



80TH FIGHTER SQUADRON

HEADHUNTER HEADLINES



- *Special Edition* -

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Volume V Number 17

"AUDENTES FORTUNA JUVAT"

June 15, 1995

JUVAT SHOT DOWN OVER BOSNIA!

Friday, 2 June, We heard on been shot down wingman of saw the plane get hit by missile), break in two, undercast. No chute was immediately thought of **HEADHUNTERS** who are that are involved in the I'm sure we all said a pilot--who ever he was-- wasn't hurt by the and somehow he was out-of- control plane crashed....

Then, on 8 June, news! Twenty-nine year O'Grady, one of our been rescued by a team helicopter!! His the shoot-down was Wright, another of our

(O'Grady with flag)

Scott thanking his rescuers on 9 June at Aviano AB, Italy

was a very tense day. CNN that an F-16 had over Bosnia. The "Basher 52" said he a SAM (surface-to-air and disappear into the observed. I some of our active duty now in other squadrons air strikes in Bosnia. little prayer for the that somehow he impact of the SAM, able to eject from his wreckage before it

we heard the great old Capt Scott F. JUVAT Members, had Marine Corps rescue wingman at the time of Capt Bob "Wilbur" LTM members! They

were fired upon at 9:07 a.m. as they flew a patrol enforcing a no-fly zone for Operation Deny Flight, which has entailed almost 42,000 NATO flights over Bosnia since it began two years ago. Scott had ejected safely from his F-16C after being hit by an SA-6 missile, had only three minutes to hide before armed enemy found his parachute, and had evaded enemy capture for six days and six nights!

It was about 1:20 a.m. local time June 8 when Capt Thomas "T.O." Hanford, flying his F-16C over the Adriatic Sea, had some extra gas to burn. He decided to use the time to call out "Basher 52" on his radio--his squadron mate and friend who had been shot down 6 days earlier and not heard from since. At about 2:08 a.m., Hanford heard a faint voice calling out Basher 52. "I had to verify it [the voice], and it took me a while to fly circles around the area," Hanford said. "I asked him a personal question."

The question--the answer to which, known only to Scott and the rescue team, would confirm it really was Scott and not someone else that would lure the rescue team into a trap. The radio exchange went something like this:

Basher 52, Basher 52, this is Basher 11
Basher 11, this is Basher 52 -- I'm alive! I'm alive!
Basher 52, What was your squadron in Korea?
Basher 11, I was in the Juvats--**JUVATS!!**
Basher 52, copy you're alive! -- Help is on the way!

Hanford added, "I'm just glad I was there fishing on the right frequency with enough gas. It was a pretty emotional moment, and flying after that point wasn't easy."

To avoid being detected by the enemy, Scott communicated his location to Hanford using a code he had devised. It took Hanford 20 minutes to "break the code." "It was only something that one of our pilots would know," Hanford said.

Once Hanford pinpointed Scott's location, he immediately radioed his superiors with the pilot's location and condition. Based on this and other information, American and NATO commanders in the early hours of June 8 launched one of the largest combat search-and-rescue missions since the Persian Gulf War. After three hours of intense planning, 40 Air Force, Marine Corps, and Navy combat planes from ships and bases in the region were airborne to rescue Scott.

By radio, Scott guided his rescuers to an uninhabited clearing in the rugged and hilly area about 10 miles from where he parachuted. About 5:50 a.m. local time, about 40 minutes after dawn, the two dark green and gray Marine helicopters cleared the USS Kearsage and raced 87 miles through the clouds to Scott's location. They were escorted by two AH-1W SuperCobra gunships and two AV-8B Harrier II jump-jets from the carrier.

After making radio contact with Scott at 6:12 a.m., the helicopters spotted a red smoke flare and landed at about 6:44 a.m. local time--only about four and a half hours after Hanford first heard the voice.

