIDA 32544-5000

FROM: MAAMH (MSgt Ragland 6608) 4 NOV 91

SUBJECT: October Historical Report

TO: MAAMH (Lt Thode)

1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

a. Weapon System Performance:
MH-53J Mission Capable Rate---63.0%
On-Time Departures-----96.8%

b. Operational Deployments:

| Mission | Location | #Personnel | Dates |
|---|---|---|---|
| Desert Storm | Confidential | 32 | continuing |
| Bilat & Air Show | Pope AFB, NC | 01 | 12 Oct-12 Nov |
| DLQ | Oceanna NAS, VA | 21 | 22-26 Oct |
| MH53 Test Prog | Robins AFB, Ga | 01 | 28-30 Oct |
| Bilat Training | Pope AFB, NC. | 02 | 29 Oct-15 Nov |

c. Local And Higher HQ Exercises: Two BILAT's to Pope AFB, NC. and one DLQ to Oceana, Va.

d. Special Programs: None

e. Suggestion Program : Suggestion submitted by the specialist branch to help move the Jay Pavillion to an alternate location

f. Participation In Fund Drives: None

g. Afto Form 22 Submissions: None

h. Awards: (SUPPORT) TSgt Gray was nominated Support person of the month. (SUPERVISION) Amn Crabtree was selected as 20 AMU Airman of the month for October.(APG) AIC Beningo chosen as branch maintenance professional and Crewchief of the month. (SPECIALIST) Ssgt Barrow was selected as Specialist maintenance professional of the month.

2. EFFECTIVE USE OF MAINTENANCE RESOURCES

a. Increased Unit Efficiency: Support section received the special tools required to support ERH aircraft.

b. Improved Mission Capability: Completed second ISU 90 mobility bin for enhanced deployment capability.

c. Community/Humanitarian Projects: None

d. Improve Work Environment/Self-Help: None

e. Safety Program: None

f. Training Program: Three individuals are currently attending the NCO Academy. One individual aattented a T64/T58 CIP conference at the GE Plant at Lynn, Maine. Also one individual attended a T64/T100 Meeting at Tinker AFB, OK. 26 crewchiefs and specialists have been trained in Tactical Teardown/Buildup. 4 personnel has been trained on 28 PAX bus, forklift, and crane operations. 9 personnel completed Elastomeric Rotor Head training at Pensacola Naval Air Station.

g. Other Information:

1. New Arrivals : (SPECIALIST) AIC Vera arrived from the P.I. (APG) MSgt Smith, SSgt Fleming, and Sgt Underwood.

2. Returnees From Deployment: (SPECIALIST) SSgt Thor and SrA Scott. (SUPPORT) SSgt Sylvia, Sgt's Thompson and Vega , and AIC Terry. (APG) Sgt Hazelwood.

3. Outbound Personnel: Capt sel Singer PCA'd to the 8/16 AMU, TSgt Taylor, SSgt Johnson and Sgt Osewski seperated from the service. Sgt Lopez PCA'd to CRS. Ssgt Kelley PCA'd to FTD as an H-53 Instructor.

4. Miscellaneous Information: (TSgt) sel Colon was assigned "B" Flight assistant flight chief. MSgt Ragland was assigned as 20 AMU Programs Resource Manager.

CARL T. RAGLAND JR., MSgt, USAF.
20 AMU Historical Manager

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
834TH AIRCRAFT GENERATION SQUADRON (AFSOC)
HURLBURT FIELD, FLORIDA 32544-5000

FROM: MAAMH (MSgt Ragland 6608) 4 DEC 91

SUBJECT: November Historical Report

TO: MAAMH (Lt Thode)

1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

a. Weapon System Performance:
MH-53J Mission Capable Rate--- . %
On-Time Departures----- . %

b. Operational Deployments:

| Mission | Location | #Personnel | Dates |
|---|---|---|---|
| Desert Storm | Confidential | 32 | continuing |
| JRT | Columbus, Ga. | 25 | 05-16 Nov |

c. Local And Higher HQ Exercises: One JRT to Columbus Georgia.

d. Special Programs: None

e. Suggestion Program : None

f. Participation In Fund Drives: Participated in "Operation Warm-heart".

g. Afto Form 22 Submissions: None

h. Awards: (SUPPORT) AIC Cleaton was nominated Support Airman of the month. (APG) SSgt Crochet was nominated Crew Chief of the month.

2. EFFECTIVE USE OF MAINTENANCE RESOURCES

a. Increased Unit Efficiency: None

b. Improved Mission Capability: None

c. Community/Humanitarian Projects: None

d. Improve Work Environment/Self-Help: None

e. Safety Program: None

f. Training Program: AIC Terry Attended H-60 School from 12-24 NOV. APG Branch has selected five personnel to attend Elastromeric Rotor Head class on 29 Nov. Three people attended Helo Survival training in P'COLA from 6-7 November. Four people attended H-60 AFET FAM training at Kirtland AFB, NM. from 11-22 Nov. Four people are currently attending the AFCC NCO Academy at Keesler AFB, Ms. We currently have one individual attending FTD at Pope AFB, NC.

g. Other Information:

1. New Arrivals : (APG) Sgt Brey Fogle, AIC's Baas, Hull, Kindall, and Lovelace. Amn's Clark, Dallesandri, Hindel and Sullivan.

2. Returnees From Deployment: (SUPPORT) SSgt Fair, Sgt's Thompson and Vega, and SrA Bragg. (APG) SSgt Trochesset.

3. Outbound Personnel: (APG) SSgt Knight and AIC Compton.

4. Miscellaneous Information: AIC Davis transferred to the Support Section on 25 Nov.

CARL T. RAGLAND JR., MSgt, USAF.
20 AMU Historical Manager

RLC

20 SOS/CC 28 Jan 92

Nomination for the Rescue of the Year Award

The Jolly Green Association

1. Attached is the 20th Special Operations Squadron's nomination package for the Rescue of the Year Award. Captain Trask and the crew of Moccasin 05 displayed gallantry and unequaled initiative on 21 January 1991 during the rescue of a downed Navy F-14 pilot.

2. These dedicated professionals worked many long hours to accomplish this very demanding and significant mission. They exhibited the highest degree of professionalism throughout the planning, as well as the execution phases of this rescue operation. Their devotion to duty and selfless accomplishment clearly warrant the recognition and honor of this most prestigious award.

RUSSELL E. RAKIP, JR., Lt. Col, USAF
Operations Officer

1 Atch
Recommendation Package

I recommend Captain Thomas J. Trask, [redacted] and crew, for the Jolly Green Association "Rescue of the Year Award". Captain Trask and crew distinguished themselves by gallantry in connection with military operations in central Iraq on 21 January 1991. While on combat search and rescue (CSAR) alert at ArAr airfield, Saudi Arabia, Captain Trask was notified of a rescue mission for Slate 46, a downed Navy F-14 pilot. Captain Trask launched single-ship into dense fog as instrument meteorological conditions prevented their support by a wingman. After an instrument takeoff, Captain Trask immediately transitioned to Pave Low terrain following systems to fly at a set clearance of 100 feet, while Major Homan, his copilot, planned a border penetration point enroute to Slate 46's reported location. After taking up their course, Captain Trask regained ground references and descended to extremely low flying altitudes to minimize his aircraft's exposure to heavy caliber anti-aircraft fire and surface to air missiles, while at the same time placing themselves in point-blank small arms range. Working with the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS), Maj Homan coordinated a link up with A-10 escort aircraft and F-15 fighter combat air patrol. Such a CSAR task force of aircraft had not been assembled in combat since the Vietnam War. Several times, AWACS reported enemy helicopters and fighters converging on the helicopter. In-depth planning and effective evasion techniques allowed Captain Trask to evade numerous enemy military vehicles approaching them during their route to the reported position. After reaching the search point and finding it vacant, Captain Trask then flew the gauntlet of now alert ground defenses back to Saudi Arabia to refuel. While in the fuel pits, Major Homan learned that voice contact had been made with Slate 46 some distance away from the original search area. Again, they flew through the ground defenses and crossed several major highways at low altitude, while avoiding areas congested with military vehicles to arrive at the pickup point. On short final to the survivor, Captain Trask's crew spotted an enemy vehicle racing toward the downed pilot. Major Homan called in A-10's, which destroyed the vehicle only yards from the survivor. With the pilot of Slate 46 rescued safely, Captain Trask began the 100-mile plus dash back to Saudi Arabia through defenses fully anticipating their reappearance. This rescue took a total of 6 1/2 hours of low level flight in daylight hours over Iraq wherein the crew flew below 100 feet and at ground speeds below 130 knots. The teamwork displayed by Captain Trask and crew resulted in the first rescue of a downed airman in Iraq, only 30 miles from Baghdad. Through gallantry and selfless devotion to duty, Captain Trask and crew reflect great credit upon themselves and the United States Air Force.

RUSSELL E. RAKIP, JR., Lt Col, USAF
Operations Officer

The Jolly Green Association

Capt Thomas J. Trask and Crew — AFSOC

See Attachment

N/A — 20 SOS/Hurlburt Fld FL

Capt Thomas J. Trask and crew merit the Jolly Green Association "Rescue of The Year Award" for gallantry and unequaled initiative as an MH-53J Pave Low crew during Operation DESERT STORM on 21 January 1991. Upon notification that a Navy F-14 pilot had been downed, Captain Trask and crew were quickly airborne and enroute to the pilot's last known position. This crew breached the fortified Iraqi border defenses four times, evaded the threat of surface-to-air missiles, and dodged enemy MIGs. They assembled a combat search and rescue task force unlike anything since the Vietnam War. After a grueling six and a half hour low-level flight and exposed by daylight, they recovered the first downed airman in the war. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Captain Trask and his crew clearly warrant the honor and recognition of this most prestigious award.

- Notified of downed Navy F-14 pilot (SLATE 46) while on alert at ArAr Airfield, Saudi Arabia.
- Launched single-ship into a dense fog which prohibited a wingman's support.
- The crew planned and coordinated a position to attempt border penetration enroute.
- Transitioned to Pave Low terrain-following navigational systems at 100-foot set clearance immediately after take-off.
- Once visual contact with the ground was reacquired, the crew descended to extremely low-flying altitudes to aid in evading enemy weapons.
- Warnings from AWACS advised the crew of an Iraqi Mirage fighter streaking towards their position.
- Worked with AWACS to link up with an F-15 fighter working combat air patrol and an A-10 for escort.
- Several more times AWACS reported enemy fighter and helicopter traffic converging on their course.
- Quick, solid planning and decisive evasion techniques enabled the crew to continue on their course.
- It was apparent SLATE 46 was not in the area upon arrival at the reported position. The crew executed several search patterns, loitering in Iraq and remaining in danger.
- Fuel critical, Mocassin 05 returned to a refueling point in Saudi Arabia.
- While the helicopter refueled, voice contact was made with SLATE 46 who was over 100 miles from the original search coordinates.
- Again the crew breached the Iraqi lines and flew over 200 miles to search for the pilot.
- The crew authenticated the downed aircrewmember and set up for landing.
- An Iraqi vehicle was seen rapidly approaching the position of the survivor while the helicopter was on short final.
- Copilot called in A-10 support which destroyed the vehicle a mere 150 yards from the survivor.
- With SLATE 46 safely on board, the aircrew began its 200-mile egress back towards friendly lines through Iraqi defenses on heightened alert.
- The rescue totaled 6.5 hours flown at altitudes below 100 feet sometimes in marginal weather, but most of the time in dangerously clear skies.
- The aircrew demonstrated unparalleled cohesiveness and professionalism against the odds of combat and enemy fire.
- The crew remained stoic in their resolve to recover this downed airman, despite almost constant changes.
- Not since the Vietnam War has such a large scale, complex combat search and rescue operation taken place, nor come to such a successful and heroic conclusion.

# CREW LIST

AWARD: THE JOLLY GREEN ASSOCIATION "RESCUE OF THE YEAR AWARD"

UNIT/BASE: 20TH SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQUADRON/HURLBURT FIELD, FLORIDA

MAJCOM: AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

| NOMINEE (GRADE/NAME): (SSAN): | AFSC: DUTY TITLE: |
|---|---|
| CAPTAIN THOMAS J. TRASK [redacted] | 1365A MH-53J AIRCRAFT COMMANDER |
| MAJOR MICHAEL E. HOMAN [redacted] | 1365A MH-53J AIRCRAFT COMMANDER |
| TECHNICAL SERGEANT JAMES A PETERSON, JR. [redacted] | K11370B MH-53J FLIGHT ENGINEER |
| TECHNICAL SERGEANT GREGORY VANHYNING [redacted] | M11370B MH-53J FLIGHT ENGINEER |
| MASTER SERGEANT TIMOTHY B. HADRYCH [redacted] | K46270 MH-53J AERIAL GUNNER |
| SERGEANT CRAIG DOCK [redacted] | K46250 MH-53J AERIAL GUNNER |

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF

THE JOLLY GREEN ASSOCIATION FOR 1991

TO

CAPTAIN THOMAS J. TRASK AND CREW

Captain Thomas J. Trask and crew distinguished themselves by an extraordinary act of valor and selfless devotion to duty during Operation DESERT STORM on 21 January 1991. On that date, Captain Trask and crew received notification of a downed Navy F-14 pilot in Iraq. Launching in instrument meteorological conditions, the crew would, through the course of the day's events, breach Iraqi defenses four times and fly for over six and a half hours behind enemy lines. The helicopter was on short final when an Iraqi vehicle raced toward the survivor. The downed pilot was literally rescued from the clutches of Iraqi troops who had approached to within 150 yards before an A-10 destroyed the vehicle. The extraordinary heroism and self-sacrifice of Captain Trask and his crew reflect great credit upon themselves and the United States Air Force.

CAPTAIN THOMAS J. TRASK

[redacted]

AFSC: 1465A, SPECIAL OPERATIONS STAFF OFFICER

Captain Thomas J. Trask is an MH-53J Pave Low pilot and the executive officer for the vice-commander, Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command, Hurlburt Field, Florida. He is 30 years old.

Captain Trask was born Dec 20, 1961, in Chicopee, Massachusetts, and graduated from North Syracuse Central High School, North Syracuse, New York, in 1980. He received a bachelor's degree in Aeronautical Engineering from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Prescott, Arizona, in 1984. He completed Squadron Officer School in 1991.

After receiving his commission in April 1984, as distinguished graduate in the Reserve Officer Training Corps, he entered the Air Force in September 1984 and completed undergraduate helicopter pilot training in June 1985 at Fort Rucker, Alabama. In September 1985, after the UH-1N qualification course at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, he was assigned as a pilot with Detachment 5, 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Wing, Edwards Air Force Base, California.

In October 1987 Captain Trask returned to Kirtland Air Force Base for the HH-53 qualification course and was then assigned as an MH-53J Pave Low pilot with the 20th Special Operations Squadron, 1st Special Operations Wing, Hurlburt Field, Florida. He also served as an exercise planner and wing liaison officer to Joint Special Operations Command, Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina. He completed 9 combat missions in Operation JUST CAUSE and 33 combat missions in Operation DESERT STORM. He assumed his present position in August 1991.

Captain Trask is an instructor pilot with 1,800 flying hours in UH-1N and MH-53J helicopter. His military awards and decorations include: Silver Star, Air Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Aerial Achievement Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Expeditionary Service Medal, and the Southwest Asia Service Medal.

Captain Trask is married to the former Karin M. Fistick of Syracuse, New York.

MAJOR MICHAEL E. HOMAN



AFSC: 1465A, SPECIAL OPERATIONS STAFF OFFICER

Major Michael E. Homan is an MH-53J aircraft commander and assistant operations officer assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Florida. He is 38 years old.

Major Homan was born in Gordon, Nebraska, on 8 September 1953. He attended Isle High School in Isle, Minnesota. After graduating from high school in 1971, he enlisted in the Air Force and completed basic training at Lackland AFB, Texas. He was selected as Distinguished Graduate from Electronic Switching System Technical Training at Sheppard AFB, Texas. His first operational assignment was to RAF Bentwaters, United Kingdom, where he worked as an autovon switching system repairman from 1972 until 1973.

Major Homan enrolled in Industrial Technology at the University of Minnesota under the Airman's Education and Commissioning Program. He finished his degree and the Reserve Officer Training Program (ROTC) in 1977, graduating Magna Cum Laude from the University and as a Distinguished Graduate from ROTC.

He attended Undergraduate Helicopter Training at Fort Rucker, Alabama, from 1977 to 1978, and again came out on top as the Distinguished Graduate. In 1978, after transition at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, he moved McConnell AFB, Kansas to fly HH-1H helicopters for Detachment 7, 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron. He rapidly upgraded to aircraft commander, instructor pilot, and flight examiner in under 2 years. Returning to Kirtland AFB in 1980, Major Homan transitioned into HH-53 and subsequently assigned to 20th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Florida. During this assignment, Major Homan was upgraded to HH-53H aircraft commander and assigned as unit training officer; and accepted a follow-on fixed-wing conversion course. Major Homan received the Officership Award and was selected Distinguished Graduate of his fixed-wing transition course at Williams AFB, Arizona. He moved directly to the FB-111A at the 4077th Combat Crew Training Squadron, Plattsburgh AFB, New York, in 1987. He was a flight commander and eventually the operations officer until December 1989. In January 1990, Major Homan reported for his duty assignment at the 20th Special Operations Squadron where he has held positions as a flight commander, chief of current operations, and assistant operations officer. He is currently a staff officer in Air Force Special Operations Forces' Program Development, Air Force Special Operations Command.

Major Homan is married and has a 14 year-old son and a 17 year-old daughter. He is a senior pilot with over 4,000 flying hours, 50 in combat. His decorations include: Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Air Force Commendation Medal, and Combat Readiness Medal. Major Homan completed Squadron Officer School in 1978, Air Command and Staff College in 1985, and Marine Corps Command and Staff in 1982. He holds a Master's Degree in Management Science from Troy State University.

MASTER SERGEANT TIMOTHY B. HADRYCH



K46270, INSTRUCTOR AERIAL GUNNER

Master Sergeant Timothy B. Hadrych is an instructor aerial gunner assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Florida. He is 34 years old.

Sergeant Hadrych was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on 4 October 1957. He attended Del Norte High School, excelling in academic achievement. As a 3-year member of the Rodeo Club, he served as club president organizing activities that earned the school's clubs more than $15,000.

After graduating in 1975, Sergeant Hadrych enlisted in the Air Force under the Delayed Enlistment Program and was called to active duty in December 1975.

On completion of Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, in 1976, Sergeant Hadrych began technical training as an aircraft armament system specialist at Lowry AFB, Colorado, graduating with a 92 average. He was assigned to Holloman AFB, New Mexico and earned his five-skill level. Sergeant Hadrych served as a Squadron Lead Crew Chief during the wing's transition from F-4 to F-15 aircraft, standardizing and evaluating wing load crew procedures. In December 1979, he was reassigned to RAF Lakenheath, United Kingdom, serving as a Load Crew Chief on F-111F aircraft. He attended Professional Military Education II and Leadership School while assigned to RAF Lakenheath. In December 1982, he was assigned to Hurlburt Field, Florida, working on MH-53J and UH-1N helicopters with the 834th AGS and 20th AMU. He was selected as Weapons Person of the Month on three occasions, NCO of the Month, and NCO of the Quarter. As shift supervisor, he was reassigned to the 834 EMS, where he supervised in shop and flightline maintenance on AC-130, MC-130, UH-1N, and MH-53J aircraft earning numerous outstanding quality assurance reports. In 1986, Sergeant Hadrych volunteered for aerial gunner duty with the 20th Special Operations Squadron, earning his mission-ready status in July 1987. His duties included NCOIC of Mobility, Squadron Inspections, and of the Armory. He attended the NCO Academy in 1987 at Tyndall AFB, Florida. He participated in Operations URGENT FURY, JUST CAUSE, and DESERT SHIELD, and DESERT STORM.

Sergeant Hadrych is married and has two children. He and his wife participate actively in local church activities and Young American Football League. He was selected as Squadron NCO of the Year in 1989. He is the recipient of the Air Force Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters.

TECHNICAL SERGEANT GREGORY M. VANHYNING



AFSC: M11370B, HELICOPTER FLIGHT ENGINEER

Technical Sergeant Gregory M. VanHyning is a helicopter flight engineer assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Florida. He is 35 years old.

Sergeant VanHyning was born in Topeka, Kansas, on 14 January 1956. He attended Shawnee Mission Northwest High School, was an active member of Boy Scout Troop 186, and was awarded the rank of Eagle Scout in December 1971. After graduating from high school in 1974, Sergeant VanHyning was employed locally and member of the Lenexa United Methodist Church in Lenexa, Kansas.

He enlisted in the United States Air Force under the delayed enlistment program in October 1974 and called to active duty in December 1974. On completion of basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, in 1975, Sergeant VanHyning began technical training as an aircraft armament systems specialist at Lowry Air Force Base, Colorado. He was then assigned to Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, and began on-the-job training for his five-skill level. His other assignments as a weapons mechanic include RAF Lakenheath, United Kingdom, July 1977, and Plattsburgh Air Force Base, New York, July 1979.

As a volunteer for special duty assignment, Sergeant VanHyning was assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Florida, in September 1980 as an aerial gunner on the HH-53H Pave Low III helicopter. In September 1982, he cross-trained into the helicopter flight engineer career field and began academic training at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas. After completing flight training at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, he returned to Hurlburt Field. He upgraded to instructor flight engineer in March 1985 and flight examiner/flight engineer and assigned to the Squadron Standardization and Evaluation office in July 1987. Sergeant VanHyning was reassigned to the 38th Air Rescue Squadron, Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea in October 1988, as NCOIC of the flight engineer section.

In November 1989, Sergeant VanHyning returned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron and began requalification training to flight examiner/flight examiner. In July 1990, he became NCOIC of the squadron standardization and evaluation office. Sergeant VanHyning graduated from the Noncommissioned Officers Academy, Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, 6 days early to deploy to Saudi Arabia in support of Operations DESERT SHIELD/STORM. In Operation DESERT STORM, Sergeant VanHyning flew 51 combat sorties and was credited with one combat save by rescuing a downed Navy pilot in Iraq. His decorations include the Air Force Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters and the Air Medal.

TECHNICAL SERGEANT JAMES A. PETERSON, JR.



K11370B, MH-53J FLIGHT ENGINEER

Technical Sergeant James A. Peterson, Jr., is a MH-53J Pave Low flight engineer and assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron, at Hurlburt Field, Florida. He is 34 years old.

Sergeant Peterson was born in Valentine, Nebraska, on 17 September 1957. He graduated from St. Croix High School where he lettered in baseball. He worked part time as a cook to pay his own tuition.

Shortly after graduation, he joined the Minnesota Army National Guard where he served as a communications specialist. At the end of 3 years, Sergeant Peterson enlisted in the United States Air Force.

Sergeant Peterson's Air Force career started at Lackland where he entered basic training and technical school. Sergeant Peterson completed Security Police Technical School at Lackland AFB, Texas, with Honor Graduate recognition.

As a security policeman, Sergeant Peterson was assigned to the 92 SPS at Fairchild AFB, Washington, from July 1979 through July 1983. During this assignment, he was team member and team leader on Stategic Air Command's Combat Weapons Loading Team. As the security police team leader, his squadron placed second among 25 teams.

In July 1983, Sergeant Peterson cross trained to become a MH-53J Pave Low flight engineer. He graduated in November 1983 and was reassigned to the 41 ARRS, McClellan AFB, California. In March of 1987, he was transferred to the 20th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Florida. Sergeant Peterson served nearly 6 months in Saudi Arabia during Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. On 21 January 1991, Sergeant Peterson was a crewmember aboard the first combat rescue deep inside Iraq.

Sergeant Peterson is married with three children and regularly attends St. Paul's United Methodist church. Sergeant Peterson and his wife teach third and fourth graders at the Pioneer Club. He is an active member of the American Family Association of Florida, a volunteer of Holley Navarre Elementary School, commissioner of football for Navarre Youth Sports Association, and volunteer at the local crisis center.

SERGEANT CRAIG DOCK



AFSC: K46250, INSTRUCTOR AERIAL GUNNER

Sgt Craig Dock is an aerial gunner assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Florida. He is 25 years old.

Sgt Dock was born in Hawthorne, California, on 5 December 1966. For 2 years, he attended Buena High School in Sierra Vista, Arizona. While living in Arizona, Sgt Dock was an active member of Village Meadows Baptist Church and Boy Scout Troop 414, where he attained the position of senior patrol leader. Sgt Dock also enjoyed mountain climbing and motocross racing in the Arizona desert. At the beginning of his junior year, Sgt Dock attended Midland Preparatory School in Los Olivos, California. Sgt Dock actively participated in school sports such as soccer and lacrosse.

After graduating in 1984, Sgt Dock enlisted in the Air Force under the Delayed Enlistment Program and was called to active duty in October 1984.

On completion of Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, in 1984, Sgt Dock began technical training as an aircraft armament systems specialist at Lowry Air Force Base, Colorado. He was then assigned to Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, and began on-the-job training for his five-skill level gun mechanic certification on helicopters. After a 13-month tour at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, Sgt Dock was assigned to the 50th Tactical Fighter Wing, Hahn Air Base, Germany, in April of 1986. After being trained as an aircraft weapons specialist on F-16 fighters, Sgt Dock quickly excelled as a maintenance technician; his exceptional performance was instrumental in the wing being awarded the Daedalian and Phoenix commendations for outstanding maintenance. After a 2-year tour in Germany, Sgt Dock applied for special duty as an MH-53J Pave Low aerial gunner and attended the basic flight school at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico. After completing training in minimum time, Sgt Dock was then assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron, at Hurlburt Field, Florida. After 2 years as a qualified aerial gunner, Sgt Dock was upgraded to instructor in October of 1991. Sgt Dock experienced his first combat missions with the unit while deployed to Saudi Arabia in support of Operations DESERT SHIELD/STORM.

Sgt Dock is single. He is enrolled in Community College of the Air Force and an active member of the Air Force Sergeants Association. Sgt Dock is a recipient of the Air Force Achievement Medal.

Excerpts from

Gulf War
Air power Survey
Volume IV (unclass)

## Helicopters

**MH-53J Pave Low III:** a redesigned 1950s helicopter with upgraded avionics and sensors. Designed for the Marine Corps as a heavy-lift logistic support helicopter, the Sikorsky H-53 (fore-runner to Pave Low III) was procured in limited numbers by the Air Force starting in 1967, and extensively modified for use as a long-range combat rescueaircraft.[266] The H-53s were progressively modified to MH-53J Pave Low III standards with the addition of FLIR, high-resolution terrain-avoidance radar, improved avionics, and cockpit symbology. By the eve of Desert Shield, all Air Force H-53s had been modified to Pave Low III standards, were equipped with flare and chaff dispensers, GPS for precise navigation, and 50-caliber machine guns.

In Desert Storm, the MH-53J proved capable of penetrating deep into Iraqi airspace. The Pave Low's FLIR and terrain-following radar permitted safe flight at extremely low altitudes at night. GPS permitted precise navigation. Poor visibility and lack of visual cues rendered attempts to fly and navigate with only night vision goggles (NVGs) dangerous except under optimum conditions[267] Of Coalition helicopters, only the MH-53J was able to operate consistently on dark, moonless nights. The 13 Pave Lows flew 282 sorties[268] and participated in combat search and rescue operations, infiltration, exfiltration, and other important missions into threat areas. The MH-53 aircraft opened the war by guiding Apache AH-64s to their targets.

---

[266]The H-53 had its origins in the Sikorsky HR2S, a reciprocating-engine Marine Corps heavy-lift helicopter designed to a 1951 requirement, which entered service in 1956. The initial Marine Corps version, the CH-53A, which first flew in 1964, inherited many of the basic technologies from the HR2S; specifically, the dynamic rotor head components and extruded titanium rotor blade spars. The Air Force combat rescue version, the HH-53B/C, entered service in late 1967. Earl H. Tilford, Jr., *Search and Rescue in Southeast Asia* (Office of Air Force History; Washington, D. C., 1980), p 70.

[267]Lt Col Comer, the MH-53J Squadron Commander, expressed the problem succinctly: "As far as flying operations went, we found . . . that we had a real problem with visibility. The wind blew the sand around all day in about fifteen to twenty knots of wind. It was very light sand and would remain suspended in the air. At night, if there was no moon, the suspended sand created a haze that reduced visibility to one mile and often less. The terrain was so uniform of surface that it was hard to discern any features." Under these conditions, Comer considered NVGs "almost useless." Comer, *History*, p 8.

[268](U) GWAPS *Statistical Compendium*, Table 81, "Total Sorties by U.S. Service/Allied Country by Aircraft Type."

In addition, the MH-53J was used for the first successful combat recovery of a downed pilot in Desert Storm.



**MH-60G Pave Hawk:** a modified UH-60A Blackhawk used for night operations and combat search and rescue. The Pave Hawk has several special-mission, night, all-weather upgrades. The upgrades include an additional 117-gallon internal fuel tank, in-flight refueling capability, a doppler/inertial navigation system, electronic map display, Pave Low III FLIR, satellite communications, and a 600-pound capacity external rescue hoist that anchors a "fast-rope" repelling system. It is armed with a 12.7-mm machine gun.

The Pave Hawk entered operational use in September of 1987. In Desert Storm, 8 MH-60s flew 284 sorties,[269] primarily for combat search and rescue and for transporting reconnaissance teams into Kuwait and Iraq.

## Aircraft and Weapon Systems Not Employed

### *B-1B Lancer*



The B-1B Lancer is a long-range bomber originally designed for the nuclear strategic role. Lancer joined the Strategic Air Command alert force on 1 October 1987. At the time of Desert Storm, its conventional capability had not been fully developed.

The B-1B role in Desert Shield and Desert Storm was primarily to assume the nuclear alert commitments of B-52 squadrons deployed in the war. SAC chose this role for the B-1B because of its munitions incompatibilities, crew training focus, relationship to arms control treaties, and limitations on its electronic warfare equipment. The significant resources available to the Coalition meant that this non-use was never a critical factor.

---

[269](U) *Ibid.*

appear to drop bombs. All this would happen while their main national command centers and communications nets were being attacked. The strikes were coordinated to cause mass confusion and major disruption in the Iraqi air defense system. This would allow other Coalition aircraft to execute follow-on attacks with greater safety.[46]

Carefully executed deception operations had been conducted to support these initial attacks. During Desert Shield, the Coalition had conditioned the Iraqis to a 'standard' air picture through a series of training exercises. A conscious effort had been made to accustom the Iraqi radar operators and air defense personnel to seeing tankers, AWACS, Rivet Joint, and combat air patrols flying in predictable patterns in the general vicinity of the border.[47] An "Early Warning (EW) line" had been developed connecting points south of which Coalition aircraft flying at that altitude would not be acquired by the Iraqi air defense system.

***Desert Storm***

On the night of 17 January, before the first attacks, the Iraqis saw the 'standard' air picture on their scopes. All aircraft involved in the initial missions completed their marshalling and refueling south of the EW line. The first group of aircraft to cross the line were the F-117s, which used stealth characteristics to operate in Iraqi airspace without being detected. The first major target an F-117 struck was the intercept operations center (IOC) in southern Iraq at nine minutes before H-hour. The center, a primary air defense node in central Iraq, was responsible for directing enemy fighters in that region. It was attacked to ease the passage of the F-15E/EF-111 flight package soon to pass through that region, on their way for attacks on western Scud sites around H-2 airfield. It was hoped that the attack on the center would prevent information about further incursions from being passed on to higher headquarters.

The second group of aircraft to penetrate Iraqi airspace was Task Force Normandy, which combined the navigational ability of Air Force

---

[46](S) *Master Attack Plan*, "First 24 Hours," pp 1-8, and (S) Briefing, CDR Donald McSwain, USN, Black Hole Air Campaign Graphics with Post War Annotations, Jan 1991, GWAPS Files NA-302.

[47]Briefing, "Electronic Combat in Desert Shield/Desert Storm," Brig Gen Larry Henry, CENTAF/EC. GWAPS Files - NA-358. Also Intvw, Murray Williamson with Brig Gen Henry, GWAPS, Aug 1992.

MH-53s with the firepower of Army AH-64 Apaches. This attack destroyed two border EW sites twenty-one minutes before H-hour to give the F-15E/EF-111 strike package heading for the Western Scud sites a "hole" in the EW coverage. While the attack was successful, the EW sites must have issued some warning because the antiaircraft artillery batteries in Baghdad began firing immediately before H-Hour.

To maximize the shock to the rest of Iraq's air defense system at H-hour, other F-117s attacked eight key air defense centers ranging from the National Air Defense Headquarters in Baghdad to selected important IOCs. Also, striking at core targets in an attempt to prevent a coordinated national defense, they attacked the two main national military command bunkers and the presidential grounds near Abu Ghurayb. In addition, the main telephone exchange and other key communication nodes were struck. These attacks were level, medium-altitude deliveries with infrared acquisition and GBU-27 penetrating laser-guided bombs.

Shortly after the F-117 strikes, fifty-two TLAMs struck their designated targets. Approximately one-third were targeted against the electrical power grid, since it was believed that the air defense system depended on the national electrical grid for most of its power. Disabling it would force the air defense system off line for a period.[48] The remaining TLAMs were targeted against core targets: Ba'ath Party Headquarters, the Baghdad Presidential Palace, and the Taji surface-to-surface missile (SSM) support facility.[49] These attacks were designed to stimulate confusion in the national decision-making structure and to remove a portion of its offensive capability.

Following Task Force Normandy's preparation, a strike package consisting of 22 F-15Es and 3 EF-111s struck Western Scud launch areas in the vicinity of H-2 airfield. Supported by KC-135s, this strike package formed south of the EW warning line, then headed north. After

---

[48](S) Interviews with electrical engineers had given the planners a good knowledge of specific, critical targets and possible Iraqi workarounds to keep the system going. Interview, GWAPS Task Force VI personnel with Lt Col Dave Deptula confirmed that the Black Hole's major intention in striking the power plants was to disable the air defense system.

[49](S) *Master Attack Plan*, "First 24 Hours," p 2.

### *Combat Search and Rescue*

The recovery of downed U.S. aircrews has traditionally enjoyed a high priority in wartime.[147] Doctrinally, combat rescue was the responsibility of the Joint Force Commander. Each component commander was responsible for planning and conducting CSAR in support of his own operations. CSAR was a Service responsibility.[148] The Special Operations CSAR responsibilities were no greater than that of any other Service or functional component.

The crisis in the Gulf confronted the Air Force with a dilemma. The Air Force had recently reestablished the Air Rescue Service (ARS), but without helicopters capable of penetrating a high-threat environment.[149] In the aftermath of the failed April 1980 Iranian rescue operation, most CSAR aircraft, the HC-130s and HH/CH-53s, had assumed special operations roles. The most capable ARS helicopter, the MH-60 Pave Hawk, was available only in small numbers and was considered capable only for a medium-threat environment. None of the Services possessed forces trained and equipped solely to conduct classic combat rescue missions. In Desert Storm, SOF aviation assets were the only forces with the requisite capabilities to penetrate enemy territory, recover a downed pilot, and egress safely.[150] Special Operations Forces, however, are equipped and trained for night missions. A 24-hour on-call search and rescue mission could put Special Operations Forces in enemy territory during daylight hours–a circumstance they are taught to avoid.

The above problems notwithstanding, and with a campaign plan that called for the use of hundreds of aircraft flying thousands of sorties around the clock, a strategy had to be created and forces positioned for

---

[147]Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service, the principal CSAR force in Vietnam, was disbanded in 1983, and its components and equipment were absorbed by Special Operations Forces (SOF). Air Rescue Service was (re)constituted in 1989, but was not combat ready and was not equipped with helicopters capable of penetrating a high-threat environment.

[148]JCS Pub 3-50.2, Doctrine for Joint Combat Search and Rescue.

[149]In 1989, the 41st Rescue Weather Reconnaissance Wing was realigned under the Military Airlift Command and renamed the Air Rescue Service.

[150]The only SOF aviation assets configured to penetrate enemy airspace were the U.S. Air Force MH-53 and MH-60, and the U.S. Army CH-47 and UH-60.

accomplishing CSAR. CINCCENT tasked the mission to SOCCENT, who in turn designated Air Force Special Operations Command, Central Command, to be the single manager for all CSAR aviation.[151] CENTCOM Army,[152] Navy, and Air Force aircraft were responsible for on-call CSAR for Kuwait and Iraq, south of 33 degrees, 30 minutes north latitude. The area north of 30 degrees, 30 minutes north latitude was covered by EUCOM forces in Turkey. By the time Desert Storm began, aircraft supporting CSAR missions were located at five bases in Saudi Arabia and at two in Turkey.

A CSAR plan was developed and a joint rescue coordination center (JRCC) was established within the Tactical Air Coordination Center (TACC). Once established, Special Operations personnel and aircraft were on 24-hour CSAR alert for over eight months. The mission continued into the postwar period.

Air Force Special Tactics personnel conducted CSAR exercises and provided communications, escape, and evasion training to aircrews. They also helped develop and implement weapons, survival, first aid, and medical training for Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) personnel.[153]

### *CSAR Procedures*

Central Command's CSAR guidelines required reasonable confirmation of a downed aircrewman's survival and location before a CSAR

---

[151] AFSOCCENT provided mission guidance to AFSOF assets at Rafha, Ar'Ar, and Al Jouf and to the Army's 3/160 assets at King Khalid Military City. All assets responded to the Joint Recovery Coordination Cell (JRCC) at Riyadh, and final mission approval rested with SOCCENT. U.S. Army Special Ops CMD, Historical Monograph on Desert Shield/Storm, 1992, p 4-5.

[152] The Army 3d Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, working with Air Force Special Operations, developed procedures and techniques for conducting CSAR. Using these techniques, Army SOF aviators rescued one F-16 pilot. The Army flew MH-47 (Chinook) and MH-60 Blackhawk helicopters.

[153] (S/NF) Air Force Special Tactics personnel were augmented by Air Force Survival instructors (SOCCENT E&E After Action Rpt, 5 Mar 1991).

mission launch.[154] First Special Operations Wing personnel visited each flying wing and briefed aircrews on CSAR procedures, and detailed information on SOF capabilities and requirements.[155] The CSAR system was set-up so that once a crewman ejected and reached the ground, fighters, would be diverted to the designated area. The JRCC, then alerted AFSOCCENT to execute the mission (see Figure 58). Due to dense enemy concentrations on the battlefield and Iraqi use of radio direction-finding equipment, downed pilots were frequently captured immediately after parachuting to the ground. As a result, only seven CSAR missions were launched, resulting in three saves.

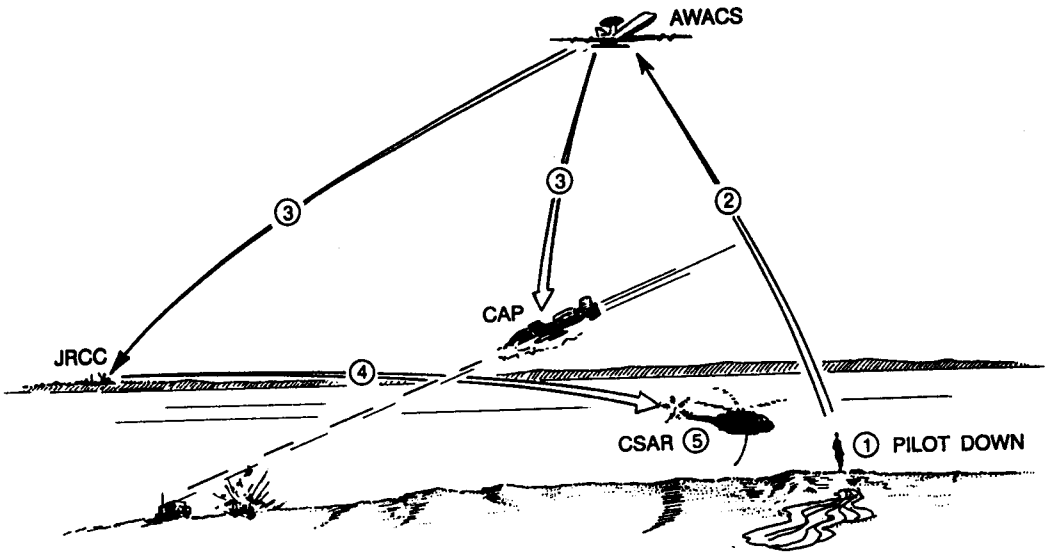
The first save, January 21, was a daylight recovery[156] of a Navy F-14 pilot (Lieutenant Devon Jones) downed deep in Iraq by antiaircraft fire. The E-3 AWACS directed two A-10s to the area of the downed pilot, over 160 miles inside Iraq. Meanwhile, a MH-53 Pave Low helicopter

[154]Some aircrews found fault with Central Command's CSAR procedure requiring confirmation of a survivor before a mission launch. The following are comments by Lt Col Trumbull, 550 TFTS, interviewed 17 Jun 91. "The other thing I think was missing was SAR (search and rescue). Our DO and his backseater were on the ground for three and one-half days in western Iraq. Nobody'd go in and pick them up, and they eventually became prisoners of war. The advertised special operations guys that came down to talk to us before the war said, 'no sweat, we'll come get you anywhere you are.' That from my perspective, was a big lie. When I've got guys on the ground for three and one-half days and they don't go pick them up, we basically decided at that point that if anybody went down, you were on your own. Nobody was going to come get you." Lt Col Trumbull refers to the Eberly and Griffith shoot down. Poor communication prevented contact, location authentication, and recovery efforts. The officers were captured when they walked into a border guard post. Three recovery attempts were made before their capture.

[155](S) Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) Desert Storm After Action Rpt, 1991, p 9-10.

[156]SOF CSAR preferred to operate in darkness, the time when they were most likely to survive.

**Figure 58**
**CENTCOM CSAR Procedure**




was launched. As the helicopter arrived in the rescue area, the A-10s destroyed an Iraqi radio-intercept truck closing in on the downed pilot. Two Special Tactic Paramedics, part of the MH-53 helicopter crew, assisted the downed pilot to the helicopter and conducted a preliminary physical examination.

Other rescue missions did not go as smoothly. On 27 February 1991, AWACS received a call of a downed F-16 pilot in hostile territory (Iraq) and reported the data to the JRCC. [DELETED].[157] [DELETED]. The Army directed a UH-60 Blackhawk to refuel, pick up a flight surgeon, rendezvous with two armed AH-64 Apache[158] attack helicopters, and attempt a rescue. The pilot's exact location was unknown. The plan was

---

[157](S) Intvw, Capt Greg Eanes, USAF, Chief, Escape and Evasion, SOCCENT during Desert Storm, Sep 1992.

[158]The UH-60 Blackhawk and the two AH-64 Apache helicopters were from the 101st Airborne Division.

operations, however, where close coordination was a necessity and fragmented and inefficient operations had to be avoided.[176]

### *Wartime Tasking*

During Desert Storm, Special Tactics combat air traffic controllers operated the three forward operating locations (FOLs) while the Pararescue Jumpers were flying as medical crewmen aboard Air Force MH-53s and MH-60s, and Army CH-47s and UH-60s.

At Al Jouf and Ar'Ar airfields, along the Saudi Arabia-Iraq border, Special Tactics combat air traffic controllers recovered and refueled hundreds of aircraft and operated the primary emergency divert airfields for battle-damaged or minimum-fuel aircraft returning from combat sorties in Iraq. Al Jouf also became the main operating base for A-10s in the northern region.

On 22 January 1991, a Special Tactics combat air traffic controller was a member of a special team infiltrated to within fifteen kilometers of Baghdad on a classified mission. His knowledge of close air support and communications procedures provided the team with a reasonable assurance that they would receive support if needed. The team was successful in cutting many lines of communications from Baghdad to outlying areas. As a result of the team's success and the contributions of the Special Tactics combat air traffic controller, the special operations unit requested four more Special Tactics personnel to conduct other clandestine missions.

During Desert Storm, Special Tactics personnel functioned as frontline combat medics, flew aeromedical evacuation missions in support of the Coalition forces, and provided other medical support. They assisted in planning and executing Joint Task Force Charlie; a medical contingency plan designed to provide initial medical support at Kuwait City International Airport.[177]

---

[176]Briefing, Bernie Oder, Special Tactics (USAFSOC), 4 Jun 1992.

[177]Kuwait City International Airport was to act as a casualty collection point, triage, and air evacuation station.

# Appendix H

## Special Operations Forces (SOF) Training Considerations

Before Desert Shield, SOF trained exclusively to conduct clandestine special operations missions under cover of darkness. For the helicopter crews this required extremely low-altitude penetrations of enemy airspace, landings, and egress, all completely blacked out. The prolonged deployment made it difficult to maintain currency in primary aircrew skills, a problem applying to both MH-53J and MC-130 crews. To compound the problem, they were tasked with the Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) role in which they were not trained.[1] Both aircraft depend on terrain-following radar for low-altitude penetration, and crews quickly found that the fine sand characteristic of the Arabian peninsula was partially transparent to their radars, leading to less than anticipated obstacle clearance.[2] Poor visibility caused by the extremely find sand, kept suspended in the air by relatively light winds, was a particular problem for helicopter crews.[3] This phenomenon was responsible for the loss of several U.S. Army helicopters at night during Desert Shield, prompting the imposition of minimum altitude and illumination restrictions. The MH-53J-equipped 20th Special Operations Squadron (SOS) was the only helicopter unit exempted from these restrictions due to their FLIR, radar, and hover coupler capability.[4] Night landings were, by far, the most demanding event and required the development of specialized techniques

---

[1]Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service, the Air Force component responsible for CSAR, was disestablished in 1983 and its component units either disbanded or absorbed by SOC and its first-line equipment (notably the MH-53Js and HC-130 tankers) transferred to SOF. Air Rescue Service was reestablished in 1989 but had no combat-capable, long-range helicopter units during Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

[2](S) Intvw, J. Guilmartin and Col F. Goldstein, GWAPS, of Lt Col Richard Comer, USAF, commander of the MH-53J-equipped 20th Special Operations Squadron, 1 Sep 1992.

[3](S) Lt Col Comer, *History of Desert Shield/Desert Storm*, p 8.

[4](S) Intvw, Lt Col Comer.

techniques included the use of small chemical lights as hover points, use of the MH-53's infrared searchlight, and making fully coupled approaches.[5] For daylight CSAR missions, helicopter crews recognized the need for close escort, and A-10 support was provided. Escort tactics relearned from Vietnam proved effective.[6]

Fixed-wing SOF crews were generally well prepared for the war. They suffered the same problems associated with poor visibility from blowing sand. There were initial problems acquiring munitions and Saudi training range support for the AC-130 gunships. Ranges and equipment for high-speed airdrops had to be resolved for MC-130 Combat Talon crews to maintain proficiency. Initially, few Talon crews were qualified to drop the BLU-82 bomb. Overall, Air Force SOF credited good training with helping to keep losses low, a point on which the 20th SOS commander was particularly emphatic.[7]



[5](S) Lt Col Comer, *History of Desert Shield/Desert Storm*, pp 8-9. The problem was particularly acute on moonless nights.

[6]Intvw, Guilmartin and Goldstein, GWAPS, of Col George Gray.

[7](S) Intvw, Lt Col Comer.

