

Irregularities in A-10 Crash Near Phoenix

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Subject: Irregularities in A-10 Crash Near Phoenix

From: [withheld by request]
Date: Sat, 5 Apr 1997 21:50:00
Subject: Missing Aircraft Wierdness

On Wednesday, April 2nd, Davis-Monthan AFB in southern Arizona reported that one of its A-10 aircraft went down on a training mission, somewhere near Roosevelt Lake and the Superstition mountains in Arizona. DM AFB said that the plane was part of a flight of three and left its companions, last being sighted near the lake and Mountains.

The mission was to the Goldwater gunnery range in south-central Ariona, near Gila Bend. (Note that the Roosevelt lake is far northeast of Gila Bend, which is a tad odd, but there are military flight paths that more or less circle most of Arizona to simulate long missions.)

The weather was bad, but search-and-rescure units were launched. (However, based on listening to the S&R units on the scanner, they were behaving--uh, differently--than they normally do, with far fewer units and much less civilian participation than normal. S&R has continued since Wednesday, but weather has remained pretty bad.)

It came out on Friday that the A-10 had four 500lbs bombs on board.

On Saturday, it was released that a 10-11 year old kid in Young, Arizona, who was a aircraft fanatic heard a plane fly over around noon Wednesday and positively ID'ed it as a A-10, due to the unmistakable twin rear engines. The military checked its radar tapes and found an unidentified radar track that matched the child's observation; additionally, the observation was completely consistent with the location and speed of the aircraft if it had continued to fly instead of crashing.

That track lead into southwestern Colorado before the craft disappeared from radar.

Commentary: Ordinarily, search-and-rescue teams find military aircraft that crash in these parts within a few hours, and there's participation of ALL the local news helicopters (sort of a contest to see who'll get footage first.) The newsies didn't get involved until very late on this one, and even then, it's been a remarkably limited participation.

Also, the local media are really, really confused on this one; normally, a disappeared plane story is just a small item, but it's been increasing in coverage each day. The story the media has gotten from the AFB gets new information with each telling; even though the AFB knew that the plane was armed, it took to days to convey this.

The TV news anchors themselves are openly commenting that the missing plane story is "bizarre." One channel has already started to speculate that the plane might have been stolen.

(No one has yet tried to make the connection to the OK city trial in Colorado yet, however, or the rumors of a mysterious low-flying aircraft that were reported there in late July and early August flying over the route that is used when taking the defendants to hearings.)

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