

An Engine change that almost ended badly

Here is a story that may interest a few!

As an engine mech. And being one of the first in country in 66 one of the first duties we had was to put our planes together from boxes of parts. This took several weeks. As time went by and we got established in PHU LOI the hours on the engines meant that it was time to replace them. The C.O's plane was one of them and just happened that there was a group of Huges near by that seem to have excess amount of rocket pods --- so we borrowed just two and mounted to the under wing of his plane fully loaded. We also had an electrician who wasn't lets say the most GUN-HO member of the unit -- he was not RA ---- A guy from Florida named Smith. He was assigned to hook them up and he DID. Any way with engine change complete and a checkout required I was also required to go along.

The flight was going along well when all of a sudden while fling along the Saigon river the C.O. spotted a sampan where it wasn't supposed to be there. So without to much thought we looped back around and took aim hoping to send one of the rockets his way. On the first pass we were low enough to see him clearly -- and him in return. As we approached the second pass for the "Kill shot " From the rear seat I could see his eyeballs very frightened and doing everything he could to avoid the on coming. Sure enough as the pilot squeezed the trigger to fire one—that is when all hell broke loose not one but all the rockets fired at the same time seems that Smitty wired them to all fire at once. Not only did it damn near rip the wings off but all the rockets missed the target.

I felt the plane actually backup! Now I'm scared -- I knew that the engine was right but not about the rest of the plane,

On the return flight back to base -- was a lot on mumbling and @#%\$ and upon landing the C.O. jumped out of the plane and was looking for the electrician.

At that point I left the area. I always wondered what happened to Smitty.

I wonder if anybody remembers this.

SP/5 George Roy

66-67