[redacted]

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 1ST SPECIAL OPERATIONS WING (AFSOC)
HURLBURT FIELD, FLORIDA 32544-5000

REPLY TO ATTN OF: 20 SOS/DO (Capt Woodson, 7438) 1 Jul 91

SUBJECT: Operation DESERT STORM Technical Data Collection

TO: 1 SOW/DOXT
AFSOC/DOXT

The Deputy Secretary of Defense directed the compilation of technical data from Operation DESERT STORM to support continuing actions in the acquisition process in a memorandum dated 20 May 91. The answers to those questions in the data collection plan which apply to 20th SOS are attached to this letter. If you have any questions contact Capt Woodson at AV 579-7438.

Eugene A. Correll

EUGENE A. CORRELL, Lt Col, USAF
Operations Officer

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

1. OVERVIEW:

A. How effective were Special Operations Forces? 20th SOS effectiveness during DESERT STORM was truly superior. The unit performed certain missions which no other helicopter unit in the world could.

B. How suitable is currently fielded equipment for SOF missions? The MH-53J has precision navigation equipment, terrain following and terrain avoidance radar, and threat countermeasures equipment, which gives the helicopter unmatched capabilities. The unit's excellent combat record during DESERT STORM showed that the fielded equipment on the MH-53J is well suited for special operations missions. The MH-53J will be even more capable when all the aircraft are completely modified with improved threat countermeasures equipment and other systems such as the Personnel Locator System (PLS).

C. What non-doctrinal SOF missions were executed? The primary missions of the unit is to conduct infiltrations/exfiltrations, aerial gunnery support, resupply, reinforcement, heavy-lift sling operations, psychological operations and others as dictated by higher headquarters. The unit performed many traditional SOF missions during DESERT STORM such as infiltrations and exfiltrations. However, numerous missions were very unique because they had never been tested in a combat environment. In fact, the concept and tactics used in the very first mission, [redacted] was developed for the first time during DESERT SHIELD and had never been used before in any exercise or real world operation. On 17 Jan 91, this mission required the MH-53Js to lead eight AH-64 attack helicopters into Iraq to destroy early warning radars. Other missions were equally unique and are outlined in this paper.

[redacted]

2. PERSONNEL RECOVERY:

ISSUES:

A. How effective were personnel recovery operations? During DESERT STORM, the unit was on alert at King FAHD, Al Jouf, Rahfa, and/or ARAR for search and rescue and special operations missions. The unit attempted four search and rescue missions during the operation. One mission was successful.

B. How suitable is currently fielded equipment for personnel recovery operations? Each mission proved that the MH-53J with its unique navigation and terrain following systems was the only aircraft in theatre capable of performing search and rescue missions deep in enemy territory in all types of weather conditions.

REQUIRED DATA:

A. How many personnel recovery missions were performed? Four personnel recovery missions were performed.

B. How many missions were successful? One personnel recovery mission was successful.

C. What limiting factors affected mission performance? Search and Rescue forces must know the exact location of the survivor for rescue missions deep inside enemy territory. Rescue helicopters are placed at great risk, if they are required to search for survivors in a high threat environment behind enemy lines. Controlling agencies should not send rescue helicopters into enemy territory without first establishing communication with the survivor. Survivors must be trained and equipped with [redacted] radios and establish communication as soon as possible with a friendly agencies. Rescue helicopters must be equipped with the Personnel Locator System (PLS) to pin-point the survivors location. [redacted]

D. For each mission(or a representative sample/average for each type mission):

[redacted]

(1) Origination Point: On 19 JAN 91 two MH-53J aircraft were launched from Rahfa to search for a downed F-16 pilot, Stroke 65. They flew 130 NM into Iraq near Tallil AB in heavy fog at night using Pave Low unique equipment. They searched the location for 20 min. [redacted] diverted them to another location and they searched for another 30 min. Then [redacted] told them that the Iraqi air force had discovered them. The aircraft returned to Rahfa. No survivors were recovered.

Transportation Platforms Required: Two MH-53J Helicopters

Transportation Platform Deficiencies: None

Communication Devices Required: SATCOM, UHF, VHF, and FM

Communication Capability Deficiencies: MH-53J helicopters were not equipped with Personnel Locator System (PLS). [redacted]

Target Locating Devices Required: [redacted]

Target Locating Deficiencies: [redacted] did not know the exact location of survivor.

Navigation Devices Required: Terrain following radar, forward looking infared, inertial navigation system, and Global Positioning System(GPS).

Navigation Deficiencies: You had to rely on GPS. Map quality was very poor. Landmarks were located at different coordinates depending on what scale map you had.

Collateral Mission (Y/N): Yes.

Did mission interfere with the overall scheme of operations? No.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(2) Origination Point: On 21 JAN 91 two MH-53J helicopters were launched from Arar to search for a F-14 pilot near AA Assud AB. They spent 6.5 hours, mostly in enemy territory, attempting to locate Slate 46. They found the survivor and while the rescue was taking place, a convoy of Iraqi trucks came toward the survivor. Moccasin 04 called in A-10 Sandies and they destroyed a truck. The survivor was picked up and returned to Al Jouf, mission successful.

Transportation Platforms Required: Two MH-53J Helicopters

Transportation Platform Deficiencies: None

Communication Devices Required: SATCOM, UHF, VHF, and FM

Communication Capability Deficiencies: MH-53J was not equipped with [redacted]

Target Locating Devices Required: [redacted]

Target Locating Deficiencies: [redacted] did not know the exact location of survivor.

Navigation Devices Required: Terrain following radar, forward looking infared, inertial navigation system, and Global Positioning System(GPS).

Navigation Deficiencies: You had to rely on GPS. Map quality was very poor. Landmarks were located at different coordinates depending on what scale map you had.

Collateral Mission (Y/N): Yes.

Did mission interfere with the overall scheme of operations? No.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(3) Origination Point: On 27 Jan 91 the first ever US/UK joint helicopter combat mission consisted of one MH-53J and one CH-47. They flew to the north of Baghdad in search of a [redacted] special forces team. The aircraft flew 4.0 hr. and spent 40 min. searching but no one was found, mission unsuccessful.

Transportation Platforms Required: One MH-53J Helicopter and one [redacted] CH-47.

Transportation Platform Deficiencies: None

Communication Devices Required: SATCOM, UHF, VHF, and FM

Communication Capability Deficiencies: MH-53J was not equipped with Personnel Locator System (PLS). [redacted]

Target Locating Devices Required: Unknown

Target Locating Deficiencies: none

Navigation Devices Required: Terrain following radar, forward looking infared, inertial navigation system, and Global Positioning System(GPS).

Navigation Deficiencies: You had to rely on GPS. Map quality was very poor. Landmarks were located at different coordinates depending on what scale map you had.

Collateral Mission (Y/N): Yes.

Did mission interfere with the overall scheme of operations? No.

[redacted]

(4) Origination Point: On 28 Feb 91 one MH-53J flew out of Kuwait City and one MH-53J flew out of King Fahd to search for a fighter pilot. They flew six hours and logged three sorties in the KTO. Weather was less than 1/2 mile visibility. They were unable to locate the pilot, mission unsuccessful.

Transportation Platforms Required: Two MH-53J Helicopter

Transportation Platform Deficiencies: None

Communication Devices Required: SATCOM, UHF, VHF, and FM

Communication Capability Deficiencies: MH-53J was not equipped with Personnel Locator System (PLS). Because of line of sight limitations and low level operations, helicopters are unable to establish communication with the survivor unless they are within approximately 5 NM to 10 NM.

Target Locating Devices Required: [redacted]

Target Locating Deficiencies: [redacted] did not know the exact location of survivor, which caused the MH-53J helicopters to have to search for a very long time in enemy territory.

Navigation Devices Required: Terrain following radar, forward looking infared, inertial navigation system, and Global Positioning System(GPS).

Navigation Deficiencies: You had to rely on GPS. Map quality was very poor. Landmarks were located at different coordinates depending on what scale map you had.

Collateral Mission (Y/N): Yes.

Did mission interfere with the overall scheme of operations? No.

E. Operational Readiness Rate (mean time between failure): Maintenance did a super job and had a very high aircraft in commission rate. Maintenance should answer this question.

F. Availability of Repair Parts: Parts were available. Maintenance should answer this question.

G. Specialized Maintenance/Support Required: The biggest short coming was the lack of technical data to support heavy weight operations. Nineteen missions involved tactical, low-level operations weight above the normal maximum gross weight. Maintenance should answer this question.

H. Environmental Considerations (sand, heat, humidity, storage, etc.: Sand, dust, and heavy weight operations had an affect on the helicopter. Parts seem to wear out early and weapons jammed more because of the the sand and dust. Some temporary covers were devised to protect helicopter equipment. Covers were made for the weapons and plastics covers were made for the Control Display Unit for the Enhance Navigation Computer. Maintenance should answer this question.

DATA SOURCES:

Pilots debriefs
Mission folders

[redacted]

3. INFILTRATION/EXFILTRATION PLATFORMS:

ISSUES:

Were infiltration/exfiltration platforms able to insert and recover personnel without detection? We think the enemy only detected us on two missions. [redacted] debriefed after one mission that they heard two enemy outposts talk about hearing helicopters in the area. The mission was completed uneventful. [redacted]

REQUIRED DATA:

For each aircraft mission type (representative sample/average for each type mission):

[redacted]

[redacted]

A. Origination Point: On 6 Feb 91 two MH-53J helicopters departed King Fahd and inserted a [redacted] team and a combat raiding craft 11 miles off shore of Kuwait City.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each)

Target (name, location, etc.): Kuwait City

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Mission successful

[redacted]

[redacted]

B. Origination Point: On 7 Feb 91 two MH-53Js lead the first covert infiltration of Special Forces teams into Iraq. The weight of the Special Forces vechile and team required the helicopter to operate at weights far above normal max gross weights. A 50,000 lb. emergency war plan gross weight waiver was implemented. The first behind enemy lines air refueling took place on this mission.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western IRAQ

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

C. Origination Point: On 10 Feb 91 a six ship formation with three MH-53J, one CH-47, and two DAP gunships inserted three vehicles and SF team members behind enemy lines.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

D. Origination Point: On 12 Feb 91 one MH-53J lead one MH-60G nine miles off the Kuwait shoreline to insert a [redacted] recon and surv. team.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Kuwait City

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

[redacted]

E. Origination Point: On 13 Feb 91 a five ship formation lead by one MH-53J, inserted elite SF personnel & vehicles deep into Iraq. The aircraft spent 23 minutes on the ground, the longest ever for helicopters since G-day.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

F. Origination Point: On 17 Feb 91 one MH-53J led two heavy lift CH-47s and two DAP gunships behind enemy lines. They were undetected by enemy radar and spent 2 1/2 hours in Iraqi territory. The aircraft air refueled in Saudi airspace. The rehearsal for this mission was on 15 Feb 91.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

G. Origination Point: A four ship formation departed an air base in Saudi Arabia lead by a MH-53J on 19 Feb 91. The aircraft flew 130 nm into Iraq in deteriorating weather to accomplish a covert infiltration of elite SF personnel and to resupply another team. Enroute to there second objective the lead MH-53J's radar failed. The second MH-53J assumed lead and continued with the mission. After the resupply mission was completed, the mission commander diverted the gunships 60 nm to the north to interdict enemy SAMs. The MH53Js air refueled in Saudi airspace and returned to base.

Number of Mission: one

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

H. Origination Point: On 19 Feb 91 two MH-53Js lead by two MH-53Js successfully dropped a [redacted] and surveillance team 17 nm of the Jazirat Kubbar Island off the coast of Kuwait City. The mission was accomplished without incident.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Kuwait City

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

[redacted]

I. Origination Point: Again on 22 Feb 91 two MH-53Js lead by two MH-53Js dropped a [redacted] team 17 nm from Jazirat Kubbar Island off the coast of Kuwait City.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Kuwait City

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

[redacted]

J. Origination Point: On 23 Feb 91 two MH-53Js inserted a [redacted] SF surveillance and recon team 150 nm into Iraq. The mission was successful and both aircraft returned to base without incident.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

[redacted]

K Origination Point: On 23 Feb 91 three MH-53Js inserted [redacted] surv and recon team only 10 nm from the elite Republican Guard elements. One of the teams was compromised [redacted]. The team was exfiled and flown to Saudi airspace. The aircraft were in enemy territory for 2 1/2 hours.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Aborted team compromied.

[redacted]

[redacted]

L. Origination Point: On 24 Feb 91 two CH-47s and two DAP gunships were lead by two MH-53Js behind enemy lines in the vicinity of an active airfield H-3 to insert elite SF long range recon personnel & vehicles. Diversionary airstrikes and EW were used to mask the flight. The aircraft experienced deteriorating weather and heavy dust obscuring visibility. The MH-53Js were flown at their emergency war plan weight of 50,000lb. and were air refueled behind enemy lines.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

M. Origination Point: One 26 Feb, MH-53Js took part in the first joint air land direct action mission. The MH-53Js infiled Special Forces to neutralize enemy communications facility. The formation encountered AAA on target which was neutralized by a coordinated Tacair strike. On egress to Saudi airspace, they again encountered AAA. The aircraft flew for 4.5 hours and completed their mission successfully.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): Jink and chaff

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

N. Origination Point: On 27 Feb 91 a two ship formation departed an air base in Saudi Arabia and flew over 200 miles into Iraqi territory. There mission was to resupply a SF team. The MH-53J experienced hydraulic problems that were fixed in Iraq on the ground. This mission was the longest penetration in Iraq for the MH-53Js.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

[redacted]

P. Origination Point: On 27 Feb 91 three MH-53Js led a formation at heavy gross weight through poor visibility from burning oil fields in Kuwait. They also went through an unknown threat area to infiltrate reinforcements into Kuwait City. Due to thick smoke cover the formation could not be briefed fully on the threats surrounding the target area. The LZ was hot, mines and obstructions at the target area made landing hazardous. This was the first coalition aircraft to land at KCIA.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Kuwait City

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

[redacted]

Q. Origination Point: On 28 Feb 91 four MH-53Js led a formation of six to reinforce SOCCENT troops at KCIA. Enroute to the target area, the aircraft had a fuel transfer problem which the flight engineer repaired ingeniously by switching electrical connections on the probe extension and tank transfer cannon plugs. The mission was successful and the aircraft returned to base safely.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

R. Origination Point: On 28 Feb 91 two MH-53Js were the first aircraft to land at the US embassy in Kuwait City to infil troops to secure the US mission.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Kuwait City

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

5. Origination Point: On 28 Feb 91 the MH-53J led a eight ship mission into NW Iraq to emergency exfil an elite SF recon forces and vehicles. They spent over 10 minutes on the ground. Over 3 hours were spent behind enemy lines.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

[redacted]

T. Origination Point: On 3 Mar 91 a MH-53J led a six ship formation 200 miles into Iraq to exfiltrate elite SF recon teams and their vehicles.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

[redacted]

O. Origination Point: On 3 Mar 91 two MH-53Js led six aircraft deep into Iraq to exfil a SF recon team and their vehicles.

Number of Missions: One

Aircraft Type: MH-53J

Note Special Equipment Installed: None

External Fuel Tanks Installed: Yes

Loadout (ordnance type/#, tanker off-load, etc.: Two 50 cal machine guns w/1000 rds each

Target (name, location, etc.): Western Iraq

Time on Target/Duration: 5 min.

Target Weather (forecast/observed): Haze

Target Acquisition Means/Range (visual, FAC, radar, etc.): Visual

Target Defenses Active (Y/N): Y

Type of Defense (AAA, SAM, air-to-air, etc.): All

Defensive Measures Used/Effective (Y/N): None

Damage to Aircraft (Y/N): N

Mission Effective (Y/N): Y

If aborted, why? (weather, A/C, fuel, etc.): Complete

[redacted]

[redacted]

Weapon Specific Data:

For each mission that expended ammunition/weapon or a representative sample: No mission expended ammunition.

Supportability Data: Same as Personnel Recovery.

DATA SOURCES:
Pilot debriefs
Mission Folders

SUPPORTABILITY DATA:

A. Operational Readiness Rate (mean time between failure): Maintenance did a super job and had a very high aircraft in commission rate. Maintenance should answer this question.

B. Availability of Repair Parts: Parts were available. Maintenance should answer this question.

C. Specialized Maintenance/Support Required: The biggest short coming was the lack of technical data to support heavy weight operations. Nineteen missions involved tactical, low-level operations weight above the normal maximum gross weight. Maintenance should answer this question.

D. Environmental Considerations (sand, heat, humidity, storage, etc.: Sand, dust, and heavy weight operations had an affect on the helicopter. Parts seem to wear out early and weapons jammed more because of the sand and dust. Some temporary covers were devised to protect helicopter equipment. Covers were made for the weapons and plastics covers were made for the Control Display Unit for the Enhance Navigation Computer. Maintenance should answer this question.

DATA SOURCES:

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

4. AIRCRAFT SURVIVABILITY:

ISSUES:

A. Were the aircraft susceptible to being hit by battlefield air defense systems? Every mission which aircraft crossed the enemy border was susceptible to being hit by battlefield air defense systems.

B. What locations on the aircraft were the most vulnerable? The aircraft is vulnerable in all locations to large caliber AAA and SAMS. Most of the critical parts on the MH-53J are protected by armor against light AAA.

C. What additional ECM/sensors will enhance survivability? Certain parts of the main rotor, tail rotor, and the flight control system are unprotected and if hit could cause catastrophe failure.

D. What additional ECM/sensors will enhance survivability? Additional electronic countermeasures equipment would enhance aircraft survivability. Future modification for the MH-53J includes improved ECM capabilities with the addition of equipment and modification of the AN/ALE-40, Countermeasures Dispenser System. Addition equipment includes: Electronic Countermeasures System (ECM) AN/ALQ-136 and the Missile Warning System (MWS) AN/AAR-47.

REQUIRED DATA:

A. List total sorties flown: The unit flew 360 sorties and 806.6 flying hours during DESERT STORM.

B. Identify losses by mission, phase of flight, and cause. (include non-combat losses.) No MH-53J aircraft was lost.

C. Identify aircraft suffering, battle damage, type of damage, what caused the damage, and at what phase of the mission. No MH-53J aircraft suffer battle damage.

D. Identify the number of aircrews KIA, MIA, and POW. No aircrewmembers were KIA, MIA, or POW.

E. Was aircraft able to detect defensive fires? Don't understand question.

F. Was chaff effective? Chaff was successfully dispensed on two aircraft on two separate occasions when SAMS were launched at the aircraft.

Was Dispensing reliable? It is unknown if the chaff had any affect on the missiles. After debrief, crewmembers thought the all the SAMS that were launched were IR shoulder launched missiles and chaff would not have any affect anyway.



[redacted]

[redacted]

G. Were flares effective? The effectiveness of the flares are unknown.

Was dispensing reliable? Flares were successfully dispensed on two aircraft on two separate occasions when SAMS were launched.

Did the flares aid maneuvers to defeat the threat? On one SAM launch, either the flares, the Infrared Countermeasures System (IRCM) AN/ALQ 157, or the evasive maneuver caused the missile to go ballistic and may have saved the aircraft.

H. Were the IR pods effective? The Infrared Countermeasures System (IRCM) AN/ALQ 157 were thought to be effective. On one SAM launch as mentioned earlier, crewmembers thought the IRCM or the flares made the missile go ballistic.

I. What radar ECM jammer/pods did you use? The MH-53J helicopter is equipped with the AN/ALQ 162, Electronic Countermeasures System (ECM) [redacted]

How many times were they used? Crewmembers turned the system on every time they crossed the border.

J. Were they effective? The AN/ALQ 162 seemed to be very effective and very reliable. [redacted]

What problems did you encounter with the system? No significant problems were noted on the AN/ALQ 162.

K. List the significant ECM deficiencies: No significant problems were noted.

L. How effective were the mission planning tools available?

(1) Minicamps: Minicamps was very helpful for mission planning. However, many problems were encountered: Crewmembers had to load all the threat information into the Camps. Only a few Intel personnel knew how to work with Camps. Camps is limited in memory capacity and all the order of battle couldn't be loaded into it.

(2) Intel Data: Intel information between the Army, Air Force, and Navy was very different. Threats were shown at different places and some threats were not shown at all.

(3) Intervisibility Calculations: unknown

SUPPORTABILITY DATA: Same as Personnel Recovery

[redacted]

[redacted]

ENCOUNTERED THREATS:

| Threat System | Effectiveness (Scale 1-10) | Detection (Visual/RWR) | Reaction Chaff, Flares, etc |
|---|---|---|---|
| AAA close encounters possible 37 MM | 1 | Visual | Jink, Chaff |
| Two SAM launches possible SA-7 or SA-14 | 3 | Visual | Jink, Chaff, and Flares |

NOTE: NO OTHER THREATS WERE ENCOUNTERED.

[redacted]

MISSION: SR019,020,021,022/ ODA 312,332,323,333 23 FEB 91

| CREWS: | LEAD | CHALK 2 | CHALK 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| AC | CAPT. KEN SIPPERLY | CAPT. KEVIN EWING | CAPT. MIKE BEARD |
| CP | CAPT. ED MEYER | CAPT. DOUG GOOLIN | CAPT. DOUG MOORE |
| FE | SSGT. BOB RICE | SSGT. CARL WILLIAMS | SSGT. RUSS HENSON |
| FE | TSGT. DAN SHERIFF | SSGT. MARC CASTRO | SSGT. CLAY ENGLE |
| AG | SSGT. JOHN SUMMERS | SSGT. TOBY CLARK | SSGT. R. ACOSTA |
| AG | SGT. MIKE PEARCE | SSGT. KEVIN THURMAN | SGT. T. MCGILLIS |
| PJ | | SSGT. TROY ARCE | SGT. CLIFF NELSON |

MISSION BRIEFING:
Mission 019 through 022 involved infilling four separate reconnaissance and surveillance teams [redacted] into the following LZ's: 019-N301600,E0463300, 020-N301300,E0462400 021-N302100,E0462200, 022-N302400,E0460700. These LZ's are located approximately 35nm north of the Tri-Border area and with-in 10nm of the closest Republican Guard force and heavy armor tank division. Their successful infil has great strategic importance: their reporting capabilities of troop and armor movement back to 7th Corp is 1.5 hours better than any in the field. This information would be the first to reach the 7th Corp. commander concerning large troop movement.

MISSION NARRATIVE:
On 6 Feb 91, mission tasking came down to infil the four teams in the AO at G-24 hours inorder to dig in and begin surveillance on troop activity. Between 7 Feb and 23 Feb, Capt's Sipperly and Meyer face-to-face briefed with the teams 6 times to review the concept, infil routes, LZ locations and communication procedures. The teams required a bit more attention because they were "green" to the operation, this was their first one as teams! The intel for that area changed daily, making route selection difficult. With the threats in the area, helicopter and team survivability was a big factor in the equation. The final route took us from KKMC to Rafha, crossed the border at England Border Crossing and proceeded north than southeast. Total time in country was 4+10 hours.

On mission day, 23 Feb, a three ship package was to depart King Fahd and proceed to KKMC for link-up. Moccasin 03 and 04 departed first and Moccasin 02, lead bird, caught up to the element at KKMC after several minor maintenance problems. Here is were the constant change begins. After briefing with the individual team leaders and updating the flight route and threats, the takeoff was delayed due to the lack of airspace coordination between 18th Airborne Division and 7th Corp.. Mission 019 and 022 were in jeopardy due to possible mine fields in the area. We decided not to take the risk of landing between mines and cancelled teams 019 and 022. At this point, team 020 was left and the mission was a go. The CINC made the final decision on airspace based on mission priority; thus our flight route was approved. All launches were again put on hold and missions in progress were recalled at 1713Z because of a possible cease fire. While waiting for a go, it

for ensuring the aircraft navigation, threat analysis and radio data were 100% accurate. He did an excellent job on focusing ahead of the aircraft and performing tasks without being asked. At times of peek cockpit tasking, he offered informal guidance and leadership for the crew, aiding greatly in the decision making process. His learning curve skyrocketed as more tasks were added to an ever changing plan. His performance in the cockpit was outstanding in every way and was a prime contributor to tour safe return. What a trooper!!!

Tsgt. Dan Sheriff: Backup Flght Engineer/Right Scanner/Gunner/Cabin NCIOC - Was responsible for keeping the aircraft clear of any ostacles and from overflying any threats or bedouwin/troop concentrations on the ingress and egress. He did an excellent job as the cabin NCOIC, ensuring that it was properly configured for the team. During both aerial refuelings, he kept the pilots appraised of the tankers position as visibility was low and the potential for vertigo was great. He relieved the pilots of radio duty by monitoring SATCOM and keeping Concord up to speed on the mission progress.

SSgt. ~~John Summers:~~ Mike Pearce Lead Gunner/Left Scanner - Did a great job keeping us clear of all enemy ground troops. His concise radio calls made the approach and landing to the objective LZ SAFELY UNEVENTFUL. He did a super job configuring the cabin for the infil and briefed the teams in a most professional manner. His competence put the team at ease during the flight.

SSgt. ~~Mike Pearce:~~ John Summers Tail Gunner/Scanner - Was primarily responsible for the configuration of the cabin for the mission. He briefed, loaded

vertigo and kept us appraised of the tanker's position during both join-ups. He also guarded the tail through the ingress, keeping us up to speed on possible enemy activity and monitoring the rest of the formation. Overall, an excellent job!

Historical Significance: This mission brought the MH-53J closer to the heavy threat concentrations then any other planned mission known to date. We were surrounded by Republican Guard forces, Mechanized Infantry Divisions and a multitude of AAA and SAM threats. It was so proved by the amount of premission planning and threat analysis that was put into the mission. This mission was also directed by the CINC as a go due to the vital information that would be provided to the 7th Corp - the ground force that was going to begin the ground battle. This was also the first time we ever worked with 3rd Group teams and did make great strides in winning their trust in our professional abilities to put them on time, on target - ANY TIME ANY PLACE!!!

SEAL TEAM 5 INSERTION 19-20 FEB 91

#1 CAPT WHITE #2 CAPT SIPPERLY #3 CAPT BLY #4 CAPT GRISBY
CAPT O'BOYLE CAPT MEYER
SSGT PROCTOR TSGT SHERIFF
SSGT HILL SSGT RICE
SGT B.K. SMITH SGT SUMMERS
SGT GENTILE SGT PIERCE

MISSION: TO INSERT [redacted] ON KUBBAR ISLAND (17NM EAST OF KUWAIT CITY). INSERTION TIME WAS 1800L (30 MIN. AFTER SS). AFTER INSERTION THE AIRCRAFT (2XMH-53'S, 2XMH-3'S) SAT ALERT FOR EMERGENCY EXTRACT AND/OR GUN SUPPORT. THE [redacted] USED THE ISLAND AS A BASE FOR C2 AND A LAUNCH POINT FOR THEIR RECON OF THE KUWAIT CITY COAST. THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED IN 2XCRRC'S. EXTRACTION OCCURRED AT 0620L.

WX: THE CONDITIONS FORCED US TO TF IN AND OUT OF THE ISLAND.

MISSION EXECUTION: CAPT SIPPERLY'S CREW FLEW ISLAND SECURITY WHILE MY CREW HELD THE REST OF THE FORMATION 2NM FROM THE ISLAND (ALL ON THE SYSTEM). ONCE THE ISLAND WAS CONFIRMED SECURE AND NO BUBBY TRAPS WERE FOUND, I LEAD THE REST OF THE FLIGHT TO THE ISLAND. THE HELO'S WERE POSITIONED SO AS TO PROTECT ALL APPROACHES TO THE ISLAND AND DISPERSED ENOUGH TO MINIMIZE AN ATTACK BY ARTY, MORTOR, OR SEA ATTACK. THE [redacted] RECON STARTED AT 1900L AND RETURNED AT 0530L. EXCEPT FOR A 3 MAN C2/SECURITY TEAM, IT WAS UP TO EACH CREW TO TO ENSURE THEIR SECTOR SECURITY. THE MAJORITY OF THE NIGHT SAW ZERO ILLUM AND LOW CLOUD/VIS AND RAIN. THIS WAS PERFECT WX FOR THE IRAQI'S TO PROBE THE ISLAND. INTEL HAD PASSED THAT IRAQI PATROL BOATS WERE ACTIVE IN THE AREA.

Meyer was Co-pilot for SIP

MISSION HIGH POINTS: TF FLIGHT IN AND OUT OF THE ISLAND WITHOUT BEING DISCOVERED. SECURING THE ISLAND FOR 12 HRS.

NOTE: THE [redacted] MADE CONTACT WITH A PATROL BOAT 5NM FROM THE ISLAND ON THEIR RETURN. CAS WAS CALLED ON THE TARGET BUT COULD NOT LOCATE. THE PATROL NEVER FIRED [redacted] SO MY GUN SUPPORT ROLE WAS NOT REQUIRED.

was determined that the field surrounding the LZ's 019 and 022 was really a sensor grid used in oil exploration, thus SR 019 and 022 were back on! At 1724Z we got the execute order and the three ship departed KKMC with minimal delay.

Prior to crossing the border, we aerial refueled with the 9 SOS and took on max gas due to the long range infil. Enroute to the a/r track, the flight encountered a dust storm and lead immediately resorted to 300' set TF command with the flight tucked in tight. The tanker joined on TOT with approximately 2 miles visibility. On the aerial refueling track we experienced moderate turbulence associated with heavy rain showers. Visibility went down to less than 1.5 miles and we relied heavily on tanker positioning to overcome vertigo. After aerial refueling, we crossed the border and proceeded to the [illegible] flying between 50-100 feet. We passed over several areas of troop and tank concentrations and one large convoy - all were stored in the system for the intel debrief. The teams were inserted at their chosen spots without incident, lead carrying team 020, chalk 2 team 022 and chalk 3 carrying team 019. Two of the three infil spots were incredibly dusty, resulting in dust out conditions at about 250' AGL - thus use of the TF system was imperative for a safe landing. Moccasin 03, chalk 2 heard team 20 calling for emergency exfil while egressing the area. They extracted the team expertly as Moccasin 02 and 04 orbitted just out of the AO awaiting for Moccasin 03. Poised for emergency exfil of the other teams, Moccasin 02 and 04 waited 10 minutes at which time Moccasin 03 called exiting the AO. Moccasin 02 and 04 encountered 2 separate suspected ^^^ pieces at less than 1/8 and 1/2 miles - no shots were fired. The crews expertly evaded the area as a precaution. Enroute to the second aerial refueling, we lost all moon illumination. Fortunately the heavy rain showers had moved away from the track. We landed at KKMC initially to drop off team 20 but found that they needed to go to King Fahd. During the flight from KKmc to Fahd, we encountered heavy rain and resorted to the TF system, 300' set - all crews were exhausted. With the bad weather came vertigo and scanning in the pitch black abyss became impossible as the scanners strained to see the ground. All crews put in a 19.5 hour day.

We flew a total of 11.6 hours, 9.6 at night on NVG's. Each crew executed the mission in an outstanding manner, responding to the miriad of changes with calm and professional confidence that inspired the trust of the teams.

SUMMARY:
There are several areas that made this mission unique from other taskings:

Intel- The intel scenario was in a constant state of confusion because of the ever changing troop movement and the lack of current intel. The 3rd Group intel was not plotting the "big picture" ground OB and SOCCENT was slow to plot the potentially dangerous AAA and SA batteries. The reason - all agencies were requesting a miriad of information and this bogged the system down. Ed and I had to daily sift through pages of unplotted intel concerning GOB and AOB and make current ONE map so that the aircrews and teams could work from

effectively. This was understandable seeing our AO for the infils - centered between 2 Mechanized/Infantry divisions and the Republican Guard force!

HIGH THREAT AREA: This area was the ultimate high threat area to plan a flight route through! The 49th Infantry division was to the north, 3 Republican Guard divisions less than 10 miles to the east and 4 Mechanized Infantry divisions approximately 13 miles to the south, not tomention the scattered batteries of AAA, ground troops and small convoys and communication nets with a variety of SAM's - all mobile! The route was built to tactically circumnavigate all of these divisions and the associated SAM and AAA threats. This kept Ed and I busy almost daily as new concentrations popped up and the SAM and AAA threat moved from one area to the next. We spent 2-3 hours daily plotting, changing and analyzing the threat.

G-DAY:
It was of the utmost importance that these teams be put in the field at G-24 hours. When infilled, they would supply 7th Corp with time critical information concerning the movement of ground troops and armor, 1.5 hours sooner than any other means of tactical communication already in the field. This information would give 7th Corp the tactical advantage to plan strategy for the first wave of the ground war. Considering the delays for maintenance, weather, intel updates, airspace problems and a possible cease fire, we were able to infil the teams only 10 minutes later then the pre-arranged TOT - an exceptional performance by all!!!

Overall, an exemplary performance by all crews to successfully and professionally completing a mission so critical to the start of the ground war. We were the first crews to have penetrated all the different airspaces owned by the 18th Division and the 7th Corp while a multitude of other flying activities were in progress preparing the way for the ground war. The CINC saw the significance of the mission and made sure that the route was deconflicted!

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS:

Capt. Ed Meyer: Flew precision TF during times of low visibility caused by smoke and heavy rain. He flew an excellent dust out approach when infilling the team despite the powder dust engulfing the helicopter at 250' agl. His performance during the labor intensive planning cells was exceptional! He continuously offered intelligent inputs to the flight planning and was an asset during the team meetings and final mission brief. Ed did an outstanding job aerial refueling during one of the most vertigo inducing conditions seen in theater - no contrast between sky and ground and flickering lights on the ground and the horizon. Was a tremendous asset to me in deciphering current intel from noncurrent information. When he wasn't flying the helicopter, he offered outstanding guidance in the cockpit that helped keep the mission flowing smoothly.

Ssgt. Bob Rice: Primary Enginner - This was Bobs first mission into Iraq in the seat and he saw all that could possibly happen during one flight. Bottom line - he did an exemplary job!!! He was responsible

AIR MEDAL

I recommend Capt Jeffrey D. White, [redacted], for the award of Air Medal. Capt White distinguished himself by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight as MH-53J Aircraft Commander and flight lead for four separate missions to accomplish the infiltration of Kuwaiti resistance forces into Kuwait City from 12-23 February 1991. Capt White received the mission concept package at the start of Desert Storm and began to build a plan based on the SOCCENT special plans group's desire to insert the team to a landing zone within Kuwait City itself. Capt White realized that the Iraqi air defenses on the beach surrounding the city made this plan completely unworkable. Drawing on his experience as an unconventional warfare helicopter pilot, Capt White saw the need to combine the assets of the Air Force and the Navy to successfully complete the plan. He proposed using the 5th NSWG (SEALS) in conjunction with the MH-3 helicopters of the 71 SOS and the MH-53J helicopters of the 20 SOS. He suggested using the MH-53s to carry the SEAL teams with small attack craft to Jazirat Kubbar Island located 18 miles east of Kuwait City. THe SEALs would then put their boats into the water and drive into a semi-deserted part of the beach and deliver the Kuwaiti nationals to waiting resistance forces who would then take them to safe locations. Once the SEALs had accomplished this, they would boat back out to the island, load up, and fly away. The MH-53s were to remain on the island with the MH-3s to provide on-demand fire support to cover an emergency MH-3 exfiltration of the SEALs and the Kuwaiti National team in the event the operation was compromised. Capt White proposed his plan to the SOCCENT special plans group and they accepted it completely. Capt White flew as flight lead Aircraft Commander on two rehearsals during which the SEALs performed successful reconnaissances of several possible landing sites on the Kuwaiti mainland. On 22 February 1991, Capt White led a formation of two MH-53s and two MH-3s to land on Jazirat Kubbar Island from which the SEALs successfully inserted the Kuwaiti nationals. Capt White's innovative thinking was solely responsible for the completion of an extremely important mission. Without his unconventional approach, the mission might not have been done. The professional ability and outstanding aerial accomplishments of Capt White reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

GEORGE A. GRAY III, Col, USAF
COMAFSOCCENT

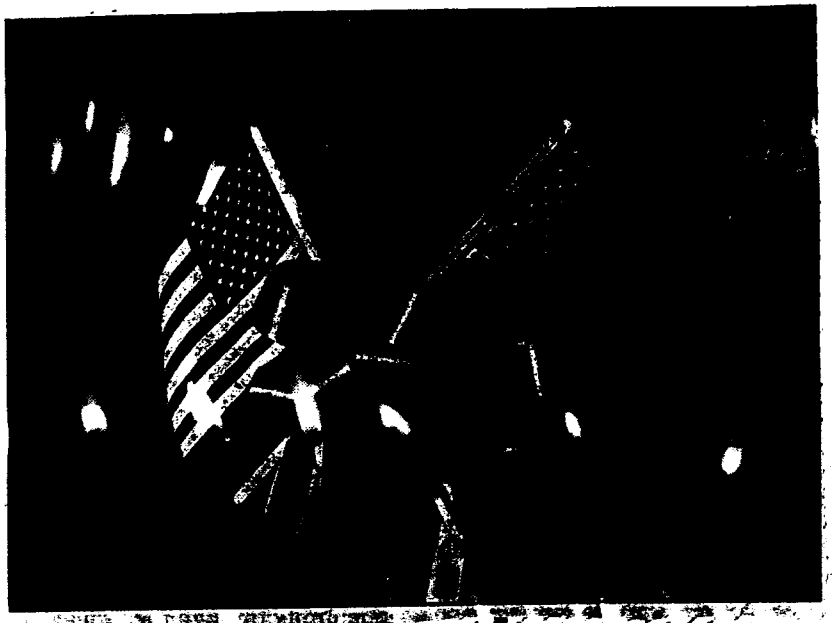
I recommend Captain Kenneth G. Sipperly, Jr., [redacted] for the award of Air Medal. Captain Kenneth G. Sipperly, Jr. distinguished himself by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight as an MH-53J aircraft commander in eastern Iraq on 23 February 1991. On that date, Captain Sipperly was flight lead for a three-ship formation of Pave Lows on a covert insertion of three special forces reconnaissance teams behind enemy lines. The teams' missions were to monitor and report troop and armor movements of several enemy divisions, including the Republican Guards, located north of the tri-border area. Captain Sipperly began extensive mission planning two weeks prior to the planned execution date due to the complex nature of the mission. The scenario demanded each aircraft be flown at weights well above the normal operating limits through an area of concentrated enemy defenses. He formulated a very detailed route that successfully avoided these enemy concentrations and guaranteed the team's insertion be undetected. During the prosecution of the mission, the flight encountered a severe dust storm enroute and heavy rain showers and moderate turbulence during the air refueling just prior to crossing the Iraqi border. The entire flight in enemy airspace, in excess of four hours at altitudes of 100 feet and below, was accomplished in pitch black conditions and visibility as low as one and a half miles. The perseverance and outstanding airmanship displayed by Captain Sipperly kept the flight together and ensured the successful completion of this high priority mission. As a result of Captain Sipperly's heroic actions, the reconnaissance teams were able to safely pass real time intelligence critical to the VII Corps ground offensive. The professional skill and airmanship displayed by Captain Sipperly reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

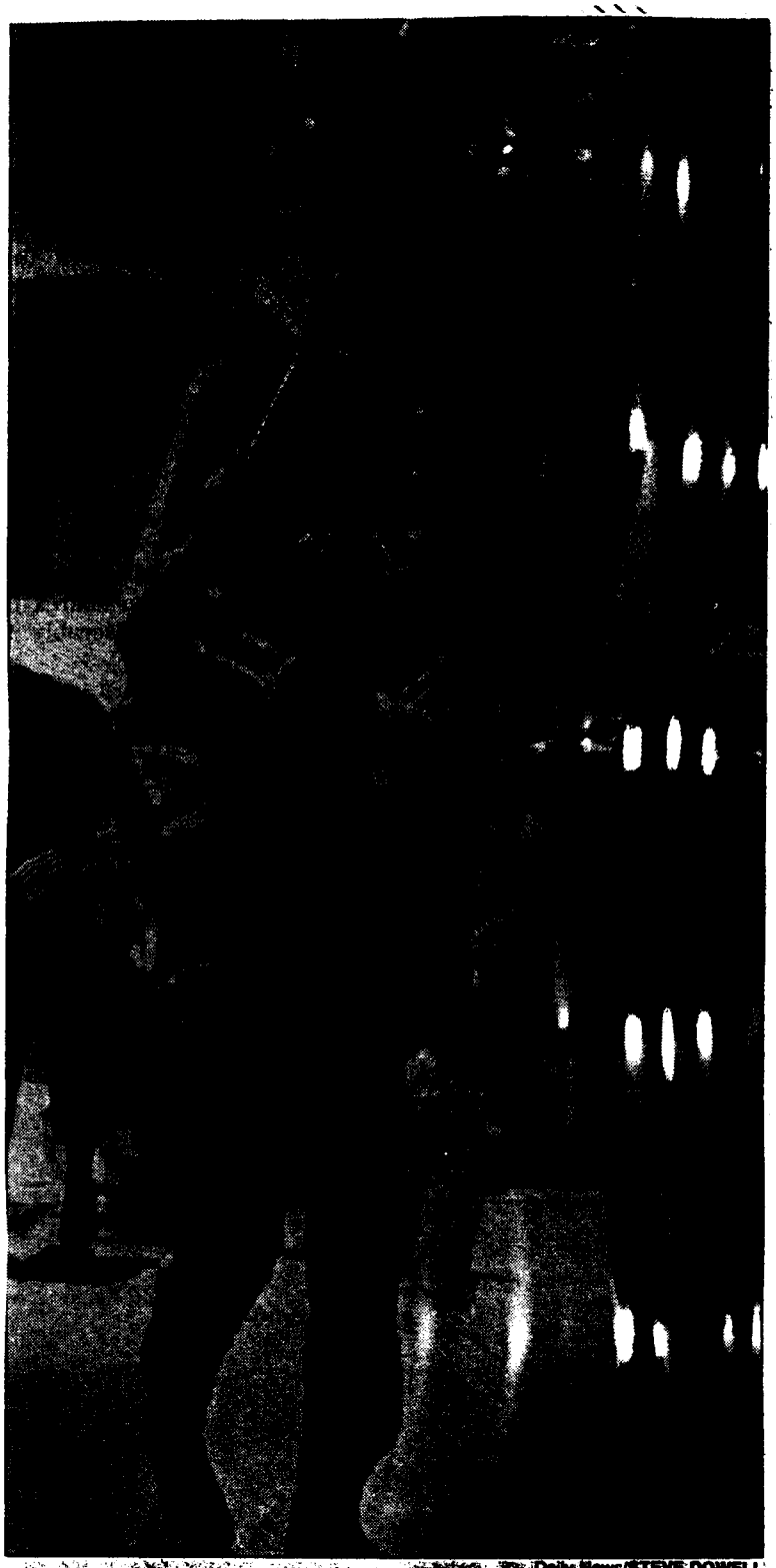
GEORGE A. GRAY III, Col, USAF
COMAFSOCCENT

Sunday, March 10, 1991

# HOME COMING

## Hurlburt troops return to tears and cheers





The Daily News/STEVE DOWELL

Waving an American flag, Staff Sgt. Dennis Shindler was the first airman off the plane that arrived Saturday afternoon at Eglin Air Force Base with 225 airmen returning from deployment in Saudi Arabia.

## Home at last

Staff Sgt. Dennis Shindler of Orlando was the first one off the L-1011 jetliner, which arrived after an overnight layover in Maine. He embraced his wife, Belinda, and 5-year-old son, Colt.

"This is great. This is unbelievable, all the support we have back here," said Shindler, an aerial gunner aboard a helicopter from the Hurlburt-based 20th Special Operations Squadron. "We did what we had to do over there. I'm just glad to be home with my family."

It was the largest contingent of troops to return to a Florida base since the war against Iraq ended, but not the last. Planes with returning airmen are scheduled to land here every day this week, said Capt. Claudia Ziebis, a Hurlburt spokeswoman.

The first American to shoot down an Iraqi plane in the Persian Gulf War, Air Force Capt. Steve Tate, got a hero's welcome Saturday in Detroit.

"Any of us who went over were willing to give our lives for that beautiful flag right there," Tate told about 1,000 cheering, flag-waving supporters at the Michigan State Fairgrounds.

Tate became an instant hometown celebrity Jan. 17 when he recounted on television how he shot down an Iraqi Mirage fighter that suddenly appeared on his tail while he was escorting a bombing mission.

Soldiers bound for Fort Hood, Texas, aboard a Boeing 747 broke into cheers when they saw Lady Liberty in New York Harbor on their way to a stopover in Newark, N.J.

"It was a very emotional moment for the troops," said Ned Walker, a spokesman for Continental Airlines, which flew 401 members of the 2nd Armored Division and 1st Cavalry Division from Saudi Arabia to Fort Hood, Texas, via London and Newark, N.J.

A chartered Pan Am 747 carrying 400 members of the 2nd Armored and 1st Cavalry beat the Continental flight to Fort Hood. As troops stepped from the jet, they waved American flags, flashed victory signs and yelled "Home at last!"

About 40 members of the 49th Tactical Fighter Wing and 833rd Services Squadron returned to New Mexico Friday and Saturday.

"All right!" shouted Senior Airman Joe Haslwantur as his Air Force family swarmed around him. "We kicked their butt!"

# Signs, balloons say 'I love you'

Seven-year-old David Reimer gently tapped a reporter's arm Saturday.

"Will you write about my Daddy?" he asked.

Daddy — Tech Sgt. Dudley Reimer — was about to come home to his wife Alicia, 12-year-old Anna, 9-year-old Gina and David.

David, Anna and Gina all said they'd give their father a big hug and tell him how much they missed him.

Then, said David, "I'm going to ask him if he killed any of the bad people fighting for the bad guys."

David said he "hated the war because Saddam Hussein started it, and he wanted to take over another country."

He said his Dad had called home several times. "He said he wanted our homework done, and he sent me some Saudi Arabian sand for show and tell."

★ ★ ★

Karen Stonerock said her husband, Airman 1st Class Sean Stonerock, didn't believe it when she told him about the outpouring of American support for troops in the Persian Gulf.

But, she said, he found out Friday night in Maine that she was telling the truth.

Stonerock said her husband, who was in the Persian Gulf for 5½ months, called Saturday morning to describe the greeting he and about 200 other service personnel received in Bangor.

"He said there was no one there who was a relative," she said. "It was strangers who came to cheer them on."

Cissy Keiter said her husband, Airman 1st Class Tim Keiter, had the same reaction.

"He said he cried," she said. "It felt so good to see that people he didn't even know cared so much."

★ ★ ★

When Sgt. Jack Harvey called his parents' home in Peoria, Ill., Friday to say he'd be back at home sometime Saturday, his mother and father "played dumb."

"He said he didn't know the route," said Pam Harvey. "So we just said, 'Call us when you get in.'"

But Pam and Jack Harvey actually had heard from a unit sergeant earlier in the morning and knew exactly when their son was arriving. They and their 12-year-old son, Scott, left Illinois soon after talking to Jack and drove to Eglin Air Force Base.

They brought a large "Welcome Home" poster with their son's photo in the center.

"We had to put his picture on it," Pam Harvey said. "He isn't expecting anyone to be here at all."

★ ★ ★

Staff Sgt. Dennis Shindle had a trio of messages waiting for him.

