

20 July 1969 mission
Team 36: Tim Greenly (TL), Mike Blymyer (ATL), Milford Harvey (rear scout)

As the world watched on live television, Neil A. Armstrong piloted the descent of the Apollo 11 lunar module, nicknamed "Eagle", and he and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin became the first human beings to land on the moon. On that same day as the world watched the moon landing Team-36 was involved in its own drama along Highway 1 in Vietnam.

The enemy had been pulling ambushes robbing civilians along Highway 1 in III Corps. Division wanted our Ranger company to go in, observe possible enemy action on Highway 1, and help Division determine where the enemy was basing from and what their strength was. Team-36 got tasked with the mission.

At that Time Tim Greenly was the TL, I was serving as the ATL, and Milford Harvey was our rear scout. Unfortunately, I can no longer recall who else was on that mission with us.

Tim and I did an overflight of the projected AO to find a decent LZ. After flying over the area for a while the only place we could find to land a helicopter was the highway itself; not a comforting thought.

The next day (July 20, 1969) bright and early after first light, Team-36 inserted on Highway 1, hoping against hope that the enemy didn't have watchers along the highway. The Huey slick set down and we bailed for the side of the road to set up a quick defensive position. The birds flew off, we checked our commos. and waited to see what, if anything, was going to happen.

After 15 or so minutes we started moving towards the tree line some several hundred feet away. We hadn't progressed very far when Harvey tapped me on the shoulder and said he heard something to our right at the edge of the jungle.

Tim came back and Harvey told him he had heard what sounded like a bolt being thrown. I hadn't heard it but figured my hearing wasn't as good as Harvey's. We moved quickly to jungle and set up a defensive perimeter to see what develops.

Tim and I were set up farthest from the tree line; maybe ten feet apart keeping an eye peeled for any activity to our front. What we didn't realize at the time was that our landing site was right between two manned enemy bunkers.

After a while Tim heard something moving off to our south coming closer. He crawled over and spotted an enemy patrol coming up a trail that was behind us, eight to ten of them, all armed with AK's and, strangely enough, were wearing Regional Police fatigues or as Tim called them "Ruff Puffs".

Tim motioned to me that he had enemy approaching. I nodded and confirmed that I could also see them. Tim indicated that I should hold fire until he engaged the enemy. Tim opened fire and I followed suit, but in a different direction. It became apparent that we were engaged with at least two different groups. We had bad guys on our left and right front and a cleared road behind us.

The jungle came alive with small arms fire as we kept up suppressing fire. We radioed Headquarters and let them know we were in contact and were requesting gunships on station.

Tim started to call in a fire mission when, suddenly, a helicopter showed up and someone kept interrupting Tim on our frequency. Tim not very politely told him to get off our frequency (it turned out it was the new Division Commander) and he had decided that he was going to have the Blues (1/9th) inserted to "rescue" us.

We set up 360 security and waited. The Blues inserted south of us and after we filled them in on our situation, we directed them to move north along the wood line to our location. The Blues made their way to our position.

About that time the CG made us aware that they had spotted several enemy bunkers spread out along the wood line. He wanted the Blues to recon in force and see what developed. Tim suggested to the Platoon Sgt. that our team should take point. We were told instead to fall in at the rear of the platoon.

The Blues moved out into the open area between the wood line and the highway towards the other side of the highway. As we brought up the rear, we heard firing up front and everyone hunkered down waiting to see what was up. One of the Blues came back and said that the Platoon Leader wanted to see Tim up front.

Tim went with him and found a young 2nd Lt huddled down behind a log and everyone else spread out. The lieutenant told Tim that this was his first time in combat and his Platoon Sgt. had been hit along with one other man. He then asked Tim as to take command.

Tim came back to the team and said, "You're not going to believe this." Tim had me get everyone over to the other side of the highway and set up a 360 perimeter and hold. Tim grabbed Harvey and told him to bring one of our LAWs. Shooting his M-79 like a pistol Tim worked his way to the lieutenant's position. Tim told him to get his people across the highway to our Team while he and Harvey stayed in place. Tim picked a likely spot and sent a LAW rocket into it.

There was no return fire and the medic was able to get the two wounded guys back and treated. Harvey and Tim sat there for a bit and Tim told the Harvey to rejoin the Team.

Nothing was happening so Tim shortly followed. Somehow he tripped and shoved the muzzle of his Car-15 into the dirt plugging it up tight. Tim remembers cussing up a storm when he rejoined us and had to cut a piece of bamboo to shove down his barrel to clear it. The slicks showed up and we exfiltrated with no further casualties.