As 20 Marines jumped out and secured the area, they spotted Scott about 50 yards away, clad in his flight suit, survival vest, and green survival hat turned inside out to show bright orange, "so at least they would know that anybody who has got an orange hat on must be a stupid American," running toward them with his pistol in his hand. As he was helped into the second helicopter, Scott said, "I'm O.K. Get me out of here!" Less than two minutes after arriving, the helicopters lifted off and headed back to the carrier. Cold, bearded, hungry, and dehydrated,

Scott was wrapped in a blanket and given a military ration on his way out. At 7:07 a.m., Serbian forces on the ground shot at the aircraft with small arms and at least one shoulder-fired SAM. The helicopters landed safely at 7:30 a.m., but small arms bullet holes were found in the chopper.

He later in Alexandria, telephone that them gave him survive.

On June his rescue, publicly for the thanking God “heroes” who He was greeted flyover by “They say they their job, but there, they lives to get me said to members and



told his family VA, via thinking about the strength to

9th, a day after Scott talked first time, and the rescued him. by cheers and a fellow pilots. were just doing they came in risked their out,” O’Grady squadron other well

wishers in a hanger at Aviano Air Base, Italy. “If you want to find some heroes, that’s where you should look, because those are the biggest heroes in the world.”

He recounted how he hunted ants, squeezed precious drops of moisture from his socks and hid like a “scared little bunny” in the bushes as Serb soldiers fired their rifles just a couple of yards away. Saying he was no “Rambo” and no hero, he attributed much of his survival for six days to his faith.

“If it wasn’t for God’s love for me and my love for God, I wouldn’t have gotten through it, and He’s the one that delivered me here, and I know that in my heart,” he said.

But Lt Gen Michael E. Ryan, commander of Allied Air Forces Southern Europe (and a **Headhunter** also!) said Scott deserved some credit on his own.

“He knew what had to be done when he hit the ground, and he did it marvelously,” Gen Ryan said.

Scott said he sampled grass after he saw some cows grazing and decided “If they could live off of it, I could.” One day he stuck his finger into an anthill near where he had bedded down in the bushes. “They scamper really quickly so it’s hard to catch them,” he said, breaking into a grin. “Food aversion isn’t a problem when you’re hungry.”

On Sunday, June 11th, Scott returned to Andrews Air Force Base, MD. The small Air Force C-20 executive jet that carried him from Europe touched down at 2:29 p.m. EDT as an Air Force band struck up the “Queen City” march and scores of family and well wishers waited with flags and flowers in welcome. Air Force Chief of Staff Ronald R. Fogleman was the first to greet Scott as he got off the plane. After emotional embraces with his family members, Scott was ushered toward a microphone. He stood by while Gen Fogleman told onlookers that it was “a great day for America....One of our own has come home.”

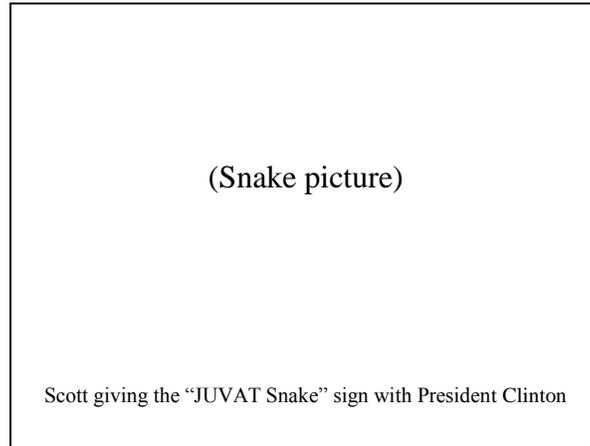
Scott, who at one point held out a medal he wore around his neck for his sister Stacey to see, then walked behind the podium.

“First off, I gotta tell you that in the past I had my doubts that miracles were possible,” he said. “But I stand here before you and basically want to tell you that if it wasn’t for God and the miracle he basically blessed me with as far as being able to stay alive and come back here and see you all, it wouldn’t be possible.”