His wife, Belinda, carried a poster with a reference to her husband's big muscles. It said said "Welcome Home You Huge Man. I Missed You, Dennis."

Their son, Colt, 5, carried a sign that said "You're No. 1 Dad. I'm Proud of You."

And the sergeant's mother, Diane Brown, sported a T-shirt that said "Welcome Home Denny. You're Our Desert Storm Hero."

★ ★ ★

A trio of cashiers at the Albertson's grocery store in Fort Walton Beach welcomed home their husbands Saturday from the Persian Gulf.

Connie Pauley, Terry Lopez and Jodi Weber were singing the praises of their bosses, who gave them each a bottle of champagne and a bouquet of balloons — and told them to not report to work for at least a week.

Pauley said she and her husband — Staff Sgt. Rodney Pauley — were taking the store up on its offer. They booked a room at the Comfort Inn in Navarre for three nights.

Weber said she and her husband — Senior Airman Anthony J. Weber — are going to stay home for a few days and prepare for a new arrival to the family. She's pregnant.

Lopez said she, Staff Sgt. Rudy P. Lopez, and 9-year-old son Michael will "make up for lost time."

★ ★ ★

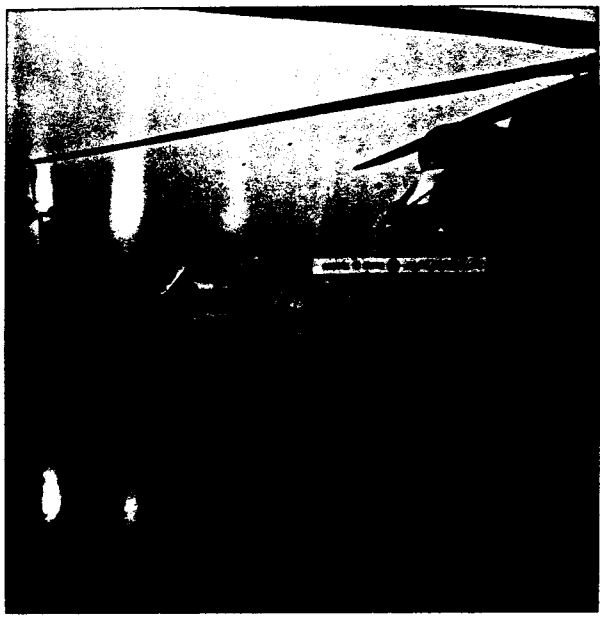
While most troops complained about Saudi Arabian food, Sgt. Tom Brothers said he thought it was "great."

Brothers said the Saudis frequently eat lamb, which he enjoys.

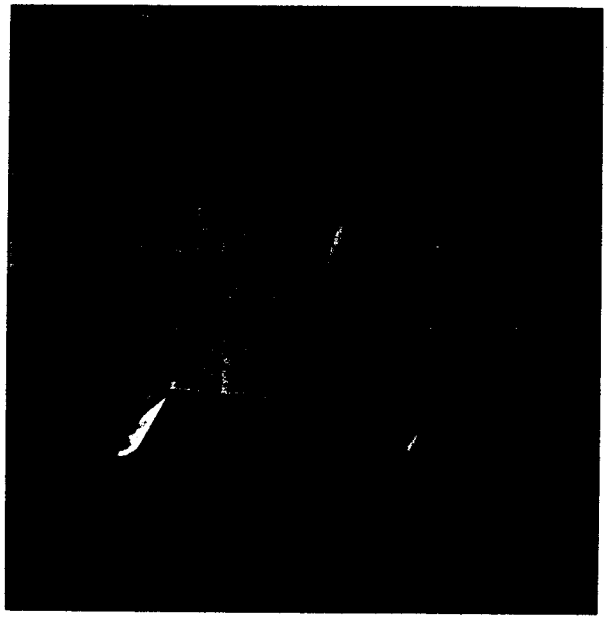
Brothers' girlfriend, Heidi LaBarr, didn't let the extra weight get in her way. She perched on his lap throughout the interview. The couple met two months before Brothers shipped out.

When asked what he missed most, Brothers simply pointed at LaBarr.

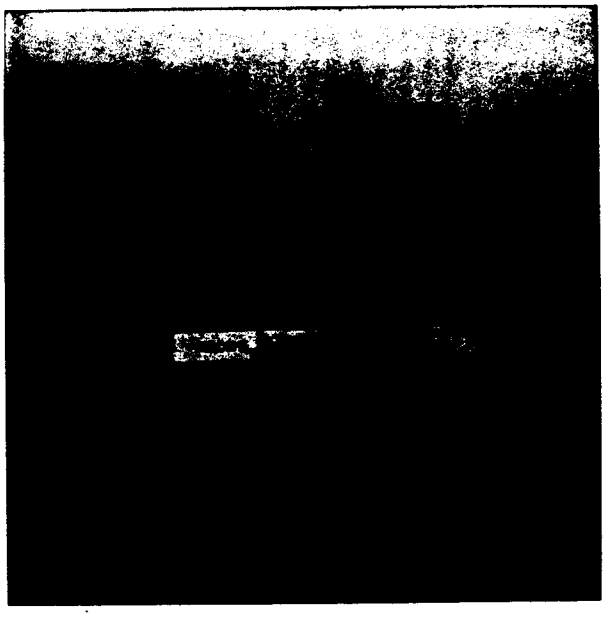
*— Ginny Graybiel, J. Todd Foster, Dave Casey*



Kuwait Airport



Kuwait Airport

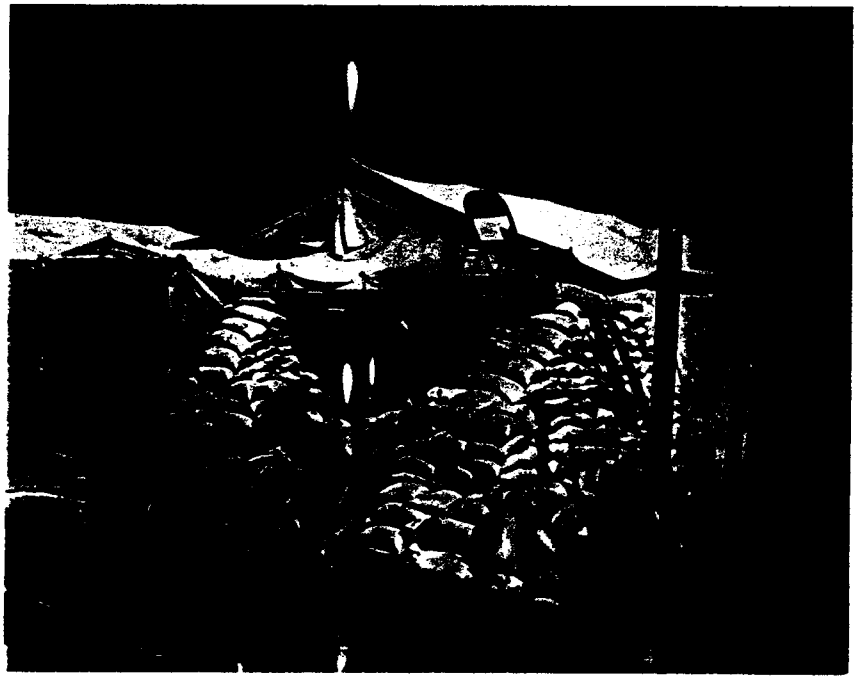


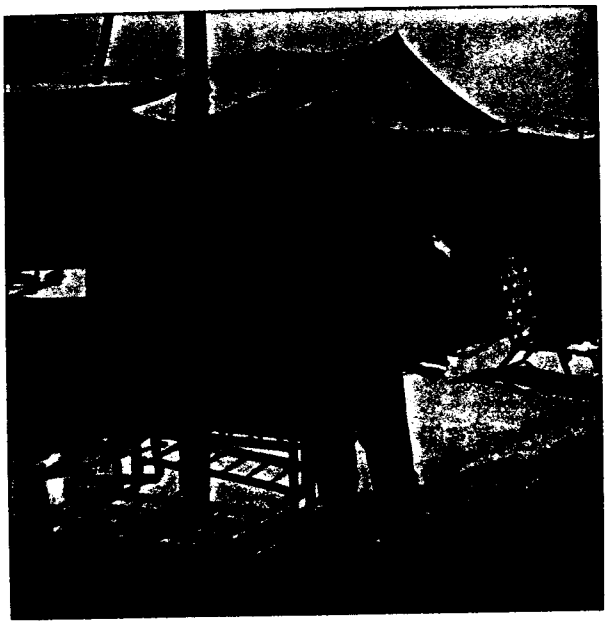
Kuwait Airport



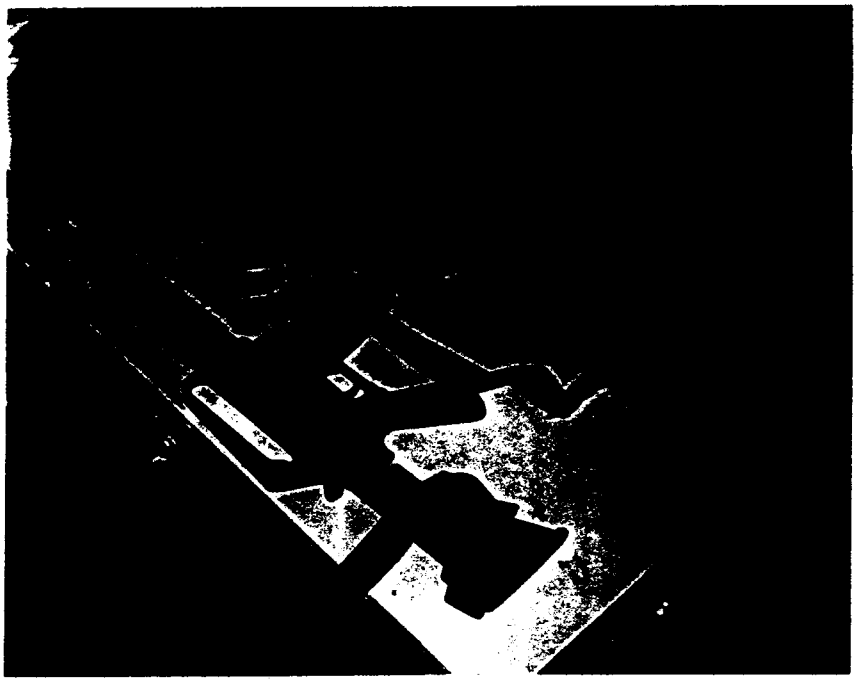
Kuwait Airport











**War in the Persian Gulf**

MISSION: Direct Action escort

DATE: 17 JAN 1991

CREW: A/C - Capt Kingsley FE - Sgt Corey
CP - Capt Beard AG - Msgt Jenkins
FE - Msgt Pinkowski AG - Ssgt Shindle

MISSION CONCEPT: Four MH-53's were tasked to lead eight AH-64's into Iraq as a navigation platform to simultaneously arrive at two early warning radar sites chosen to be destroyed at H-hour minus 22 minutes.

MISSION PLANNING: Each radar site was assigned to two MH-53's and four AH-64's for mission planning and execution. The planning was based on exact timing for each waypoint for the ingress to the objective as well as complete threat degredation to insure minimum detection and maximum surprise. Our aircraft was chosen as flight lead and due to the distance to the objective we were required to takeoff 17 minutes earlier than the other flight. The threats at the objective were primarily anti-aircraft artillery alligned to the south and west. Our ingress was from the east with our primary concern being a major road alligned approximately eight miles east of the site heading north to south. Additionally, we could not exactly pinpoint the location of Iraqi border observation posts. We conducted eight progressive rehearsals including three live fire sorties on a Saudi range. The last two rehearsals were planned and executed to exactly simulate the timing and terrain of our actual mission.

MISSION EXECUTION: Notification of H-hour was given to us eight hours before our required takeoff time. After completing our last minute briefings and finalizing our sequence of events based on zulu time we proceeded to the aircraft and waited for a last minute order to go. Sgt Corey prepared the aircraft completely including Have Quick, secure comm, inputs of the navigation route in both the doppler and the INS, and setting up the cockpit. Our complete mission was based on timing and no comm with the exception of Satcom calls. We took off on time and due to a tail wind we had to slow our indicated airspeed. There was no moon illumination during the entire flight and we kept the flight at 100 ft AGL thus requiring complete concentration on the part of the whole crew. Just short of the border we noticed the observation posts were lit and one was too close to our flight path. We elected to deviate to the east and readjusted our airspeed to make up for the extra distance. As we proceeded north across the border Msgt Pinkowski noticed what looked like a barracks complex around ten miles to the northeast. Again we elected to deviate our flight path slightly to put some high terrain between us and the barracks. We were coming up on the road around eight miles from the objective when once again Msgt Pinkowski noticed a vehicle moving south. At that point we were close to our release point for the AH-64's so we elected to continue on and make our time on target. We arrived exactly on time and Ssgt Shindle dropped a cluster of chem lights to mark the spot for the AH-64's. We broke off to the left and held at a point where we could examine the vehicle we noticed and subsequently rejoin with the AH-64's for our egress to the south. Msgt Jenkins reaquired the

vehicle and reported that it had stopped, the occupant got out and began firing in all directions. Both gunners held good restraint in not returning fire due to the fact our position was not known and gunfire was not aimed in our direction. The AH-64's completed their mission in about ten minutes with 100% success and we egressed to the south as a flight of six after rejoining the two flights. We noticed another observation post and a large cluster of buildings close to our flight path again. We deviated to the east to split the distance between the one we saw on ingress and the one currently in front of us. The AH-64's continued back to Al Jouf while we broke off at A'RAR to hot refuel and assume search and rescue alert. We stayed on alert until daylight and recovered at Al Jouf twelve hours after the mission started.

# Hurlburt aircrews led sneak attack on Iraq

By TRACY WENZEL
Daily News Staff Writer

HURLBURT FIELD — Aircrews from here helped the Army sneak into Baghdad early Jan. 17, spearheading the first and most crucial air attack of the Persian Gulf war.

Col. George A. Gray III told a press conference Monday that MH-53J Pave Low helicopters from Hurlburt guided less sophisticated Army attack copters to two early-warning radar sites inside Iraq.

The Apache copters knocked out both radar sites, opening "a hole in the Iraqi air-defense net," said Gray, who commands the 1st Special Operations Wing.

"The key," he said, "was to take them down before they could make any warning calls back up through their command-and-control structures."

The strategy worked.

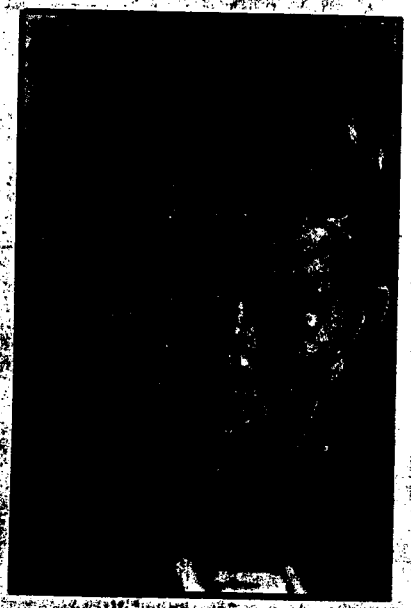
"History will show it was a surprise attack," Gray said. "We had no losses."

Had the Iraqis been aware of that initial attack, the colonel said, "we would have suffered quite a few more losses over Baghdad." He added that by completing the mission, the joint Army-Air Force flying team "essentially start(ed) the war."

Gray said he personally briefed Operation Desert Storm commander Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf about the mission. The general, he recalled, had only one question.

"He said, 'Colonel, will you guarantee me 100 percent suc-

Please see HURLBURT/5A



COL. GEORGE GRAY III
...recounts gulf heroics

# HURLBURT

From 1A

cess in this mission?' I said, 'Yes, sir, I will.' He said, 'Then you can start the war.'"

Gray said the Pave Lows – each outfitted with three navigation systems, a central computer, terrain-following and avoidance radar and forward-looking infrared radar – escorted the Apaches into Iraq under cover of darkness, so low they were undetected.

Without the Pave Lows' sophisticated navigation abilities, the two radar sites – one 12 miles inside Iraq, one 20 miles in – would have been difficult to find, he said.

By sneaking quietly "through the back door," the Pave Lows were able to cross the border 30 minutes before allied air forces started their attack on Baghdad and Iraq, he said.

Hurlburt Field sent to Saudi Arabia all five of its flying squadrons: the 8th Special Operations Squadron, which flies MC-130H Combat Talons; the 9th Special Operations Squadron, which flies HC-130 tankers; the 16th Special Operations Squadron, which flies AC-130H gunships; the 20th Special Operations Squadron, which flies MH-53J Pave Low helicopters; and the 55th Special Operations Squadron, which flies MH-60 Pave Hawk copters.

Gray said the units chalked up these individual accomplishments:

■ The 8th SOS used its Combat Talons to airdrop leaflets that persuaded enemy forces to surrender. The Talon crews also dropped BLU-82 bombs – huge, 15,000-pound bombs that hadn't seen combat since the Vietnam War.

Gray said the gulf war was the first time BLU-82s were used as an offensive weapon. In Vietnam, he said, they were dropped "primarily to create instant helicopter landing zones in the middle of the jungle."

This time, he said, the bomb – the largest conventional bomb in the U.S. arsenal – became a psychological weapon.

Its boom was so big that some British troops on the front lines called their headquarters and said, "We think the blokes have just nuked Kuwait," Gray said.

■ The 9th SOS used its HC-130 tankers to refuel special-operations helicopters. The tankers also dropped leaflets.

"I think you saw most all the prisoners of war that came across the border ... were holding our leaflets," said Gray, who estimated the Combat Talon and tanker crews distributed more than 20 million leaflets to Iraqi soldiers.

■ The 16th SOS used its AC-130H Spectre gunships to take out targets such as missile batteries. Gray said the gunships, the heroes of the December 1989 invasion of Panama, had a limited role in the desert war.

■ The 20th SOS used its Pave Lows for the initial foray into Iraq, and later during a dramatic desert rescue.

■ The 55th SOS used its Pave Hawks for combat search and rescue and to deposit special-forces ground troops behind enemy lines.

"We spent a lot of time flying our helos ... very deep into Iraq to insert special-forces teams for reconnaissance or to disrupt their command and control or to spot Scud (missile) sites throughout Iraq," Gray said.

Hurlburt troops flew more than 5,000 sorties during Operation Desert Storm, logging more than 10,000 hours in the air.

Although hundreds of local troops have returned home, as many as 500 Hurlburt personnel are still deployed in Saudi Arabia, Gray said. If the peace holds, he said, they will come home shortly.

"Hopefully, when we get a cease-fire signed, we can start bringing those people home," he said.

# Air Force Secretary Rice thanks Hurlburt for efforts

By TRACY WENZEL
Daily News Staff Writer

HURLBURT FIELD – Minutes after Air Force Secretary Donald B. Rice welcomed 40 Hurlburt airmen back from the Persian Gulf war, he pinned on 11 medals their co-workers earned during the December '89 invasion of Panama.

Rice, 51, arrived here about 5:30 p.m. Monday, just in time to greet a plane that brought personnel from the 834th Civil Engineering Squadron home from Saudi Arabia.

"I came to say thanks, Hurlburt, for an outstanding job," Rice said later, speaking to 1,500 or so people at Commando Hangar.

Rice praised the aircrews of the Air Force Special Operations Command and 1st Special Operations Wing.

"When it came time for the shooting to start," he said, "the men and women of AFSOC and the 1st SOW stood front and center."

Rice said Hurlburt helicopter crews who helped the Army take out two early-warning radar sites in Iraq "opened the gates for the most successful air attack in history."

"You helped show Saddam (Hussein) that his mother of all battles was really the daughter of all delusions," he said.

He noted some of Hurlburt's other achievements, including a

Please see RICE/3A

# RICE

From 1A

daring daytime rescue conducted by the crews of two MH-53J Pave Low helicopters.

"Few missions are as dangerous or as important as combat search and rescue and few moments as rewarding as when one succeeds at that mission," Rice said. "(Capt.) Tom Trask and his Pave Low crew know that feeling. They plucked a Navy pilot off the desert floor and out of the clutches of the Iraqis who were closing in on him."

Equally impressive were Hurlburt's Combat Talon crews, who – among other things – dropped 15,000-pound BLU-82 bombs on the enemy, Rice said.

"Saddam's forces may not have gotten to see the mother of all battles but they did get to see the mother of all bombs," he said.

Rice pledged to never forget the 14 Hurlburt airmen who died as "valiant heroes" in a Jan. 31 gunship crash.

"No base paid a higher price than Hurlburt," he said. "Even as we try to find words to honor the memory of the men of 'Spirit 03,' we recognize that through their courage and their deeds – as President Lincoln said – they've spoken more eloquently for themselves than we ever could."

Rice last visited Hurlburt in August 1989, just four months before U.S. forces invaded Panama.

"It's a sign of the dedication to duty around here that the presentation of these Just Cause awards had to wait until the end of the next war," he said.

# Daring rescue in desert

## U.S. helicopter picks up downed pilot as Iraqis close in

Pilots pumped up about rescue,

angry about POW treatment

MISSION: Rescue of downed F-14 pilot

DATE: 21 JAN 1991

CREW: A/C - Capt Kingsley
CP - Capt Beard
FE - Msgt Morrow
FE - Sgt Corey
AG - Msgt Jenkins
AG - Ssgt Shindle

callsign
Moccasin 04

MISSION CONCEPT: Moccasin 04 and 05 were tasked to sit CSAR alert at Arar for a 24 hour period from 1600 20 Jan to 1600 21 Jan.

MISSION PLANNING: At 0515 on 21 Jan both alert aircrews were notified of two possible shoot downs over Iraq. Two sets of coordinates were given, one for an F-14 pilot and one for an A-6 crew. AWACS had voice contact with the F-14 pilot only. The other alert crew, Moccasin 05 was tasked to go accross the border to the sothernmost point where the F-14 pilot was supposed to be. We were put on strip alert at the aircraft with APP running waiting for voice contact with the A-6 survivors. We planned to use the preplanned "spider routes" for ingress and egress.
MISSION EXECUTION: Moccasin 05 searched for 2.5 hours with no joy at the location he was given. He came back for hot gas at Arar. At this time, Cpt Kingsley was at the communication center. We were told that there was no A-6 shootdown and released from that mission and told to return to Al Jouf with Moccasin 05 after they got their gas. Monitoring 282.8 in the cockpit, Cpt Beard heard two A-10's talking to the downed F-14 pilot. Moccasin 05 had just completed hot gassing and was taxiing out (he was monitoring 282.8 also) as he told the A-10's and AWACS that we were available and ready to go immediately. We were now tasked to fly in formation with 05 and search accross the border.

Now about 1000, the sky was clear and the sun was bright. Mig cap and close air support (Sandy A-10's) was coordinated by AWACS. We launched north to the new coordinates. As we crossed the border northbound, Sandy's had to come south for a/r. We were constantly monitored by AWACS, given threat and coordinate updates. Coordinates were updated two more times.
We pressed north to each new set of coordinates as fast and as low as we could go avoiding all sams and EW threats in the area. We reached the coordinates where the survivor was supposed to be (within 5 miles of a roland sam site). The Sandys were just off the tanker and about 5 minutes behind us as we searched the area. They apporached from the south and informed us that we were searching in the wrong area. Sandys gave us a vector (they had a visual sighting of the survivor). As briefed, Moccasin 04 would hold south of the LZ to reduce the possibility giving away the survivor location and to provide deception for the enemy. Moccasin 05 went on to the survivor location about 2 miles to the north. The Sandys caught up with us as we crossed last road before the survivor location. Moccasin 05 noticed a truck rapidly approaching. The Sandy's rolled in and smoked it. We held south as 05 located the pilot visually and came in for a landing. While we were holding, we noticed that the coordinates of the survivor were within 5 miles of the original coordinates our crew was given for the downed A-6! As 05 egressed we rejoined him and the Sandys daisy chained above us. The egress route was basically the

same with the AWACS directing us around threats and sending a flight of F-15's to take care of some Mirage F-1's that had alerted to our presence in the area. Flying out at almost full up collective and no higher than 30 ft agl, we egressed the FO with no shots fire from us or at us.

Fuel calculations showed that we had enough gas to make it back to Al Jouf. The flight landed at Al Jouf in front of a very happy crowd. We debriefed the the apparent screwup in coordinates (if M-05 was given the correct coordinates on his first search he could have picked the pilot four hours earlier). We were very impressed at the professional coordination and immense effort given on all levels to extract the survivor. Fighter support, tanker support, Sandy support and command and control from the AWACS all contributed to a job well done.



**CAPT. TOM TRASK**
...helped rescue downed pilot

# Chopper from Hurlburt credited with daring rescue of Navy pilot

By TRACY WENZEL
Daily News Staff Writer

HURLBURT FIELD – Of the three pilots who were rescued during the Persian Gulf war, Navy Lt. Devon Jones probably came closest to getting captured.

Jones, an F-14 Tomcat pilot, was plucked from the desert by a Hurlburt helicopter crew that reached him about the same time a truck full of Iraqi soldiers did.

Jones can be thankful that the copter's escorts – two A-10 Thunderbolt II ground-attack planes – had made it there, too. Just as the Iraqis were closing in on him, one of the A-10s opened fire and blew the truck to bits.

Hurlburt Capt. Tom Trask piloted one of two MH-53J Pave Low helicopters used in the Jan. 21 rescue, a daring daytime mission conducted 180 miles behind enemy lines.

Trask's crew tried twice to find Jones. The first time out, about an hour after sunup, they had the wrong coordinates and had to turn back. Hours later, the A-10 crews renewed radio contact with the downed pilot and called Trask back in.

This time, the Air Force sent two helicopters and two A-10 "Warthogs" on the mission. The A-10s found Jones and circled above him as the copters made the long trip in. But the A-10s got low on gas and flew off to refuel, leaving the copters to make their way alone.

Trask said the copters were able to narrow Jones' location to a five-mile area.

As they approached, he said, "we had to have him do a hold-down (of the transmitting button) on his radio so that we could use our equipment to get a bearing on where he was."

But the enemy also was able to bear down on Jones' signal.

"About five minutes later," Trask said, "a military truck came busting out through the desert straight at the guy.

Please see RESCUE/5A

## RESCUE

From 1A

"The truck was no match for the A-10's 30mm gun."

Trask said the burning truck rolled to a stop within 100 yards of where Jones had dug into the sand.

"We went in and landed next to the truck ... We put (Jones) on board and the A-10s escorted us out of there," he said.

The Pave Low, a high-tech version of the HH-53 Super Jolly Green Giant that was used in Vietnam, worked "exceedingly well" in the desert war, said Col. George A. Gray III, who commands the 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt.

At a press conference Monday, Gray asked reporters to "remember back to the Vietnam days (when) we had sometimes over 120 airplanes committed to a search-and-rescue mission.

"On Desert Storm," he said, "we used two or three airplanes."






MH-53 Pave Low helicopter stole into Iraq to grab a Navy F-14 Tomcat pilot downed in the desert just eight hours before. Two A-10 Thunderbolt attack planes circled as the chopper hovered in. Suddenly an Iraqi Army truck blundered into the area. One of the Warthogs opened fire with its 30-millimeter gun—powerful enough to destroy tanks—and blew the truck off the road. "It was a rather indescribable feeling to know that he was now on the helicopter, and we were coming out of enemy territory—that we were about to pull this off," said Capt. Paul Johnson, who led the effort.

Heroic rescues have always made for pulse-racing stories, from the World War II pilots spirited out of hostile countries by resistance fighters to the American airmen yanked from Vietnam's jungles by Jolly Green Giant choppers. Intelligence sources tell NEWSWEEK that for Desert Storm, Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf gave special-operations commandos orders from the start to set up escape and evasion routes (E&E nets) in Kuwait and Iraq with CIA help. Those nets have already gotten their first test: in the opening days of Desert Storm, Kuwaiti resistance fighters got a downed Kuwaiti pilot out of the country.

# Desert Rescue: *A Tale of Two PJs*



***Sergeant Pennington***

story by CMSgt. Vickie M. Graham,
Senior Editor

illustrations by Sammie W. King,
Assistant Art Director

Everyday, and with little notice, Sgts. Ben Pennington and Bob Vaughan are ready to risk their lives to save others. They're pararescuemen — PJs for short — and they've experienced their share of tricky humanitarian rescue missions that could have ended their lives.

Although a PJ's job is to handle life-threatening situations routinely, the two bluesuiters know firsthand that no rescue is ever routine.

Neither, they discovered, is war.

If Pennington and Vaughan ever wondered how they'd react in combat, their questions disappeared faster than Iraq's air force.

When the first shots were fired in January, the PJs — assigned to Air Rescue Service headquarters at McClellan AFB, Calif. — found themselves closer to enemy gunfire than most enlisted airmen.

Pennington, on board a 20th Special Operations Squadron MH-53J Pave Low helicopter, witnessed the first shots of the war. "We went in with some Army Apaches [helicopters] whose job was to destroy early warning sites to create a safe flying corridor to Baghdad," said the 28-year-old from Lake City, Fla. "We provided rescue and medical expertise for the strike package."

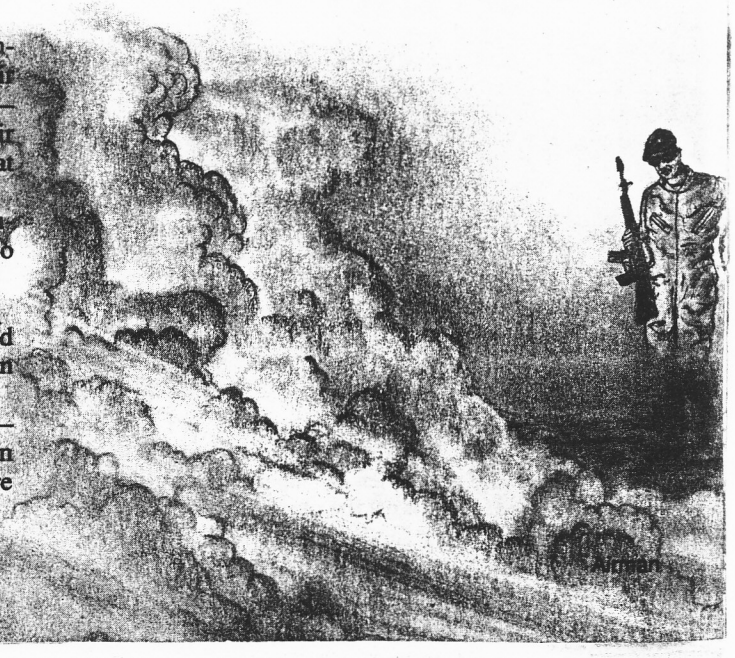
Five days later, he grabbed Navy Lt. Devon Jones from the desert floor as Iraqi soldiers approached the downed flier.

"We were at a forward operating location about 25 miles from the Iraqi border," recalled Pennington, now assigned to Det. 2, 1723rd Special Tactics Squadron at Clark AB in the Philippines. "We flew about 165 miles into Iraq — again on a Pave Low from the 20th SOS — but after flying search patterns for two hours, we didn't find anything."

About the time they decided to head back, the crew was alerted of possible radio contact with the Navy pilot. They flew deeper into Iraq, but still found no sign of the missing pilot.

After returning to base, a circling AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) crew confirmed the pilot's location.

"We refueled and took off again, this time flying with another special ops chopper 186 miles into Iraqi territory," Pennington said. "We were about 30 miles from Baghdad and could see thick smoke rising from the city.



# Fighting the Storm

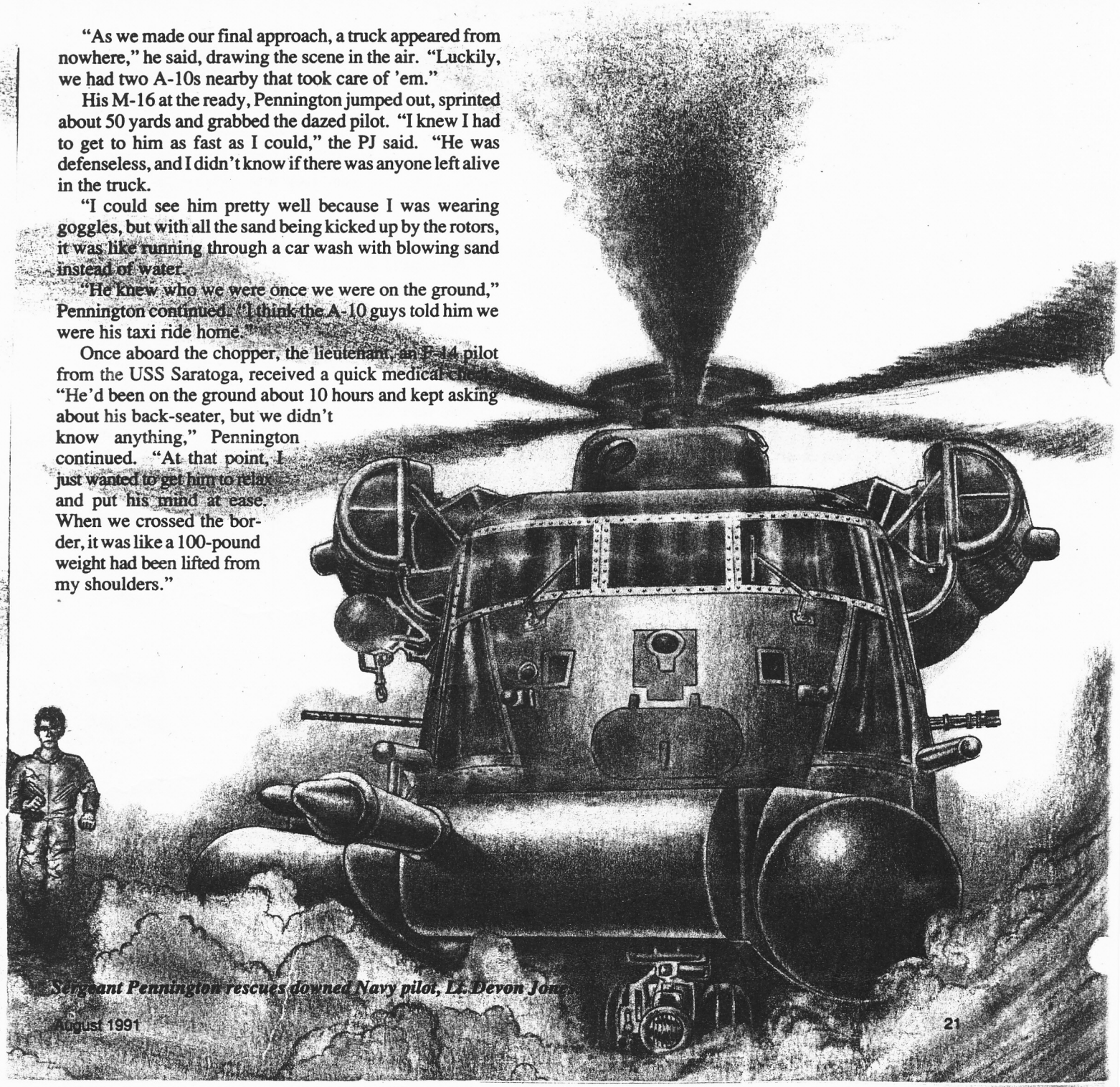
"As we made our final approach, a truck appeared from nowhere," he said, drawing the scene in the air. "Luckily, we had two A-10s nearby that took care of 'em."

His M-16 at the ready, Pennington jumped out, sprinted about 50 yards and grabbed the dazed pilot. "I knew I had to get to him as fast as I could," the PJ said. "He was defenseless, and I didn't know if there was anyone left alive in the truck.

"I could see him pretty well because I was wearing goggles, but with all the sand being kicked up by the rotors, it was like running through a car wash with blowing sand instead of water.

"He knew who we were once we were on the ground," Pennington continued. "I think the A-10 guys told him we were his taxi ride home."

Once aboard the chopper, the lieutenant, an F-14 pilot from the USS Saratoga, received a quick medical check. "He'd been on the ground about 10 hours and kept asking about his back-seater, but we didn't know anything," Pennington continued. "At that point, I just wanted to get him to relax and put his mind at ease. When we crossed the border, it was like a 100-pound weight had been lifted from my shoulders."



*Sergeant Pennington rescues downed Navy pilot, Lt. Devon Jo*

he got back to the States, he called her. "Hi, Mom," he said. "How'd you like the bird I gave you?"

"It was delicious."

"You *ate* the bird!" the guy shrieked. "He was very expensive. He could *talk!*"

"Well, if he was so smart," replied the mother, "why didn't he say something?" —Quoted on "Fitz and Rosenberg," WNEW, New York

QUESTION: What's the difference between Eastern Europe and the United States?

Answer: The United States has a Communist Party.

—Contributed by Dana Perkins

A COUPLE went for their yearly checkups. The doctor saw the man first and asked him how he'd been feeling. "I have one problem, Doc," he answered. "The first time my wife and I make love, everything is fine, but the second time I sweat a lot."

The doctor completed the physical and then examined the wife. "Your husband says the first time you make love is perfect, but that he perspires the second time. Do you know why?"

"Of course I do!" she exclaimed. "The first time is in December, and the second time is in August!"

—Quoted on "The Ken and Barkley Show," KABC, Los Angeles.

"COMING SOON to a theater near you—the hilarious adventures of a wacky college professor trying unsuccessfully to teach math to marine animals. Don't miss: *Honey, I Flunked the Squids!*" —Chuck Flagg in *One to One*

IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN, Adam asked God, "Why did you make Eve so beautiful?"

"To attract your attention."

"Why did you give her so sweet a personality?"

"So you would love her."

Adam thought about this for a while. "Why, then, did you make her so dumb?"

"So she would love you!"

—Quoted by Caroline K. Simon

OVERHEARD at the Food and Drug Administration: "If laughter is the best medicine, shouldn't we be *regulating* it?" —Baloo in *The Wall Street Journal*

ALBERT EINSTEIN arrives in heaven and is told that he'll be rooming with four other men. So he introduces himself to the group.

"Glad to meet you," says the first roommate. "By the way, my I.Q. is 180."

"Good," replies Einstein. "We'll be able to discuss quantum physics."

"I have an I.Q. of 159," the second interjects.

"Splendid—we can talk about the latest mathematical theories."

"As for me," says the third man, "my I.Q. is 132."

"Delighted," Einstein replies. "We can debate the current state of the arts."

"I'm honored to meet you," the last man in the group says. "But my I.Q. is only 85."

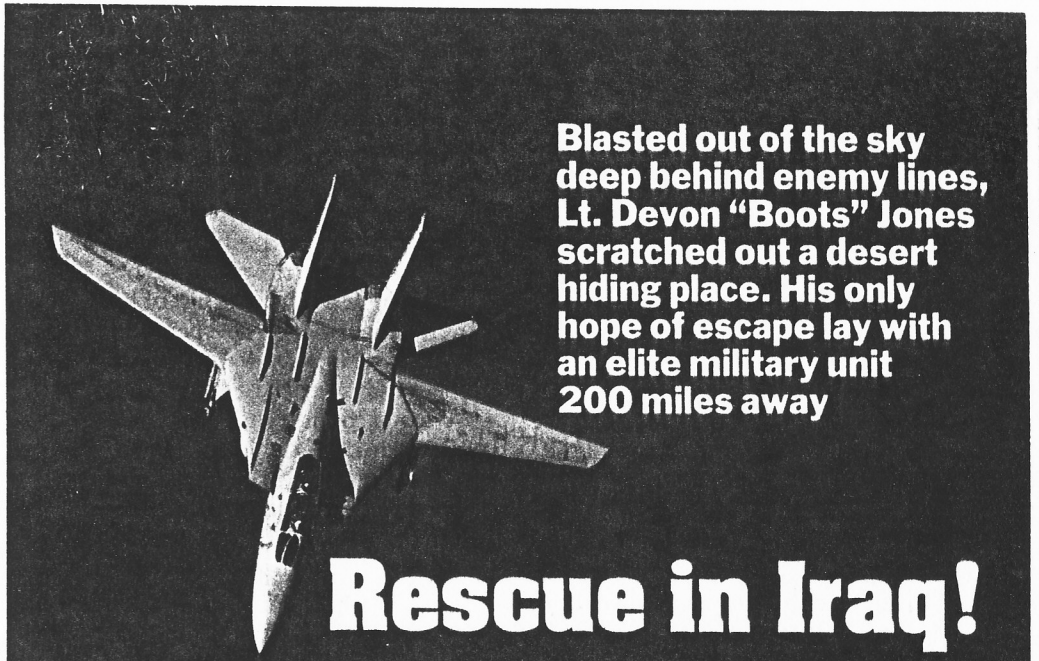
"That's all right," Einstein answers, shaking the man's hand. "So tell me, where do you think interest rates are headed?"

—*The Big Book of New American Humor*, edited by William Novak and Moshe Waldoks with Donald Altschiller (HarperPerennial)

---

*Do you have a joke for "Laughter, the Best Medicine"? See page 10.*





**Blasted out of the sky deep behind enemy lines, Lt. Devon "Boots" Jones scratched out a desert hiding place. His only hope of escape lay with an elite military unit 200 miles away**

# Rescue in Iraq!

BY MALCOLM MCCONNELL

*6:05 a.m., January 21, 1991*

"SAM!" Navy Lt. Devon "Boots" Jones shouted into his oxygen-mask microphone. "Two o'clock."

"Tally," Lt. Larry Slade responded from the F-14A Tomcat's rear cockpit, acknowledging he also saw what every U.S. pilot over Iraq dreaded most. A surface-to-air missile (SAM) was streaking directly at them.

It was the fifth day of Operation Desert Storm. Jones and Slade's Tomcat was escorting a Prowler radar-jamming plane working with Navy strike jets from the *USS Saratoga* pounding the Al Asad airfield in central Iraq. They had received no electronic warning of the enemy SAM. Their only possible evasion was to outmaneuver it by making a violent barrel-roll turn directly at the oncoming missile.

Jones slammed the throttles forward, and as the Tomcat surged he yanked the control stick hard against his right thigh. The plane rolled into a high-speed turn toward the approaching SAM. In the rear cockpit, Slade hit switches to dispense aluminum foil "chaff" to confuse the SAM's radar.

The missile and the Tomcat would pass each other in less than five seconds. Jones breathed oxygen from his mask and tried to clear his mind. Two

PHOTO: © RANDY JOLLY

leg, they would be dangerously short of fuel. Normally, such a rescue would be tried only at night. But there was no time to wait. It would have to be done in broad daylight—a mission not yet attempted in the war.



Capt. Tom Trask



Maj. Mike Homan



Just 25 minutes after initial alert, Tom Trask called the tower, announcing that Moccasin 05, their mission call sign, was ready. He advanced throttles to maximum power and took off into a fog so dense it was like flying inside a bottle of milk. Trask kept his eyes on the screen of the terrain-following radar, which he'd set to maintain 100 feet—the minimum safe height in such conditions. Fifteen minutes later, Homan leaned over from the left cockpit seat and tapped the navigation scope. "Crossing the fence right now," he announced.

They were in enemy territory. As if on cue, the gauze of mist shredded, and beige desert dunes appeared. Trask leveled off only 15 feet above the sand. Flying "on the deck," he knew Iraqi radars couldn't spot them.

"Yukon, Moccasin 05," Homan called to the radar plane circling high above. "Have you got us?"

"Roger, Moccasin 05," the controller replied. "We have you on flight follow." The AWACS's radar was locked onto the chopper and could follow its path precisely. Other sensors in the Yukon's huge rotating dome could detect enemy aircraft, air-defense radars and even vehicles on the ground.

One of Yukon's other responsibilities was to control the two A-10A Thunderbolt II jets that would provide close-support firepower should the Iraqis on the ground attempt to thwart the rescue. Traditionally known as Sandys, the slow-moving A-10s were easy prey for Iraqi MiGs or Mirage F1 fighters. So they were escorted by two F-15 jets, codenamed Citgo.

*8:30 a.m.* Flying over the Saudi-Iraqi border, Capt. Paul Johnson,



PHOTOS: (CAPT. TOM TRASK) © MARK KULAW/NORTHWEST FLORIDA DAILY NEWS; (MAJ. MIKE HOMAN) COURTESY U.S. AIR FORCE; (PAVE LOW) © RANDY JOLLY



the lead A-10 pilot, longed for a cup of coffee, but had to settle for a foil pouch of flat, warm water. He was dead tired. He and Capt. Randy Goff, his wingman, had been up since 3:30 a.m. preparing for their missions. They'd been airborne for an hour when the Yukon controller sent them into Iraq to try to contact Slate 46.

As they reached the rough location Yukon had given them, Johnson tuned to the primary search-and-rescue frequency and called the downed pilot. "Slate 46. Sandy 57. How do you copy?"

There was no reply. He heard only hissing static in his headphones.

*8:50 a.m.* "Moccasin 05," Yukon called. "Fast-moving bogy. He's hot on you. Better get out of there!"

Trask mouthed a silent curse. The enemy plane was probably a French-built Mirage F1, a first-rate jet interceptor that could easily destroy his chopper with long-range missiles. Skimming barely ten feet above the thorny brush, he sideslipped into the relative shelter of a wadi.

Then came reassuring information from the F-15 combat air patrol. Once "painted" by the U.S. jets' radars, as they moved in for the intercept, the Iraqi F1 had turned tail and headed north. But clearly word was out that a large U.S. chopper was moving deep into Iraq.

Ten minutes later, Moccasin 05 reached the coordinates Yukon had given for Slate 46. Trask combed the area for 20 minutes, but there was no trace of the pilot. As the minutes ticked by, chatter died on the intercom. Though no one gave voice to it, everyone believed the downed airman had already been captured. With fuel desperately low, Trask was forced to turn south for the long flight back to the Saudi border to refuel. The Sandys and F-15s remained to continue the search.

*9:00 a.m.* As the gray daylight swelled under the cloud deck, Devon Jones saw that the desert was almost completely devoid of hills, gullies or vegetation. Around him were fresh tire tracks and the hoof prints of animals. He had to find a hiding place before he blundered into someone.

A waist-high mound of dark dirt just inside a shallow depression looked promising. Jones dumped his gear on the far side of the mound and began to dig determinedly with his survival knife.

As the day grew brighter, he clawed a rectangular hole, four feet long, as wide as his shoulders, and three feet deep. After digging a long time, his hands were bloody and dirt-caked. But he was satisfied he had an adequate hiding place.

He was mingling the darker earth from his hole with the lighter surrounding sand when he heard the rumble of an approaching vehi-

months shy of 30, he had been a college football and baseball star. After a master's degree in business, he had forsaken a career in banking to become a Navy fighter pilot. His three years of rigorous flight training now faced its ultimate test.

Jones sagged in his ejection seat as the G forces mounted. The glaring missile swept past. It seemed they *had* outmaneuvered it, and the chaff was masking them. Then the cockpit filled with a harsh, white flash. The SAM had exploded near the F-14's vertical tail fins, shredding the rudders.

Jones was thrown violently against his instrument panel. The force of the explosion ripped off his oxygen mask. The plane was in a flat spin to the right, and the clouds whipped past the canopy, faster with each crazy revolution. As brutal G forces mounted, Jones's limbs felt like sandbags; his helmet was banging back and forth, as if he were being pummeled by an unseen boxer.

