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PICTURES OF TEAM

THE LOSS OF JAMES STRIDE

At 0800 hours, October 5, 1968, Recon Team Alabama with James Stride the 1-0 (One-Zero), Stephen Engelke the 1-1 (One-One), Lynne Black the 1-2 (One-Two) and six indigenous personnel were inserted on a reconnaissance mission into Target Area OSCAR-8 (YC561692) located in Laos. The team was inserted on the edge of an open field by two CH-34 helicopters. Once on the ground they came under sporadic gunfire and realized they were in the middle of a North Vietnamese Base camp. The One-Zero decided to break contact and guide the team down a well-used trail. Within minutes, RT Alabama was ambushed by the NVA and the team's Pointman Hoa Nguyen and Team Leader James Stride were killed in the initial burst. Due to the enemy's superior firepower and sheer numbers their bodies were not able to be recovered.

The remaining members regrouped and Lynne Black made contact with Covey to declare a Prairie Fire emergency as the team fought their way out of the NVA encirclement and headed into the jungle. RT Alabama was engaged multiple times by the North Vietnamese Army and had lost their Tailgunner Cong Nguyen before they could be extracted by the US Air Force Jolly Green Helicopter JG-32.

In trying to recover Recon Team Alabama, two ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) CH-34's were shot down and the fate of the crews are unknown. One US Jolly Green Helicopter (JG-10) was shot down and Major (O-4) Albert Dwayne Wester and Senior Airman (E-4) Gregory Paul Lawrence were Killed In Action.

RT Alabama's operation is well documented in Lynne Black's book: Whisky Tango Foxtrot and the History Channel's documentary: Heroes Under Fire, Jungle Ambush.