Aside from a teens when he wanted Scott has always for the Air Force, said expect him to climb

“Scott’s doing his father said. “He’s and doing what the Air He’s only disappointed

In an 11 June e-JUVATS from Lt Col Commander of the in Korea, he said:



brief period in his early to be a Ninja Warrior, wanted to fly fighters family members. They back into the cockpit.

what he wants to do,” happy flying the F-16 Force wants him to do. when he’s not flying.”

mail message to Robert A. Coe, present 80th Fighter Squadron “...Thank God for the

quality of training, fellowship, and pride that the Juvats of yesterday and today enjoy! Praise God for placing a hedge of protection around Scott O’Grady!”

Col Bob Kan (Ret), Juvat Lead ‘72-’73, replied: “Thanks for the note on JUVAT O’Grady. I thought his behavior and gestures were JUVAT-like! We too, thank God for his safe return, and are mighty impressed by his performance and his representation of the true fighter pilot.”

A very happy President Clinton called Scott’s parents and said; “Capt O’Grady’s bravery in the face of great danger and uncertainty are an inspiration to all of us.” We agree!!

Scott’s lunch with his Commander-in-Chief at the White House on Monday, June 12th, hosted by the President and attended by his parents, grandparents, brother and sister, was a far cry from his diet of ants and plants while evading capture. They feasted in private on grilled vegetable gazpacho and lump crab meat salad, lamb chops with layered potatoes and mushrooms, spring greens and asparagus, followed by cherry sherbet and fresh fruits. Surveying the spread, Scott cracked, “You’ll understand, Mr. President, if I don’t eat the salad!”

After lunch, Scott was treated to a hero’s welcome at the Pentagon. Accompanied by the President, Defense Secretary William Perry, and Joint Chiefs Chairman General Shalikashvili, Scott walked out of the Pentagon to an outdoor platform overlooking the Potomac. President Clinton said; “He gave us something more precious than we can ever give him: a reminder of what is very best about our Country.” Perry said; “We’re here today to celebrate true grit. They shot down his plane but not his spirit.”

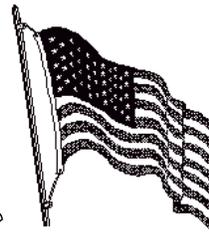
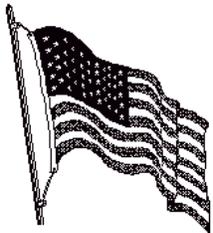
Scott, along with his sister and father, was the guest on CNN’s Larry King Live June 14th. He received a call from London and Israel--both of which were to say how much they admired him for his actions. Also during the one-hour show, many of the Marine rescuers from the USS Kearsage called to say hello. The surprise of the evening, however, was a call from our former First Lady, Nancy Reagan. She and the President were watching, and she expressed their

pride in Scott's actions. She also invited him out to see them in California! Scott was a little overwhelmed!

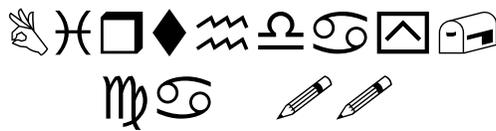
As I said in my 9 June letter to you, Scott, on behalf of the entire **headhunter** Organization--all the WWII, BTW, Korean, Vietnam, and the JUVATS--we want you to know how proud we are of you! Your outstanding cool and courage under extreme conditions are an inspiration to all of us.

"Hoover," we would like to do something for you to show our pride. We can't give you a new red Ferrari (we only give out one of those per year, and it went to me this year!); however, we can make you a LifeTime Member of the **HEADHUNTERS**. Your permanent card is being made, and it will be sent to you in 2-3 weeks. It isn't much, but it's the feelings that go with it that really count--and you can be assured it's a bundle of pride from all of us--JUVAT!! Outstanding job! Welcome back! It's hard to keep a good man down!! And as you demonstrated, "Once a JUVAT, Always a JUVAT!!"

Sources for the above pictures and information came from: Associated Press, Air Force Times, CNN, CNN Headline News, and the Columbus, GA Ledger-Enquirer.



**It may not be perfect,
but it's way ahead of whatever's in second place!!**



The next **HEADHUNTER HEADLINES** will be dated 1 September 1995.

CINCINNATI, HERE WE COME -- SEPTEMBER '96!!

✓6,

Col Jay E. "Jay Bird" Riedel, USAF Ret
 Juvat Lead '79-'80



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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