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Smokejumper Obituary: Sisler, George K. (North Cascades 1957)

National Smokejumper Association

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Smokejumper Obituary

Sisler, George K. (North Cascades 1957)

Ken, 29, died February 7, 1967, while on a SOG mission in Laos. He was born September 19, 1937, in Dexter, Missouri.

Ken was a member of the 5th Special Forces Group, 1st Special Forces in Vietnam. He was the platoon leader/advisor to a special United States/Vietnam exploitation force. While on patrol deep within enemy dominated territory, his platoon was attacked from three sides by a company sized enemy force. Lieutenant Sisler quickly rallied his men, deployed from a better defensive position, called for air strikes, and moved among his men to encourage and direct their efforts. Learning that two men were wounded and unable to pull back the perimeter, he charged from the position through intense enemy fire to assist them. He reached the men and began carrying one of them back to the perimeter, when he was taken under more intensive automatic weapons fire by the enemy. Laying down his wounded comrade, he killed three onrushing enemy soldiers by firing his rifle and silenced the enemy machine gun with a grenade. As he returned the wounded man to the perimeter, the left flank of the position came under extremely heavy attack by the superior enemy force and several additional men of his platoon were quickly wounded. Realizing the need for instant action, to prevent his position from being overrun, he picked up some grenades and charged single-handedly into the enemy onslaught, firing his weapon, and throwing grenades. This singularly heroic action broke up the vicious assault and forced the enemy to begin withdrawing. Despite the continuing enemy fire, he was moving about the battlefield directing air strikes upon the fleeing force when he fell mortally wounded. The light medium speed Naval ship USNS Sisler is named after him.

Ken jumped at NCSB during the 1957 season.

(end of excerpt)