

Air Combat Command

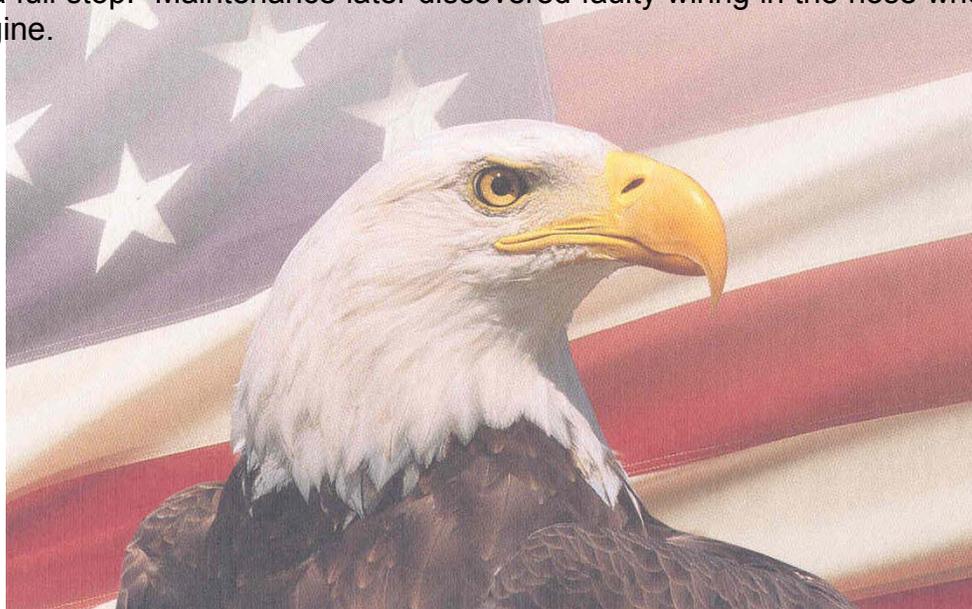
Aircrew Safety Award of Distinction

Maj Rick Moses • Capt Rich Rosa • Capt Oswald Medley • Lt Christopher Papa

Shortly after initial takeoff, during a night sortie the crew of an RC-135 noticed small fluctuations in the oil pressure for the number one engine. As the copilot reduced engine power, the fluctuations stopped and there were no further abnormal indications. When the landing gear was lowered on the second approach, the nose gear indicator displayed an unsafe condition. The navigator, Maj Rick Moses, immediately checked circuit breakers and the alignment indicators for the nose gear, while the instructor pilot, Capt Rich Rosa, checked hydraulic quantities and pressures -- all systems checked good. Capt Rosa recycled the gear twice while on final and got the same indicators. Capt Rosa planned to leave the gear down on the go around, but as they began the climbout, the number one engine oil pressure began to fluctuate violently accompanied by the low oil pressure light. Taking immediate action to eliminate unnecessary drag with thrust loss, Capt Rosa raised the landing gear and retarded the number one engine to idle once the gear had retracted. The aircraft leveled off at 3,000 feet above ground level and the crew requested a holding pattern. The engine now appeared to be operating normally in idle with the low oil pressure light out and no other abnormal indications. Capt Rosa elected to leave the engine running in idle and fly a three-engine approach for a full stop following the resolution of the landing gear malfunction. While in holding, the crew again lowered the landing gear via the normal system and once again the nose gear failed to indicate down and locked. After completing the landing gear alternate extension checklist with the same indications, the crew decided to leave the nose gear down lock handle installed and pinned the nose gear down. They declared an in-flight emergency and flew a three-engine instrument landing system to a full stop. Maintenance later discovered faulty wiring in the nose wheel well as well as a missing oil cap for the number one engine.



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