"Boots," he heard Slade's voice in his headphones. "Are you there? Are you okay?"

Jones was unable to fasten his oxygen mask to reply. In the dark, noisy cockpit, he grappled with the control stick and thrust his leaden feet against the rudder pedals. The plane was unflyable. Already they had dropped 10,000 feet.

"Boots," Slade shouted, "we're going down."

They had to get out. But the Tomcat spun faster with each revolution. If Jones didn't eject now, he might soon be too battered to do so. But the G's were too violent for him to grab the primary ejection handles on his seat top. Instead he snatched at the backup handle between his knees. With the last of his strength, Jones tugged desperately. The canopy ripped away, and the seat blasted him into the cold wind.

With a twanging snap, his parachute opened. As he descended through the cloud deck, Jones glimpsed Slade's chute slightly below him. The Prowler they'd been escorting had just turned south as the missile hit. The crew probably saw them go down and would have relayed a "Mayday" call to Yukon, the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) radar plane on station high above the Saudi Arabian-Iraqi border to the south.

For a long time Jones hung in the silent, murky clouds. Then he heard the crackling boom of their abandoned aircraft exploding in the desert below. His feet slid free of the clouds, and suddenly the desert floor swept up beneath him. He hit hard on the flat, packed dirt.

Slowly getting up, he checked his limbs for injuries. Despite the violent spin and ejection, he was unhurt. He hid his parachute and his white flying helmet. Staring into the darkness, searching for Larry Slade, he saw nothing.

"Rat," Jones said into his radio, using Slade's private call sign, "can you hear me?"

There was no reply.





Lt. Larry Slade

Lt. Devon Jones

He turned up his radio volume and listened, hoping to hear a voice from a U.S. aircraft overhead. All he heard was the chill, dry desert breeze. But he knew the distant Yukon might hear him. "Slate 46. On the ground," he said, stating his official call sign. "I'm okay and moving west."

Jones began walking across the desert, hoping to find a dry stream bed, a wadi, to hide in. He stopped at regular intervals, unslung his radio and called with mounting anxiety. "Slate 46. Anybody copy this transmission?"

*7:30 a.m.* Air Force Capt. Tom Trask was sleeping in the bunk room at Arar airfield, Saudi Arabia, when someone shook him awake with the words "We may have a mission. An F-14 is down."

Trask spun out of his cot and jammed his feet into boots. Around him, the five members of his crew were pulling on flight suits. They were part of the 1st Special Operations Wing, the secret Air Force unit in charge of search-and-rescue deep inside enemy territory. They flew an MH-53J Pave Low, one of America's largest and most powerful helicopters.

When Trask and his co-pilot, Maj. Mike Homan, studied the navigation chart, it became clear that their mission was a dangerous gamble. The Yukon radar plane reported a rough location for the downed pilot 160 miles inside Iraq. Although Saddam Hussein's air defenses had been pounded relentlessly, this sector still bristled with mobile surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft sites. The round trip would take three hours. On the return

PHOTOS: (LT. LARRY SLADE) © JEAN LOUIS ATLAN/SYGMA; (LT. DEVON JONES) © ROBIN LAYTON KINSLEY/THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT; F-14 © RANDY JOLLY

cle. Jones jumped into his hole and peered cautiously over the lip. A battered farm truck rolled up to a blue tank nearby and two men in work clothes climbed out. As Jones watched, the men walked around the cylindrical tank, then climbed back into the truck and drove off.

*It's a water tank,* Jones thought. His mind was racing now. Local farmers obviously came here, but the men in the truck hadn't seen him, so he could probably stay hidden here all day, refill his water bottles and strike out west after darkness, toward safer country. As he sucked down water from one of his five small plastic bottles, Jones began to believe that he might actually survive the day and be rescued after dark.

*12:05 p.m.* Aloft in the lead Sandy, Johnson was frustrated. Where had Slate 46 gone? Earlier, the F-15s had briefly heard him. But so far Johnson hadn't been able to. Had Iraqi searchers closed in on him?

"Lead, Two," Randy Goff called, interrupting Johnson's somber speculation. "We're going to be bingo fuel in one-five." They had 15 minutes of fuel left before they, too, would have to head south for refueling.

"Roger," Johnson acknowledged. Then, in a final effort, he renewed his call to the survivor. "Slate 46. Sandy 57. Do you copy?"

Suddenly the frequency sprang alive.

"Sandy 57," the voice said calmly, "this is Slate 46. Go ahead." Johnson felt a rush of adrenalin. They had a survivor on the radio.

"Let me come a little closer so I can talk to you," Johnson called.

*12:10 p.m.* Moccasin 05 was refueling at Arar airfield when they heard Johnson talking to Slate 46. Trask snatched the radio microphone.

"Yukon, Moccasin 05. We are refueled and returning north."

*12:20 p.m.* Johnson and Goff estimated Slate 46 to be 20 miles west of the Al Asad airfield. This was much farther north than they had originally figured. The Sandys' fuel situation was truly critical, and they were still far south of the pilot's position.

"Sandy Lead, Moccasin 05." It was Trask coming to rendezvous with them. "Keep heading north. You've *got* to get a good position on him."

Johnson nodded grimly. Slate 46's location inside Iraq was at the extreme end of the Pave Low's range. If the A-10s headed south to refuel themselves before locating him, the Pave Low would run out of fuel. Johnson and Goff had to risk it.

Johnson eased the stick forward and rolled over on a wing to get a better view. He dropped to 3000 feet, called to the survivor and told him to keep a lookout for the flares he was about to drop. After the third flare burst overhead, Jones





radioed back, "I'm about four miles south of you at your 6:30."

Johnson and Goff dropped even lower. Moments later, Johnson heard Jones's excited cry, "Mark Mark," signaling the A-10 was directly overhead.

As Johnson pulled back on his stick, he memorized the coordinates blinking on his navigation system. He just hoped they had enough fuel to rendezvous with their tanker. Johnson read the coordinates to Moccasin 05, which was continuing north. He told Jones, "Got to go get some gas. I'll be back in 30 minutes."

*1:40 p.m.* Trask and his crew now had their survivor's exact location. But to reach him, they would have to cross a four-lane roadway thick with military vehicles. Trask looked for a momentary break in the Iraqi traffic. Then he saw it. Doing nearly 140 knots, its nose less than ten feet above the asphalt, the huge chopper swept diagonally through a gap between two convoys and their astonished occupants.

"Moccasin 05," the Yukon controller called, his voice sharp with tension. "New threats, repeat, new threats." An SA-8 missile radar was sweeping them.

The controller's voice became almost shrill now. "You *must* turn east," he ordered.

Trask swung his chopper east and then south, waiting for the refueled A-10 escorts to join them. Moments later, the two green jets slashed by overhead.

Linked up once again, the A-10s and the Pave Low flew a daisy-chain pattern, continuing their search for Slate 46.

*1:55 p.m.* "One mile now," Slate 46 called after spotting the helicopter. "Ten o'clock."

"Roger," Homan replied. For the first time in the entire long mission, the rescue chopper had solid voice contact with the survivor.

But their elation was quickly broken by the Pave Low's left door-gunner. "We've got a mover to the west," he shouted. It was a mud-spattered truck with a tarpaulin cover. This had to be a radio-direction-finding unit.

"Sandy," Trask called frantically, "where's the survivor?"

"The truck is going right at him," Johnson answered.

"Smoke the truck!" Homan called.

"Roger," Johnson replied.

The A-10s rolled in on the truck, loosing a stream of red cannon tracers on it. The enemy vehicle exploded in orange flames.

Trask was back on course again, flying north. "Sandy," he called, "where's the survivor?"

"Fly right at the smoke," Johnson called.

"At the smoke?"

"Yes. Fly right at the burning truck."

Rearing the chopper back on its tail, Trask air-taxied slowly toward

the smoldering vehicle. To his amazement, less than 150 yards away, he saw a man in a green Navy flight suit pop up from a hole. The pilot stood there with his survival kit in one hand and his radio in the other, calm and still, like a young executive waiting for a commuter train.

As soon as the wheels touched gravel, two of Trask's rescue team were out the doors. Thirty seconds later, they had Devon Jones on board. As they climbed away from the wadi, Trask glanced back into the hold. His eyes locked with those of the survivor. The man was battered and muddy, but his face bore an expression of boundless gratitude.

*2:00 p.m.* "Sandy Lead," the Yukon controller said, his voice swelling with emotion. "Understand you were successful?"

"So far," Johnson answered. "But we've still got a long way to go."

*3:15 p.m.* Lt. Devon Jones sat on the vibrating aluminum deck of the Pave Low. The slipstream whipped through the two open gun hatches and cooled his flushed face. He was exhausted but throbbing with exuberance at being alive and free.

With an aerial chart on his knee, Jones stared intently at the helicopter's navigation computer. He heard Homan say, "Sandy, this is Moccasin 05. We're crossing the fence." They were out of Iraq.

Capts. Randy Goff and Paul Johnson flew many more combat missions during Operation Desert Storm. On February 6, Johnson's aircraft took a direct hit from a missile, which blew a massive hole through his right wing. Johnson managed to fly the crippled aircraft across enemy territory to his base in Saudi Arabia.

For the rest of the war, Maj. Mike Homan commanded Special Operations Pave Lows based at Arar airfield. Capt. Tom Trask continued to fly rescue missions.

Lt. Larry Slade, a prisoner of war, was returned from Iraq on March 4. He revealed that he had been captured by Iraqi soldiers in a pickup truck at about 10:30 a.m. on January 21.

As for Lt. Devon Jones, he flew 30 more combat missions from his ship, the *USS Saratoga*. And on March 10, he proudly served as Larry Slade's escort officer at a P.O.W. welcome-home celebration at Andrews Air Force Base.

---

***True to Type.*** Computer buffs have added new symbols to their written language. The Smiley (:-) is one. The Wink (;-) is a second. The Shock (:o) is a third. The Sorrow (:( ) is a fourth. The Sarcasm (:/) is a fifth. Give this paragraph a sideways clockwise turn, and look at the symbols again.

—L. M. Boyd, Crown Syndicate



Nothing concentrates
a worker like living on the edge

# What Every Free-Lancer Knows

*Condensed from* The Wall Street Journal
Benjamin J. Stein

You might not think that business managers, government officials or ordinary workers would have much to learn from a free-lance writer like myself. But if they had to absorb the harsh lessons that most people in my position live with every day they would be better for it.

Here's what I've learned in 15 years on my own:

*You must produce something.* If you are a civil servant at the Federal Trade Commission or the White House—as I was before I became a free-lance writer—you can sit at your desk and shoot the breeze with your boss and get paid. You can take sick days and get paid. The momentum of the organization takes up the slack of individuals. Income is to a large extent severed from output.

Free-lance writers get paid absolutely zero if they do not produce. (They often get paid zero even if they do produce.) They stand no chance of paying the mortgage and feeding the kids if they have not ground out the pages to sell.

If the ordinary American worker could know the free-lancer's fear when he faces his bills, if he could feel the sharply edged connection between output and being able to sleep at night, that worker would be a match for any Japanese or Korean.

*Saving is imperative.* Anyone with a paycheck coming in every Friday knows that if his bank account runs low on a Thursday, he will have more money the next day. This strips away the incentive to save. It did for me when I was in a regular job.

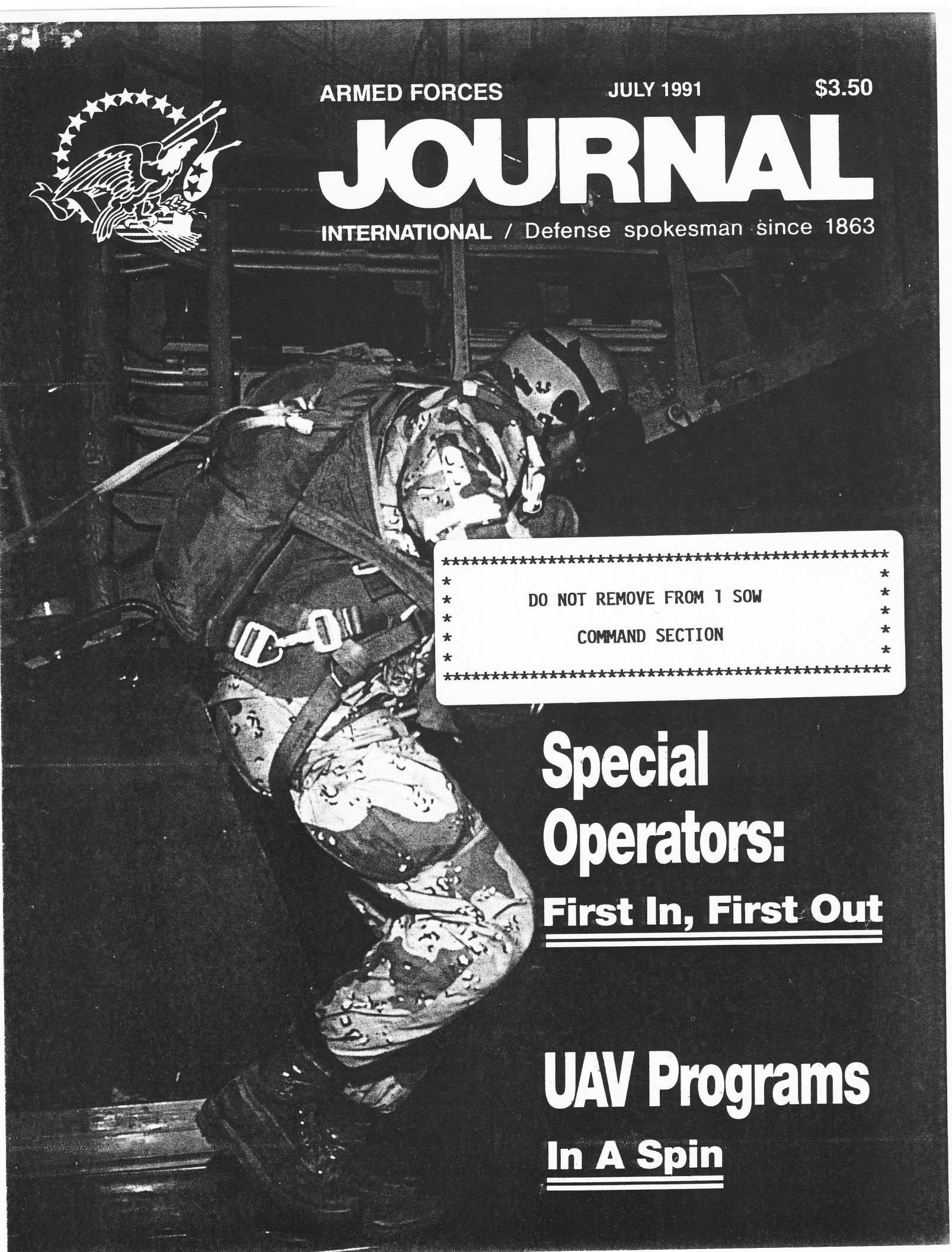
The free-lancer, on the other hand, lives in a state of constant

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (APRIL 3, '89), © 1989 BY DOW JONES & CO., 200 LIBERTY ST., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10281

ARMED FORCES JULY 1991 $3.50

# JOURNAL

INTERNATIONAL / Defense spokesman since 1863



**********
*
* DO NOT REMOVE FROM 1 SOW
*
* COMMAND SECTION
*
**********

## Special Operators:
### First In, First Out

## UAV Programs
### In A Spin

# USAF MH-53J Pave Lows Led Army Apaches Knocking Out Iraqi Radars to Open Air War

**by Benjamin F. Schemmer**

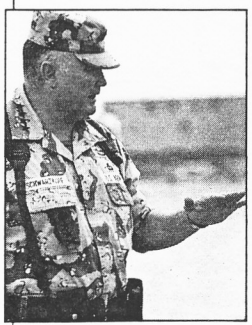
Four US Air Force MH-53J Pave Low helicopters led the way for the US Army Apache attack helicopters that blasted open the air corridor through the Iraqi air defense net to let USAF F-117 stealth fighters and hundreds of other aircraft hit Baghdad undetected early on the morning of January 17th.

Two teams were involved in the joint operation. Each had two Pave Lows from USAF's 20th Special Operations Squadron, commanded by Lt. Col. Richard Comer, leading four Apaches from the 101st Aviation Brigade of Ft. Campbell, KY, when they attacked two separate early warning and ground control intercept radar sites in far western Iraq. Communications at both sites had to be knocked out within 30 seconds of each other, because of overlapping coverage, to ensure a "radar black" corridor. One site was 23 miles inside Iraq, the other 14 miles.

## Schwarzkopf: "OK, Colonel, You Get to Start the War"

The raid was so vital to the opening of Desert Storm's air campaign, *AFJI* was told by officers involved in the operation, that General H. Norman Schwarzkopf personally asked the Commander of USAF's 1st Special Operations Wing, Col. George A. Gray III, if he could guarantee "100% success" that the Pave Lows from his 20th SOS could get the Apaches in undetected and time their attacks to knock out communications at both sites within 30 seconds. When Gray assured Schwarzkopf his Pave Lows could do it, Schwarzkopf told him, "Okay, Colonel, you get to start the war."

The sites were struck at 2:38 in the morning on 17 January when the Apaches fired eight Hellfire missiles for simultaneous time-on-target hits. The communications were silenced and then the early warning radars. Within four minutes, both sites were completely destroyed.



**Schwarzkopf**

(USAF photo by S. Sgt. Dean Wagner)



**Gray**

The McDonnell Douglas Apaches, from Lt. Col. Richard Cody's 1st Battalion of the 101st Aviation Brigade of the 101st Air Assault Division, fired 27 Rockwell-built Hellfire missiles, 100 BEI Hydra-70 2.75-in rockets, and 4,000 rounds from Hughes-built 30-mm chain gun cannons during the operation. Targets were engaged at ranges of from three to six kilometers after visual contact had been made at 12 km and targets verified at seven km. Each aircraft had two primary targets and a secondary target. Up to eight Hellfire missiles were in the air at one time. One Apache engaged with all three weapons at once and simultaneously handed off a target to another AH-64.



**MH-53E Pave Low from 20th SOS**

The Pave Lows and Apaches had never flown together before Desert Shield, so the two units rehearsed the operation in a live fire exercise in the Saudi desert.

## Fired On Inside Saudi Arabia

En route back from the targets, the Pave Lows were fired upon by two SA-7 missiles—*inside* Saudi Arabian airspace. Alerted by their warning receivers that they were being fired on by infrared-guided missiles, the aircraft dropped flares to decoy the missiles and escaped being hit. The SA-7s, it turned out, were fired by Iraqi Bedouins, who wander back and forth across the Saudi/Iraqi border, have little idea where the border is, and probably couldn't care less about it in any case.

The USAF-Sikorsky-built Pave Lows, designed for covert, deep-penetration missions, have more precise, long-range navigation equipment than do the Apaches or Black Hawks, including Doppler and inertial radar systems as well as Global Positioning System readouts, and have more sophisticated electronic countermeasures and communications gear.

## "Stealth" Pave Lows

A Department of the Army fact sheet released on March 13th, "Army Weapons Systems Performance in Southwest Asia," had about three inches of single-spaced details on the Apaches' and 101st Aviation Brigade's performance in the raid. It made no mention of the 20th Special Operations Squadron or that US Air Force Pave Lows led the Apaches in to "open the corridor that US Air Force planes used to begin the bombing of Baghdad."



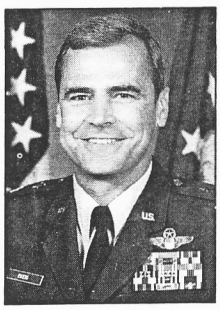
**First of the 101st's Apaches**

The Army and McDonnell Douglas also released a videotape showing the engagement with imagery taken through the Apaches' forward looking infrared, night vision sensor. The USAF Pave Lows are not shown or mentioned in it. A three-page McDonnell Douglas fact sheet on the raid and the video tape of it make no mention of the Pave Lows.

An article from the Army's *Soldier* magazine, reprinted in an April booklet from McDonnell Douglas called *Apache*, talks of "the eight-Apache, one-Black Hawk task force." On the second page, the article notes, "The 'Red Team' of four Apaches and two Air Force helicopters took off first before 1 a.m." There is no other mention in the article of any Air Force participation—sort of as if the stealthy "two Air Force helicopters" were just along for the ride.

During a March 15th Pentagon briefing on the air war, Air Force Chief of Staff General Merrill A. McPeak was asked about the role of USAF helicopters on the mission. McPeak's reply was only, "I can't help you on that."

Word seldom leaks out about successful special operations; one usually hears about them only when they go wrong. In this case, everything apparently went right; we're amazed we can write about it.



**Maj. Gen. Thomas E. Eggers, Air Force Special Operations Command**

The 1st Special Operations Wing is part of the Air Force Special Operations Command headed by Maj. Gen. Thomas E. Eggers and headquartered at Hurlburt Field, FL. Eggers became the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of US Special Operations Command at MacDill AFB, FL, at the end of June. ■ ☆ ■

# Special Ops Teams Found 29 Scuds Ready to Barrage Israel 24 Hours Before Cease-Fire

**by Benjamin F. Schemmer**

Special operations ground teams discovered a concentration of 29 mobile Scud missiles in southwestern Iraq—on their launchers, ready to unleash a barrage attack against Israel—just 24 hours before President Bush announced on Wednesday, February 27th, that the allies would cease hostilities that midnight. The teams called in A-10 Warthogs on runway alert to pound the Scuds with Maverick missiles and 30-mm cannon fire.

Those air strikes were called in by a young Air Force enlisted man who spotted the Scuds just as he was about to radio for a helicopter to extract him from what had seemed to prove a fruitless search. The air strikes lasted six hours.

A barrage by 29 Scuds would have saturated the Patriot air defense missiles defending Israel and would have left Israel no choice but to enter the war—and possibly even to use nuclear weapons against Baghdad, sources tell *AFJI*.

Defense Secretary Dick Cheney met the airman at a Congressional breakfast honoring key Desert Storm personnel and told him, in effect, "Oh, you're from the Scud busters. You kept Israel out of the war." General H. Norman Schwarzkopf had thanked the special operations ground teams and the Air Force helicopter crews who inserted and extracted them, using words very similar to Cheney's, right after their incredible find: "Thanks for keeping Israel out of the war."

In all, special operations ground teams located more than 40 mobile Scuds that spy satellites, reconnaissance aircraft, and Scud-hunting F-15Es or road-roaming A-10s could not find, according to sources who took part in those operations.

Iraq fired 86 Scuds during the war, 40 against Israel; Patriot missiles intercepted 42 of them. Before the war, US intelligence reportedly had estimated that Iraq had only three mobile Scud battalions, each with about 12 launchers, but had no idea how many reload missiles Iraq possessed. As it turned out, Iraq had far more launchers and missiles: it fired an average of five Scuds a day in the first 10 days of Desert Storm and one a day during the last 33 days, although three Scuds were launched daily on the 36th through 40th day of the 43-day campaign.

The last Scud was fired on the 41st day, about 48 hours before the cease-fire. Had US special operations teams not found the 29 Scuds poised against Israel, the next-to-last day of the war might have been the beginning of a far bigger one. Some coalition leaders thought Iraq had exhausted its supply of Scuds when on February 25th the last two Scuds were fired at Israel (both landing in the Negev desert) because one of the warheads was filled with concrete, which is sometimes used as ballast in test missiles. One Scud was also fired toward Saudi Arabia that day; the last Scud was fired, against Saudi Arabia, on February 26th.

About 39 Scuds fell harmlessly into the Persian Gulf or in the desert, but one landed in a military barracks compound near Dhahran, killing 28 American soldiers and wounding 97 others. Four Israelis were killed during the Scud attacks and nearly 200 wounded.



**1st Special Operations Wing commander and squadron commanders. Kneeling in front: Col. George A. Gray III, Commander 1st SOW; standing from left to right: Lt. Col. Jerry L. Garlington, Commander, 55th Special Operations Squadron (MH-60 Pave Hawk Helicopters); Lt. Col. Donn P. Kegel, Commander, 16th Special Operations Squadron (AC-130H Spectre gunships; Lt. Col. Enrique A. Oti II, Commander, 9th Special Operations Squadron (HC-130 Combat Shadow refueling tankers); Lt. Col. Thomas M. Beres, Commander, 8th Special Operations Squadron (MC-130E Combat Talons); Lt. Col. Richard L. Comer, Commander, 20th Special Operations Squadron (MH-53J Pave Low helicopters). Picture taken in front of a MC-130E Combat Talon.**

**(USAF Photo by Sgt. Gregory A. Ford)**

Central Command reported at various times during the war that allied forces had knocked out a significant number of fixed and mobile Scud sites, missiles, launchers, or decoys during what Air Force Chief of Staff General Merrill A. "Tony" McPeak later described as "the great Scud chase."

But the Pentagon and US Central Command now say they have no count of what the total would have been and that a final tally of such kills is still being debated. McPeak acknowledged on March 15th that the Scuds "had a greater impact than expected," saying they required "the diversion of a significant portion of our combat power." McPeak said the Air Force had to "put about three times the effort that we thought we would" into trying to locate the missiles. McPeak never mentioned the close call of 26 or 27 February when the 29 "locked and loaded" Scuds were found aimed at Israel.

General Schwarzkopf, knowing that inserting ground teams into Iraq involved very high risk operations in a very high threat environment, was initially reluctant to put one soldier at risk north of the Saudi border. But, *AFJI* is told, he was ordered by Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Colin L. Powell to use the clandestine teams after Powell and Defense Secretary Dick Cheney called in General Carl W. Stiner, the Commander-in-Chief of US Special Operations Command, and Maj. Gen. Wayne A. Downing, Commander of the Joint Special Operations Command at Ft. Bragg, NC, and became persuaded that "black" special operations teams on the ground could find more Scuds than satellites and aircraft had been able to. By then, the US realized that Iraq had far more Scuds than intelligence first indicated and it had become painfully evident how hard it was to locate the mobile missiles by air.

Just before Cheney and Powell met with Stiner and Downing, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Zhamir had called Washington warning that Israel was about to handle the Scud problem itself, having carefully rehearsed special missions against them.

The ground teams were apparently all inserted by MH-53J Pave Low helicopters from USAF's 20th Special Operations Squadron, although members of the unit have declined to discuss their cross-border operations. *AFJI* was told, however, that the unit flew a total of about 60 cross-border missions during the war.

Most of the mobile Scuds were found by "black" ground teams from special tactics units and some by 20th SOS aircrews.

Schwarzkopf reportedly had asked for two Ranger battalions to be deployed soon after the 82nd Airborne Division arrived in theater, but is said to have been told those units were being held in reserve for other contingency missions. Only one Ranger company was deployed.

Data which General McPeak released in mid-March show that, in all, about 5,000 special operations personnel took part in Desert Shield/Desert Storm, out of 540,396 US troops deployed to the Gulf. Fourteen of them were lost when an AC-130 gunship was shot down in the early morning hours during the battle to retake the abandoned Saudi Arabian city of Khafji.

So far as is known, no other special operations personnel were killed or missing in combat, although nine became noncombat casualties. ■ ☆ ■

# 8th Special Ops Squadron Nicknamed 8th Bomb Squadron After BLU-82 Missions




**First 15,000 BLU-82 Daisey Cutter delivered by 8th SOS**

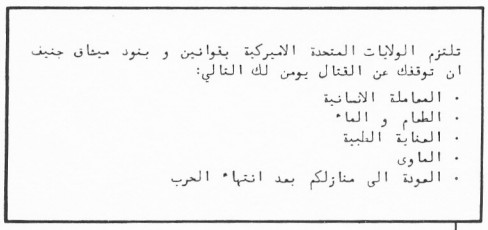
**by Benjamin F. Schemmer**

USAF's 8th Special Operations Squadron dropped two 15,000-lb BLU-82 Daisey Cutter bombs the night of 6 February to blast a safe corridor through Iraqi minefields and defensive berms for US Marines to open the Desert Storm ground war. The squadron's MC-130H Combat Talons had never tested one of the bombs against a minefield before. But the 8th SOS commmander, Lt. Col. Thomas Beres; the 1st Special Operations Wing commander, Col. George A. Gray III; and the head of Central Command's Special Operations Command, Army Col. Jesse L. Johnson, recommended using them as senior commanders wrestled with the prospect of high casualties trying to breach the minefields with conventional means.

The Marine advance was so successful and fast that General H. Norman Schwarzkopf moved up the rest of the ground offensive, his famous "Hail Mary" left hook through western Iraq, by 14 hours.

By the end of Desert Storm, the 8th SOS had dropped 11 Daisey Cutters—all that were in the theater—and the unit became known as the 8th Bomb Squadron. It normally dropped the BLU-82s in pairs, usually from about 17,000-ft altitude to stay above the antiaircraft artillery threat, and achieved a circular error average of 50 yards. Given the BLU-82's net 12,600-lb high-explosive payload, that CEA was equivalent to a direct hit. The bomb's explosive effect is so powerful that ground forces entering the target area later found that every Iraqi soldier within about three miles had been killed.






**Psy-war leaflet**

## "They've Just Nuked Kuwait"

The blast resembles a nuclear explosion and is so impressive that after one such mission, where a dense minefield had been laid around an objective inside Kuwait, a British special forces team 110 miles away radioed back to its headquarters, "Sir, Sir, the blokes! They've just nuked Kuwait."

The BLU-82s proved to have huge psychological impact and were usually followed up by leaflet drops telling the Iraqis, in effect, "This is the first of many bombs to come. Suggest you take advantage of this safe-conduct pass, lay down your weapons, and cross safely to our lines."

After one such mission, an Iraqi lieutenant colonel and battalion commander crossed into allied lines with his intelligence officer and handed over detailed maps of all the minefields in his sector.

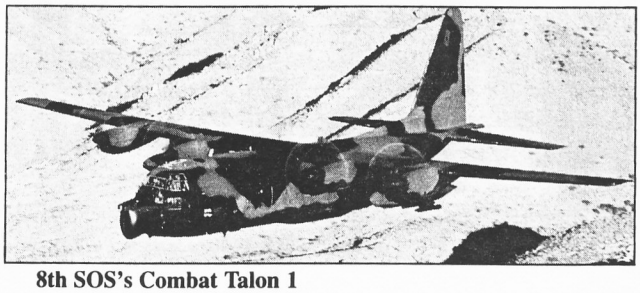
In all, the 8th SOS's four Combat Talons dropped 17-million leaflets during the war, contributing further to the nickname it earned as the 8th Bomb Squadron. Most surrendering Iraqi soldiers had the leaflets in their hands.

One of the BLU-82s was dropped in a mine-strewn wadi deep inside Kuwait, the first line of defense near a huge truck park that was a British objective. Central Command was unable to get any bomb damage assessment from that mission, due to weather or other circumstances, but when UK soldiers reached the first line of defense, no Iraqi soldiers were found. When they reached the second line of defense, there were lots of Iraqis—all dead in their foxholes.

The 8th SOS is the only US unit trained to drop the unwieldy weapon, which resembles a fat, squat water heater. A three-foot-long nose fuze assured that the bomb would explode just high enough above the ground for its concussive energy not to be dissipated in a crater.

Three bombs were dropped within three seconds of each other on Failakka Island, a heavily defended Marine objective. Its radars and antiaircraft weapons went out of commission instantly.

The 8th SOS also flew refueling missions for Pave Low MH-53J helicopters from the 20th Special Operations Squadron flying clandestine insertion and rescue operations. Its four Combat Talon crews flew 40 sorties totaling about 135 hours during the war. As this issue went to press, at least one of its aircraft was still in the Gulf region. ■ ☆ ■



**8th SOS's Combat Talon 1**

# No USAF Combat Rescue Aircraft in Gulf; It Took 72 Hours to Launch One Rescue

**by Benjamin F. Schemmer**

Not one aircraft from the US Air Force's newly reestablished Air Rescue Service was deployed to Saudi Arabia for the Gulf War, during which 38 allied aircraft were shot down, 14 of them US, and 21 American airmen taken prisoner.

Two pilots were rescued by US special operations teams from behind Iraqi lines before they could be captured.

In one case, it took almost 72 hours for US forces to launch a rescue mission—trying to pick up USAF Col. David W. Eberly and Lt. Col. Thomas E. Griffith, whose F-15E was shot down while hunting Scud missiles on 19 January in the Iraqi panhandle northwest of Baghdad, almost on the Syrian border. Scuds in the H-2 and H-3 target boxes there were the ones launched against Israel.

That rescue was delayed due to a complex set of circumstances. The most disconcerting one was the length of time it took to get diplomatic clearance from Turkey for two MH-53Js from USAF's 21st Special Operations Squadron to even take off; it took still longer to get clearance from Syria for the helicopters and an



**Lt. Devon Jones runs toward a 20th SOS parajumper/ pararescueman as an MH-53J lands to bring him home.**

**(USAF photo by M. Sgt. Timothy B. Hadrych)**

***The Air Force disbanded its Air Rescue Service in 1983, after an agreement that US Army rotary-wing units would take over its mission.***

MC-130 aircraft to overfly Syrian territory so it could refuel the helicopters. That mission failed, even though Eberly and Griffith activated their rescue beacons soon after parachuting to the ground and continued signaling intermittently for a significant period of time.

Equally frustrating was the inability to get a precise fix on the aircrew's location: Eberly and Griffith turned out to be almost 10 miles away from where they were reported shot down. Special operations teams operating on the ground searched all over the area in which Eberly and Griffith were reported down, but could not locate them. Those teams were a key part of the rescue network since they carry long-range, secure communications sets and can pinpoint, rather than guess at, their own positions and also can warn of (and in some cases neutralize) enemy forces trying to capture downed aircrews or in a position to shoot down rescue aircraft.

By the time the Pave Lows finally reached their position, Eberly and Griffith had been taken prisoner. Both were repatriated soon after the cease-fire.

An officer involved in the mission told *AFJI* it was "totally frustrating."

The 21st Special Operations Squadron, commanded by Lt. Col. Robert Zdenek, is part of US European Command's 39th Special Operations Wing and flew the mission from a site in Turkey called "Batman." According to reports that *AFJI* is unable to verify, Zdenek finally decided to launch his aircraft before diplomatic clearance was obtained—with an okay to do so directly from the National Military Command Center in Washington—but was already 10 minutes into Syrian airspace by the time that approval came. His unit deployed to Turkey with five MH-53J Pave Low helicopters and was later augmented with two more for combat search and rescue missions.

On another rescue attempt, also in northern Iraq, a Navy pilot turned out to be even farther away from where he was reported down—30 miles north of the coordinates called in by his wing man and by the E-3A Airborne Warning and Control aircraft tracking his flight.

The first successful rescue involved downed Navy F-14 pilot Lt. Devon Jones, who was rescued by an MH-53J from the 20th Special Operations Squadron from Hurlburt Field, FL. The rescue team barely got to him in time—and first had to take out two Iraqi trucks closing in with direction-finders trying to locate the airman. Jones' backseater landed some distance away. He was captured and later repatriated.

The second successful rescue involved an F-16 pilot shot down 40 miles across the Saudi/Iraqi border. He was saved by an aircrew from the 3rd Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, based near Savannah, GA, which normally supports the Ranger Battalion at Hunter Army Airfield, GA. The unit is commanded by Lt. Col. Dalle Dailey.

The 20th SOS flew special operations and rescue missions in Kuwait and southern Iraq, while the 21st SOS flew those missions in northern Iraq; their areas of responsibility were divided by a line just north of Baghdad.

The Air Force disbanded its Air Rescue Service, then part of Military Airlift Command, in 1983, after an agreement between then Air Force Chief of Staff General Charles A. Gabriel and Army Chief of Staff General John A. Wickham that US Army rotary-wing units would take over its mission, as well as all rotary-wing special operations work. That initiative, however, was strongly opposed by Congress and by some elements within the Office, Secretary of Defense. Instead, the Air Force tried to merge its special operations and combat search and rescue units under 23rd Air Force, the forerunner of today's Air Force Special Operations Command. Both types of units fly high-risk, deep penetration missions whose aircrews, pararescuemen, and rescue controllers require almost identical skills and training. They also use much the same aircraft—C-130 Combat Talons to guide them into the target area and refuel en route, plus MH-60G Pave Hawk and longer-range HH-3 helicopters (or, in the case of special ops, MH-60Ks and MH-53Js with special electronic countermeasures suites, more precise navigation systems, better communications, and terrain following/terrain avoidance radars).

## Air Rescue Service Revived

The Air Rescue Service was reestablished in 1989 as a separate USAF major command at McClellan AFB, CA, and now has about 1,200 active-duty and 1,900 Reserve personnel and 80 active and



**MH-60G**

59 Reserve aircraft. Only four of those aircraft are new Sikorsky HH-60Gs specifically configured for rescue work with in-flight refueling, an external rescue hoist, and all-weather radar. The first such aircraft was delivered in 1989, but 86 are supposed to be delivered by the end of this year. ARS also has four UH-60s and a number of older HH-3Es and CH-3Es.

Capt. Frederick B. "Rick" Helmer, a spokesman for Air Rescue Service, told *AFJI* that "it was a command decision not to send our aircraft" to the Gulf. "There were already special operations units there. We basically broke away from the special operations role in August of 1989," he said. About 100 Air Rescue Service personnel were deployed to the Gulf—pilots, copilots, flight engineers, pararescuemen, rescue controllers and coordinators, intelligence specialists, and administrative personnel. All have returned.

Air Rescue Service is commanded by Col. John D. Woodruff. Three MH-53E Pave Low helicopters from Hurlburt Field's 20th Special Operations Squadron are still deployed in Saudi Arabia for search and rescue missions, with about 80 people there. Why is not clear—unless, of course, someone expects the shooting to start again, since there are scores of Army UH-60 aircraft at about 10 sites which could perform such missions. ■ ☆ ■

# Alleged US-UK Special Ops Heist of Iraqi Missiles Before Desert Storm "Didn't Happen"

**by Benjamin F. Schemmer**

It was a "great story, but it didn't happen," according to US special operations personnel who would have helped pull it off: that's what *AFJI* is told about a report printed on the front page of *The Times* of London on January 13th that US special operations forces and a team from Britain's Special Air Service Regiment flew into Kuwait before Desert Storm was unleashed, stole an Iraqi surface-to-air missile, and interrogated its crew. *The Times* said the heist happened "last month," e.g., in December, and quoted an unnamed "senior Pentagon official" about the "brilliant" and "daring" operation.

When asked about the report and the status of the missile, Pentagon spokesman Pete Williams said on January 15th, "That assumes that the report is correct, and I can't find any information to indicate that it is."

Without attribution to *The Times*, *Soldier of Fortune* magazine later reprinted word of the caper, but offered no new details. Dramatically embellished versions of the heist have since been circulating by word of mouth.

One such version says that late on the night of January 7th, 10 days before Desert Storm's air war began, US Air Force Pave Low helicopters flew a team from Britain's 22nd SAS into Kuwait or Iraq and hijacked several SA-8 and SA-10 radar-guided air defense missiles. Technical intelligence specialists in Saudi Arabia later took the missiles apart, that story goes, so that allied jammers and decoys could be "tweaked" to their frequencies. While on the ground in Iraq, the fable continues, soldiers from the UK's Special Air Services interrogated Iraqi officers at the air defense site to learn how their command and control net operated: who alerted them to air attack, what communications systems and frequencies were used, who controlled the orders to open fire, and how the site was netted with other air defense batteries.

The British have their own long-range helicopters, Boeing HC Mk-1 Chinooks flown by the Royal Air Force, and the SAS often used them during Desert Storm. But those aircraft are not equipped with the night vision and terrain avoidance systems that allow USAF MH-53J Pave Lows to fly 20 or so feet above the desert floor even when there is no moon or ambient light, as was the case several nights during the Gulf conflict. At times, Pave Lows were used to guide the UK's Chinooks with their SAS teams deep into Iraqi territory.

The MH-53J Pave Low helicopters involved in the alleged missile caper were reportedly from USAF's 20th Special Operations Squadron, part of the 1st Special Operations Wing, most of which deployed from Hurlburt Field, FL, to Saudi Arabia soon after Iraq invaded Kuwait last August. But sources in the unit told *AFJI* of the alleged heist, "It's a great story, but it isn't true. It didn't happen."

The British Embassy in Washington declined comment on the *The Times* report.

***"We have no helicopters. The Saudis have no helicopters. We have no evidence to indicate there were any helicopters."***

The stolen missile caper became further embellished by rumors that it had happened on January 7th, not in December, and that tied it to one of the war's weirdest mysteries—six defecting Iraqi helicopters that turned out to be a mirage.

On January 7th, US Central Command released information, first leaked by Saudi Arabian officials, that "six Iraqi helicopters landed on Saudi territory late Monday night Saudi time." Four of them, CENTCOM said, "landed at Ra's Al Khafji while the other two landed in the desert, apparently running out of fuel." Asked about the helicopters, the Pentagon's Pete Williams read the CENTCOM release verbatim; the next day, he said that senior US intelligence officials had confirmed the report. Subsequent reports and news stories said the Iraqi helicopters had defected, but Iraq denied those reports and said that none of their helicopters had been flying on January 7th. On January 8th, Prince Sultan bin Abdul Aziz, the Saudi defense minister, denounced the whole story as having been "made up by CNN and foreign news agencies." Later that day, Williams told the Pentagon press corps of the story he had confirmed 48 hours earlier, "I don't have confirmation that either this is true or it is untrue." A few hours after that, Williams called *The Washington Post* to say, "We have no helicopters. The Saudis have no helicopters. We have no evidence to indicate there were any helicopters."

On January 10th, Williams explained the bizarre incident by saying that a "US soldier near the Kuwaiti border thought he heard helicopters on Monday night and he reported this possibility," and that US and Saudi forces began to look for them. He added, "US helicopters assigned to the Special Operations Command spent seven hours looking in the area, but they found nothing. . . . There were no US helicopters in the area which might have been mistaken for defecting Iraqi helicopters."

But rumors have since been circulating that the phantom "Iraqi" helicopters were really MH-53 Pave Lows from the 20th Special Operations Squadron bringing back the purloined Iraqi missiles instead of "defecting" Iraqi pilots, and that the Iraqi helicopter mirage was a badly bumbled

*(Continued on page 40.)*


**HOFFMAN ENTERPRISES**

TACTICAL & ASSAULT GEAR

**For 20 years we have been the professional's source for—**

- Ballistic Armor
- Shields (all types)
- Tactical Lighting
- Entry Equipment
- Weapons Sights
- Gun Accessories
- Hostage Negotiator
- Communications
- Kevlar Gloves
- Optical Devices
- Respirator Masks
- Tactical Holsters
- Batons & Restraints
- Equipment Cases
- Pyrotechnics
- Radar
- CPR Microshield
- AIDS Virus Protection
- FAX Encryptor
- Lock 'n' Run

**When the #@%&! hits the fan, you can't settle for second best! Before it does, call us.**

FAX: (619) 931-7718 PH: (619) 931-7055

P.O. Box 2179 Carlsbad, CA 92018

**CIRCLE 109 ON READER SERVICE CARD**

## Spectre Scholarships

**Fourteen members of the USAF's 16th Special Operations Squadron lost their lives when their AC-130 gunship, *Spirit 03*, was shot down while heavily engaged during the battle to retake Khafji on January 31st. Surviving them are 10 widows and 22 children ranging from newborn to 18 years of age. Those 14 men were the only US special operations troops killed during Desert Storm.**

**The Spectre (special operations gunship) Association has launched a scholarship fund for the widows and children. (Military survivor benefits make no provisions for college educations of family members of any deceased Service personnel, even of those killed in action.) Lockheed Corporation, which builds the C-130s and converted some into AC-130 Spectre gunships, has donated $9,100 to the fund; Rockwell Corporation, which is building the newest AC-130U version, has donated $9,000; the *Journal* STAFF HAS DONATED $1,000.**

**Members of the Spectre and Air Commando Associations hope to raise $500,000 for the scholarship fund—roughly equal to the amount raised in the Col. Arthur D. "Bull" Simons Scholarship Fund after the 1980 Iranian rescue mission for the survivors of the eight men who died at Desert One. Seven of the eight were married; they were survived by 11 children.**

***Journal* readers wishing to contribute to the Spirit 03 scholarship fund may contact Chief Master Sgt. Don Beardsley, President of the Spectre Association, or Chief Master Sgt. Jack Hollyfield, a board member, at 904-884-5432, or send their checks to:**

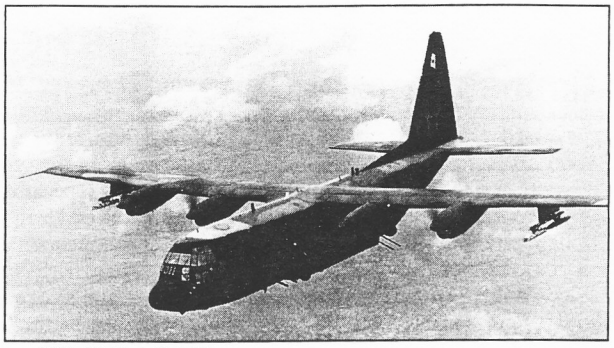
**Spectre Association**
**PO Box 707**
**Mary Esther, FL 32569**

**All donations are tax deductible. Lithographs depicting a gunship in flight with the names and faces of the 14 men are available at $15 each; T-shirts with a picture of the gunship on the front, the squadron emblem on the left sleeve, and the name and tail number of the downed gunship on the back are available at $10 each. The back of the T-shirt bears this inscription:**

**"On 31 January 1991, while on a mission over Kuwait, 14 gunship crewmembers touched the hand of God and became true Ghostriders."**

**Although part of US Special Operations Command and its subordinate headquarters, Air Force Special Operations Command, during peacetime, the 16th SOS's gunships operated during Desert Storm under the operational control of US Central Command's Air Component Commander, not under CENTCOM's Special Operations Component, SOC CENT. The 16th SOS is commanded by Lt. Col. Donn Kegel.**

**Sources close to the unit tell *AFJI* that *Spirit 03* was "heavily engaged" in support of US Marines helping Qatar and Saudi units retake Khafji, "doing lots of good work, near bingo fuel [just enough to get home], but not under any threat" when shot down as sun came up on January 31st.** ■ ☆ ■



16th SOS AC-130

*(Continued from page 39.)*

cover story. But that story isn't true either, *AFJI* is now told.

Still another version surfaced on June 11th, when Daniel Schorr said on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" that the helos were Soviet-built helos painted in Iraqi colors and flown by US special operations personnel returning from a mission across Iraqi lines.

According to Schorr, they were spotted by the Marines and, in order to keep from being shot at, signalled that they were defecting Iraqis. The Saudi military got wind of the story and trumpeted it to the press as a propaganda victory before the US authorities could put a lid on it. Pete Williams' shifting denials resulted, and the US press bought the cover-up, Schorr said.

