

‘These Things We Do That Others May Live’



THE SORTIE

FALLBROOK SQUADRON 87

Capt. James Pedersen- Editor

In September, Fallbrook Squadron 87 conducted a series of search and rescue training exercises at Fallbrook Airpark that was attended by Civil Air Patrol squadrons from Hemet, Fullerton, Long Beach, and San Diego. The Mission Coordinator for the exercise was 1Lt. Rich Lovick, the Safety Officer was LtCol. Carl Morrison, the Operations Officer was Capt. Dale Hetrick, the Communication Officers were Maj. Joe DiMento and Capt. Dee Osargent. Public Affairs information was handled by Capt. James Pedersen. During the morning briefing Lt.Lovick covered search base procedures and reviewed the goals of the mission for the two day exercise, the upgrading of flight qualifications, Scanner and Observer duties, and airplane preparation. Col.Morrison covered safety procedures and suggestions for the exercise. Maj. DiMento and Maj. Osargent covered base communications and aircraft radio procedures. Maj. Jim Redmon functioned as one of the check pilots for flight crew trainee



Maj Jim Redmon, and Capt. Stuart Oster

upgrades in Mission Pilot, along with Mission Observer and Mission Scanner rides. The training exercise began with an individual pre-flight briefing for all the aircrews that highlighted the terrain and obstacles that were unique to each search area. The focus of the mission was on aircrew training using Direction Finding (DF) techniques for the location

of an Emergency Locator Transmission (ELT) beacon coming from a simulated downed aircraft. Approximately four to six search and rescue sorties were flown each day, with each ending in a post-flight briefing for all aircrews that evaluated the success of their mission. The in-flight DF crew procedure for the aircraft involved flying toward the ELT beacon using only the signal strength and direction meters in the front of the DF unit on the aircraft instrument panel to determine the direction of the signal. As the crew flew they changed the airplane heading approximately 5 degrees to the left and right until the needle on the signal direction meter was centered and watched for the needle on the signal strength meter to increase. When the signal strength needle began to decrease they recorded the latitude and longitude of that position. They then began to turn the aircraft identical to the needle on the direction meter and recorded that position in latitude and longitude as the needle bounced left to right and began to get weaker. At that point, they were close to being over the target ELT and performed a series of aircraft circles to give the aircrew a visual reference on the ground. Any position identification points were noted for discussion at the mission briefing later. This was invaluable experience for all aircrews, and the squadron wishes to thank LtCol Carl Morrison for the generous use of his hanger for the exercise.



Maj Brian LaPlante, Capt. Stuart Oster, and Capt. Dale Hetrick