

~~DECLASSIFIED~~

DATE: 30 October 1971

FLIGHT DESIGNATION: King 22

MISSION OBJECTIVE: Covey 273

LOCATION: 20 NM NE of L39

MISSION NUMBER #B-3-037 30 Oct. 71

SAVED: NONE

At approximately 1015Z we overheard the end of a conversation between an aircraft and Moonbeam. We called Moonbeam and were informed that Covey 273 an O-2 was approximately 20 NM NE of L-39 (Savannakhet) with a failed rear engine and did not desire any assistance. We continued a listening watch on Moonbeam primary frequency for about 5 minutes at which time we were informed that Covey 273 had switched frequencies. We immediately QSY'd to Smokey Control frequency and contacted Covey 273. He stated that his rear engine had failed, that he was approximately 10 NM NE of the field and had the runway in sight. He further stated that he was having no problems and needed no assistance. Weather in L-39 area was clear and visibility unrestricted. We informed Moonbeam of this and continued into the L-39 area. At approximately 1030Z Moonbeam called and informed us that Covey 273 had lost his front engine. We attempted contact with L-39 tower on both VHF and UHF but could not raise them. An Air America Caribu #392 on take off roll came up on VHF and said he would take a look around. We then contacted Smokey Control and Church bells to find out what information they had. Neither had any information but RAVEN 33 and A.A. Porter GN came up and said they would also look around. GN had heard a call from someone he assumed to be Covey 273 stating that they were looking for a level spot to set down and a quick consensus of the forces determined that the river banks would be the likely place to start looking. At this time A.A. helicopter H59 took off from L-39 after a briefing from Church bells. He stated that he would search the approaches to the runway. About 4 minutes later H-52 another A.A. helicopter took off and had just broken ground when H-59 sighted the Covey 273 aircraft at 1031Z approximately one mile from the runway (22) to the north east. He stated that there were a number of local people in the area waving their arms and pointing back along the flight path and he would check to see where they had bailed out. A few minutes search revealed no chutes so he returned to the crash site and set down with H-52 overhead. At this time Jack called and asked if we would like Jolly Green 62. We advised that there were a number of planes and choppers in the area and we had located the crash site so that JG62 would not be needed. At 1040Z H-59 called and reported 2 bodies in the crash, 1 apparently dead and the other very badly injured. He requested through Church bells to have two medics available and dispatched H-52 back to the field to pick them up. While H-52 was in transit we learned that the medics only had first aid training and so requested JG with 2 PJ's.

GROUP-4

Downgraded at 3 year intervals,
Declassified at 12 years

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They immediately headed toward L-39 with an ETA of 1145Z. Shortly after we received word from H-59 that the medics wished to move the bodies to L-39 ASAP and needed stretchers. H-52 returned to the field to bring 2 stretchers. At this time Raven 33, who had been made on Scene Commander at 1034Z, requested a flare ship from Moonbeam since it was nearly dark on the ground. Moonbeam began coordination for a flare ship but could not get one immediately. They diverted Mail 31 (OV-10) from his working area to the area because he was carrying flares. We then asked Raven 33 if the area was permeable and received an affirmative reply. At 1058Z we then told the on scene forces and Moonbeam that we would descend down to 3,000 feet and drop flares until Mail 31 or a flare ship arrived on scene. We made one flare drop just as the bodies were removed from the wreck and loaded on H59. At this time JG 62 landed at L-39 to await transfer. At 1129Z H59 landed and transfer of the injured was completed. As JG 62 was taking off, Jack called to have JG 62 and K22 proceed to U-Tapau with the survivor. The PJ's assessed his condition and decided that NKP would be much better because of the seriousness condition of the survivor. At this time the personnel from H59 at the crash site started searching the wreckage for any classified material and equipment, so K22 continued to drop flares. Raven 33 landed to refuel and H52 discontinued operations. Smokey, a ground mobile unit from Smokey control, was dispatched from the field with a guard team mounted by Church bells to guard the crash scene overnight. Mail 31 checked in and we notified him that he would not be needed and released him back to Moonbeam. At 1142Z we also notified Moonbeam that a flare ship would not be needed. JG 62 passed an ETA to NKP as 1135Z. K22 continued to drop flares to aid in the deployment of the guard team. H59 returned to the field and Raven 33 took off again to aid in the flare drops. The guard team was in place at approximately 1152Z and one more flare was dropped at 1155Z at which time Raven 33 and King 22 RTB'd. Seven flares were expended on the mission. Enroute back to Udorn Jack informed us that the patient would be moved from NKP to U-Tapau and diverted us to NKP to perform med-vac. A landing was made at NKP at 1223Z and taxi had commenced when word was received from Jack that the patient's condition had stabilized and we would not be needed for transport. K22 then took off and RTB'd to Udorn, landing at 1300Z.

SUPPORTING FORCES

AA392 -C-7
Raven 33-0-1
Hotel 52 - Helicopter
Mail 31-OV-10
Smokey Control
Golf November - Porter
Hotel 59 - Helicopter
Jolly Green
Churchbells
Smokey Mobile

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30 October 1971

O-2A 67-21439 20 TASS, 504 TASG, USAF, Da Nang

1Lt Robert Edward Ryan (KIA)

An O-2 FAC aircraft crashed near Savannakhet in southern Laos after being hit in the engine by ground fire. The pilot was killed in the incident.

THIS GUY MAY
HAVE SURVIVED

HE IS NOT ON VN VET WALL OR
COVER