Ben Bradlee of *The Washington Post* often warns of journalism, "The truth only *emerges*; it's seldom instantly apparent." So it seems with stolen missiles and defecting helicopters. ■ ☆ ■

## "Coach" John Carney Retires, Headed for Chef's School

The organizer, leader, and mentor of USAF's little known "special tactics" units, Col John T. Carney, Jr., retired at Hurlburt Field, FL, on May 31st—and is headed for chef's school in Charleston, SC, after which he hopes to open a five-star restaurant near Eglin AFB, FL, with himself as head chef. His wife, Cindy, says it's about time he learned to cook.

Cooking has been a cartharsis for the man who flew into Iran in a CIA Twin Otter to emplant remotely activated beacons and landing lights at Desert One three and a half weeks before the April 1980 rescue mission landed there. Carney helped plan the mission and then led seven USAF combat controllers and pararescuemen whose job it was to safely get Delta Force into that site. Carney later led US special operations teams into Grenada during Operation Urgent Fury, on Operation Just Cause in Panama, and in Desert Storm during the Persian Gulf crisis.



Carney

A 1964 ROTC graduate from the University of Arizona, Carney served in Southeast Asia as part of Project Center Stage in Thailand. He then coached varsity football and taught physical education for seven years at the US Air Force Academy, where, it is alleged, he also learned to swim. He entered USAF's combat control career field in 1975 and, after the US Embassy in Tehran was seized in November 1979, became a unit commander in Task Force 1-79, which was organized with Delta Force to mount the rescue mission later known as Eagle Claw. Carney subsequently commanded the newly organized 1723rd Combat Control Squadron at Hurlburt, later becoming the Director of Combat Control Operations at headquarters, Military Airlift Command, Scott AFB, IL, and then Director of Combat Control and Rescue Operations there.

### First in, Last out

Reassigned to 23rd Air Force headquarters at Hurlburt Field in 1987, Carney activated the 1720th Special Tactics Group, which integrated combat controllers and air rescue or pararescue teams to lead Delta Force, SEAL Team Six, USAF's 1st Special Operations Wing, the Army's 160 Aviation Special Operations Regiment, and similar special operations units on high-risk missions behind enemy lines and then help extract them. Those USAF special tactics teams are usually "the first in, last out." Members of the special tactics units are all combat control or pararescue qualifed, scuba-qualified, and specialists in high-altitude, low-opening parachute operations.

Carney's successor at the 1720th is an Air Force Academy graduate, Lt. Col. (promotable) Robert W. Neumann. ■ ☆ ■

# Four New SOF Aircraft Are Late and Way Over Cost, but . . .

**by Benjamin F. Schemmer**

Four new special operations aircraft are not faring as well as the men who fly them, and in them, performed during Desert Storm. Two are Air Force fixed-wing programs; two are newer Army helicopters.

## IBM's MC-130H Combat Talon II

Eleven years after the Iranian hostage rescue attempt, Air Force special operations forces have yet to get the first of five new MC-130H Combat Talons IIs funded in Fiscal Year 1983 under a sole-source contract let to IBM. The plane was to become operational more than four years ago, by May of 1987. Since, 19 more planes have been funded to augment the Air Force's existing force of 14 long-range, low-level, night infiltrators that fly Army Rangers, Delta Force, Navy SEALs, Air Force special tactics teams, and other special operations forces deep behind enemy lines and extract them.



**IBM's MC-130H Combat Talon II**

While the planes' performance requirements have become far more complex than originally designed, the program has had nine different program managers, slipped repeatedly, and soared in cost. Last January, USAF hoped to have the first Talon II operational by August; in April, that date changed to September or October; since then, the plane's test schedule has been extended for six to 12 months to fix what was supposed to be a modification of an existing radar and to test the plane's complex electronic countermeasures suite.

First let as a fixed-price, $97-million-ceiling-price contract for what was supposed to be "off-the-shelf integration" of five aircraft, the contract was changed in January of 1983 to involve 12 aircraft costing $480.3-million. Now the Air Force expects 24 planes to cost $1.92-billion. The cost may prove higher still: all the possible cost increases reviewed for a November 1990 Air Force-Special Operations Command four-star "summit meeting" would make the program's total cost $2.47-billion, including unanticipated research and development needs, unique spares, and special logistics support at more bases than first planned.

## Rockwell's AC-130U Gunship



**Rockwell's AC-130U gunship**

The first of 12 new AC-130U side-firing gunships, put under contact in July 1987 and once scheduled to become operational in October of 1992, is also late. The initial operational date is now projected for the summer of 1993, although a draft Air Force Audit Agency report of April 30th—a copy of which was made available to *AFJI*—says that "full scale development would not be completed until March of 1994"—well beyond the September 1993 date by which 11 production aircraft were to have been delivered.

The Rockwell program "has experienced cost, schedule, and technical difficulties that have gotten progressively worse," according to that report. It recommends that the Air Force either "a) stop further production activities, b) reassess the contractor's ability to perform the development and production programs, [or] c) depending on the results of the reassessment, either initiate termination action or restructure the development and production program."

The plane's first flight last December was over two years late. The program represents the only aircraft production program Rockwell has left.

Rockwell's fixed-price incentive development contract, which had a target price of $155-million and a ceiling of $176-million, included firm, fixed-price production options for six aircraft totaling $130-million and five additional ones costing $104-million. (Neither sum includes the old C-130H airframes Rockwell has to modify or government-furnished equipment such as guns and sensors.) By March of this year, however, USAF's draft audit says, "contract modifications" had raised the nominal total of $389-million for development and production to $434-million—not counting $379-million in disputed costs which it lists. These include: a $140-million claim which Rockwell submitted in June of 1990 for "equitable adjustment"; an $18-million Rockwell claim alleging a mistake in pricing the production options; plus $159-million which Rockwell now says it will lose on the development contract and $62-million it expects to lose on production.

In January, USAF headquarters told *AFJI* that "any cost incurred over the contract ceiling amount will be absorbed by Rockwell." But in April two senior Air Force officers acknowledged they had "no idea" what the AC-130Us might finally end up costing, since Rockwell's claim for "equitable adjustment" may not be settled for years. Historically, one officer pointed out, such claims have been settled for about 20 cents on the dollar.

Acknowledging that the AC-130U "has long been a troubled program" and remains "a program with big problems," Col. Paul L. Beggs, USAF's Program Director for Special Operations Forces, agreed in a May 3rd response to the draft audit report that it "would be beneficial to restructure the program," but said that would cost another $150-million to $200-million and would add a year or more to the schedule.

As with the MC-130H, "add on" requirements have increased program costs and delayed the schedule. Bell Aerospace, for instance, was unsuccessful in designing a new all-low-light-level television, the plane's principal sensor. GEC was selected last year to undertake a "complete redesign." A new 25-mm gun has experienced ammunition feed problems. The audit report said that Rockwell had yet to deliver even one of 38 critical item specifications that had been due before a critical design review held between June and September of 1989.

## Army MH-47E/MH-60Ks

New special operations helicopters for the Army—Boeing MH-47Es and Sikorsky MH-60Ks—are experiencing somewhat similar difficulties. Although the extent of their problems is not clear, the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee said in October of last year that "a program that was estimated to cost $643-million in 1987 is now estimated to cost $1.2-billion" and said that "the SOF helicopter program has reached the point of unaffordability." Last month, the Subcommittee again criticized both programs for "increased costs and schedule slippages," saying that "unnecessary risks as a result of concurrency have been rather costly." The Subcommittee warned that "if these programs undergo additional cost overruns," US Special Operations Command would have to offset them from elsewhere in its budget. (SOCOM has the responsibility to organize, train, and equip all special operations forces and is the only one of 10 theater or unified commands with its own budget, known as Major Force Program Eleven. It also has the unique authority to approve the requirements for which its money is spent.)

In 1988, SOCOM validated a require-

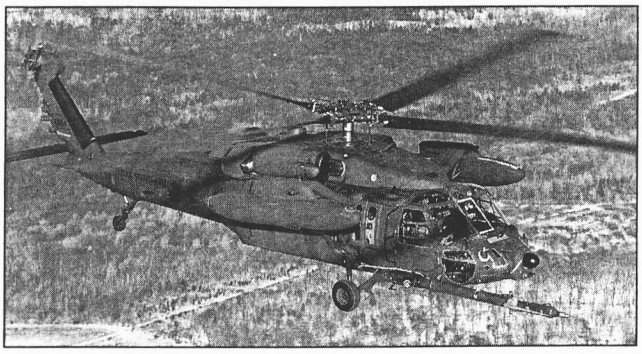
ment for 51 MH-47Es, the last of which was to be delivered in December of 1994. But that number was cut last year to 34 and now stands at only 26. The first MH-47E contract was awarded in December of 1987 at a not-to-exceed cost of $81.2-million, with options for 50 more aircraft. The prototype first flew on May 31st last year and is scheduled to be delivered to the Army late in 1992. The planes have a 51-ft-long refueling probe and enough internal fuel to complete a 5½-hour covert mission of 300 nautical miles radius at low level, day or night, with a 90% probability of completion.



Boeing's MH-47E

Like their smaller, 24,500-lb-gross-weight MH-60K counterparts, the 54,000-lb MH-47Es also have a new integrated avionics subsystem with forward-looking infrared; a multimode, Texas Instruments, terrain avoidance/terrain following/digital ground mapping radar for nap-of-the-earth flying when visibility is extremely low; secure satellite communications; Have Quick secure communications; data burst communications; automatic target handoff; AVR-2 laser and radar warning receivers; voice warning of missile launch; chaff and flare dispensers as well as infrared jammers; and digital automatic flight control systems.

Sikorsky won the MH-60K developmental contract in January of 1988, made its first flight in August last year, and is now scheduled to deliver the first production aircraft in November. The Army plans to buy 22 aircraft in addition to one prototype, and has options for 38 more.



Sikorsky's MH-60K

IBM is the designated avionics subcontractor for both aircraft.

## IBM's Entrée

IBM got involved in special operations aircraft in 1978, when it developed the software to convert USAF HH-53H rescue helicopters to the far more sophisticated special operations MH-53Js. (Their avionics, electronic warfare suites, and all-weather navigation systems are being replicated in the MH-47Es, MH-60Ks, and MC-130Hs, but with more modern technology.) That work led IBM into a special, "black" program following the Desert One disaster in 1980. Called Credible Sport, it involved a specially modified aircraft with a tailored SOF avionics suite, in-flight refueling, infrared lights, and a special short takeoff and landing capability that was to let it complete the Iranian rescue mission in one night instead of two. Unfortunately, at a high-level demonstration of the Credible Sport aircraft, the crew crashed right in front of the grandstand. No one was hurt, but the program was terminated.

But Credible Sport gave IBM enough credibility to win a 1982 Air Force program to build 243 specially equipped HH-60 helicopters for combat air rescue and special operations work: 60 of them were to incorporate SOF capabilities like the MH-53J Pave Lows and the MC-130E Combat Talon Is. That contract, in turn, led to IBM's sole-source award in 1983 for the MC-130H Combat Talon IIs, since avionics integration was supposed to be the most challenging task and because the MC-130Hs were to integrate, "off the shelf," the avionics developed for the HH-60D rescue bird. At one time, the two aircraft were to have 95%, and then 85% avionics commonality.

## What Went Wrong?

The MC-130H program started coming unglued when the HH-60D rescue program was canceled in 1985, after its costs soared to over $21-million per helicopter. The MC-130H was left to bear the cost of developing the HH-60 avionics it was supposed to integrate "off-the-shelf," plus attendant test and logistics support costs.

The original Congressional direction was to upgrade 12 C-130s into Combat Talons with improved reliability, maintainability, availability, and survivablity features. But, Air Force Col. Denis M. Boroczk points out, there was no such thing as a Combat Talon then: every plane the Air Force owned was a "one-of-a-kind modification, each configured to a different scenario." There were no drawings, no standard specification. (Boroczk heads the special operations division in the Directorate for Strategic, Special Operations, and Airlift Programs under the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition.)

IBM ended up picking Emerson Electric, which had never built a terrain-following radar, for the MC-130H—in large part, the Air Force says, because Emerson was the only contractor which would bid to the specification without exceptions. That radar, which had to "look into a turn" at one degree per second (thus, eight-to-10 degrees of aircraft bank) was supposed to involve "modifications" to two of six line replaceable units in the F-5 fighter's single-frequency radar. The modifications were supposed to take two years; historically, a terrain following radar takes five to seven years to develop.

By the time a workable design was approved by the Air Force, Emerson's APQ-170 radar had seven totally new line replaceable units, was a multifrequency radar, and weighed a hefty 1,486 lbs.

Other problems emerged: new electronics countermeasures made the aft cabin too hot, and it was too noisy back there. Ear plugs solved the latter problem, and SOCOM waived its cabin cooling requirement when shown that the 85-degree temperature specified involved a "heat soaked" aircraft taking off after sitting for hours in the middle of a 120-degree-Fahrenheit day with its engines and auxiliary power unit off but avionics and electronic countermeasures powered up. (A climatic map of North Africa, the Middle East, and Southwest Asia show three small spots where such conditions might exist one percent of the time in the hottest month of the year—in southern Algeria, central Chad, and northern Iraq.) As one Air Force officer told *AFJI* of the proposed $150-million fix, "It could have turned the aircraft into a meatlocker." (The original C-130 specification was simply to cool the cabin to ambient temperature plus eight degrees.)

Similarly, an "off-the-shelf" electronics countermeasures suite was recommended by a Georgia Tech study. But some components had never been in production; one had never been qualified on a propeller-driven aircraft; and another—designed as a "quick fix" for Southeast Asia—had no logistics base. Talon II had to bear the costs of testing, certifying, and integrating that equipment, as well as to set up a logistics support system for it. The original MC-130H concept called for six months of flight test on one aircraft; the ALQ-172 radar jammer, originally designed for the B-52, ended up requiring 100 hours of unscheduled, dedicated flight test for the MC-130H.

What's the bottom line? USAF Maj. Gen. Stephen B. Croker, Director of the Air Force's Strategic/SOF/Airlift Programs, told *AFJI* in April, "Beware of 'off-the-shelf' integration efforts. I am really skeptical." But he's confident special operators will finally get a superb airplane. ■ ☆ ■

**AMERICA FLUNKS MATH**
How Does Your State Rank?

# Newsweek

June 17, 1991 : $2.50

# SECRET WARRIORS

DO NOT REMOVE FROM
1 SOW COMMAND SECTION

**BEHIND IRAQI LINES**

## How SEALs and Scud-Hunters Helped Win the War

18201
0 706289 6
24

# Secret Warriors



**The role played by special forces in Desert Storm was virtually unknown to the public. NEWSWEEK reveals how commando teams helped win the war.**

BY DOUGLAS WALLER

Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf had a very big problem. For months, KH-11 spy satellites and high-flying TR-1 reconnaissance planes had circled over Saddam Hussein's air defenses, looking for holes. They had found none. Unless the allies could find a way to break through the early-warning radars ringing Iraq, the air raid on heavily defended Baghdad might become an Iraqi turkey shoot. Schwarzkopf feared that he would lose scores, even hundreds, of planes on the first night of the air war. That night was now only a few days away.

Sitting on the couch in his command center, Schwarzkopf listened warily to Col. George Gray, the sandy-haired leader of the Air Force's top commando unit, the First Special Operations Wing. Colonel Gray explained his plan. A task force of MH-53J Pave Low helicopters, backed by Army AH-64 Apache attack choppers, would sneak across the Iraqi border and punch a hole in Saddam's early-warning screen. The attack would take split-second timing; if it failed, the air defenses around Baghdad would light up like the Fourth of July. As he knelt on Schwarzkopf's carpet with his maps spread out, Colonel Gray tried to show his commander why his men would succeed.



LEIF SKOOGFORS—WOODFIN CAMP

## Who's Who in Special Operations

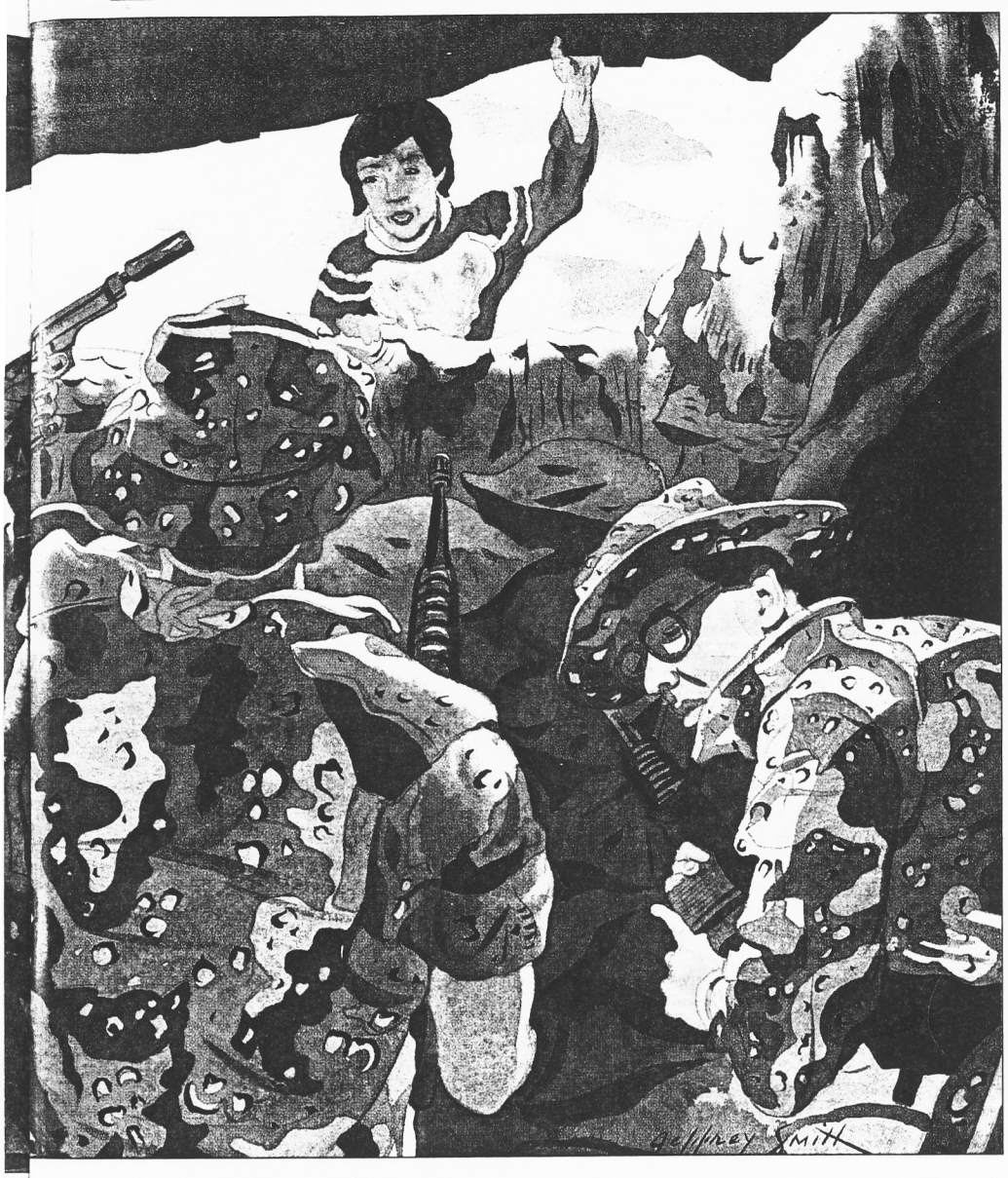
Special Operations Command in Tampa, Fla., oversees the 45,000 members of the special-ops forces—the elite of each branch of the U.S. military.

**Army:** The 30,000-member special-forces group is based at Fort Bragg, N.C. It includes the famed Green Berets, the Army Rangers, a covert-attack helicopter regiment and psychological-warfare and civil-affairs experts.

**Navy:** In Coronado, Calif., the 4,000 troops and support personnel of the Navy's Sea Air Land commandos (SEALs), special boat squadrons and SEAL delivery teams train in furtive amphibious assault techniques.

**Air Force:** Based at Hurlburt Field, Fla., the 9,000-member special-ops air units focus on secret infiltration and air-cover missions.

**Joint Services:** Schooled in counterterrorism, the group comprises the Navy's SEAL Team 6 and Delta Force, an Army unit so secret not even its logo (drawing, bottom) is publicized. These real-life ninjas number just 1,300 members, including support staff.



Schwarzkopf said nothing. Like many Regular Army men, the field commander of Operation Desert Storm was skeptical of special-operations forces. The movies might glamorize secret commandos like Delta Force and the Navy SEALs, but to an old foot soldier like Schwarzkopf they were nothing but trouble—weirdos and "snake-eaters" who had to be rescued by the regular grunts when their harebrained operations went awry. Still, Schwarzkopf listened. He had no alternative.

After a long silence, Schwarzkopf fixed the commando leader with his blue eyes. "Colonel, are you going to guarantee me 100 percent success on this mission?"

Gray breathed deeply. He could feel a trickle of sweat down his back. "Yes, sir," he answered.

"Well," said General Schwarzkopf, "then you can start the war."

The mission was a 100 percent success. Gray's commandos pierced the radar screen; undetected, hundreds of allied planes poured through, dropping their bombs on Baghdad before the Iraqis could even fire back. Allied losses on the first night: zero.

Thousands of proud veterans of Operation Desert Storm will march in victory parades like the one last Saturday in Washington and this week in New York. But there will be no celebrations for the special-operations forces. The secret warriors prefer it that way. They don't want to be known as Rambos. They like to think of themselves as "quiet professionals." Though numbering only 9,400 out of the allies' half-million-odd men and women in the gulf, "these were the people who put the brains behind the brawn in Desert Storm," says Andy Messing, a former Green Beret major who directs the National Defense Council Foundation. The part played by special-operations forces in the gulf war is virtually unknown to the public. Fragmentary reports, of Green Berets stalking in the desert, of an Air Force commando AC-130 gunship downed during the battle for Khafji, appeared in the press during the war. But to determine the true role of special forces in the gulf, NEWSWEEK interviewed scores of commandos, of all ranks, who had quietly returned to their bases around the United States. What became clear is that special forces played a critical role in securing a victory that was swift, sure and relatively cost-free to the allies.

**The Iraqi girl slowly lifted the lid and gazed wide-eyed at the three Green Berets in their spider hole**

On the surface it seems like Operation Desert Storm benefited from a series of lucky breaks. Baghdad was caught napping by airstrikes. The ground forces sailed through Iraqi minefields virtually unscathed. Iraqi defenders were completely hoodwinked by a faked amphibious landing off Kuwait's gulf coast. The risky "Hail Mary" flanking maneuver into southern Iraq was not surprised by a counterattack. Israel stayed out of the war. In fact, however, each of these fortuitous developments owed more to covert special operations than to good luck. Among them:

- Saddam's air defenses were asleep that first night because of the tactical shot of Novocain delivered by Gray's air commandos.
- A psychological-operations team, using the largest nonnuclear bomb in the Pentagon's arsenal, produced an intelligence windfall that gave Schwarzkopf maps of the Kuwaiti minefields.
- A team of six Navy Sea Air Land (SEAL) commandos fooled the Iraqis into believing they were an amphibious invasion force of several thousand Marines. Several Iraqi divisions were diverted east to repel the phony invasion—allowing Schwarzkopf's army to maneuver around to the west.
- Army Special Forces teams slipped into Iraq before the ground war to act as human tripwires, warning Schwarzkopf's commanders every time Saddam's Republican Guard moved.
- A top-secret team from Delta Force, America's elite counterterrorist unit, played an instrumental role in tracking down and destroying Scud missiles aimed at Israel. On the last day of the war, Delta Force helped wipe out 26 Scuds that Saddam was preparing to launch at Israel in a last-ditch attempt to drag the Israelis into the war.

All of these missions were extremely dangerous. Indeed, several of them pro-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JEFFREY SMITH

talk. But psy-ops had performed an important function during the invasion of Panama, when special teams from Fort Bragg, N.C., had saved lives by talking Panamanian soldiers out of their strongholds. In the gulf the Fourth Psychological Operations Group out of Bragg dropped some 29 million leaflets on dug-in Iraqi forces and set up a special radio program to woo defectors. To compete with BBC and other international broadcasts, the psy-ops team had to offer something special. What the "Voice of the Gulf" began broadcasting, along with prayers from the Koran and testimonials from well-treated Iraqi prisoners, was precise information on the units to be bombed each day. Iraqi soldiers began tuning in to the "Voice of the Gulf." "It's a quick way to increase your market share," said psy-ops commander Col. Layton Dunbar, with a smile. Almost three quarters of the defectors coming over the border said the leaflets and broadcasts influenced their decision to go AWOL.

The men of the Eighth Squadron believed that the BLU-82 bomb could send an even more powerful message. In the early-morning hours of Feb. 7, Maj. Skip Davenport's MC-130E Combat Talon cargo plane lumbered off the runway. In its belly sat the massive bomb. Behind Major Davenport, a companion plane lifted off, carrying another BLU-82 (Davenport and his wingman became known as the Blues Brothers).

The day before, their target area had been rained with leaflets warning the soldiers below: "Tomorrow if you don't surrender we're going to drop on you the largest conventional weapon in the world." The Iraqis who dared to sleep that night found out the allies weren't kidding. The explosion of a Daisy Cutter looks like an atomic bomb detonating. In the southwest corner of Kuwait that night, an enormous mushroom cloud flared into the dark. Sound travels for miles in the barren desert, and soon Iraqi radio nets along the border crackled with traffic. Col. Jesse Johnson, Schwarzkopf's special-operations commander, cabled a message back to the U.S. Special Operations Command headquarters in Florida: "We're not too sure how you say 'Jesus Christ' in Iraqi." A British SAS commando team on a secret reconnaissance mission near the explosion frantically radioed back to its headquarters: "Sir, the blokes have just nuked Kuwait!"

The next day a Combat Talon swept over the bomb site for another leaflet drop with a follow-up message: "You have just been hit with the largest conventional bomb in the world. More are on the way." The victims below didn't need much more convincing. The day after the BLU-82 attack, an Iraqi battalion commander and his staff raced across the border to surrender. Among the defectors was the commander's intelligence officer, clutching maps of the minefields along the Kuwait border. The intelligence bonanza enabled Central Command officers to pick out the gaps and weak spots in the mine defenses. When the ground war began Marine and allied forces breached them within hours.

## Faking Out the Iraqis

Over the horizon from the Kuwaiti coast floated an armada of ships, containing some 17,000 Marines poised to hit the beaches. But the only amphibious invasion of Kuwait was conducted by a half-dozen Navy SEALs. They were enough.

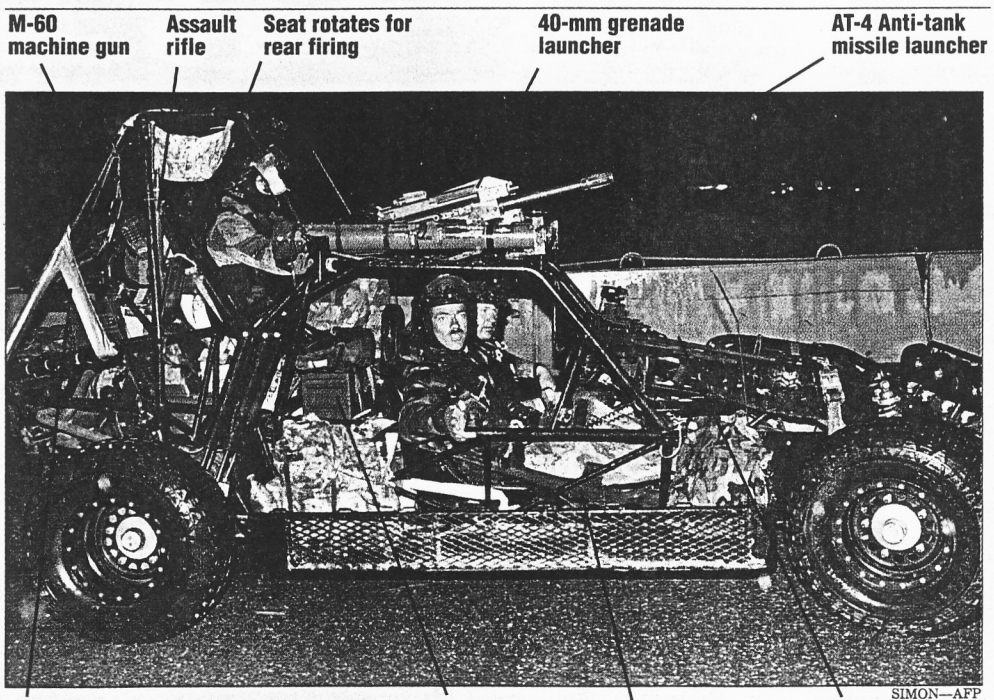
As darkness fell on Saturday, Feb. 23, the day before the allies were to launch the ground war, Lt. Tom Dietz and five SEAL swimmer scouts raced out of their Saudi coastal base at Ras al-Mishab in a pair of Fountain-33 speedboats. Powered by 1,000-horsepower MerCruiser engines, the Fountains zoomed 40 miles an hour up the Kuwaiti coastline, bouncing as high as five feet off the waves. In a routine chop the pounding can be severe enough to break a man's knee. The water in the gulf that night was a bone-chilling 50 degrees Fahrenheit. More worrisome, it was infested with mines. The Navy speedboat operators sailed blind, lights out, knowing that if their thin-shelled craft struck a mine they would be instantly vaporized.

At about 10 p.m. Dietz's speedboat stopped 15 miles off the Kuwaiti coast. His team untied the Zodiac rubber raiding craft lashed to the bow. For a month the SEALs had been secretly swimming up to the Kuwaiti beaches to scout the shoreline for possible amphibious landings—and found them all heavily defended and mined. Dietz's two motorized Zodiacs puttered slowly to the shore, stopping every few miles so the commandos could look and listen.

Five hundred yards from the beach, the Zodiac drivers killed the engines. The SEALs slipped quietly over the side. Each carried buoys to be strung out during the swim to the beach, plus a haversack packed with 20 pounds of C-4 explosives. The Iraqis would think the four-foot-wide buoys were being used as markers for incoming amphibious ships. The haversacks

## Off-Road Warriors: Fast Attack Vehicles

The souped-up $50,000 dune buggies used by Navy SEALs on reconnaissance missions in the Kuwaiti desert were able to scale eight-foot sand berms and reach speeds of 60 mph.




SIMON—AFP

The only amphibious invasion of Kuwait was conducted by a half dozen SEALs. They were enough.



had dual timers (one served as a backup) that would detonate the C-4 two hours after being set. The charges had to go off at exactly 1 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 24, three hours before the allies began breaching minefields along the Kuwait border. The timing was critical. The Iraqis had to be given the opportunity to react to the diversion—to move troops east to respond, rather than reinforcing the west where the real attack would come.

Swimming abreast, the team watched the shore. Each member had a German Heckler and Koch submachine gun slung across his back and a pistol strapped to his side, but they would be no match for one Iraqi machine-gunner on the beach. Every hundred yards the team stopped. Dietz pulled out a pocket night-vision scope, wrapped in a Glad bag, to scan the beach for any activity. The smoke from oil fires made the night even more black. The beach sand was a bright white. No sign of life.

At the shoreline, the team spread out and unloaded its haversacks in about a foot of water. Using hand signals, Dietz ordered the timers set. The SEALs slithered back into the ocean. As they approached the Zodiacs, the speedboats closed in and began peppering the shore with .50-caliber machine-gun fire for a half hour to wake up the coastal bunkers. Every five minutes, two-pound charges were dropped off the sides of the boats and detonated. Then at 1 a.m. on the dot, the haversacks blew, lighting up a swath of the beach in balls of flames. Dietz radioed back the code word ("Pamela") for "mission accomplished."

Eight hours later, the SEALs of Task Force Mike sat exhausted in a secure debriefing room at Ras al-Mishab. A message came in to Dietz from Commodore Ray Smith, the SEAL commander in the Persian Gulf. It began with "Bravo Zulu," Navy lingo for congratulations. "Your mission was a success. Elements of two separate Iraqi divisions moved to the beach immediately after your operation. Pass it on to your men. Job well done."

## Behind Enemy Lines

The Green Berets, the Army's elite commando units, had been chafing for action since September. Back in the early days of the crisis the U.S. Special Operations Command had proposed secret missions inside Iraq to stir up rebellion against Saddam. Schwarzkopf thought organizing Iraqi dissidents would be a waste of time. If American soldiers were discovered it might accidentally start the war, which was the last thing the White House wanted.

The only American assets allowed to cross the borders before the war were CIA agents who were mostly Middle East nationals on Langley's payroll. Several dozen CIA operatives infiltrated into southern and northern Iraq to help allied pilots evade capture if they were shot down. In Kuwait the agency slipped in Arab operatives trained in commando tactics to organize resistance cells. The Kuwaiti resistance set up escape and evasion routes for downed pilots and a cellular-phone linkup with Johnson's special-ops command in Riyadh to pass along intelligence on bomb targets.

Once the war started, the Green Berets got the green light to begin "special recon" missions. The CIA had warned Schwarzkopf's generals that the tanks and trucks they wanted to send across southern Iraq for the Hail Mary play would become bogged down in the sandy terrain. Pentagon maps for the region were incomplete. Six-man Special Forces "A" teams secretly helicoptered into Iraq, scooping up soil samples to take back to Riyadh. The teams carried camcorders and digitized still cameras that transmitted photos back to headquarters. The soil samples showed the ground would be firm enough, and the pictures gave commanders a close-up view of their battlefield. But the Green Berets' most dangerous missions were yet to come.

As dawn broke on the Saturday before the ground war began, M/Sgt. Jeffrey Sims, Sgt. 1/c Ronald Torbett and S/Sgt. Roy Tabron inched up a periscope out of their spider hole deep in enemy territory. Sims, the team leader, flipped on his SATCOM radio and began sending coded messages to his headquarters in Saudi Arabia. As the U.S. Army XVIII and VII Corps swept through southern Iraq to encircle the Republican Guard, Schwarzkopf had to be sure that his flanking maneuver was not cut off by Iraqi reserves counterattacking from the north. Sims, Torbett and Tabron were part of more than a dozen Army Special Forces teams secretly helicoptered into southern Iraq before the ground war began. Their job was to instantly send a warning if the Iraqis tried to lay a trap.

The three sergeants were on one of the deepest backdoor recons the Green Berets would make: north of the Euphrates River, less than a hundred miles from Baghdad, to watch one of the main roads from Iraq to Kuwait. They had spent the night digging the hole for their "hide site," reinforcing it with prefabricated material. (Green Berets

had perfected hide-site techniques by examining the tunnels dug by the Viet Cong during the Vietnam War.) For weeks before the recon, Special Forces teams practiced digging the holes and living in them for days. Elaborate techniques were used to camouflage the tops and disguise any odors that might attract animals.

Still, Sims's team could not escape an inquisitive child. As they peered out of their hole Saturday, an Iraqi girl no more than 7 years old walked by. The commandos held their breath. She stopped, stared for a moment at the small slit in the ground. Slowly she lifted the lid and gazed wide-eyed at the three Green Berets in their desert fatigues and camouflage face paint. Tabron's heart jumped. The three commandos quickly aimed their 9-mm pistols, equipped with silencers, right at the girl's head. The girl could have easily been shot and dragged into the hole. The mission could continue. "But we couldn't live with ourselves," said Tabron. She was spared.

The child screamed and ran for her father. He returned with her to the hide site. The Green Berets jumped out and tried to calm the father. No luck. He ran off with his daughter to alert Iraqi soldiers. Soon Sims, Torbett and Tabron were surrounded by about a hundred Iraqi infantrymen. Sims called in Air Force F-16 Falcons on a strafing run. As Torbett and Tabron picked

# The Mind of a Commando

At McP's, the Navy SEALs' favorite hangout in the southern California town of Coronado, the regulars can always tell an impostor. He's the one bragging about his exploits. Real SEALs never discuss their missions in a bar. They call the impostors—and there are many of them, cruising for groupies—the wannabes. Only wanna-bes pose as Rambos. The SEALs see themselves on a higher plane. A lieutenant commander who's spent 20 years as a SEAL explains: "We are developing in these guys warrior intellectuals. They fight well. And they read everything from Rommel to Clausewitz."

Reading books is not exactly the film image of secret warriors made famous by Chuck Norris and Sylvester Stallone. But the Hollywood version is deceiving, a holdover from the Vietnam War days when the force did have its "snake-eaters" and lone wolves. Navy SEAL training is extraordinarily arduous, but it requires as much mental as physical toughness. Musclebound "Conans" are often the first to drop out of training. (Half of all SEAL recruits fail to complete the program.) During "Hell Week," the sixth week of the SEALs' grueling training, the students can sleep for only four hours—in six days.

Commandos in Delta Force, the Pentagon's secret counterterrorist unit, tend to be family men in their 30s. One drunk-driving charge and an Air Force special-operations pilot is tossed out of his unit. Attracting attention to yourself is considered bad form among special operators, many of whom are teetotalers or deeply religious. Says Neil Livingstone, a Washington consultant on counterterrorism: "There's no place in their ranks for showboats."

Special-operations forces are clannish and insular. On a remote range at Fort Bragg, N.C., stands a compound ringed by a barbed-wire-topped fence with only a blue sign in front that reads SECURITY OPERATIONS TRAINING FACILITY. It's the self-contained home of Delta Force. One building houses the "climbing wall" with simulated jagged rocks for rappelling exercises. On another wall hang 60 different locks, which commandos practice picking. In a three-story "shooting house," operators learn how to clear a room, firing live ammunition at moving robots or three-dimensional holograms. "You have to have an ego," says Don Feeny, a former Delta member. "You have to be able to go into a room where five guys are out to get you and be completely confident you can handle them all."

**In 'Pineland':** Special operators also have to think on their feet. The Green Berets, who specialize in unconventional warfare and training foreign insurgents, spend three weeks screening applicants who can't. During one phase of Green Beret training soldiers parachute into North Carolina's Uwharrie National Forest. Local townsfolk play the part of guerrillas in the fictional country of "Pineland." One exercise has a blindfolded student ushered into a "safe house"—Ronnie Parsons's garage near the tiny town of Candor. The blindfold is removed and the student sees Parsons sitting behind a table with an AK-47 lying across it. He orders the student to sit down and dumps a live turkey in his lap, demanding that he cure it of pneumonia. To win the guerrilla's confidence the student has to bluff that he can care for the bird. "If they're not prepared to go into different cultures and adapt, we're in trouble," a Special Forces instructor explains.

Special-operations work can take a personal toll. Some commandos become so focused on their jobs they wall out family and friends. Divorce rates among the all-male combat commando units tend to be high. Husbands can be gone on secret training missions as much as six months out of the year. Marriages that survive tend to be strong. "If you're not an independent person, you're not going to make it in this job," says Stephanie Comer, wife of an Air Force commando. Most nerve-racking for the families is not knowing where the father is, when he'll be back, whether he's in danger. Some couples have secret codes they exchange if the husband has time to telephone from a distant country. For other wives, it takes several sleepless nights before they adjust to their husbands being away. In the back of their minds is the fear that their husbands may never come back—and they'll never really know why.

DOUGLAS WALLER



BILL GENTILE FOR NEWSWEEK

**'No place for showboats':** *Leonik flew a Pave Low in the gulf*



One Green Beret team, caught deep in Iraq, fought off 150 enemy soldiers for more than six hours

off Iraqi soldiers who came within 50 yards of their ditch, the three Green Berets prayed for a chopper to come quickly.

Chief Warrant Officer James (Monk) Crisafulli was one of the top MH-60 Black Hawk pilots in the 160th Aviation Regiment, the Special Operations Command's elite helicopter unit. But this was one mission chopper pilots dread: flying into enemy territory in daylight and landing in the middle of a fire fight. Next to Crisafulli was Chief Warrant Officer Randy (Beast Man) Stephens. Two crewmen manned machine guns; a couple of Green Berets hopped aboard to help if there were casualties. Crisafulli and Stephens roared off at 160 miles an hour, flying so low to the ground they had to jerk the Black Hawk up at one point to avoid hitting a camel.

Sims's team was about to be overrun on one flank. As the Black Hawk neared, the Green Beret leader fired a pen flare to mark their position. Crisafulli hopped a telephone line, swung the chopper around, then dropped it like a stone between Sims's ditch and the advancing Iraqi flank just yards away. The Black Hawk crewmen and Green Berets blazed away with machine guns. "We're taking hits!" the crew chief yelled on his intercom. Three rounds struck the rotor blade and a self-sealing tank, another whizzed past the pilots' heads. Sims, Torbett and Tabron scrambled aboard and the helicopter lifted off. Nine enemy lay dead. The rescuers and Green Berets escaped without a scratch.

There were other harrowing missions by the Green Berets. Direct-action teams attacked command bunkers and sabotaged communications lines. One eight-man recon team, caught deep in Iraq, fought off 150 enemy soldiers for more than six hours. By the time helicopters rescued them, the Green Berets and their air cover had killed 130. But most teams slipped in and out undetected, gathering intelligence on the Republican Guard. Schwarzkopf's western flankers were never caught off guard.

## Hunting for Scuds

Saddam's Scud attacks on Israel hadn't claimed many lives, but they threatened to provoke the Israelis into responding. Washington was desperate to keep Israel out of the war. It became increasingly imperative to hunt down Saddam's Scud launchers and destroy them.

Hundreds of allied warplanes were diverted to Scud hunting. An elaborate command-and-control system went into place to spot the Scud launches and dispatch F-15E Eagles to destroy the launchers. But the allies were destroying the launchers only after they fired. To win the Scud war, the missiles had to be hit before they were launched. Israel secretly test-fired a nuclear-capable missile into the Mediterranean Sea to signal Washington that it was prepared to use atomic weapons to stop the attacks. It was time to mobilize Delta Force, the commando unit so secret that the Pentagon still refuses to admit its existence.

In western Saudi Arabia, Maj. Gen. Wayne Downing, commander of the Pentagon's counterterrorist units, formed a secret "fusion cell" made up of A-10 Thunderbolts, Delta Force and British SAS commandos. Air Force Pave Lows dropped commandos into western Iraq; others roamed the countryside in desert-mobility vehicles. Iraqi mobile Scud batteries received their targeting orders from fixed command-and-control centers. A network of compounds and storage facilities supplied the batteries. Delta and SAS saboteurs began destroying these facilities in lightning night raids. Hiding in the dunes, commandos "painted" mobile Scuds with laser target designators and called in airstrikes. In two weeks the fusion cell destroyed more than a dozen Scud sites.

On Feb. 27, the final day of the war, allied reconnaissance spotted a terrifying last-gasp gambit by Saddam Hussein. Iraqi crews moved 26 Scud missiles near the western border for a barrage attack on Israel. The fusion cell scrambled. All 26 were destroyed. Schwarzkopf sent a private message to the secret cell: "You guys kept Israel out of the war."

But at a price. As the troops returned home to flag-waving parades, a quiet service was held at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Chapel in the Special Forces compound at Fort Bragg. No announcements were made of the ceremony. Invitations went out by word of mouth. Inside sat the Delta Force and the families of Patrick Hurley, Otto Clark and Eloy Rodriguez Jr. The three Delta commandos died when the Black Hawk flying them back from a Scud-hunting mission crashed into a sand dune. On the altar sat three sets of jump boots, three green berets. The squadron commander called the roll. "Here," said each Delta member. But there was silence after three names. Hurley, Clark and Rodriguez. A bugler sounded taps. In death, they would be remembered as they fought, in secret. ■

# The Force of the Future?

## Reversal of fortune: the special-ops mission is growing

On a remote site at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, Delta Force practiced the rescue mission again and again. The team erected a full-scale model of the three-story Modelo prison where Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega held Kurt Muse, an American arrested for running a clandestine radio station. At H-hour on the night of the U.S. invasion of Panama, Delta's mission was to storm the prison and rescue Muse. The mock-up was intricately designed, down to the cupola on the roof that the commandos would breach. Other members played the part of Panamanian Defense Force soldiers in the heavily guarded cellblock. Casualties seemed inevitable. Secret Delta Force doctors, stationed at military hospitals around the country, were told to be ready to fly to Panama on the eve of the invasion. The mission had to succeed, not only for Muse's sake but also for the future of the newly formed U.S. Special Operations Command.

The mission was successful. Muse was rescued unharmed; though a wild fire fight brought down Delta's helicopter, his rescuers got away with him. The raid was just one of scores of special-forces missions in Panama. Some 3,500 commandos participated in the Just Cause invasion, raiding airfields, destroying Noriega's personal jet and boat and hunting for the dictator. The special ops weren't flawless. A Navy SEAL team was badly mauled trying to destroy Noriega's plane, and Noriega eluded U.S. forces for four days. Still, the performance of special-operations forces in Just Cause, followed a year later by dazzling success in Desert Storm, made believers out of many skeptics in the Pentagon.

The regular military has always looked askance at special operations, questioning the need for unconventional tactics and secret—and often unaccountable—operatives. After the Vietnam War the ranks of special forces were nearly decimated. Units that lived survived on scraps left over from conventional-force budgets. Then came the failed 1980 Desert One hostage rescue in Iran and a series of scandals during the Reagan years, brought on by some special-ops officers who ran amuck with off-the-books operations. It was clear that special operations had to be at once improved and better controlled. In 1987, Congress forced the Pentagon to create the Special Operations Command.

Today the command has a force of 45,000. Headquartered in Tampa, Fla., it trains and supervises Navy SEALs, Air Force commandos, Army Green Berets, civil-affairs and psychological-operations units, an elite Army helicopter regiment, plus America's secret counterterrorist teams (Delta Force and SEAL Team-6). While the rest of military spending shrinks, the command's $2.3 billion budget is gradually expanding. "People have the impression that all we do is run around and blow up things with knives in our teeth," says Gen. Carl Stiner, who heads the command. "It isn't that way. These guys can do anything." Besides blowing up bunkers, special forces in the gulf served as liaisons to foreign units in the coalition, aided Kurdish refugees and treated a wounded elephant at the Kuwait City zoo.

**Bomb tip:** The command has not escaped unscathed in the bureaucratic wars. Special-ops officers were frustrated that their Intelligence Support Activity, a supersecret Army spy unit, was not allowed to send agents into Panama to track Noriega before the invasion. If they had, these sources insist, Noriega might have been captured the first night of Just Cause. The command has tried to ease what it claims are cumbersome procedures imposed by the CIA and other intelligence organizations, who review all covert spying operations. Before the invasion the command wanted to sneak agents into a Panama City warehouse to check out a tip that the drug cartel was storing five car bombs to assassinate Just Cause commander Gen. Maxwell Thurman. But the command could never get interagency approval from Washington. CIA supporters say the agency had plenty of assets in Panama to collect the information, but the Southern Command kept the CIA station at arm's length because it considered the CIA too close to Noriega.



