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DATE: 29 November 1971

MISSION NUMBER: A-3-038 November 71

AIRCRAFT DESIGNATION: King 21

DISTRESSED AIRCRAFTS: CH-47 - Playtex 866

LOCATION: 130°-100° Radial 10-15 Miles Hue Tacan

SAVES: NONE

At 0430, 29 Nov. 71, we were briefed by Jack that we would be diverted from the normal King 21 orbit to cover the search for an Army CH 47 - Call Sign - Playtex 866 that had been missing on a flight from Danang to Hue Phu Bai. The last reported contact was at 0530Z 29 November on the 130° radial of Hue NDB. King 21 arrived in the area of the search at 0730 local and made contact with PECAN - a ship off the coast acting as on-scene commander. At that time there were no aircraft in the area due to bad weather conditions. Contact was made with Hue approach control who confirmed the last call of Playtex 866. He reported on the 130° radial of Hue NDB at 0530Z, said he was declaring an emergency and going Tactical IFK. There was no indication of the nature of the emergency. Contact was then made with Danang VFR control to attempt to determine the exact route of flight. They indicated that they did not have radio or voice contact with Playtex 866 at any time. The weather in the area at the time of last contact was reported to be 500 to 1000 overcast - visibility 3-4 miles and both ceilings and visibility lower in rain showers. Queen had a report that some fishermen observed a low flying helicopter pass over head about that time and he was heading out to sea. This area was on about the 100° radial of Hue NDB and on the coast. About 0830 local, several Army helicopters (6) arrived in the area led by Smokey 26 - a UH1H. A search area was set up and co-ordinated with Smokey 26 and each aircraft covered an area 10 kilometers square. Several sightings were made of old wrecks in the area of ZD 169058 and ZD 151054 but were confirmed as previous crashes. During the morning hours, attention was focused in the area of the coast and low lands where the Playtex was last reported. The high areas were obscured by low clouds. At 1130 local King 21 was diverted from the mission to cover the orbit due to another SAR in progress. Upon returning around 1300 local we were informed by Sailfish 18 (101st Airborne Cmd Post) that the Army had called off the search for the day as the weather was too bad. During the afternoon, three aircraft were used to continue the search and the area was expanded to include the sea. Several items were found floating off shore but could not be readily identified as being on board the aircraft. They consisted of 6 - 7 boxes of "Booster Bomb Nose" M-148. Lot 2020, and numerous cans about 10-15" long and 5-8" in diameter. These were suspected to be contents of the boxes as several had broken. These were located on the 090 radial for 18 miles from Hue Tacan. A piece of plywood about 6'x6' was discovered about 2 miles further out and several pieces of white styrofoam and a piece of cloth about the 26 mile area on the 087 radial. The ship- PECAN was vectored to the areas of debris but nothing

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could be identified. Jolly Green recovered one box of Booster Bomb Nose M-148 for later identification. King 21 departed the area at 1615 local due to lack of fuel. The weather in the search area remained 500 to 1000 ft overcast with 3-4 miles visibility - lower in rain showers, and moderate to severe turbulence was encountered in mountainous areas.

King 21 Crewmembers

AC/AMC	Lt Col Edgar C. Benson Jr.	FE	TSGT Kenneth G. Spiegel
CP	1Lt James F. May	LM	TSGT Johnny B. Mullins
N	Capt Joel F. Hancock	FE	TSGT Edgar L. Trout Jr.
N	Maj James J. Kelly	N	Capt Thomas T. Ishii Jr.
RO	MSGT Thomas R. Kimbrell	RO	SSGT Rosco Williams
RO	TSGT Lester L. Ruark	FS	Col Lewis Smith
FE	MSGT Sidney A. Presley		

Other Resources Used

Smokey 26 + 6 UH1H's (Army)
 Helix 15
 Jolly Green 72/21 (AM) 65/67 (PM)
 Flatboat 33 (2 Gunships)

Ships

PECAN

Edgar C. Benson
 EDGAR C. BENSON, Lt Col., USAF
 Aircraft/Airborne Mission Commander

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