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DIARY VERSION OF A...

RHINO RESCUE



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Monday

12:30 a.m. — 'Phone call from Mr. Wheeler, Director Uganda National Parks, Emergency at Buligi. White Rhino calf with snare caught firmly around the head. After a quick résumé of equipment and drugs I arrange to meet Senior Game Warden Pilot, Ian Ross at the Medical School.

1:00 a.m. — Met Ian Ross and advised of flight to Bukoba Airstrip, Murchison Falls National Park.

2:15 p.m. — Equipment ready, drugs made up. Arrived at Entebbe Airport. Filed flight plan. Aircraft fuelled, ready and waiting.

2:45 p.m. — Took off for Bukoba Airstrip.

3:00 p.m. — Landed Bukoba. Game Warden Augustine Bendevalé waiting with Land Rover and Rangers. Left immediately for Buligi Playgrounds to find Rhino.

3:30 p.m. — Four Rhino sighted in the shade of some trees. Two adult females each with a two-thirds grown calf, one of which had a snare deeply embedded in the muscle of the head and jaw with one end of the cable trailing. Estimated weight of victim in order to judge drug dosage. Decided to try to split the group into two, dart the calf and trust we could keep the mother at bay with Land Rover.

3:50 p.m. — Two darts loaded and ready. Attempted to stalk the Rhino on foot but failed due to sudden change in wind. Returned to Land Rover and gave chase. Darts fired but unsuccessful.

3:25 p.m. — In pursuit of the Rhino again.

3:50 p.m. — Successfully darted the calf in the hind quarter.

3:53 p.m. — Rhino calf immobilised and down. Approached the calf and separated the female with the Land Rover. Removed the snare, injected an enormous dose of penicillin, cleaned up the wound. The female Rhino had watched from about 20 yards but showed no signs of charging.

Other spectators included some 30 buffalo.

4:20 p.m. — Administered antidote.

4:25 p.m. — Respiration increased to 12 per minute.

4:30 p.m. — Calf regained its feet, trotted off to join its mother.

4:45 p.m. — 15 mins. observation then we left for Bukoba Airstrip.

5:00 p.m. — Arrived at Bukoba Airstrip. Augustine Bendevalé advised to watch the calf for a couple of days.

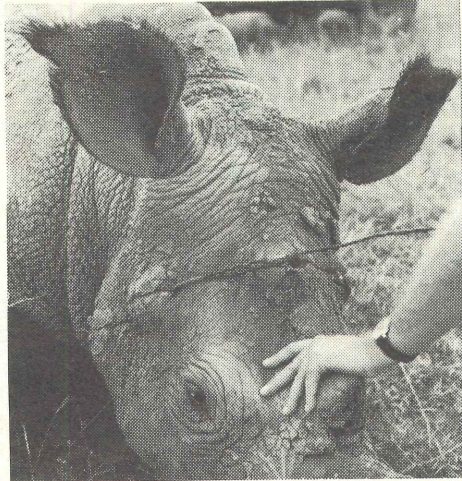
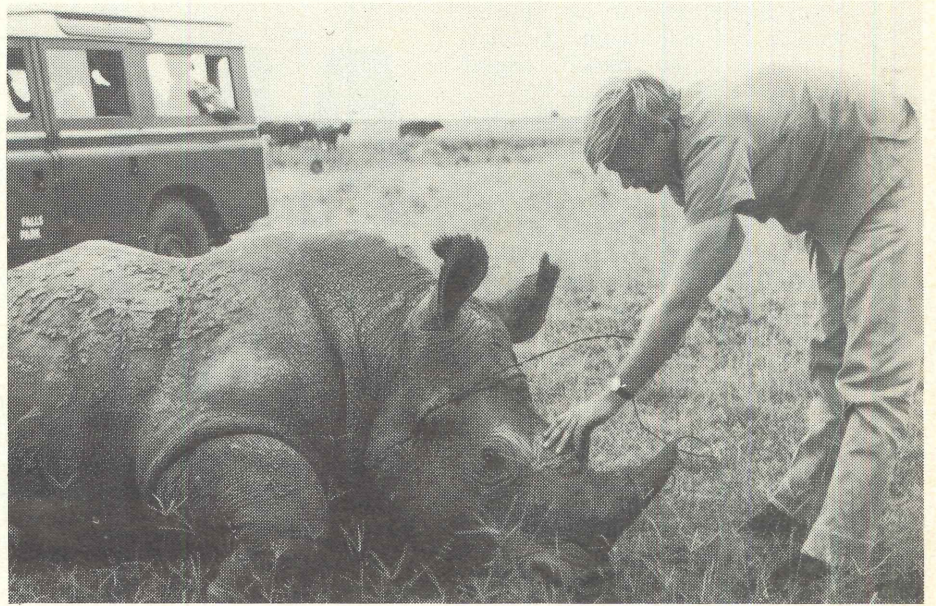
5:05 p.m. — Took off from Bukoba.

6:15 p.m. — Landed at Entebbe Airport.

6:25 p.m. — Welcome beer at the Lake Victoria Hotel, Entebbe.

Wednesday

Received Radiocall from Murchison Falls: "All well".



ABOVE: Murchison Falls Senior Warden Ian Ross examines the wounded rhino, with a herd of buffalo looking on. **LEFT:** Close-up of the injured calf. **BELOW:** Ian Ross removing the snare.