STEPHEN FERRY—GAMMA-LIAISON

**Real fighting and bureaucratic wars:** *The invasion of Panama*

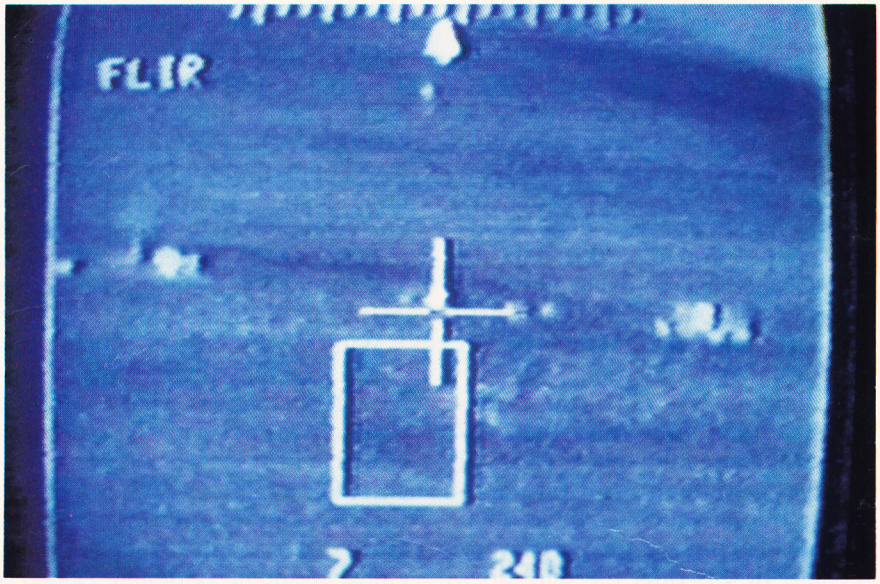
Despite the squabbling, the special-operations mission is only likely to get larger. Stiner has secret contingency plans to respond to terrorist threats anywhere in the world within hours. Army Green Berets are becoming more involved in the drug war. With the cold war over, most of tomorrow's battles will likely be small ones in the Third World, ideal for special operators trained to fight unconventionally. Desert Storm was an anomaly. The last time America fought such a conventional battle was during the Korean War. "Low-intensity conflicts are the wave of the future," says Jim Locher, assistant secretary of defense for special operations. If so, the Special Operations Command may be the force of the future.

DOUGLAS WALLER

**The helicopters would open the war. They had to take out Iraq's early warning net, and they had to get it all.**

# Apache Attack

By Richard Mackenzie



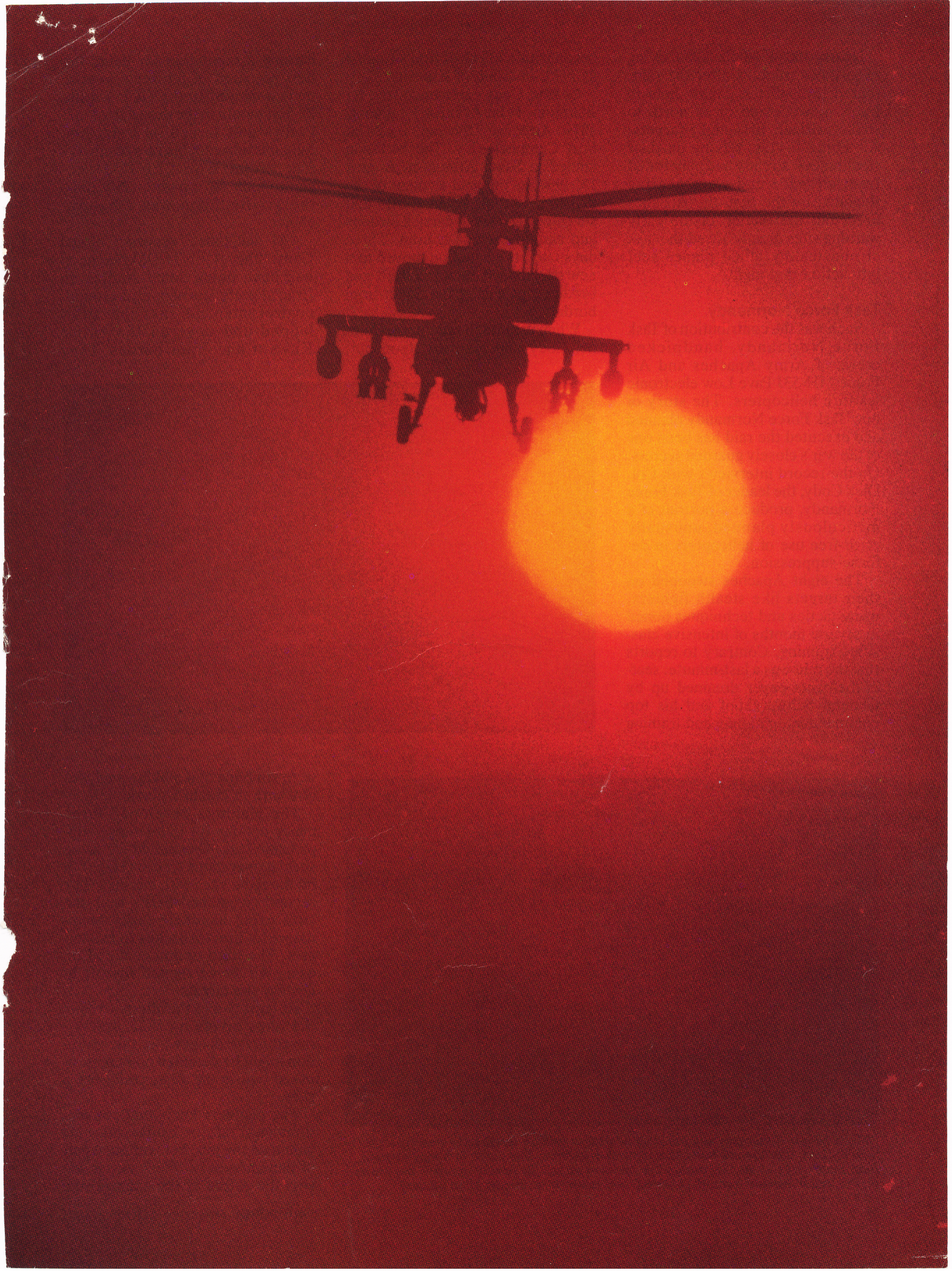

*According to Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, the January 17 attack by Army AH-64 Apaches "plucked out the eyes" of Iraq's air defenses. Above, one of the Apaches' FLIR screens one second before missile impact. For the mission that opened the war, the AH-64s were modified with 230-gallon external fuel tanks to ensure a return to base as smooth as the one shown at right, after a training mission in the US.*

AT TEN seconds before 2:38 a.m., in a moonless sky over Iraq, eight US AH-64 Apache helicopters zeroed in on their targets. On their forward-looking infrared screens appeared the images of two Iraqi radar sites just north of Saudi Arabia, placed there to detect intruding fighters. They were linked to four Iraqi fighter bases and to the Intelligence Operations Center in Baghdad.

The unseen Apaches hovered low, four miles south of the radars. At the controls of Number 976, 1st Lt. Tom Drew broke radio silence. "Party in ten," he said. On cue, ten seconds later, the helicopters unleashed a salvo of laser-guided Hellfire missiles. "This one's for you, Saddam," muttered CWO3 Dave Jones, the pilot of another Apache.

The shots, fired in the predawn hours of January 17, 1991, marked the start of Operation Desert Storm and were among the most critical of the war, blinding Iraq's early warning net at a key moment. US Central Command relied entirely on the Apaches and USAF special operations helicopters to do the job. "If something had happened and we didn't do 100 percent [destruction]," said one gunner, CWO4 Lou Hall, "a lot of people were going to get hurt."

The Apaches did achieve 100 percent destruction, or close to it. Eyewitnesses report that, when the Hellfires hit the targets, the radar bases evaporated in clouds of smoke and flame. In the four and a half minutes it took to complete the task, the Apaches had, in the words of Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, "plucked out the eyes" of Iraq's Soviet-supplied air defenses.



Nearly 100 allied planes, arriving twenty-two minutes after the raid, roared through the gaping hole in Iraq's network and raced north to strike critical, first-night targets. Air Force F-117s, relying on their stealthiness, already had penetrated Iraqi airspace and were nearing Baghdad by the time the Apaches fired, but destruction of the early warning sites greatly eased the task of nonstealthy allied planes sent into action that night.

### Task Force Normandy

Such was the contribution of Task Force Normandy, handpicked crews of Army Apaches and Air Force MH-53J Pave Low electronic warfare helicopters. The story of how Task Force Normandy planned and executed the raid has been one of the war's closely guarded secrets. On-the-record interviews with Col. Dick Cody, the leader of Task Force Normandy, produce a portrait of a meticulously planned, unusually error-free use of helicopters in defense suppression.

The eight Apaches swooped on their targets like stealth fighters, using tactics and techniques honed in several months of intensive classified training. Contrary to reports that the raid was a last-minute, seat-of-the-pants caper dreamed up by General Schwarzkopf and his top commanders, planning and training began within weeks of Iraq's August 2, 1990, invasion of Kuwait.

Colonel Cody commanded the 1st Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, based at Fort Campbell, Ky. The battalion landed in Saudi Arabia on August 17, 1990, as the lead element of the division. It took seven C-5Bs and seventeen C-141s to carry its troops and equipment to Dhahran. Three days later, the battalion moved to a new site, loaded out its aircraft, and began its patrols of the Saudi-Iraqi border.

When it came to readiness, Colonel Cody and his men stood out, earning a reputation for being the best prepared of fourteen Apache units deployed to the Gulf. During its first month in the desert, Colonel Cody's unit turned in a startling fully mission capable rate of ninety-four percent. When CENTCOM began to look for a high-quality unit, the 1st Battalion was a natural choice.

"At that time," reports Colonel Cody, "they [CENTCOM planners] had been doing some studies on [Iraq's] early warning and ground-control intercept sites that overlapped and covered the entire Kuwaiti and Iraqi border. They were studying and making analyses of where to create a corridor."





***With its 30-mm chain gun and full load of sixteen Hellfire missiles or seventy-six 2.75-inch rockets, the Apache fairly bristles with ordnance. This came in handy against Iraqi tanks (top) as well as during the opening attack. To ensure secrecy, the crews on the initial mission trained, refueled, and rearmed at remote sites (above).***

The planners developed three major options for the defense suppression task. One called for using special operations forces (SOFs) to hit the radar sites with missiles. The second envisioned SOFs near the sites using handheld laser designators to direct Apaches to the targets. The third option centered on using Air Force fighter aircraft to destroy the targets.

At least two of the alternatives—the ones involving SOF units—raised grave danger that the operation might be detected and compromised before the allies could fire a shot.

The planners knew that conventional aircraft or cruise missiles would do the job. Yet without a pair of human eyes on the scene to assess the extent of the damage, the

allies would have no way of knowing whether the targets were truly dead.

Helicopter pilots, however, would be able to see for themselves how much damage had been done to these facilities. They could engage the targets repeatedly until they were sure of complete success. "This place was out in the middle of the desert, and we were working on intelligence that was four days old," says Colonel Cody. "They could have sneaked another van in there or moved things around."

It was a persuasive argument. By September 25, 1990, with CENTCOM planners having adopted, narrowed, and refined the plan, Colonel Cody was summoned to an office at King Fahd International Airport, headquarters for Commander of US Special Operations Command Central Col. Jessie Johnson.

Colonel Johnson outlined a joint force of Army and Air Force helicopters—Apaches and Pave Lows—that would sneak into Iraq to knock out radar and ground-control interception sites. "If we can get it conceptually approved," Colonel Johnson asked, "do you think you can do that?"

"Yeah," said the Apache pilot.

### One Hundred Percent

Colonel Johnson came to the point. "If we get the go-ahead even to train for this," said he, "it will be based on you saying you can take it out 100 percent."

It would not be the last time Colonel Cody would be asked to make that guarantee. "That's not a problem," he said.

Colonel Cody was ordered to start training for the operation. He would work with Col. Rich Comer, commander of USAF's 20th Special Operations Squadron, part of the 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field, Fla.

Colonel Cody recalls that the age of the men chosen for the mission averaged twenty-six years. He had twenty-four crews in the battalion. "I picked eight to go," he says, "but any one of the twenty-four could have done the mission."

In order to preserve the covert nature of the Normandy training and not raise suspicions, Colonel Cody kept command of the rest of his battalion. "I never relinquished my division mission with the 101st or the covering forces."

Not even the chosen crew members knew why, or for what mission, they were training. They knew they were practicing for a helicopter-borne, special operations raid, but they did not know that it would start the war. They did not know it would be in Iraq. They did not know the precise targets or the timing.

Colonel Cody goes on, "I selected crews. I did not select individuals. I took guys who had been flying together as combat crews the whole time. I did not select my most experienced individuals and pool them all together. I actually had some twenty-two-year-olds and twenty-three-year-olds in the front seats out there."

Joining forces with the Pave Lows was not a problem, says Colonel Cody. Flying night after night, the units practiced infiltrating denied airspace and attacking simulated radar sites simultaneously. They did six live-fire exercises, evaluating the Apaches' weapon systems, which include not only the Hellfires but also 2.75-inch rockets and a 30-mm chain gun.

Timing was everything. "It would do no good to hit one radar site and, two minutes later, to hit another one," says Colonel Cody. "We had to do it in such a way that we took down critical elements of those radar sites simultaneously so that Baghdad was not alerted to get [its] MiG-29s and ground-control intercept systems up."

The crews trained 700 miles away from the attack area. "All our training was done in a sandbox, so to speak, where we were located," says Colonel Cody. "We never practiced the route because of the sensitivity of the mission.

"All their systems were up during this time. All their intelligence-gathering networks were up—and everything else. So this was all done under the umbrella of joint training, just going out and practicing things."



—Staff photo by Guy Aceto

***Working in concert with the Apaches, Air Force MH-53J Pave Lows, with Global Positioning System receivers and terrain-following radar, got the attack package to within nine miles of the target undetected and with pinpoint accuracy.***

They learned some valuable lessons. "We practiced such things as what type of formation flights we wanted to fly," says the commander. "How low we wanted to fly. How fast we wanted to fly. All of this was done with no [voice communications]. What light signals [would emanate] from the Pave Lows. What techniques to indicate we're turning, we're not going to turn."

### No Detailed Maps

One big problem was the dearth of maps. The ones that were available did not have much fine detail and were useless for pinpointing location. Enter the Pave Lows, equipped with the state-of-the-art Global Positioning System (GPS) for precise navigation. Flying as escorts to a predetermined point, the

Pave Lows could fix the position within eight grid points—about ten meters. The Apache systems could fix only within 100 meters.

"That was the main reason we had the Pave Lows with us, so they could use the GPS to mark our actual spot at the release point prior to reaching the target area," said Colonel Cody. "They [the SOF helicopters] would drop chem lights on the desert floor to mark the position. We then plugged that into our fire-control computers on each of the Apaches. We were updating over that point. That eliminated any built-up error in the Apaches' Doppler system and fire-control system.

"It gave our target acquisition designation system extreme accuracy so we could lock onto the targets at twelve to fifteen kilometers away. That was very important as we moved forward because we knew that, from about twenty and fifteen klicks, . . . they would pick us up." The attackers, he added, wanted to make sure they had their acquisition systems "already locked on to the targets as we got inside and they started picking us up."

In practice sessions, the Pave Lows would position the Apaches and break off to return to the prearranged site. Meanwhile, said Colonel Cody, "we would go on in and practice our attack tactics, how we would sequentially dismember and destroy these sites by sectoring our fire, how we would lay for each other if we had to, how we would fight if one guy got shot down, all the permutations and combinations of 'what if?'

"We practiced those battle drills in the engagement area and then we practiced coming out, linking up with the Pave Lows at the predetermined point and crossing a simulated border and then moving on to our other mission." These maneuvers were carried out not just at low level but at nap-of-the-Earth altitude.

From the first, the Pave Low's high technology helped dramatically. "We do it well in the Army," Colonel Cody says, "but the Pave Lows have a [precision with] which they are able to hit their checkpoints right on the money. Their terrain-following radar helped us quite a bit [in] anticipating when we had to come up and when we had to go down and still maintain our airspeed. The desert-flying experience they had with their systems, telling us how they were doing it and then our trying to duplicate that with our system, was the biggest thing in training."



***Apache crews had high praise for both their night vision goggles and their FLIR, which, coupled with information provided by the Pave Lows, allowed the Apaches to operate with telling effect in the inky blackness of the desert night.***

In late October, Colonel Johnson took a training videotape to Riyadh to show General Schwarzkopf how the Apaches performed in live-fire exercises. The CINC was impressed.

### The Final Go-Ahead

By the week before Christmas, war was a distinct possibility. Gen. Colin Powell, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Dick Cheney, the Secretary of Defense, flew to Riyadh to review the war plans personally. They met in the underground war room from which General Schwarzkopf would run Desert Storm. When General Schwarzkopf came to the Apache–Pave Low mission, he called on Colonel Johnson and Col. George Gray, commander of the 1st SOW. Aides were ordered to leave the room.

Neither colonel had doubts, though both knew they were "on the blame line" if the plan miscarried. Colonel Johnson cited the Apache's ability to fly low at night, its low infrared signature, and its reduced radar signature. He also mentioned the accuracy of its standoff weapons.

This time, General Schwarzkopf himself popped the question. "Can you guarantee 100 percent success?"

"Yes sir," answered Colonels Johnson and Gray.

That was enough for Schwarzkopf. If Saddam Hussein didn't back down and leave Kuwait, the helicopters would start the war.

On January 14, 1991, Colonel Johnson ordered Task Force Normandy to deploy to Al Jouf, a desolate outpost close to the Iraqi border. "I think this thing's going down," he remarked to Colonel Cody. "We don't have an accurate H-Hour, but I need to have you in position no later than dark on the fourteenth."

On internal fuel, the Apache can fly fully combat-loaded (eight Hellfires, thirty-eight rockets, and 1,200 chain-gun rounds) for only a little more than two hours. To get around this limitation, the units adopted a suggestion first put forward by Lt. Tim De Vito, another Apache pilot. He recommended that the crews attach 1,700-pound, 230-gallon external fuel tanks to the Apaches' left inboard weapons storage area. The planners did not want to set up a refueling point like the Desert One base used in the abortive 1980 hostage rescue in Iran. To make room for fuel, each aircraft reduced its number of rockets to nineteen.

"It initially appeared that I would

have to use a Desert One type of refueling point," says Colonel Cody. "But because of the complexity of the mission, because of the problems that could have been incurred by putting refueling systems that close to the border or actually inside the border, tipping the hand of what we were doing, we came up with the wing tank concept. It had never been done before. It raised the gross weight of the aircraft some 1,500 pounds past its combat weight. But it gave us a strike capability in excess of 400 miles."

Getting to Al Jouf itself was a problem. "We even had to do that stealthily, without creating a signature," says Colonel Cody. "We rolled into King Khalid Military City—no radio calls or anything—refueled there and took right off. There were already a large number of other helicopters operating out of KKMC so we would have looked just like any training exercise."



—Staff photo by Guy Aceto

*The Apache can take it as well as dish it out. In addition to its heavy load of armament, the helicopter has armored seats and Kevlar protection. During the initial mission, Apaches took some small arms fire but suffered no damage.*

### Arriving Undetected

Heading west, flying over flat terrain, they dropped low. "We got down where nobody would be able to pick us up along the border, even if they were looking for us," Colonel Cody recounts. "I think we got into Al Jouf pretty much undetected."

That night, he briefed his crews for the first time on the mission, giving them maps and photos. "Lo and behold," said one crew member, "it looks like everything we've been practicing."

As he sat in his helicopter talking with his gunner, Colonel Cody saw a dusty rental car speeding over the tarmac. The sedan pulled to a stop. Col. Ben Orrell, Colonel Gray's deputy, yelled from the driver's seat of the car, "I need to talk to you."

Colonel Cody climbed down and ran to the vehicle.

"We have just received H-Hour from the CINC," said Colonel Orrell. "It's 17, 0300. Your mission is a go."

At 1:00 a.m. on January 17 (local time), Colonel Cody's White Team of four Apaches and two Pave Lows, each weighing more than 18,900 pounds, pulled out of Al Jouf into a jet-black sky, all lights off, and headed north. Six minutes later, the Red Team followed.

As the White Team approached the border shortly before 2:00 a.m., Colonel Cody saw a flash below. Evidently hearing the sounds of the helicopters but unable to see them, an Iraqi on the front line had fired off a missile. It missed.

As they pushed north, flying at 120 mph about fifty feet above ground, the pilots created their own "stealthiness" with a combination of high speed, low altitude, total blackout on navigation lights, and total radio silence.

"Neither the Pave Lows nor we had ever flown in that area," recalled Colonel Cody. "We were seeing stuff for the first time. Most of our training was done on the east coast of Saudi Arabia where it's very, very flat and you have sand dunes. This was some 700 miles northwest, and it was entirely different. You had mesas and a little bit more terrain, which made it more dangerous.

"The Pave Lows had terrain-following radar, which helped them out quite a bit. We didn't have that, but




—Photo by Paul Kennedy

*The Apache's primary sensor, the target acquisition and designation sight and pilot's night vision sensor, allowed the crews on that first mission to complete all phases of their attack with stunning accuracy, destroying the radar site totally.*

our FLIR, coupled with our night-vision goggles, was just working great. So you had two different systems backing each other up. We were backing them up, and they were primary. The lead Apache in each one of those teams had a primary mission of navigation. We didn't leave anything to chance."

At the GPS points nine miles south of the radar bases, Pave Lows dropped chemical lights on the desert. As the Apaches used that position to update their navigational and targeting systems, the Pave Lows peeled off and went back to the rendezvous point.

The Apaches then flew for almost five more miles, fixing the targets in their sights.

## Looking Skyward

Without doubt, they got the drop on the Iraqis, who were looking skyward for fast movers, not for helicopters. It is believed they noticed something resembling "ground clutter" on their screens about two minutes before they were hit but were still trying to figure it out when the Hellfires arrived.

"OK, I've got the target area," CWO2 Thomas "Tip" O'Neal told his pilot, CWO3 Jones, when their Apache was still seven miles from the radar sites.

"Slowing back," said Jones, asking the range.

"I'm showing 12.2 [kilometers]."

"I'll keep moving."

"I've got one of the big 'uns all the way on the right."

Moving the FLIR lens, CWO3 Jones closed in on the first building they must hit. "There's the generator right there."

"OK."

"Aha!"

"Party in ten!" said Lieutenant Drew from the lead AH-64.

The FLIR screen flashed "LAUNCH." A clock counted down the missile's flight time. An Iraqi technician, seeing flashes in the distance as he emerged from a building, ran back inside. A dozen figures ran out other doors.

Then chaos engulfed the radar station. "Just incessant fire," recalls Colonel Cody. "Missile after missile, rocket after rocket, 30-mm after 30-mm coming from four aircraft that they [couldn't] even see. From the first shot, they were just running for cover. When we closed in to 4,000 meters, we engaged their ZPUs [Soviet antiaircraft machine guns] and antiaircraft artillery and put them out."

Colonel Cody's Apache was not far from that of his wingman, Lieutenant Drew, when they started to attack. The chaos intensified, says Colonel Cody, "when he [the wingman] puts out two or three rockets and everything lights up. You're sitting there looking at your FLIR and then your naked eye picks up these flashes. You had to be very, very careful not to mistake that [for] ground fire coming at you.

"We took those things down in three and a half to four and a half minutes, four aircraft flying in pretty close proximity to each other."

They got close to the targets, too. "Some of us got closer than 800 meters when we finished. We used 2,000 meters as a breakpoint, but, depending on what our targets looked like, as we were breaking and as we were being engaged, some of us moved in a little closer and then broke."

After shutting down the sites, they moved to other phases of the attack. "If all we did was hit [the generator], they could go to secondary power," explained Colonel Cody. "We had a follow-on mission statement of putting [the base] down for a couple of days so the Air Force wouldn't have to go in and retarget it. Then our follow-on was to totally destroy it. . . . We did all of the above."

As the Apaches broke and headed back, they had to stay low. Air Force fighters were coming in over their heads. They took some small-arms fire but no damage. "Then we had to link up all these attacking forces at night at a new rendezvous point," said Colonel Cody, "and then charge back across the Saudi border—coming the wrong way! We were a little nervous."

Apache team leaders passed the good news to the Pave Lows' crews, who passed it to Central Command headquarters. The code words—"California AAA" and "Nebraska AAA"—meant the primary targets had been destroyed, the entire bases had been destroyed, and there had been no US casualties.

In the CENTCOM war room, General Schwarzkopf heard the news, took a breath, clenched his jaw and muttered, "Thank God." ■



—© Erik Simonsen

***Coalition forces banked so heavily on the Apache to open the Gulf War that Army commanders were asked to guarantee 100 percent success. They guaranteed it, the crews delivered it, and the way was opened for the successes that followed.***

---

*Richard Mackenzie is a free-lance writer in Washington, D. C. His most recent article for AIR FORCE Magazine, "A Conversation With Chuck Horner," appeared in the June 1991 issue.*

# Bringing Them Back Alive

## High-tech retrieval teams take to the skies when pilots bail out over enemy territory

THE WAR
**DESERT STORM**

War is not just advance and retreat; it's also spin and counterspin. In the same week that Saddam Hussein paraded his first POWs before the global audience, the alliance forces announced their first successful rescues of the gulf war. In a daring attempt last Monday, an MH-53 Pave Low helicopter stole into Iraq to grab a Navy F-14 Tomcat pilot downed in the desert just eight hours before. Two A-10 Thunderbolt attack planes circled as the chopper hovered in. Suddenly an Iraqi Army truck blundered into the area. One of the Warthogs opened fire with its 30-millimeter gun—powerful enough to destroy tanks—and blew the truck off the road. "It was a rather indescribable feeling to know that he was now on the helicopter, and we were coming out of enemy territory—that we were about to pull this off," said Capt. Paul Johnson, who led the effort.

Heroic rescues have always made for pulse-racing stories, from the World War II pilots spirited out of hostile countries by resistance fighters to the American airmen yanked from Vietnam's jungles by Jolly Green Giant choppers. Intelligence sources tell NEWSWEEK that for Desert Storm, Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf gave special-operations commandos orders from the start to set up escape and evasion routes (E&E nets) in Kuwait and Iraq with CIA help. Those nets have already gotten their first test: in the opening days of Desert Storm, Kuwaiti resistance fighters got a downed Kuwaiti pilot out of the country.

**Baby bottles:** The Desert Storm pilots prepare for the worst. They get preflight briefings on secret collection points in Iraq and Kuwait. Airmen take along bare necessities in their parachute packs and seat cushions, including hand weapons, desert camouflage face paint, compass, maps and a first-aid kit. They also carry a small strobe light, pocket radio and flares to signal rescuers. And, of course, water. Desert Storm pilots stuff every empty pocket with four-ounce, silver-foil pouches of $H_2O$. Some even carry baby bottles, which fit conveniently in flight-suit pockets. Pilots are told not to conserve water, but to drink freely so they'll be clearheaded to look for more. They sleep during the day and walk at night. "We tell them, 'Ration your sweat, not your water'," says S/Sgt. Kevin M. Miller, who teaches a survival course at Fairchild Air Force Base.

Pilot-rescue tactics, first developed by the Germans in World War II, became highly developed in Vietnam. One in six downed pilots was saved—about 1,300 lives in all—at a cost of 71 rescuers. Warplanes and helicopters were routinely pulled off combat missions for searches—and the rescues in North Vietnam commonly involved more than 70 planes. Today's missions can be carried out by as little as two high-tech, heavily armed helicopters.

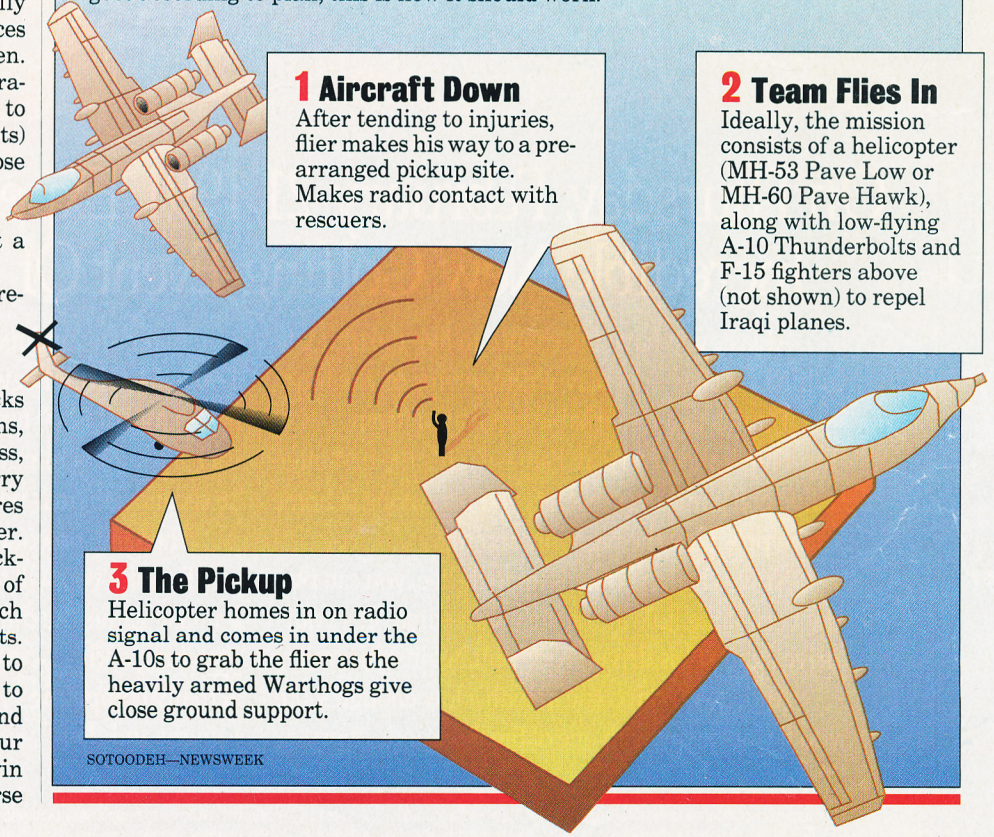
Despite the military's proud rescue history, Desert Storm soldiers face new challenges. Cover and concealment will be tougher than in Vietnam—it's not a jungle out there, after all. "You're pretty much out in the open," says an Air Force colonel. Also, American special-operations commandos have had a more difficult time setting up E&E nets in Iraq than in friendly Kuwait. But it's not just the terrain that's new. The brass had to reconstitute much of its rescue capability. After every modern air war, "the Air Force air-rescue forces are the first to go," says Earl H. Tilford Jr., visiting professor of military history at the Air Force's Air Command and Staff College. In the early days of Vietnam, air rescue was handled by the CIA's Air America until the Air Force could build the squadrons axed after the Korean War. Likewise, after Vietnam, the Air Force de-emphasized air rescue, reasoning that its pilots would likely be shot down in Eastern Europe where they wouldn't survive in the nuclear rubble. The service is still rebuilding.

The choppers will get a lot more work in the coming weeks. While the threat from Iraq's long-range, surface-to-air missiles around Baghdad and other strategic sites has been largely eliminated, the short-range SAMs and thousands of antiaircraft guns have not gone away. What goes up must come down, and some of the things that go up will certainly come back down behind enemy lines. The challenge is to bring them back alive.

JOHN SCHWARTZ *and* DOUGLAS WALLER
*in Washington*

## Rescues: High Risk, High Reward

Operation Desert Storm made rescue a top priority from the start. If everything goes according to plan, this is how it should work:

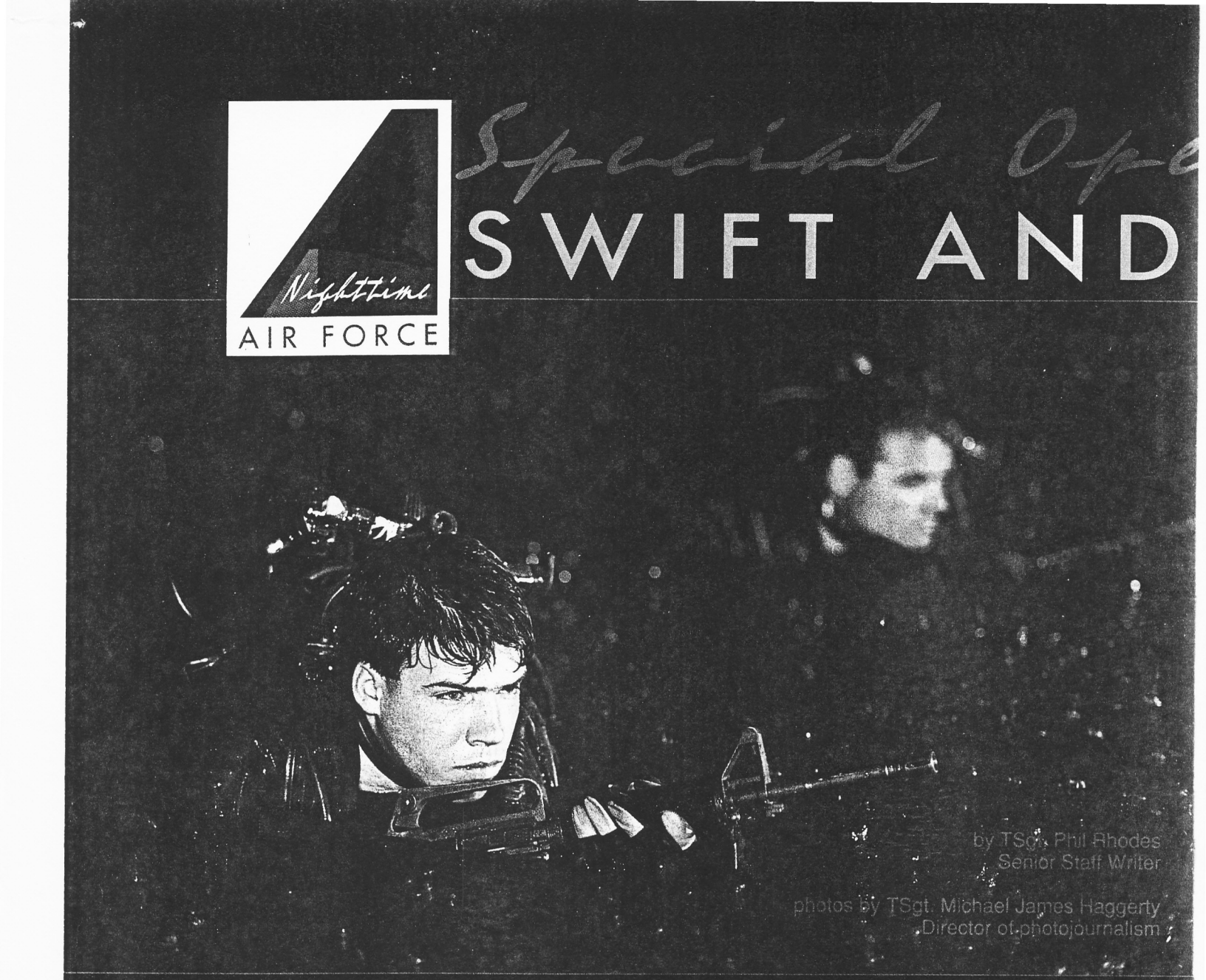



SOTOODEH—NEWSWEEK

Nighttime AIR FORCE

# Special Ope

# SWIFT AND



by TSgt. Phil Rhodes
Senior Staff Writer

photos by TSgt. Michael James Haggerty
Director of photojournalism

Ever drive down a pitch-black highway with your headlights off? How about standing in a room so dark you can't see your hands in front of you?

Essentially, that's the environment Air Force special operators work in every day — er, night. Darkness isn't a hindrance to these warriors. It's their ally.

*Airman* visited the 20th Special Operations Squadron and the 1723rd Special Tactics Squadron, two units of the Air Force Special Operations Command at Hurlburt Field, Fla. During an early morning rendezvous and a late-night flight, special operators showed how they get things done.

## Special Tactics

Combat controllers — air traffic controllers with state-of-the-art equipment, and pararescuemen, the best trauma specialists in the Air Force — form the bulk of the 1723rd STS. Years of training are required before these already tough airman are fully qualified for special tactics missions.

From high-altitude parachuting to scuba diving, there's not an environment they can't operate in. Diversity is their trademark. Low keyed but highly confident, special operators work in the background, out of the limelight. In the dead of night.

In the 1723rd, as with all special tactics units, you can't tell a combat controller from a pararescueman. The two are indistinguishable, until you reveal the contents of their 100-pound ruck sacks. PJs stuff their sacks with enough triage gear to treat most injuries. Controllers carry compact satellite communications gear to keep them in touch with anyone, anywhere in the world.

Experts at concealment, team members emerge from their hiding places and move with catlike stealth when night pulls its curtain on the sun.

These warriors rely on night-vision goggles, one-eyed devices strapped to their helmets that turn the world into varying shades of green and black. They cruise through the night in total blackout mode on specially equipped motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles and in trucks, yet they see land features with stunning clarity.

Night hides naught. With infrared scopes, they can detect anything that gives off heat — animals, vehicles and

# SILENT

the enemy — hundreds of feet away. Never lost, they can tell with pinpoint accuracy their exact location at any spot in the world, thanks to hand-held global positioning system units.

CMSgt. Robert Boyle, 1723rd STS resource manager, described the typical mission profile for these not-so-typical bluesuiters. "Any air traffic controller can land aircraft and any medic can treat wounded people. It takes a whole different kind of guy to jump out of an airplane at 800 feet while bullets are coming up at you," he said of the dangers special tactics people face.

"You hit the ground in the dead of night, run around with 500 Army Rangers. You have to create order out of chaos, then start landing airplanes. You've got to keep artillery over you, direct gunship and helicopter fire, and clear people and planes on and off the airstrip," said Boyle, one of the few Vietnam veterans in the organization.

"They've got to have the presence of mind to direct things when things go wrong. It's not the life for everyone. Only the special ones."

### Low and Fast

Zooming along at 120 miles per hour in an MH-53J isn't particularly frightening, even for the inexperienced. Skimming along above the treetops in the black of night, however, can make even the seasoned flier wince.

But for 20th SOS crews, flying low, fast and in the dark is a matter of faith — complete faith in their flying skills and the MH-53J, the world's most sophisticated helicopter.

The MH-53J Pave Low III, a derivative of the original Super Jolly of Vietnam War fame, features the most complex navigation system ever assembled in a helicopter.

The Pave Low III enhanced navigation system includes a mission computer, ring laser gyro, an inertial navigation system, a global positioning system, Doppler radar, projected map display, a terrain-following/terrain-avoidance system and forward-looking infrared, or FLIR, system.

A six-man crew keeps the aircraft aloft — two pilots, two flight engineers and two gunners. Redundancy is essential. While one pilot keeps his eyes on the instruments, the other scans the horizon. Ditto for the flight engineers. One mans the instruments. The other dons night-vision goggles and scans from the right door. When not firing 7.62mm miniguns or .50-caliber machine guns, the left- and rear-door gunners also act as scanners.

"Scanners will save the aircraft nine times out of 10," said TSgt. G.M. Van Hyning, flight engineer. "Flying at 50 feet is not overly dangerous, but it does add a little tension. When you're down that low going that fast, you don't have room for mistakes. Everyone has to be on his toes doing his job."

Learning to fly the Pave Low III is an eight-month lesson in confidence building, said Lt. Col. Gene Correll, 20th SOS operations officer. "You go out and learn. You take off those night-vision goggles and fly strictly on instruments to develop confidence. And you continually practice it."

The unit flies 80 percent of its training sorties at night, he said. "We fly in what we consider the most dangerous realm there is, about 50 feet above the ground. We do it routinely. In low weather, low visibility, on NVGs [night vision goggles] in zero illumination.

"We don't chase the moon cycle, like in the early days of night-vision goggles," Correll added. "Nowadays with the Pave Low III system and the radar, we go out any night. It's the greatest challenge anyone will face in any aircraft."

Capt. Jeff White, 20th SOS pilot, has nearly 1,300 hours in the Pave Low. Flying night missions without NVGs or the aircraft's enhanced systems is "like being in a closet and not being able to see your hand in front of you," he said.

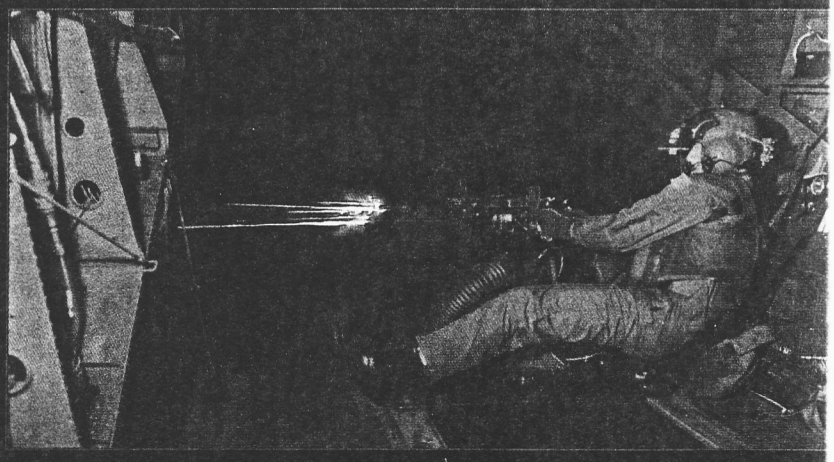
Even if the NVGs were to go bad, the crews can rely on the FLIR system. "FLIR can see things we can't," White said. "For instance, in the desert, until you're within 1,000 feet, you can't see power lines. FLIR can see those power lines about a mile and a half out. We rely on that visual intensity. And we rely on the goggles."

Accurate and reliable, Pave Low III helicopters from the 20th SOS were used to begin the air campaign during the Persian Gulf war.

Four MH-53Js led U.S. Army Apache attack helicopters across the featureless desert to blast open the air corridor through Iraqi air defenses to let F-117A stealth fighters and hundreds of other aircraft hit Baghdad early on the morning of Jan. 17.

"When you're flying low, yankin' and bankin' in the trees and the dirt, to me, personally, it's a great feeling," said SSgt. P.J. Fraley, a flight engineer on Pave Lows since 1986.

"It's exciting. You're one step away from the threshold all the time. Down low. That's where the action is."



***Special Tactics Squadron members SrA. Hank Lutz and SrA. Andrew Martin (above, left) wade ashore during an amphibious training mission. SSgt. Ismayel Gonzalez (above), an MH-53J gunner, wails away on the 20mm minigun. With night-vision goggles, Gonzalez sees objects in shades of green, white and black with startling clarity.***

# Pave Low pilots visit depot to just say "thanks"

*By Mike Antoine*

It was a homecoming of sorts. Three pilots who flew the MH-53J Pave Low in the not-so-friendly skies of the Middle East during Operation Desert Shield/Storm made a special visit to the depot to thank the men and women who have worked on the helicopter.

Also on hand was their boss, Col. George A. Gray III, Commander, First Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field in Florida.

The pilots shared war stories with about 100 Pave Low workers at the covered picnic table area near Bldg. 3221.

"Thanks for putting them together," said Gray, who had the job of briefing Army General H. Norman Schwarzkopf during the war concerning the capabilities of the Pave Low. "It's a fantastic piece of equipment," he continued, "and it allowed us to fly with impunity."



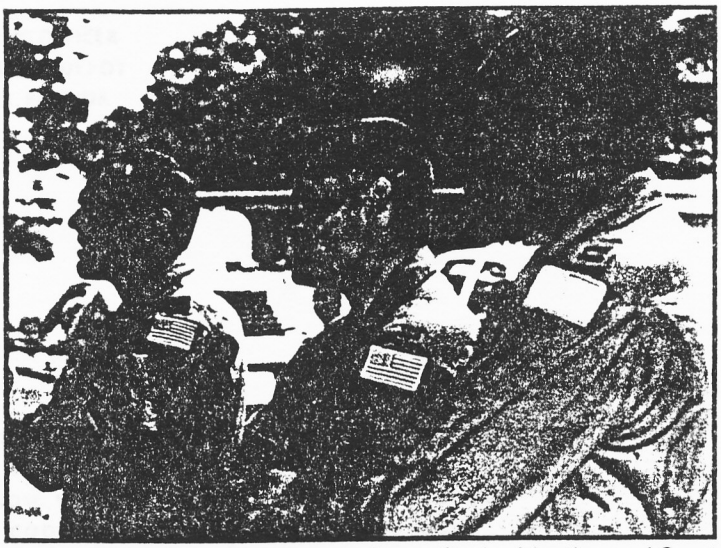
*Lt. Col. Rich Comer, 20th Special Operations Squadron Commander*

Lt. Col. Rich Comer, 20th Special Operations Squadron Commander, was among the first pilots to arrive in the Saudi Arabian theater, touching down August 11. "We were surprised by the intense heat there," he began. "It was 130 degrees in the shade. And humid, like it is here. We had an average of four guys a day from maintenance and ops fall out with dehydration. The helicopters fared better."

"We could go anywhere, anytime with the Pave Low," continued Comer. The special navigational capabilities of the Pave Low made it possible for missions to be flown despite poor daytime visibility caused by the desert sands being swept upward by the downblast from the rotor blades, and the special problems of flying the incredibly dark Middle East moonless nights. "The Pave Low flew when no other copter dared try," said Comer.

"I flew 45 sorties in the Pave Low," said Capt. Corby Martin, Air Force Special Operations Command. "There was no breakage at all," said Martin. "My wife's happy you guys did a great job."

Capt. Corky Mitchell, 20th Special Operations Squadron, flew the first U.S. helicopter to land in Kuwait City.

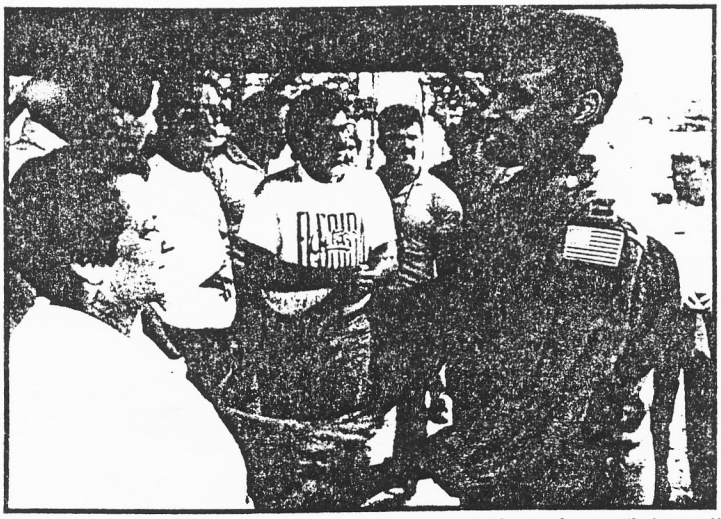


*From left: Lt. Col. Rich Comer, Capt. Corby Martin, and Capt. Corky Mitchell. The officers from Hurlburt Field visited the workers of the Pave Low helicopter on May 7.*

To get there he had to fly through the dense, oil-filled and smoky sky surrounding the beleaguered city. "The smoke was incredible. We were using goggles at seven in the morning. We finally had to TF (initiate terrain-following mode) through the stuff."

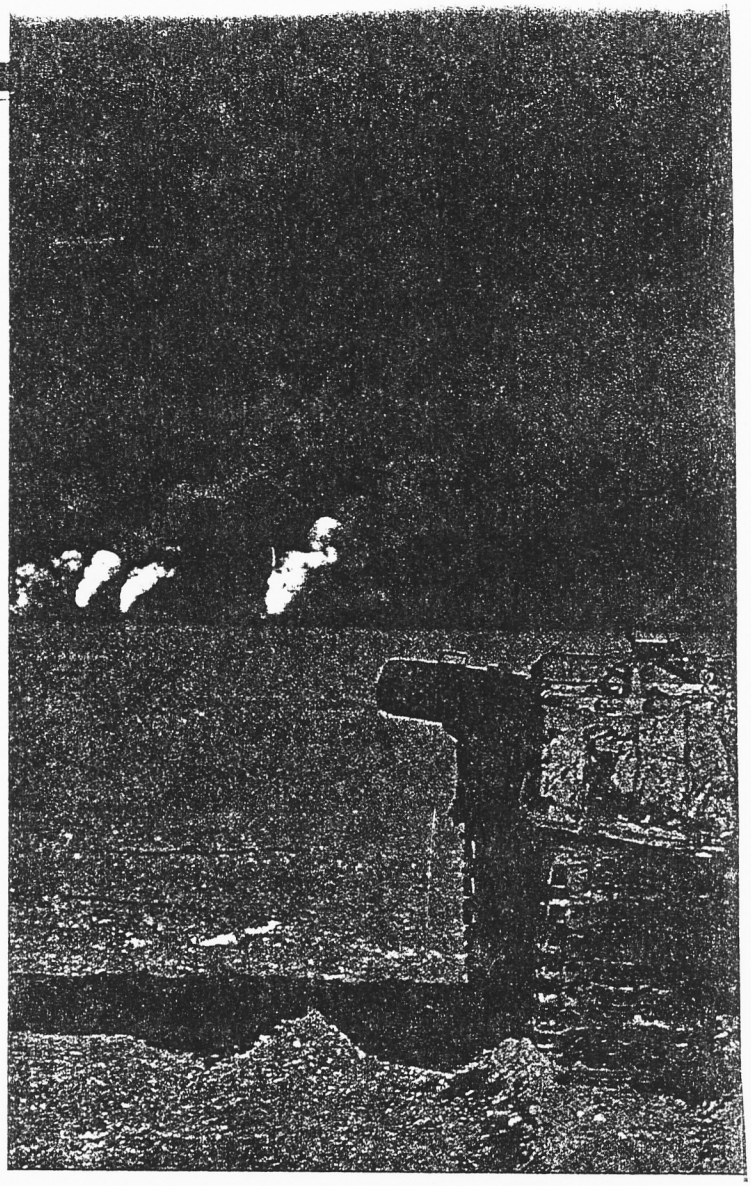
After all the war stories were shared, Capt. Jordan announced that the men would be happy to answer any questions. One worker stood up and said, "You guys have told us how much you appreciate what we did. Now I'd like to tell you how much we appreciate what you did."

Spontaneous applause broke out, and a standing ovation followed. The officers from Hurlburt Field nodded appreciatively. It was yet another successful mission for the men from the 20th.



*Capt. Corky Mitchell accepts congratulations for a "job well done" from an unidentified depot employee. Pictured behind Mitchell is Col. George Gray, CO, First Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field, Fla.*

# THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE WAR

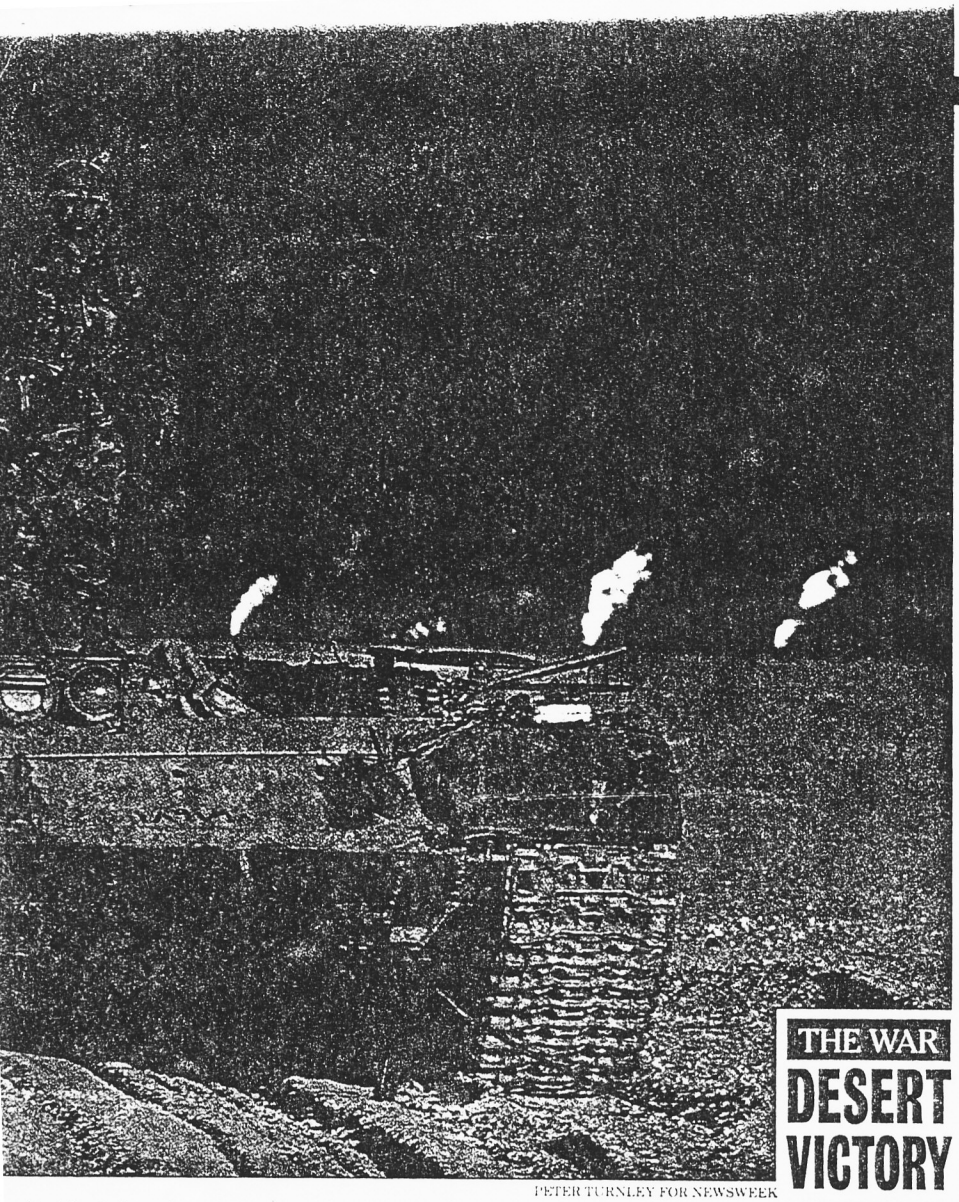


## Prodigious planning and unshakable will produced a famous victory

Around Riyadh, the uninitiated called it the "Black Hole." A large but dingy basement storage room at the headquarters of the Royal Saudi Air Force had been turned over to the American Air Force, and it was so secret that even officers with top security clearance couldn't get inside. Within the space allotted him, Brig. Gen. Buster C. Glosson built a maze of small offices in order to plot the air war against Iraq. In one set of cubicles, officers pondered how to eliminate Saddam Hussein's nuclear weapons, his chemical and biological plants, his missile-production factories. In a second, they concentrated on the Republican Guard, its artillery and tanks dug in along Iraq's border with Kuwait. In a third, they studied targets of opportunity in Kuwait itself. From throughout the American military, Glosson recruited intelligence officers to scout the enemy, logistics people to match weapons to objectives, "fraggers" to pick the final targets. Everyone was sworn to secrecy; they worked with laptop computers on a special system that could not be tapped into by anyone else, however high ranking, in the allied Central Command. Glosson ordered a large sign hung on one wall, lettered by computer printout. It read: THE WAY HOME IS THROUGH BAGHDAD.

In places like the Black Hole, the secret history of the war was played out during the seven anxious months that began last August. The final victory sprang out of the details—and only now, in the afterglow of success, are the details beginning to emerge. President Bush, his top military brass and his field commanders kept the war planning so closely guarded that almost no one, even senior military officers, knows the full scope of what they accomplished. With much the same skill that they displayed in establishing air superiority over the battlefield, they established a different sort of supremacy over the media, hiding the risks they took, the mistakes they made and the successful steps they took to overcome them.

In retrospect, the steady beat of coalition successes made the victory over Saddam Hussein look almost easy. The untold history of the war, however, is a chronicle of tight spots and alarming surprises, of stratagems devised to outwit a foe who was consistently given credit for more strength and more determination than he ultimately displayed. "Special operations" spies sneak into Iraq and Kuwait, darting around the desert in dune buggies at night, helping to locate Scud batteries and other targets, even filching electronic components from Iraqi antiaircraft sites for study by coalition experts in Riyadh. The allied air command studies the explosions after a fertilizer plant in Iraq is bombed and concludes that Saddam was far closer to building nuclear weapons than anyone anticipated. As the first Iraqi Scud hits Tel Aviv, Israel appears to be scrambling jets for a quick reprisal, and the effort to keep Israel out of the battle turns into one of the most delicate operations of the entire war; at one point the Americans seriously contemplated the possibility that Israel might launch a nuclear attack if it was hit by chemical weapons. The keepers of ordnance watch the steel rain falling on Iraq in record quantities and worry that they may run out of bombs at any moment. No, it was not just a lovely little war.



PETER TURNLEY FOR NEWSWEEK

**Behind the victory, a tale of tight spots and alarming surprises**

THE WAR

# DESERT VICTORY

## 1

## In the Black Hole

The Black Hole started humming last August when Lt. Gen. Charles (Chuck) Horner, 54, the coalition's supreme air commander, ordered Glosson, 49, to form what they called a "Strike Cell" in Riyadh. The two men made a good team. Horner was a commanding six-footer, a Vietnam veteran who liked to hop in a fighter and buzz the desert to get the feel of the terrain over which his pilots would be risking their lives. Glosson was a beefy patrician, with a North Carolina accent and a style that was all take-charge. "Chuck and I remember flying in Vietnam with less than a full load of weapons," he would say. "You can bet we were not going to let *that* happen again."

The strategic objective was set by the president: to force Saddam out of Kuwait, and to defuse his Army as a threat to the region and his chemical and biological weapons as a threat to everyone. As Glosson and his fraggers set about their work, five priorities would guide them: to destroy Saddam's command-and-control network; to blind his radar and SAM antiaircraft missiles while grounding his Air Force; to ravage the factories, depots and labs undergirding his Army; to wreck his airfields and ports, highways and bridges, and to humble his top troops, the Republican Guard.

**Spies and targets:** The first order of business was to figure out just what the enemy's assets were, and where they were. High-altitude allied reconnaissance planes and satellites constantly overflew Iraq, their infrared scanners picking up temperature changes in storage bunkers down below. "You don't have to be a rocket scientist" to interpret such data, Glosson says: differences in temperature meant the Iraqis were running a motor, or using refrigeration to store something perishable such as chemical or biological weapons. "Special-operations groups"—in effect, spies—organized by the Pentagon and the CIA were infiltrated into Kuwait and Iraq to check out defenses and potential targets (page 32). And in Washington, the Pentagon established a team called the Contingency Support Staff that began feeding intelligence and analysis to Riyadh 24 hours a day. The Air Force privately consulted academics and other experts on the Mideast, searching for vulnerable spots in Iraqi politics and society. The U.S. Army's secret "Intelligence and Security Command" teamed up with the CIA to interview European and Asian contractors who had done work in Iraq. Foreign builders supplied information on the layouts of Saddam's defense headquarters. French defense experts believe the French companies that produced Iraq's Roland surface-to-air missile system, its Mirage F-1 jet fighters and the Exocet air-to-surface missile supplied the allies with electronic data needed to neutralize them—though the companies refuse to confirm this.

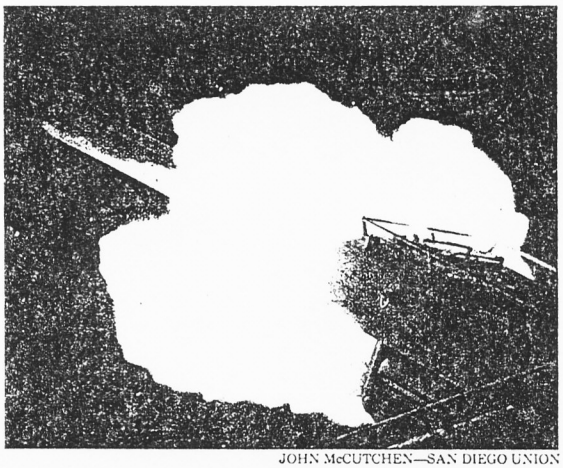
When the Black Hole team started sifting the data, it made some fascinating discoveries. One of the most interesting was a "fertilizer plant" in Al-Qaim in western Iraq. It turned out that the facility was clearly used in the research and production of nuclear weapons. The plant went on the target list. Saddam's nuclear-research facilities presented special problems as targets. To lob a bomb or missile into a reactor could damage the fuel rods at its core and spew out radioactive fallout, which could drift downwind. Glosson worked up safer tactics for pilots: shoot for hits that would cause the structure to collapse, "that way you will not blow the reactor itself apart." He came to believe that Saddam had reached the stage of combining his nuclear materials and was closer than anyone had realized to having The Bomb (though others disagreed). "He obviously had all the ingredients necessary to build a nuclear weapon," he says. "He only needed time."

If 99 percent of the targets were military, a few were more ambiguous. Glosson's team put Baath Party headquarters on its list, on the theory that in Saddam's Iraq no one could separate the party from the military. The civilian telephone system would be attacked, along with the military communications network. The allies would cut off Baghdad's electricity. The military was sure to crank up emergency generators, leaving everyone else in the dark. But the idea was to make Iraqi civilians feel the seriousness of the war without making them an outright target.

As Horner and Glosson began to refine their list of targets, they also had to figure out which weapon or delivery system was

appropriate for each. The B-52 bomber was their warhorse. It had "presence, presence," Horner thought—meaning its formidable bomb load of nearly 40,000 pounds. Although reporters made much of the B-52's ability to scare the socks off the Republican Guard, that was not its primary job. Some of the venerable planes, taking off from a base somewhere in the Middle East, could stay as long as seven hours over places where Saddam had Scud missiles, inhibiting launches and sometimes striking sites after a launch was detected. They were particularly well suited to large, above-ground targets. One of these was Taji, a huge military depot where Saddam built and refurbished tanks and Scuds and stored spare parts for his war machine. When the Black Hole team considered Taji, it thought immediately of the B-52. Taji was the size of a small city made up of row upon row of warehouses—all wide open to plummeting 750-pound bombs.

Besides their devastating array of attack aircraft, the fraggers had a variety of cruise missiles in their arsenal. For these, they wanted "soft targets": POL (petroleum, oil, lubricant) tanks, the yards for electrical power grids, installations unprotected by thick walls of concrete. Glosson's planners cranked up missions for Tomahawks into their Air Tasking Orders, carefully calibrating arrival times so the missiles wouldn't strike at the same moment planes were rolling in over a target. With unmanned missiles leapfrogging the fighters and bombers, the coalition would be able to hit Iraq 24 hours a day. No one could stand up long under that sort of punishment.



JOHN McCUTCHEN—SAN DIEGO UNION

**The Tomahawk missiles played a game of leapfrog**

New tactics had to be developed. The pilots of F-16 fighter-bombers had been trained to approach their targets at very low altitudes in order to avoid the Soviet surface-to-air missiles they would face in Eastern Europe. Long-range SAMs were not much of a problem in Iraq or Kuwait; the more pressing threat was short-range SAMs or antiaircraft guns that could be devastating to low-flying planes. The F-16 pilots would have to learn to bomb from 15,000 feet.

Finally, there was the sheer complication of mounting such an enormous air operation: with sorties averaging 2,000 to 3,000 a day, AWACS and ground radar crews had to devise sophisticated computerized flight plans to keep planes from running into one another. An armada of tankers had to be kept in the air practically round the clock to act as mobile gas stations for jet engines. This task was complicated when Syria refused to let allied planes fly through its airspace, forcing bombers based in central Turkey to take a roundabout route to their targets.

**Air assets:** In all this, Horner and Glosson were given an extraordinarily free hand. Within the Black Hole and at the White House, strategists had mastered some important lessons of military history. "There were things we did in Vietnam I swore we would never do again," Horner says. Among other things, he dumped the "route package" system that the Air Force, Navy, Marines and Army used to divvy up the Vietnam air war. Fragmentation often produced chaos in Vietnam. This time, Horner won command over all air assets. He in turn granted extraordinary authority to Glosson to organize the air war. "We all sang from the same sheet of music," he says. President Bush did not repeat LBJ's mistaken efforts to pick targets and micromanage the war. Bombing targets, except in a few rare instances, were selected and approved in Riyadh, not in Washington. At one point, Air Force topsiders by the Potomac did try to send a liaison officer out from the Pentagon to get an independent look at what was going on. Field commanders dubbed him "the Pentagon spy" and shunted him aside.

By late fall, Glosson had produced his first draft of the air campaign. The targets were divided into four broadly overlapping phases. In phase one—the strategic phase—cruise missiles, Stealth and conventional bombers would knock out targets like nuclear and chemical facilities, Scud missile sites, key industries, telephone exchanges, command-and-control nodes. Phase two would demolish enemy air defenses, including airfields, SAM systems and early-warning radars. Phase three would cut Saddam's military supply lines to the south, isolate and savage his Republican Guard and regular troops hunkered down in Kuwait. During phase four, planes would move in to provide close support for a ground invasion.

**'Patch guys':** Glosson sent off couriers bearing his plan to all the coalition air units in the gulf, and a few weeks later "fighter weapons officers" from each unit were summoned to Riyadh. These are the topmost of all top guns, some of the most experienced pilots in the military, whom the Air Force calls "patch guys" because of the distinctive patches they earn at fighter weapons school. The patch guys pored over Glosson's plan, looking for holes, arguing missions, calculating the ordnance required, adding targets, scuttling others. The plan went through several revisions, but by the end of December it was virtually complete. There were a few last-minute changes. A huge statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad as well as Iraq's garish war memorial had been targeted for symbolic reasons. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney thought this was gratuitous and, in one of the very few instances of intervention from the policy level, scratched them from the list. The Al-Rashid Hotel in Baghdad had also been a primary target. Intelligence intercepts—and a contractor with blueprints—had convinced the Black Hole that Saddam had put a command-and-communication facility in the hotel's basement. But when journalists began to fill the Al-Rashid in early January, the Central Command pulled it off the target list. The Pentagon might want to muzzle the media, but not to blow it away.

**Cheney vetoed two targets: the Iraqi war memorial and a giant statue of Saddam Hussein**

On the evening of Jan. 16, Horner and Glosson sat with their team ready for action in the Tactical Air Command Center, a room where long picnic tables were deployed, spread with maps, communications gear and radar scopes. Before them were two giant radar screens the size of a barroom's jumbo TV. At midnight, the allied air armada began taking off from bases in Saudi Arabia, the Arab emirates and from aircraft carriers nearby. Maps with the coordinates of Kuwait and Iraq flashed on the screens. Horner ordered a hookup from four AWACS planes directing traffic. A thousand fighters and bombers were closing in on their targets. The planes appeared on the screens as tiny, blinking dots. "Time kind of stood still as you saw those little dots moving towards Iraq," remembers a Navy air liaison officer in the TACC that night. The greatest air armada in history was heading for Saddam Hussein.

# 2
## Steel Rain

In the black night over Iraq, the only light in the cockpit of the F-14 Tomcat was the glow on the instrument panel in front of Cmdr. David Jackson. Suddenly his helmet radio began to ping, the signal that Saddam's air defenses had "painted" him. A heat-seeking SAM missile twisted upward toward him. Dropping decoy flares, he swerved violently, and the SAM missed. Then the sky lit up in pink, white and orange lights. Some twinkled like sparklers, others flashed like strobes. Ack-ack burst outside the cockpit in cherry-bomb pops. One needle of shrapnel and it would all be over. Trust yourself . . . trust your equipment . . . believe in your mission, he thought as the target loomed into view. The old nostrums of training worked. He made it through. The sun was coming up as the Tomcat slammed onto the flight deck of the USS Ranger. Chest heaving, he pulled himself from the cockpit. His flight suit dripped with sweat.

In the TACC, Horner and Glosson didn't know what to expect during those first 30 seconds over Baghdad. From the basement command post, Horner sent a subordinate to his office upstairs to watch CNN on television. Over a telephone hot line, the supreme air commander called to his scout, "What are they saying?" Back came the reply: "Bernie Shaw's under the table and he's got the mike out the window." Horner checked his watch. At nine minutes past the hour, Saddam's telephone exchange was due to be demolished. CNN needed the exchange to transmit its signal. At nine past, BARRROOOM. "What's Bernard Shaw saying now?" Horner asked. "He just went off the air." Much later, Horner recalled: "You know, some people are mad at CNN. I used it. Did the attack go on time? Did it hit the target? Things like that."

For the most part, Horner and Glosson's planes hit the target. For more than 40 days and 40 nights they turned the skies over Iraq into a Fourth of July display. Each evening Glosson's fraggers would meet with Horner to study the next day's missions. Afterward they would send out an Air Tasking Order detailing targets, ordnance, communications frequencies, rendezvous points and refueling stops. The ATO ran to 300 pages on a good day. Horner discovered that the computerized force management system (CFMS) he had brought to produce the ATO couldn't keep up with 2,000 to 3,000 sorties a day. He had to send home for four more computers.

The opening night of the air war succeeded beyond the Air Command's boldest imagining. Horner and Glosson divided their planes into "strike packages" and sent dozens against Baghdad and the Republican Guard. For each package, four F-4G Wild Weasels and four EF-111 Ravens full of electronic jamming equipment flew point. Their job was to knock out SAM radar and other defenses and to clear the way for a dozen F-16 fighter bombers protected by four F-15C fighters. Four AWACS control planes directed the strike packages to Saddam's doorstep. As many as 45 crew members working 12-hour shifts were crammed into each AWACS. Over nine radar screens, each operator directed as many as 25 fighters simultaneously, receiving signals in their headsets over four separate frequencies at a time. The atmosphere aboard was like the Chicago options trading pit on its wildest day.

Nothing could prepare the pilots completely for what they were flying into. "Get some sleep," advised a wing commander in Bahrain before the Wild Weasels took off. "Fat chance," muttered one wingman. Lives turned on split-second decisions. If a Wild Weasel knocked out a SAM radar site too early or too late, incoming fighters and bombers got caught in cross-fires betweeen live SAM batteries. One Wild Weasel pilot in southern Iraq had six SAMs fired at him simultaneously. Fortunately, the missiles were older SH-2 Soviet models. He threw his plane into a 5-G turn, climbed, dove and threw the SAMs off his tail; the antique SAMs couldn't match his contortions.



MARK PETERS—DOD POOL FOR NEWSWEEK

**At one point, the Air Force nearly ran out of bombs**

**On the first night, satellites mistook a flight of American B-52s for a Scud launch by Iraq**

The only glitch that first night happened not in Iraqi airspace but in the command center in Riyadh. American spy satellites were trained on Iraq to pick up Scud missile launches. At about 4 a.m., TACC screens lit up with a Scud alert. Sirens whined through the night sky, and Horner and his top aides strapped on their gas masks. It was hours before anyone figured out what had caused the false alarm: the satellites had mistaken a flight of incoming B-52 bombers over Iraq for a barrage of Scud missiles.

**Painting the targets:** Before the raids began, the TACC took every step it could think of to protect the raiders. The Central Command sent MH-53 Pave Low helicopters full of Special Forces commandos into Iraq and Kuwait to hunt and identify early-warning and fire-control systems. Apache helicopters followed the Pave Lows, painting targets with lasers so A-10 Warthog attack bombers could home in and wipe them out. Stealth bombers hit heavily defended targets near Baghdad. Because the Stealths could elude radar and needed no fighter escort, eight with two tankers could do the job of 75 warplanes and support craft. The precautions worked beautifully. In simulations before the attack, Air Force computers projected that as many as 150 planes would be lost the first night. When the real thing came, all the planes returned safely.

Relief swept through the Black Hole. "When we got through those first 10 minutes, we had 'em," says Horner. "It was just a question of time." At noon the following day, Capt. Lyle Bien, the Navy's air liaison officer, scanned the first after-action reports and noticed a recurring item. Only a few Iraqi planes had risen to challenge the allies, and these had turned tail before anyone could shoot them down. "His Air Force isn't fighting," Bien reflected. "Maybe we aren't going to see what he has." Because the Iraqis refused to fight, they were unable to drive allied planes toward groundfire defenses, reducing losses enormously. For all practical purposes, Horner controlled the skies, though the coalition wouldn't claim air supremacy for a few more days.

In the weeks that followed, Black Hole fraggers directed so many thousands of tons of munitions on Iraq and Kuwait that sometimes they nearly ran out. At one point, supplies at the Red Sea port of

Jidda were down to two or three days' worth of ammunition. Then a cargo ship steamed in with fresh bombs. To handle more complicated supply problems, the Pentagon devised a "rapid reaction" team. When a bunker proved to be especially hard-shelled, the fraggers would phone Washington, and the Pentagon would request munitions makers to custom-build a bomb for the target. The bunker buster would be rushed to Charleston Air Force Base in South Carolina, where two C-141 transports were waiting to make immediate deliveries. Only 36 hours after the special bomb was requested, it was being loaded on a warplane in the gulf. The Air Force called it "The Desert Express."

How smart bombs can really be is a matter of some dispute, but Horner put his at the head of the class. He was shrewd about the media and the image of his operation. Emerging from his basement planning center, he brought videotapes taken by his fighters and bombers. They showed his high-IQ munitions chasing the Iraqis through doors and down air shafts. But the media saw only the most sanitary videos; in private screenings, his officers watched more harrowing, X-rated tapes. One showed an Iraqi pilot in his cockpit and his crew chief frantically trying to get the craft aloft as an allied fighter bore in and blew them both away. Another showed a panic-striken Iraqi crewman racing for a shelter—and a smart bomb blasting him to pieces.

Arab pilots flew only a small percentage of the daily sorties against Saddam, but Horner and his people also attended to the image of their hosts in the coalition. AWACS planes scoured the horizon looking for Iraqi jets for the Saudis to kill. One day in late January, a flight of Iraqi F-1 Mirage fighters popped into a 30-by-30-mile box above the Persian Gulf. As it happened, Capt. Ayed al-Shamrani of the Royal Saudi Air Force was on patrol with the allies that day. Waving off Canadian and U.S. Navy warplanes, the AWACS steered al-Shamrani's F-15 in for the kill. He shot down two Mirages and became a national hero. "We wanted them to have a success," recalls one Pentagon strategist. "For him to get two planes was a double bonus."

Two days later the coalition got its own unexpected bonus when

## 'Special Ops': The Top-Secret War

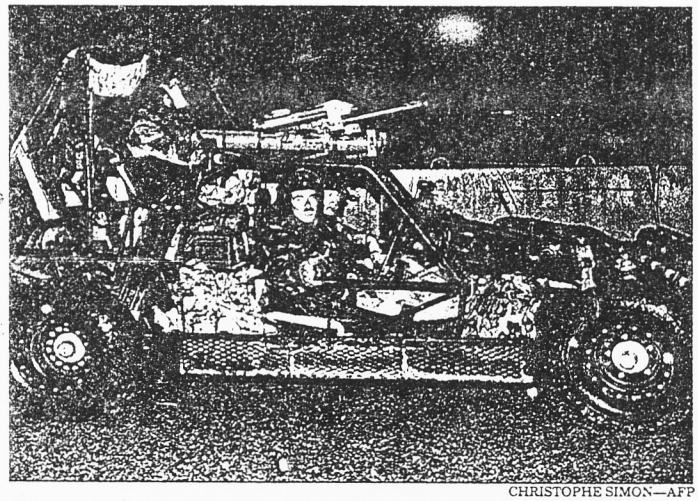
Before dawn, dozens of three- to five-man U.S. commando teams drop by parachute deep inside Iraq. Wearing night-vision goggles, they roam the desert on camouflaged motorcycles or dune buggies equipped with powerful mufflers. The commandos locate a missile launcher that had eluded Air Force reconnaissance missions. After fixing its location by bouncing signals off a satellite from hand-held transmitters, they relay the data back to U.S. headquarters. Minutes later, F-15 bombers roar over the desert and obliterate the weaponry.

It sounds like a scene from a Chuck Norris thriller—and who knows, it may become one—but this was a real covert operation carried out by U.S. Army Special Forces (Green Berets) and Delta Force commandos. While tanks, planes and smart bombs were the undisputed stars of Operation Desert Storm, highly trained commandos conducted a masterful—if unpublicized—sideshow. Navy SEALS swam up to Kuwaiti beaches, dismantling underwater mines. Commandos inside Iraq cut fiber-optic cables to military leaders in Kuwait, used laser beams to pinpoint air targets, even gathered soil samples to determine the best invasion routes. NEWSWEEK has learned that within weeks of Saddam Hussein's invasion last August, an American special-operations team crossed the border into Kuwait to observe the Iraqi buildup and conduct "snatch operations," stealing Iraqi electronic equipment and carrying it to Riyadh for analysis. Three days before the ground invasion, commandos slipped into Kuwait in helicopters painted with Iraqi Army markings to perform a final reconnaissance.

Initially, Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf had little enthusiasm for "special ops." A firm believer in conventional warfare, Schwarzkopf angered commando officers when he bumped them off military flights last August to rush tank forces to Saudi Arabia. He vetoed proposals to infiltrate agents into Iraq to organize dissidents. As the war progressed, however, Schwarzkopf gave the special forces more latitude, increased their numbers to 8,000—and singled them out for praise during his postwar news conference.

Special-operations airmen played a crucial—if inadvertent—role in suppressing Iraqi air defenses. Days before the start of the ground war, the forces began dropping 15,000-pound "Daisy Cutter" bombs on Iraqi troops from the back of C-130 transport planes. The first struck a minefield near the Kuwaiti border. Terrified Iraqis were certain that the devastating explosion signaled the beginning of the ground war, and turned on their air-defense radars all along the border. American pilots pinpointed many air-defense installations they never knew existed. Says one Pentagon official: "We were able to 'paint' every radar electronically and knock them out."

**Final mission:** Some covert warriors paid the ultimate price. Eleven Green Berets engaged in reconnaissance and sabotage around Baghdad are still missing in action, though their names have never been listed on any public MIA reports. Intelligence sources told NEWSWEEK that in late February, three commandos were hunting Scuds in Iraq when their dune buggy overturned, breaking one man's back. The Army dispatched a Black Hawk helicopter into Iraq, piloted by a four-man crew from Task Force 160, a secret Army unit. After retrieving the commandos, the crew crashed in a Saudi sand dune, killing all seven on board. The Pentagon informed the public that the Blackhawk had been on a routine medical evacuation mission. Even in death, the warriors of the Special Operations Command maintained their cover.



CHRISTOPHE SIMON—AFP

**Commandos cruised the Iraqi desert in muffled dune buggies**

JOSHUA HAMMER *with* DOUGLAS WALLER *in Washington*

the elite of Saddam's Air Force began to take flight for Iran. At first Horner didn't understand what was happening. One allied fighter pursued an Iraqi MiG across the Iranian border and shot it down. Iran was a neutral, and the American pilot dutifully reported what he thought was a blunder. But the Iranians didn't seem to notice in view of what happened next. "When the rest of the Iraqis saw the crash," Horner recalls, "they kicked in their afterburners, flew into Iran until they ran out of gas and jumped out. There were Iraqi airplanes falling all over." For a time, Horner attributed the display to Saddam's poor leadership. When more than 100 top-of-the-line Iraqi Mirages and MiGs and a number of transports turned up safely on Iranian airfields, however, the mystery deepened.

Israeli intelligence sources believe that Iraqi Air Force commanders persuaded Saddam to approve a plan to save his best planes to fight another day. Saddam apparently hoped that Iran would release the planes at some opportune moment in the fighting. But he was not able to check the move with Iranian leaders in advance because his communications were so snarled. Iran's President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani stood by Iran's neutrality. He said he would return the planes when hostilities were over. But he may be tempted to use them as leverage to obtain the billions of dollars in reparations Iran is seeking from Iraq for its depredations in the Iran-Iraq War. Coalition intelligence officers, worried about the planes, took comfort from a news film shot by a Japanese crew in Iran: it showed that crews doing maintenance on the planes were not trying to keep them ready for battle.



GILLES BASSIGNAC—GAMMA-LIAISON

**The Scud attacks sent Arens into an uproar**

**Clogged circuits:** For the coalition, not everything went as smoothly as it seemed. Before the air war began, most of its reconnaissance had been focused on strategic questions: how large were Saddam's forces and where were they deployed? Once the battle commenced, Horner needed tactical intelligence, specifics like, "There's four tanks located at the crossroads," as he puts it. Too often this information got stuck in the clogged circuits between Riyadh and Washington. To find those tanks at the crossroads, Horner sometimes had to phone the Pentagon. In order to reduce the confusion, he built better transmission circuits to Washington. He also improved his photographic capabilities. Using Learjets, he could get intelligence photos to fighter squadrons within an hour or two. He could only envy the way the media used telephones and satellites to move pictures in seconds.

To compensate for some of these intelligence shortcomings, Horner changed his air tactics. He assigned F-16 pilots to patrol individual 20-by-20-mile grids of terrain each day like cops on a beat, instead of being confined to specifically set targets. These "killer scouts," as he called them, quickly became adept at detecting Saddam's burrowing Army. As the Republican Guard began shifting their equipment around to escape punishment from the sky, the coalition pilots ran into a new problem: satellite and aerial reconnaissance photos were becoming outdated too quickly. To cope with this, the Air Force tried out a new technique called "Fast FAC," for fast forward air controllers. F-16s stripped of most of their armament except phosphorous rockets would lead the attack, looking for Iraqi equipment in their new locations. When these "pointers," as they were called, spotted an enemy installation, they fired their phosphorous rockets as markers. Behind them, heavily armed F-16s called the "killer bees" rushed in to blast the newly illuminated positions. The efficiency of Horner's tank killers shot up. A week before the ground campaign began, coalition intelligence officers estimated that their planes were destroying 100 to 150 Iraqi tanks a day.

The worst American intelligence failure led to the bombing of the Amiriya bunker in a suburb of Baghdad, where as many as 400 civilians were killed. In the aftermath, the Pentagon took back some of the control over bombing targets it had left to its field commanders. Under orders from Cheney, Gen. Colin Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reviewed all subsequent missions over Baghdad before they left the ground. A regional Baath Party headquarters, certain military intelligence buildings, state security buildings and some ministries were dropped from the target lists. Powell's main worry was that Saddam might have packed any or all of those structures with civilians. No one but the dictator wanted a sequel to Amiriya.

**One Israeli idea was to launch an airstrike into Iran to destroy the Iraqi planes that took refuge there**

From the beginning of the air war, Saddam's sense of political timing was a bit more acute than his grasp of military leadership. Virtually his only weapon of any effectiveness was the antique, slow, hopelessly inaccurate Scud missile. On the second night of Desert Storm, his first wild shot into Israel jarred Cheney out of bed and back to the E Ring at the Pentagon. Using the "Hammer Rick" hot line between Washington and Jerusalem, he phoned Moshe Arens, Israel's minister of defense. Arens was in a rage. He told Cheney that 12 Israeli jets had scrambled after the first Scud attack and were preparing to strike Iraq. He requested that Cheney give him the recognition codes that would allow his fighters to slip past allied planes without being shot down. The alternative, he said, would be to call back the coalition's aircraft for four hours so Israel could strike.

**Blunt talk:** The rest of Arens's demands were equally incendiary. He wanted the United States to muscle Jordan and Saudi Arabia into letting Israel fly through their airspace on the way to Iraq. He said he was planning a combined air and ground assault that would involve airstrikes and hundreds of commandos who would attack Saddam's H2 and H3 Scud bases in western Iraq. "We all knew that if Saddam was smart enough to launch Scuds, and Israel was dumb enough to retaliate, this war would be in very deep trouble," recalls one top Bush aide. When Cheney told him that President Bush would accept none of his demands, the prickly minister backed off. Within a half hour the Israelis were saying the jets were on a reconnaissance mission. But this was only a breather. "There was an atmosphere of constant brinkmanship," says the senior Bush aide. "It was very, very tense."

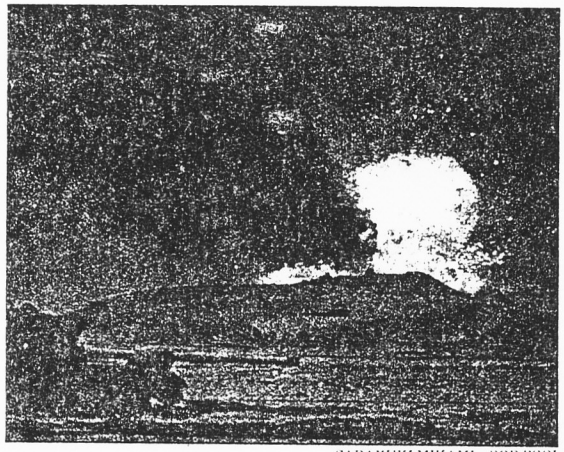
For a time, Pentagon officials were afraid that if Saddam had armed his Scuds with chemical warheads, Israel might retaliate with nuclear weapons. U.S. intelligence had picked up no evidence that Israel had moved nukes into position to launch against Iraq. But Pentagon strategists began drawing up contingency plans for the political and military aftershocks that would follow a nuclear

strike. Arabs were sure to leave the coalition, and it would have been very difficult to keep some of the Western allies in line.

Within an hour after the first Scud fell, the Bush war cabinet assembled in the office of Brent Scowcroft, the national-security adviser, mulling ways to keep Israel out of the war. President Bush phoned Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, offering condolences and batteries of Patriot missiles. Before the attack, just weeks earlier, Shamir had turned down a similar offer. Now he accepted. Cheney then phoned Arens to say the Patriots would be operational by nightfall. Special Forces assault teams would hit western Iraq to find and destroy mobile launchers. The United States had canceled hundreds of bombing runs and diverted the planes to Scud-busting missions. In effect, Washington was pre-empting the Arens plan with an American version of the same thing.

**'Man from Mars':** To prevent further deterioration in the situation, President Bush sent Under Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger to Jerusalem. It was a delicate mission. "You've got to understand Israel's psychology," Eagleburger told Secretary of State James Baker. "After 2,000 years of letting someone take care of them—and the Holocaust as a consequence—never again are they going to do that. Never." The Israeli military advanced a number of ideas for reprisals. One called for hitting Iraq with Israel's superior Jericho missiles, and even a joint U.S.-Israeli raid. Another envisioned a raid on Saddam's interned Air Force in Iran. Eagleburger found Arens agitated, Shamir grave. Among other things, they were worried that continued Scud attacks would discourage Soviet Jews from moving to Israel. With a realist's sense of vital interests and an ironist's sense of humor, the veteran American diplomat soothed the Israelis' angst. At one point after a Scud siren went off, Eagleburger put on a gas mask and caught a glimpse of himself in the mirror. "My God, it's a short fat man from Mars," he groaned. He took the mask off and never wore it again.

Israel stayed out of the war, but all the maneuvering over the Scuds caused some friction between the civilian and military leaders on the American side. On at least two occasions, Cheney grumbled that the military was dragging its feet over the president's Scud-busting campaign. It wasn't hard to see why field commanders were unhappy. Pentagon sources say that, early in the air war, 15 percent of the Central Command's air assets were diverted to the chase for the tactically worthless missiles. Horner formed a special task force that met every night to discuss how allied planes would attack Scuds the next day. An overhead spy satellite was secretly assigned to spot Scud launches, then feed their coordinates to the U.S. Space Command, which relayed them to patrolling AWACS and F-15s over Iraq. The hunters did destroy a number of mobile Scuds, but Saddam managed to fire 81 before he was finished. At the end he was shooting what appeared to be mothballed Scuds that broke apart in flight. One of these killed 28 American troops when it disintegrated over a barracks in Dhahran. The hunters redoubled their efforts. The diversion cost the bombing campaign about a week's time, delaying a ground assault. And it was on the ground that Bush, the commander in chief, intended to bring Saddam's Army to its knees.



SADAYUKI MIKAMI -DOD POOL

**In the west, Schwarzkopf threw a 'Hail Mary' pass**

**Pagonis's mission: to move 200,000 men plus supplies 300 miles in 10 days without anyone noticing**

# 3

## The 100-Hour Battle

At the Army command center deep within the Pentagon, the secure telephone to Riyadh was silent. The Army chief of staff knew better than to natter with his field commanders as they went into battle. From behind the long table where he was sitting, Gen. Carl Vuono studied a wall map of the Kuwaiti theater. His units were all in place, ready to move out. It was Saturday night in Washington, Sunday morning in the Middle East. As the clock ticked past 8 p.m., the first elements of the XVIII Corps plunged into southern Iraq. "Everyone was tense," recalls an officer who was there. The same question gnawed at all of them: "What do we do if something bad happens?"

The job of the Air Force had been to see to it that nothing bad could happen; the question was how much pounding Saddam and his Army could take. Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, the top general in the field, had wanted Horner to cut Saddam's strength in half. By mid-February it looked as if the Black Hole's Big Uglies (B-52s), Killer Bees (F-16s) and Warthogs (A-10s) were creeping up toward that goal, but nobody could be sure how close. The CIA in Langley was disputing the battle-damage estimates from the field. (Around the Pentagon the standing joke was that if a CIA man saw a satellite photo of a tank on one side of a river and its turret on the other, he would report the wreck as "possible damage.") On the day of the assault, CentCom reported conservatively that the Iraqis had been "attrited" by a third. The real figure was probably higher. Top Air Force generals had lobbied to postpone the ground assault for at least another week. They argued that with a few more days of carpet bombing, the Iraqis might throw in the towel.

Intramural spats over the relative merits of air power and ground forces are as old as the Sopwith Camel and Maxim gun. "There were plenty of elements who said the ground campaign wasn't needed at all," says one Pentagon insider. But in the end a host of arguments outweighed them. The Army and Marines were itching to get into action. Schwarzkopf argued that public opinion, in America and the world, would turn against the coalition if the bombing seemed gratuitously devastating and prolonged. The White House worried that Saddam, if he were given time, might engage in a flurry of diplomacy that would spoil the war with a muddled conclusion. And just about everyone from Bush to Colin Powell feared that Saddam might retreat before it was possible to destroy his war machine.

The Army went into battle supremely confident. Early computer projections had set likely American casualties as high as 40,000, or around 10 percent of the troops in the field. In the past, a 10 percent casualty rate was considered acceptable—but not since Vietnam. "Preparing the battlefield," the euphemism Schwarz-

kopf used for emasculating the Iraqi Army, had changed the arithmetic. The final computer models predicted that the assault would cost 5,000 casualties. Earlier, Bush's counselors had warned him to expect a ground war that would last at least six weeks. Now the computers said the job would take seven days if the Republican Guard came out to fight, 10 days if they kept their heads down.

The key to the battle plan was what Schwarzkopf later called his "Hail Mary" play, the flanking attack launched much further west than most had thought possible. American division commanders were startled when he broached it last fall. Pentagon strategists worried that he was underestimating how many troops it would take to pull off the maneuver. The CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency warned that the terrain of western Iraq was too rugged: tanks could cross it but trucks would bog down, separating the advancing XVIII and VII Corps from their supplies. But Schwarzkopf sent Special Forces commandos out to the battle zone to take soil samples and plot routes for his supply train. And in picking Lt. Gen. John Yeosock, the Army commander, Brig. Gen. Steve Arnold, the Army operations officer, and Lt. Gen. Gus Pagonis, a logistics wizard, Schwarzkopf found the men he needed to surprise the Iraqis. "It was sort of like D-Day," says Pagonis. Saddam never knew what hit him.

The challenge was to move XVIII Corps and VII Corps, with their mountains of supplies, without tipping Saddam to their location. This meant trucking more than 200,000 troops across as much as 300 miles of desert crossed by a single highway: the Tapline Road. To preserve secrecy, Schwarzkopf decided not to start the move until 10 days before the ground assault. Pagonis asked for two more weeks to build forward logistics bases and get everyone in place. Schwarzkopf turned him down, asking, "How many soldiers will it cost just so I can let you move a truck?" To shift all his men and supplies in time, Pagonis had to shuttle 4,500 trucks down the Tapline Road, 18 a minute past any given spot, 24 hours a day. As a student soldier he had got a C-minus in tactics; in the logistics of the Hail Mary play, he got A-plus. "Hey, everything goes wrong every minute," he recalls with nonchalance. "What you do is fix it."

To keep his maneuver secret, Schwarzkopf used deception the way Pagonis used axle grease. Pool reporters were carefully kept away from what was going on. The Iraqi Air Force was not watching much of anything except street life in Iran. But there was no way of blinding Soviet spy satellites overhead: they were sure to pick up the big move west. The question was whether Mikhail Gorbachev would alert Saddam. Around the Pentagon a few spooky sorts are still convinced that Gorbachev did sound an alarm, but not in time for Saddam's commanders to do anything about it. The White House and CIA don't believe it. Certainly the deception worked. Radio intercepts showed that the Iraqis had no inkling of the flanking attack.

Two feints kept Saddam looking the other way. Schwarzkopf ordered the First Cavalry Division to charge up the Wadi al-Batin corridor—the most obvious invasion route, along the western border of Kuwait—and the Marines to fake an amphibious invasion of Kuwait. The Cav grumbled at getting so little action; the Marines went ballistic. Lt. Gen. Walter Boomer, the Marine commander in the Persian Gulf, asked Schwarzkopf to change his mind. He was turned down. Gen. Alfred Gray, the Marine commandant, protested to Powell in Washington. Powell also held firm. An amphibious assault, through mine-strewn waters and up beaches raked by enemy fire, would almost surely have been the most costly engagement of the war; even the Navy, the Marine's parent force, argued against it. "The Marines really wanted this landing," says one aide to Gray. "They fought hard for it. But in the end, they lost." Still, the threat pinned down about 10 Iraqi divisions. If they had moved west, Schwarzkopf would have allowed the Marines to make their landing. But that wouldn't be necessary.

On Feb. 9, when Cheney and Powell flew out to the gulf to meet Schwarzkopf, the commander initially asked for three or four more weeks of preparation for the land war: he knew what a logistical strain "Hail Mary" would be. But his bosses convinced him that the job would have to be done sooner, and Schwarzkopf eventually selected Feb. 21 for the start of the big push. And so the final preparations were set in motion. As it happened, they coincided almost exactly with the final flurry of maneuvers on the diplomatic front.

On Feb. 12 in Baghdad, Saddam met with Yevgeny Primakov, Mikhail Gorbachev's personal emissary. Shucking his military coat, Saddam undid his holster and raised some surprisingly apt questions: would withdrawing Iraqis be shot in the back, would the airstrikes stop, would United Nations sanctions be lifted? Primakov, a diehard Soviet Arabist, reported "rays of hope" to Moscow. Gorbachev cabled Bush to report Saddam's new attitude. The call set off 10 days of reluctant diplomacy.

"The cleanest option would have been to tell Gorbachev to buzz off," grumbled one administration topsider, but it wasn't that easy. "When Gorbachev personally entered the game," said another Bush aide, "the Soviet effort became a problem we had to handle." The game was complex. Bush and Scowcroft were irritated by the Soviet gambit, but they saw it as Gorbachev's response to pressure from his military hard-liners at home. He would not break ranks with the coalition, they believed, because his primary interest lay in maintaining a good Soviet-American relationship. And so Bush kept stressing publicly that he appreciated the Soviet efforts. One day when Cheney, Vice President Dan Quayle and others suggested that the president should be more irritated by the Soviet initiative, Bush barked back at them: "No, you should be more calm." Throughout the diplomatic maneuvers, Bush followed the same rules he had set for his presidential campaign: control the agenda; answer all charges promptly and aggressively; use the media to get your message out—and never trust your opponent. "At that point, it almost did not matter what Saddam did," recalls one top Bush strategist. We were determined we would end this war when *we* wanted to, not a damn day sooner."

In mid-February, Schwarzkopf had asked that the ground assault be put off for two days—until Feb. 23. It turned out to be a

## Intelligence Goofs

The White House is seriously concerned about three major intelligence failures during the gulf war:

- U.S. planners were told the Iraqis had moved 540,000 troops into the Kuwait theater, with more than half in Kuwait itself. The actual total was nearer 250,000, of whom about 150,000 were in Kuwait.
- Iraq was thought to have about 35 mobile Scud missile launchers. In fact, they had as many as 200.
- Intelligence reported Iraq had moved large numbers of chemical weapons into the Kuwait theater, and major efforts were made to destroy them. Not a single chemical weapon has been found.

What concerns policymakers is that these failures come on the heels of errors in East Europe. U.S. intelligence never picked up the Soviet Union's huge redeployment of weapons east of the Urals, so that they wouldn't count under arms treaties. And in East Germany, major Soviet installations, including a marshaling yard buried beneath a hill, went undetected.

fortunate delay. On Feb. 21, the very day the coalition troops had been supposed to march, the Soviets announced that they had worked out a new peace plan with Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister who had made a tortuous land-and-air trip to Moscow for talks with Gorbachev. Iraq would commence a complete withdrawal from Kuwait, to be completed within three weeks.

Bush invited eight of his closest aides to his private study in the family quarters upstairs at the White House. The problem before the group was how to dispose of the peace offer without looking like warmongers. They could dismiss Gorbachev's proposal out of hand, saying it still had too many strings attached, or they could set new conditions of their own. There was danger in the second course: Saddam might actually agree to the new terms. Noting that the date for the ground assault was only 48 hours away, Powell suggested that Bush issue a tough ultimatum and give Saddam until noon Saturday, Feb. 23, to start his withdrawal. The president said, "I like that. Good idea."

Saddam let the deadline pass—and Schwarzkopf plunged ahead on schedule. On Sunday morning the mood in the Army operations center at the Pentagon was jubilant. The 101st Airborne had just captured Objective Gold, a staging area in southwestern Iraq. To the west, the French Sixth Light Armored Division and a brigade of the 82nd Airborne had taken the town of Al-Salman. Psy-ops teams were talking whole Iraqi battalions into surrendering. Saddam's Third Corps had tried to counterattack in Kuwait, but a division of Marine reinforcements drove it back. The flanking attack had taken the Republican Guard completely by surprise. Surveillance satellites showed that the Guard's Tawakalna Division was moving slowly south, perhaps deceived by the First Cavalry's feint. Other Republican Guard divisions were doing little more to gird for action than uncovering their vehicles. The bridges to Basra were down. There could be no escape.

Even the Iraqi's supposed artillery advantage dissolved into myth. Saddam had more guns, with a longer reach, than Schwarzkopf. But the coalition had American multiple-launch rockets and eight-inch guns directed by satellites. When an Iraqi battery fired a round, a U.S. Army Q-37 radar would sight it and feed the battery's coordinates to computers that directed the American guns. It took less than a minute to drop a counterround on the Iraqis. Many of them soon stopped firing. To pull the lanyard was to invite death.

On Sunday afternoon, Cheney and Powell once again joined the president and other top advisers in the family quarters of the White House, this time to give him his first full reading on the assault. Powell used a set of theater maps to describe the operations. The results, he said, were "stunning." On Saturday night, as planned, two Saudi task forces had penetrated Iraqi defenses and moved up the Kuwaiti coast. The First and Second Marine divisions had smashed through the border, just south of where Saddam had expected the main assault and concentrated his troops. The 101st Airborne had established a forward fuel-and-ammunition base deep in Iraq. Resistance had been so light that the VII Corps had opened the flank attack 14 hours ahead of schedule. The 24th Mechanized Division broke into western Iraq even as the 101st was rolling toward the Tigris-Euphrates Valley. Iraqis were surrendering by the thousands. At that point, only one American had been killed. Powell predicted that the war would be over by Friday.

The advancing allies found themselves mopping up as quickly as they advanced. Their worst problem was the weather. The forecast called for heavy rains, winds and blowing dust, a threat to supply trucks and choppers. Many of the divisions moved out in heavy chemical-protection gear, fearing that Saddam might be ready to make a last stand with chemical weapons. On Monday the winds were blowing from the south, back toward Saddam's own lines, but that didn't quell anxieties. "This guy is dumb enough to gas himself," muttered one officer in the Army command center in the Pentagon. As the frontal assault troops pressed toward Kuwait City, 23,500 Iraqi POWs clogged the roads to the rear. A message came into the Riyadh command center that Baghdad Radio was announcing Iraq's offer to surrender unconditionally. An aide snapped, "Too little, too late, f—er."



THIERRY BOCCON GIBOD—SIPA

**In the end, the Iraqis' only defense was the weather**

**'By tonight, there really won't be an enemy there. . . . You're basically just fighting stragglers.'**

By Tuesday, Cheney and Powell were back at the White House. They told Bush the military was within a day of completing its mission. By now, the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division was established south of the Euphrates, blocking the escape routes from Kuwait. B-52s began to pound panicky troops fleeing up the roads north of Kuwait City. The First and Third Armored Divisions and the First Mechanized Division were cutting up the Republican Guard's Tawakalna and Medina divisions. AH-64 attack helicopters were raking the Hammurabi Division. Only the rain protected the Guard. "There are no roads and the desert has turned to soup," CentCom cabled the Pentagon. But it didn't matter any more. The Pentagon sent a cable to U.S. forces in Germany canceling an airlift of tank-crew reinforcements. It ordered 22 supply-and-ammunition ships steaming toward the Persian Gulf to turn around. There was no fight left in Saddam.

True to form, the dictator claimed victory with every step he fell backward. By Wednesday the rout was almost embarrassing. The president assembled his war council for one final gathering. Powell said, "By tonight, there really won't be an enemy there. If you go another day, you're basically just fighting stragglers." One of the advisers suggested that Bush announce a cease-fire on Thursday. The president said, "I'd like to do it tonight. Check it with Norm." Powell picked up the White House direct line that connected the commander in chief to the commander in the gulf (one of the few times the line was ever used). Schwarzkopf quickly agreed. One of the president's men noticed that a cease-fire set for midnight would mark exactly 100 hours of ground fighting. Bush liked the symmetry of it. And at midnight the guns fell silent.

*The Secret History of the War was written by Tom Mathews with principal reporting by Douglas Waller. Additional reports came from Ann McDaniel, Thomas M. DeFrank and Margaret Garrard Warner in Washington, and from C. S. Manegold and Tony Clifton in the gulf.*

29 1365A FOR SAFETY USE ONLY

4 MAY 91

CAPT Louis A. Caporicci
Aircraft commander Cowboy 21 TN 930

We shot a practice approach to a river LZ for a simulated SOF duck deployment to ascertain suitability of the location for the duck/personnel deployment. I was talking Capt Woodson (copilot) through the techniques and procedures as he flew the approach. Once in the deployment profile (below 10' and 10K G/S) we started moving downstream until we got into ideal deployment position. Sgt Dock (left scanner) called "stop left." I was in the right seat and despite some Pastmaster spray, noted approx 40-50' clearance on the right side. I visually checked left as soon as Sgt Dock said stop left and noticed small twigs and leaves flying through our rotor wash. I suspected that we blew loose foliage from the trees on the left side that recirculated into our rotors. We then flew two actual drops into the same LZ uneventfully with no calls indicating clearance obstructions from our scanners. After the second load drop we particularly noted a whistling sound in the main blades, we landed at Ducky LZ, debarked the team chief, shut down, inspected our blades, noted tip cap damage, and based on inputs from the crew decided the aircraft was safe to fly back to Hurlburt for a full stop. I called command post via radio and had the DOS representative to LZ call command on his cellular phone. We requested 2050s/cc and wing safety be notified. Termination at HFLD was uneventful and upon final shutdown maintenance noticed damage to two tail rotors. Mishap time was approx 1915Z. Weather was 15000 SCT and 6 miles in low stratus.

1915Z

34 1365A

WOODSON PENNY D Capt [redacted]

ON 4 may 91, I was flying as copilot ON cowboy 21 ON Aircraft 930. At approximately 1930Z we hit something with the main rotor while we were practicing soft Duck INFILS. ON that date we briefed and flew a day Tac mission to include soft duck INFILS IN yellow river and live GUNS ON A77. We tookoff and flew to the yellow river for the soft Duck INFILS. I was flying. We flew to the Right of the river to survey the site. We completed the gear down automatic hover coupler checklist and did a practice soft Duck pattern. While flying down the river between the trees, the left scanner said "stop left" and I think we hit a branch ON a tree. We talked about it and decided to finish the INFILS of two soft ducks. We did the INFILS uneventful and proceded to LZ29 for landing. We landed and shut down. We decided to inspect the rotor just in case there may have been some damage. We shut down and saw that the blade tips had some damage. We decided to take the aircraft back to Hurlburt. We started up and

24 yes old

Craig Dock, Sgt, [redacted], left gunner, A46250

While performing duties as the left scanner we were shooting a SOF Duck approach to the yellow river near LZ 29. We had made a clearing pass prior to this approach to verify adequate rotor clearance.

We decided that the LZ provided adequate room for the SOF Duck infil and set up for a practice Low and Slow approach.

On the practice approach we decended to 10 feet above the water and a foward air speed between 5 and 10 knots.

I began scanning the tree line and the rotor disc for clearance as soon as we began our decent.

I estimate our rotor clearance was no less than 15 feet and then looked down and foward to clear the aircraft to continue decending.

I then looked foward to see if the treeline was extending into our flight path. It looked Clear so I then scanned along the rotor tips and the trees.

When I looked back to the 8:30 position on the rotor disc I recognized our drift towards the tree line and called "STOP LEFT".

The blades then struck a fairly small branch and I continued to say "STOP left".

clarified verbally NARROW POINT OF TREES, wide area to drop location PPC

real damage. We saw that the rotor tips had taken damage from the tree and determined that the aircraft was safe enough to return to base.

Sgt Brien K. J. Smith [redacted] Tail Gunner Scanner
25 yrs A46250

On Saturday 4 May 91 I was preforming duties on the ramps during a soft duck (craft) insertion with a swimmer deployment. On the first approach it was preformed using a simulated duck and team. While on final approach I called the tail clear of the tree line and called the tail clear down. The aircraft was then cleared down to 10 feet by the right, left and then tail. At the 10 foot call by the F.E. in the door I took over the calls and proceded to call the aircraft down. While talking the aircraft down I heard the left scanner call stop left. followed shortly by 2 more stop left calls. The right scanner made clear right calls after each stop left call. The aircraft was moved (flown) over to the right and the simulated infil was completed. We then flew out of the river channel and set up for our next approach. While setting up for the next infil the left scanner said he thought mayby something hit the blades on the left side. The F.E. said all Aircraft indications were good and the pilots said the controls felt fine. The Aircraft commander then ask the crew how they felt about it and asked if they wanted to continue on. All agreed with no apreheision. 2 more live infils were completed with no problems. After dropping off the team leader in LZ 29 we decided to shut down and inspect. This is when the damage was found. We started back up and came home.

For Safety Use Only

4 MAY 91

Staff Sergeant Michael L. Hulin, [redacted], Flight Engineer / Right Scanner. 25 A/1350B

I was right scanner flying on a mission to drop 50F Ducks into Yellow River. Run up and the flight to the drop area were uneventful. We needed to decide where to drop the team, so we flew up the river looking for [redacted] the safety boat and drop zone. We found the spot and proceeded to do a practice run with no drop as briefed. We made the approach and dropped into the river, I made altitude calls down to 10 ft and stated several times that we were well clear on the right side. At 10 ft the tail scanner, Sgt Smith, made the altitude calls while the left scanner and myself continued to clear each side of the aircraft. At one point the left scanner called stop left I made the call that we were still clear on the right and to come right 10. We completed the practice drop and the left scanner said we might have hit some leaves or a branch. The aircraft felt real good although I heard a whistle in the blades which sounded like blade tape coming off. The crew decided every thing was fine and we continued to accomplish the live drops with no problems. After that we landed at LZ 29 to drop off the postmaster. For good measure we shut down and then discovered that some damage had occured to the tip caps of several blades. Since the plane was flying good and the damage was not too extensive we flew back to Hailburt and shut down.

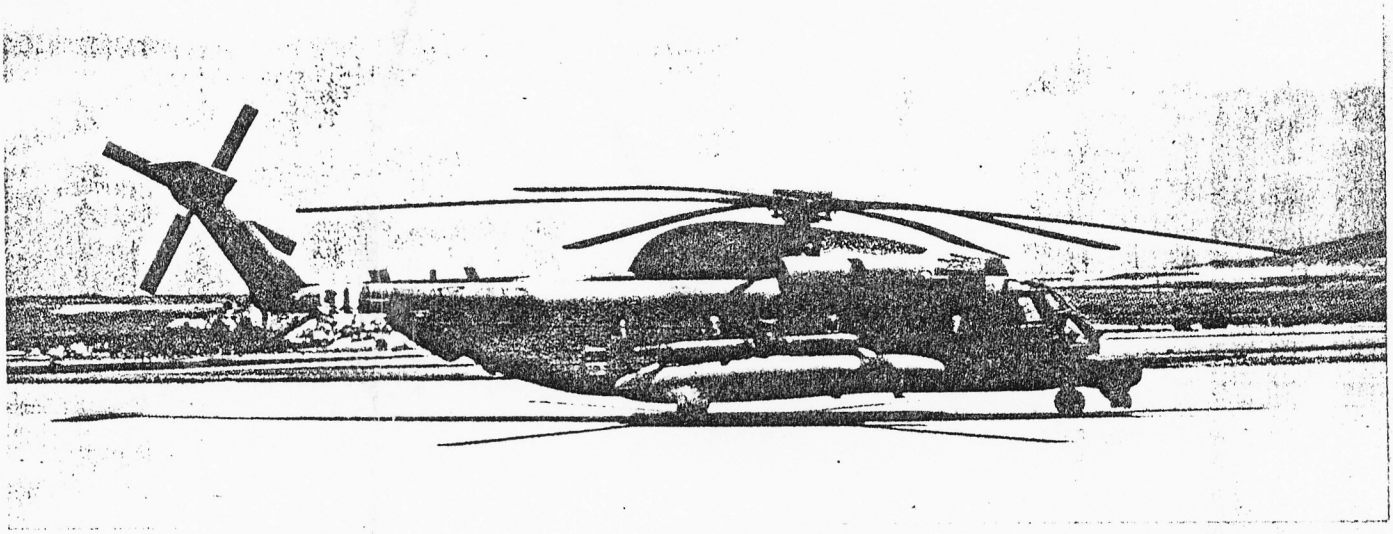
M. L. Hulin

HUX EDWARD L SSGT [redacted] 31YRS

FE (CENTER SEAT DUTIES) A113X0B

ON A DAY BOAT/SWIMMER DEPLOYMENT MISSION, 4 MAY 91, I WAS PERFORMING FE DUTIES IN THE COCKPIT. OUR FIRST APPROACH WAS DECIDED TO BE A SIMULATED DEPLOYMENT. WE PERFORMED A MODIFIED HOVER COUPLER APPROACH TO THE INTENDED LZ. I HAD FINISHED THE CHECKLIST, TURNED ON THE WINDSHIELD WIPERS AND WAS SETTING UP TO TAKE A STORE POINT FOR LATER NAVIGATION. THE LEFT SCANNER MADE A "STOP LEFT" CALL, FOLLOWED SHURTLY BY TWO MORE "STOP LEFT" CALLS. RIGHT SCANNER HAD CLEARED THE AIRCRAFT RIGHT ON ALL CALLS & PILOT HAD INITIATED CORRECTED ACTIONS. AFTER COMPLETION OF THE MANEUVER AND IN SITTING UP FOR THE LIVE EVENTS THE LEFT SCANNER SAID HE THOUGHT WE MAY ~~HAVE~~ HAVE HIT SOMETHING. AIRCRAFT PERFORMANCE & INDICATIONS WERE NORMAL. BLADE NOISE MAY HAVE INCREASED BUT NOT TO ANYTHING UNUSUAL (SOMETHING LIKE BLADE TAPE SEPERATING).

WE MADE TWO MORE UNEVENTFUL INFILTRATIONS OF BOATS & SWIMMERS BEFORE GOING TO LZ 29 FOR A PAX DROP OFF. THERE WE DECIDED WE HAD TIME TO SHUT DOWN AND INSPECT THE AIRCRAFT JUST IN CASE. UPON SHUT DOWN & INSPECTION (MYSELF, SSGT HULIN (FE)) MINOR DAMAGE TO 4 TIP CAPS AND A 5TH SMASHED CAP WERE NOTED. AT THAT POINT WE RESTARTED THE AIRCRAST AND RETURNED TO BASE.



Paul converted his Pave Low from Airfix's 1/72 CH-53 kit. The desert tan and brown camouflage scheme features three white stripes around the tail boom, perhaps special markings for the re-taking of Kuwait. Model photos by Darla Gawelski.

# Modeling a Desert Storm MH-53J Pave Low in 1/72 scale

## A conversion based on Airfix's CH-53 helicopter

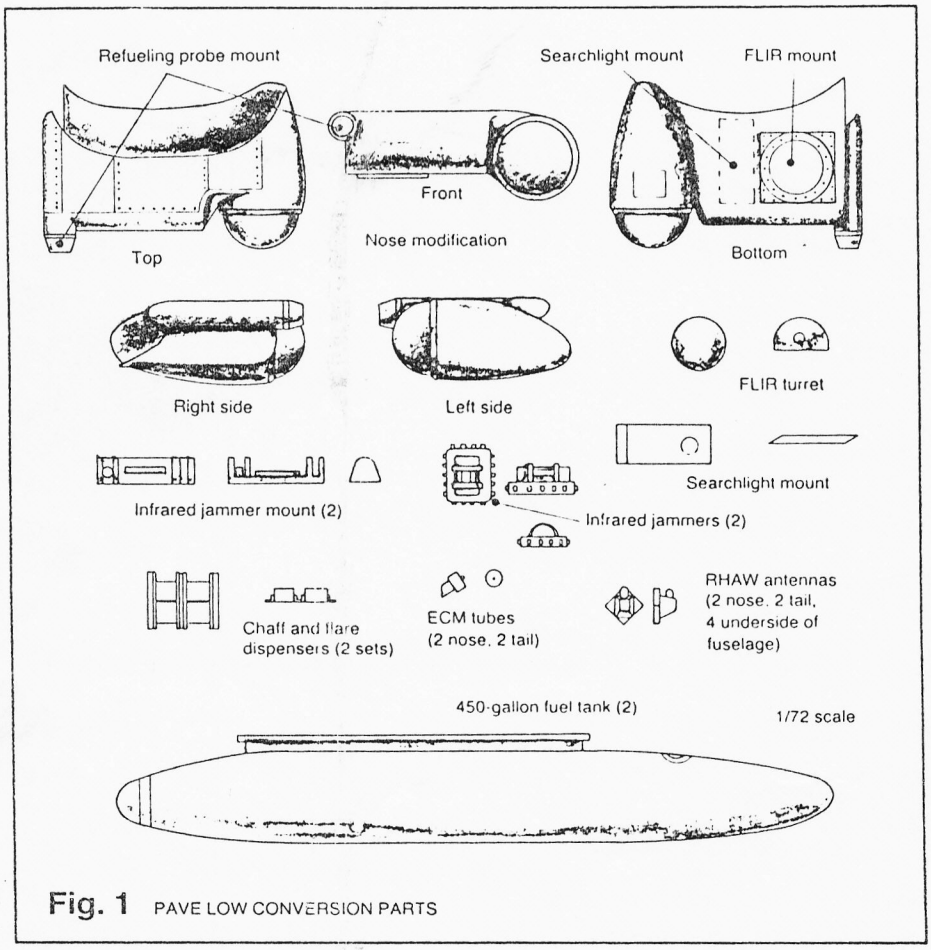



**Fig. 1** PAVE LOW CONVERSION PARTS

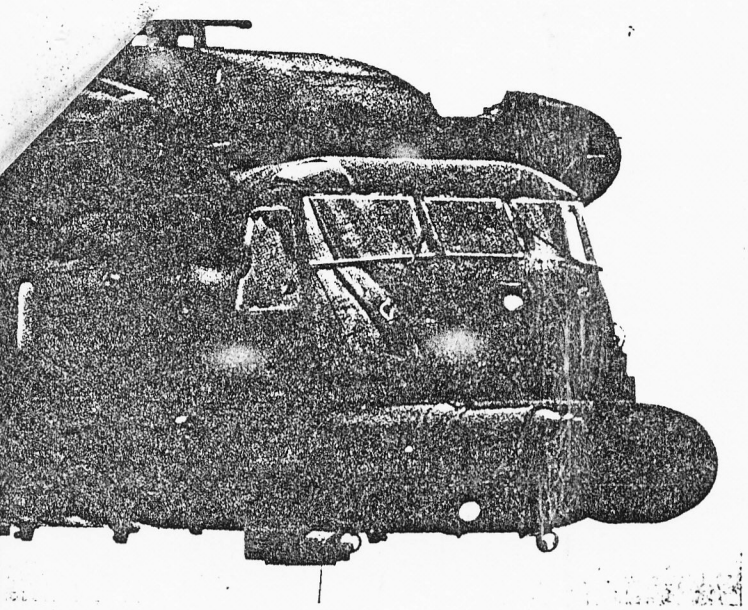
**BY PAUL BOYER**

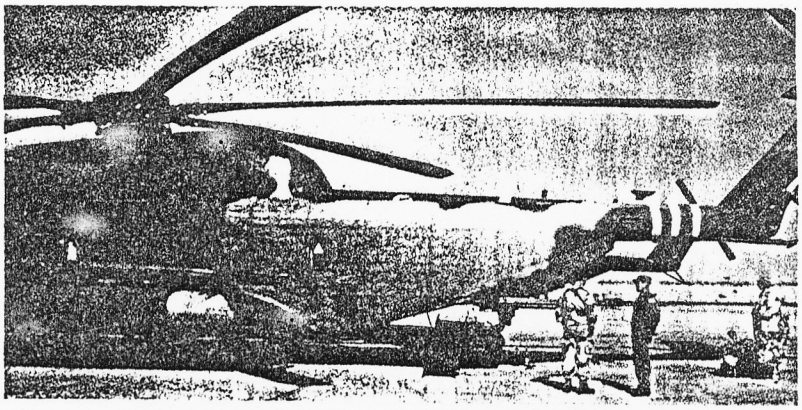
TO AN AIRMAN shot down over enemy territory, the roar of the rescue chopper is the sweetest sound he could hear. Scared, hurt (ejections without injury are rare), and definitely alone, a downed airman knows that the rescue force is his only hope of avoiding capture or death.

The United States Air Force fine-tuned the art of combat rescue in Vietnam, first with the Sikorsky HH-3 Jolly Green Giant, and then with the HH-53C Super Jolly Green Giant. With "Sandy" A-1 Skyraiders and later with A-7D Corsair IIs flying cover, the rescue forces saved dozens of Americans from signing in at the "Hanoi Hilton."

**Combat rescue today.** Although today's Air Force rescue force still uses the H-53 airframe, the modified MH-53J "Pave Low" chopper is far more advanced than earlier versions. The Air Force has converted many of its HH-53B and C Super Jollies by adding a forward-looking infra-red (FLIR) turret, an AN/APQ-158 radar (similar to that in the A-7D Corsair II), a powerful searchlight, radar homing and warning antennas, and other sensors.

To help suppress enemy ground fire, the Pave Low can carry either GAU-2B/A 7.62 mm Miniguns or .50-caliber machine guns mounted in the forward





(Left) A welcome sight to a downed pilot: A European 1 Pave Low coming in with a pararescue specialist (PJ) in the door. Note the FLIR turret under the chin, and the massive radome. USAF via Sherman Collings. (Above) A good look at the hastily applied white stripes on a Desert Storm Pave Low. Note the chaff and flare dispensers bolted to the side of the fuselage and the .50-caliber machine gun on the rear ramp. Bill Woodier via Dick Cole.

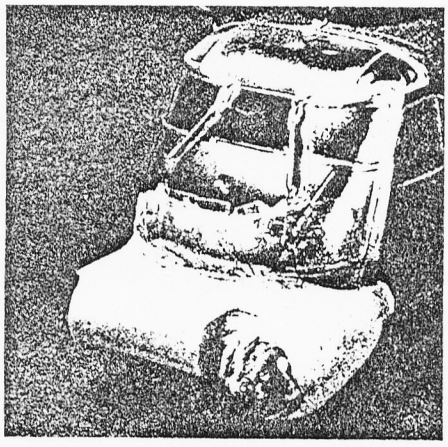


Fig. 2. Paul temporarily attached the rough nose modification over a Bare-Metal Foil barrier. After the epoxy putty set, the assembly was popped off and sanded to final shape.

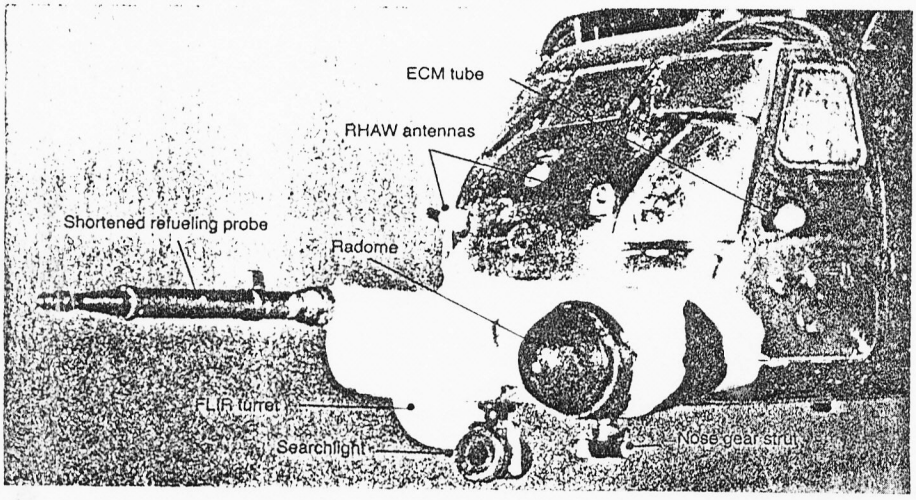



Fig. 3. The nose modification ready to paint. Note Bare-Metal Foil used to mask the windows. The refueling probe was shortened and the lensless searchlight came from a Matchbox Chinook.

cabin door and forward port window and on the rear ramp. Mounted just above the huge 450-gallon drop tanks are infrared jammers to deceive heat-seeking missiles. Chaff and flare dispensers are bolted onto the fuselage sides aft of the sponsons.

Not all Pave Low helicopters mount the same equipment. Photos show some without infrared jammers, some with different chaff and flare dispenser configurations or antenna position changes, and some with a pair of huge struts supporting the fuel tank mounts and sponsons. If you want an accurate model, pick one aircraft and replicate it.

**Desert Storm service.** War stories are just emerging, and it's clear the Pave Low helicopters played important roles in that conflict. The choppers' duties included rescuing downed airmen and inserting and extracting special forces troops deep behind enemy lines in Iraq and Kuwait.

On the first night of the war, Pave Low helicopters working with U. S. Army AH-64 Apaches knocked out two Iraqi early-warning radar sites, opening the way for bombers to strike other military targets. On January 21, 1991, a pair of Pave Lows rescued a downed F-14A pilot just outside Baghdad. This well-publicized mission involved Air Force A-10s that destroyed an Iraqi military truck bearing down on the injured Navy flyer.

Some Pave Lows pictured in tan-and-brown camouflage also show three hastily applied white bands around the tail boom; one even has a camel mission symbol on the front of the FLIR "chin" mount.

The Pave Low helicopter was a star even before the Gulf War. Tom Clancy featured the big beast in his most recent techno-thriller, *A Clear and Present Danger*. In the book, Pave Lows were used to insert covert troops in Central America.

**Modeling the Pave Low.** I just had to have a Desert Storm Pave Low for my collection of 1/72 scale U. S. military aircraft. I already had an Airfix kit of the CH-53, so all I needed was a way to convert it to the MH-53J. (The 1/72 scale Fujimi kit could be used, too.) My curiosity, piqued by Clancy's book and reinforced by coverage of the war, got me looking for more information. FSM author David Klaus suggested I talk with Sherman Collings, who had produced a 1/48 scale resin conversion for the Revell H-53 kit. I purchased one of Sherman's kits and used it to create my conversion in 1/72 scale. Figure 1 shows the nose modifications, drop

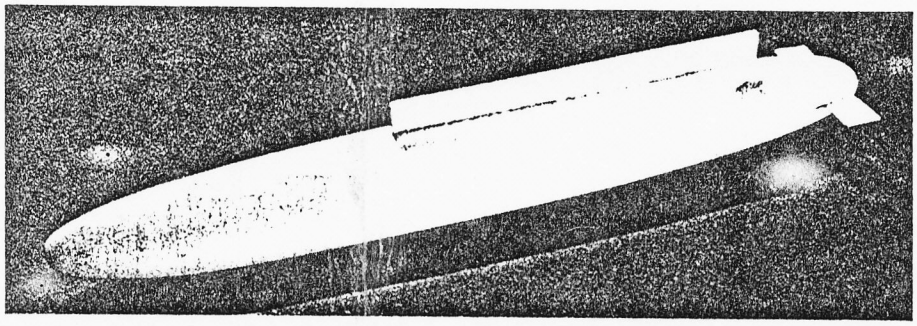


Fig. 4. The huge tanks started life in an old Airfix Phantom kit. The tapered ends were enlarged by applying Milliput epoxy putty.

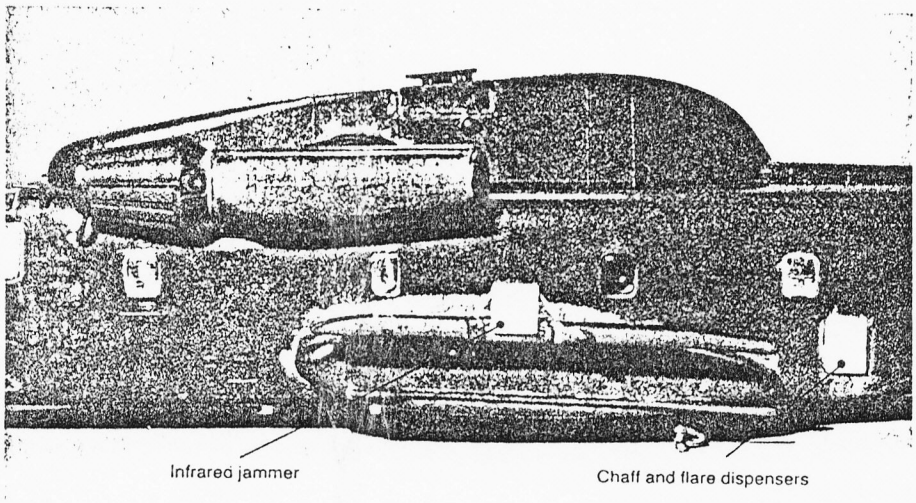



Fig. 5. Styrene sheet, tube, and stretched sprue make up the infrared jammers and chaff/flare dispensers.

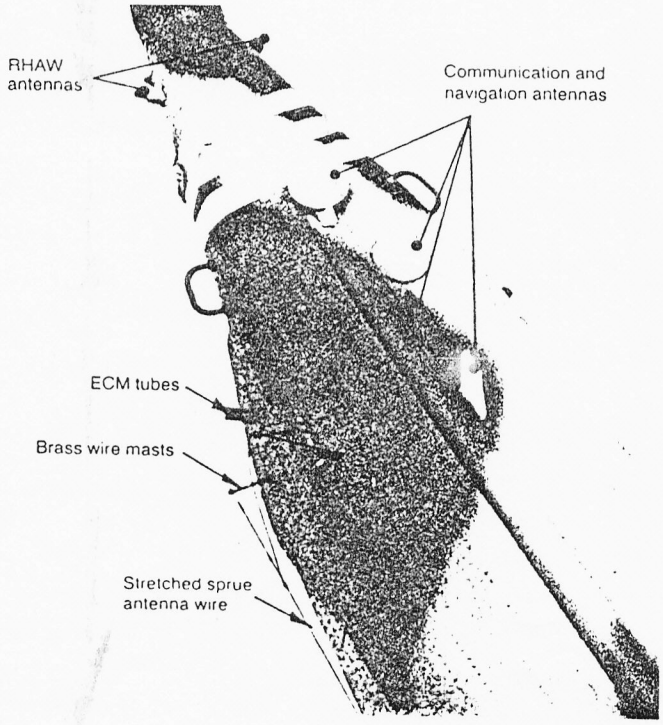



Fig. 6. Square-section styrene strip and rod from Evergreen Scale Models were used to make the RHAW and ECM antennas.

tanks, infrared jammers, and antennas in 1/72 scale.

I fashioned the radar and turret mount from sheet styrene, an old F4U Corsair drop tank, and Milliput epoxy putty. I sculpted the modification to a rough shape and let it set. Next I applied a worm of epoxy putty to the mating surface of the mount, then covered the front of the completed Airfix kit with Bare-Metal Foil: The foil served as a barrier between the plastic kit and the epoxy-putty nose conversion.

Pressing the conversion to the nose of the kit squashes the putty worm, forming a tight fit. I carved away excess putty that squeezed out and smoothed the fillet with a wet finger, Fig. 2.

Once the assembly set (about 24 hours), I popped the modification from the model and removed the foil barrier. Then I went to work on the final shape. Milliput sets to an easily sanded solid form. Working with 320-grit wet-or-dry sandpaper, I began to refine the shape of the mount. As I got closer to the correct profile, I switched to 400-grit, then 600-grit. When a chip of putty broke off a corner, I reattached it with super glue.

I added a section of round sprue to the upper right corner of the nose modification, then mounted a shortened Airfix refueling probe. Underneath, I made a vacuum-formed copy of the FLIR turret from Testor/Italeri's AC-119K Stinger kit and attached it underneath the mount, Fig. 3. I glued the searchlight from a Matchbox CH-47 Chinook kit to a rectangle of .060" styrene.

**Big tanks.** Over the years, larger drop tanks have been hung on the rescue birds. Tanks nearly identical to F-105 wing tanks were used on early Super Jollies, and these come in the kit. Since then units similar to F-105 center-line tanks were used, and finally, the big, fat jobs on Pave Low.

I searched through my spare parts box for tanks that came close to the length and diameter of the huge tanks. I found a couple of incorrectly shaped center-line tanks from an Airfix Phantom. The ends were too tapered, so I fattened them with epoxy putty and sanded them to shape. I added simple sheet styrene fins to the aft end of each tank, and .060" pylons to mount the tanks to the sponsons, Fig. 4.

**Infrared jammers.** The infrared jammers (sometimes known as "hot bricks") were easy to fashion. First, I had to remove the position lights from the sponsons — these were reattached later. Next, I cut and filed a section of the outside edge of the sponson for the jammer mount, Fig. 5.

I made the jammers by splitting styrene tubing and attaching each piece to a square of .060" styrene. I added stretched sprue braces last.

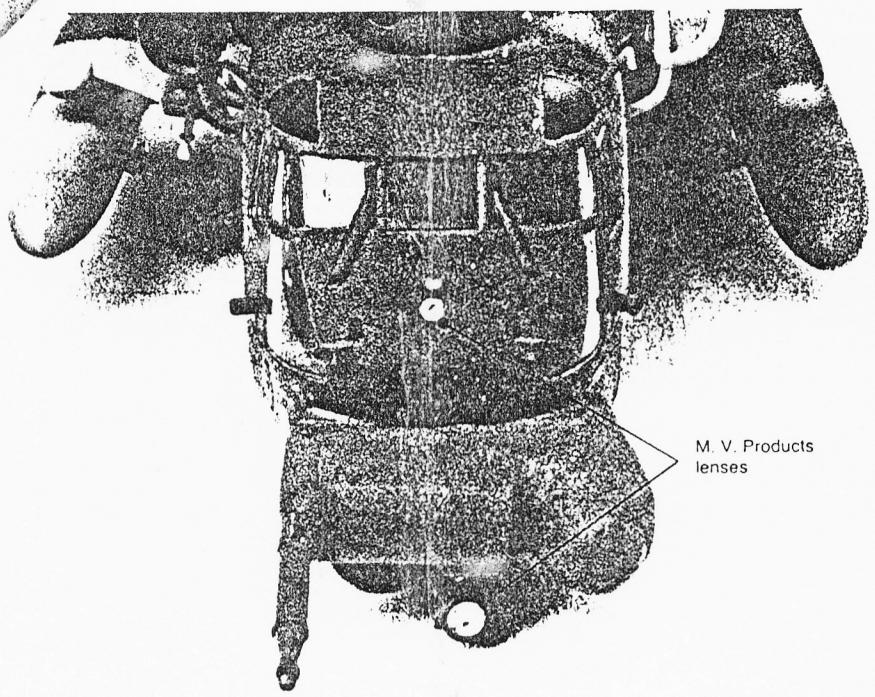



Fig. 7. More antennas complicate the outline of the nose of the Pave Low.

**RHAW antennas.** The radar homing and warning (RHAW) sensors were easy to fashion from Evergreen square-section styrene strip. I made the little knobs on the ends from a short section of styrene rod. I made the other communication antennas from sheet styrene and stretched sprue and used styrene rod for the ECM tubes fore and aft, Figs. 6 and 7.

**Finish.** Before Desert Storm, Pave Low helicopters were painted in a European 1 scheme of FS 34092 green, FS 34102 green, and FS 36118 Gunship Gray. For desert use, a modified "Asia Minor" scheme was applied (page 30).

I tinted Floquil military Buff with a little railroad Reefer Yellow, then applied an overall coat. For the brown I used Polly S Earth Red.

The photos I've seen of the Desert Storm Pave Lows show no national insignia. The machine I modeled had three hastily applied white bands around the tail boom, covering the serial number. I applied black numbers and letters from my leftover decal pile. When dry, I hand brushed Polly S white over them.

I finished the rotors with a mix of Floquil Engine Black and Grimy Black. I dry-brushed the rotor head details with silver, then wiped each blade with gray pastel dust on a cotton swab. A mix of black, brown, and gray pastel dust created the exhaust staining on the aft fuselage sides. I painted the position lights first with silver, then with Tamiya's clear red and clear green. M. V. lenses enhanced the taxi light below the windscreen and the searchlight below the nose. Tamiya clear green was used for the overhead windows in the cockpit. FSM

[Thanks to Sherman Collings for a wealth of information and photos of this helicopter. Thanks also to USAF Majors Dick Cole and David Klaus for providing photos of Desert Storm Pave Low choppers, and to Sandie Henry of the Air Force Special Operations Public Affairs office for the Desert Storm rescue story.]

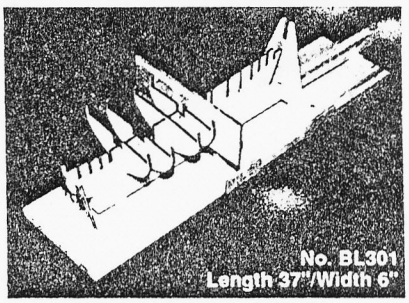
## REFERENCE


- Hall, George, *Superbase 17 Eglin*, Osprey Aerospace, London, 1990


## SOURCES

- Sherman Collings' 1/48 scale resin conversion kit for the MH-53J Pave Low is available from High Flight Models, a division of MB Models, 4242 Big Ben Court, Charleston, SC 29418. The conversion fits Revell's kit and contains all major exterior additions plus a pair of the large drop tanks.
- Bare-Metal Foil: Bare-Metal Foil & Hobby Co., P. O. Box 82, Farmington, MI 48024
- Contrail rod and tubing, available from Imported Specialties, 3655 Sullivant Ave., Columbus, OH 43228
- Sheet, tube, and rod styrene: Evergreen Scale Models, 12808 N. E. 125th Way, Kirkland, WA 98034
- Milliput epoxy putty: Rosemont Hobby Shop, P. O. Box 139, Trexler Mall, Trexlertown, PA 18087
- M. V. Products lenses, available from Wm. K. Walthers Inc., P. O. Box 18676, Milwaukee, WI 53218


BUILDING SLIP
for
Plank-on-Frame
Ship Models




New from Billing Boats!

The revolutionary new Building Slip from Billing Boats guarantees true bulkhead alignment. One of the most useful tools for model ship builders, it makes plank-on-frame hull assembly fast and accurate. The two-piece hardwood base is adaptable for small and large models. With the two base sections joined, it will hold any wooden keel up to 35" long.

**It's easy to use!** The grooved keel support is screwed into the base. Two guides (one permanent and one adjustable to accommodate models of all sizes) hold the keel steady. An alignment bar, centered on the keel, straddles the base. It slides freely to maintain proper alignment while you position each bulkhead into place. No need to take your model out of the slip once you've assembled the bulkheads. Simply remove the alignment bar and proceed with planking and final assembly.

**Available now!** Just released by Billing Boats, the Building Slip is in stock and ready for immediate shipment. Order yours today for a perfectly aligned hull every time.

Mfg. List $49.95
**Introductory Special Only $39.99!**

**Credit Card Holders call TOLL-FREE 800-222-3876 Monday-Friday 9-5 ET. Or FAX anytime! 717-839-2090**

MODEL EXPO, INC.
Dept. FSA1, PO Box 1000, Industrial Park Dr, Mt. Pocono, PA 18344

__ Please send Building Slip No. BL301
__ My check or Money Order is enclosed.
Please include $4.00 shipping and insured delivery. PA residents add 6% sales tax.
__ Charge my credit card ____ MC ____ Visa
Acc No.____
Exp.____
Signature____
Name____
Address____
City____ State____ ZIP____
Valid through 12/31/91. Copyright Model Expo, Inc. 1991

INTERNATIONAL COLOR AND CAMOUFLAGE

# USAF MH-53J PAVE LOW

BY SHERMAN J. COLLINGS

THE SECRET WORLD OF U.S. Air Force special operations includes combat rescue, the primary mission of the Sikorsky MH-53J Pave Low helicopter. Modified from Vietnam-era CH-53B/C airframes, the Pave Low choppers shed the old two-green and tan tactical scheme of the 1960s and '70s for new European 1 camouflage.

Until recently, the European 1 scheme was standard on Pave Lows. The wraparound scheme consisted of FS 34092 medium green, FS 34102 green, and FS 36118 Gunship Gray. These colors were consistent with the camouflage applied to most other Air Force aircraft from the late 1970s through the 1980s. Pave Lows in European 1 schemes were involved in the Grenada operation as well as Operation Just Cause in Panama.

With operations in the Persian Gulf area looming, some Pave Low choppers of the 20th Special Operations Squadron based at Hurlburt Field in Florida were painted in a modified Asia Minor scheme in late 1990. A standard Asia Minor scheme consists of a variegated pattern of tan, brown, and dark green over a light gray bottom. The modified scheme applied to the Pave Lows is a wraparound pattern of only the tan and brown. FS 20400 Tan Special (semigloss) and FS 30140 Brown Special were applied in the pattern shown. Neither the dark green nor light gray was used: The entire bottom of the aircraft was painted in FS 30140 Brown Special. As with any scheme, variations in the pattern occur. FSM

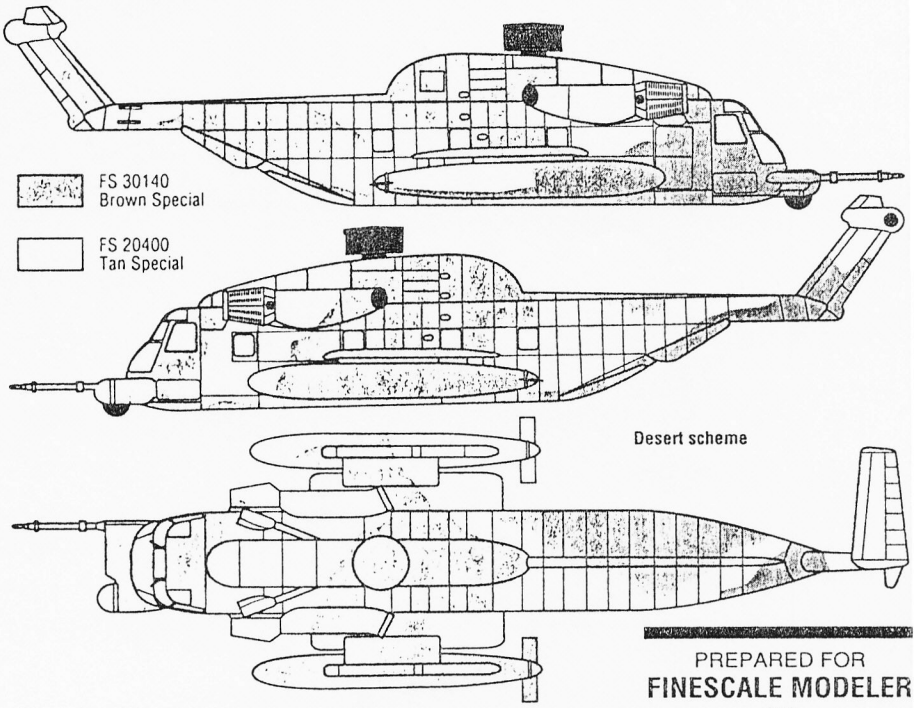
## AVAILABLE MODELING PAINTS

European 1 scheme:

- FS 34092—Gunze Sangyo (H302), Humbrol (149), Pactra Acrylic (A31), Precision (M97), Testor Model Master (1764), Xtracolor (X114)
- FS 34102—Floquil Military (300199), Gunze Sangyo (H303), Humbrol (117), Pactra Acrylic (A33), Polly S (500815), Precision (M135), Testor Model Master (1713), Xtracolor (X116)
- FS 36118—Floquil Military (300204), Gunze Sangyo (H305), Humbrol (USN1), Pactra Authentic (M31), Polly S (500822), Testor Model Master (1723), Xtracolor (X130)

Modified Asia Minor scheme:

- FS 30140—Polly S Earth Red (500829, billed as FS 30177) is an exact match
- FS 20400—Floquil Military Buff (300075) with a tint of yellow is close, Xtracolor (X145)




PREPARED FOR
FINESCALE MODELER
BY
Steve Davis

SIKORSKY **MH-53J Pave Low** 1990

