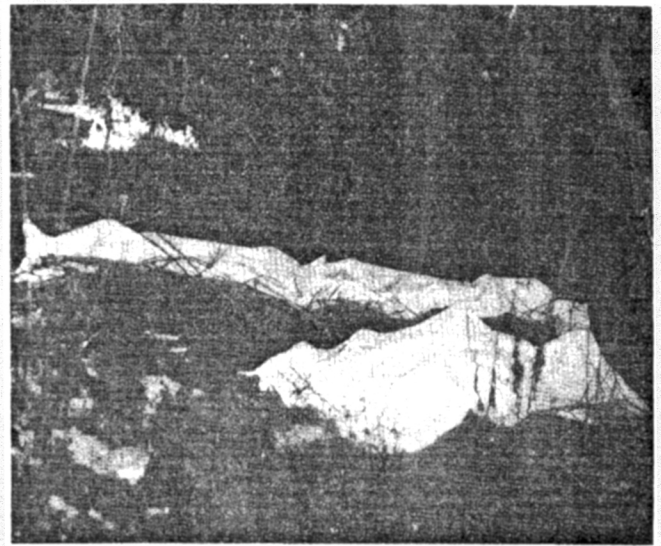




ENGINE POD LIES ON GROUND, EMPTY REMINDER OF FORCE OF CRASH INTO HILL



SHEET COVERED BODIES LIE IN FOREGROUND AS FIRE RAGES IN BACK

After 40 Years, Tragedy Hard To Take

The following remembrance is written by Fred Burns, retired executive sports editor of the Huntington Publishing Co., and longtime follower of Marshall University athletics.

The impact of a tragedy has varying results. Being a retired sports writer we dropped by the newroom of The Herald-Advertiser Satur-

day evening to confirm plans for a trip to see today's Cincinnati-Cleveland football game.

Things were quiet until Don Hatfield sent a reporter and photographer on a quick run to the Tri-State Airport because he had a report "a plane was in trouble." He wished us loud "I hope it is just a small one."

His wish did not come to pass. When help was needed to round up pictures of the vic-

tims we started going through the sports department files. . . files we had helped collect through 40 years of working on the newspaper.

It was a trip through 40 years of athletics at Marshall — even back to the 1930s and the days of the famed Frank "Red" Crist, through the 1930s when John Zonini ran wild, and later Jackie Hunt, Len Hellyer, Jim Cure and many more. These were just some of the pictures we ran across while looking for those

who died in last night's crash. You just don't associate athletes with such tragedies and it is still hard to believe.

We were talking with Ernie Salvatore, the sports editor, when Hatfield told us about the crash which he "wished" was just a small one. We looked up at the clock and the time caused a thought to cross our mind, "an Eastern 727 was due at that time." Salvatore suggested, "The

Marshall charter flight is due at 8 p.m." But, you immediately had to think, "No, it can't happen here."

But, it did, and as the news room began to fill up with reporters and editors called in to help, we got involved with hunting pictures. In a case like this you are in a hurry but you still want to stop and wonder about each athlete whose picture you see and one by one the memories come back.

The picture of Charley Snyder, the former Marshall coach now at Toledo, brought back one memory which might have had an ending like last night.

Marshall was playing at the University of Delaware and had chartered a flight for that game. As it turned out the charter company did not have one plane big enough but sent two small ones.

The two pilots could not agree on a flight plan so one went by the way of Pittsburgh and the other by the way of Washington. The one going by Pittsburgh blew out one of the windows and stopped at Allegheny County Airport at Pittsburgh for repairs. He bounced as high as a house when he hit the runway.

The other plane had trouble which resulted in no lights and no radio and it was dark. He almost landed on a four-lane highway, which he thought was the Baltimore, but did finally get down amid all of the fire equipment the airport had.

The team then took a bus to Delaware where they found the rest of their teammates and a sports writer who never did like to fly charters and had gone to Philadelphia on a regular commercial flight.



POLICE AND FIREMEN CHECK SCENE AT SITE OF MARSHALL PLANE CRASH



SEARCHLIGHTS SHINE ON DEBRIS AT SCENE OF FIERY CRASH

Other Major Sports Tragedies

The Associated Press

The plane crash involving the members of the Marshall University football team was the second air disaster in less than two months to bring tragedy to a football squad.

It recalls similar accidents to sports figures. A small plane carrying members of the University of Montana Sky Diving Club and a second light craft collided on the fire equipment the airport had.

One of the two planes carrying members of the Wichita State University football team, coaches and others crashed Oct. 2 in Colorado en route to Logan, Utah, killing 31 per-

sons, including 14 football players.

Eighteen members of the United States figure skating team died when their plane crashed in Belgium Feb. 15, 1961 en route to the world championships in Czechoslovakia.

On Oct. 29, 1960, 16 players on the California Poly football team at San Luis Obispo were killed when their chartered plane crashed at Toledo, Ohio, after a game against Bowling Green.

A small plane carrying three members of the Western State College football coaching staff was missing in Colorado on Oct. 21, 1965. European teams also have

been hard hit. Eight members of the British Manchester United soccer team were killed in a plane crash near Munich, Germany in February, 1959.

Ten years earlier, the Italian championship soccer team was wiped out when its plane crashed in the center of Turin.

Plane crashes also have claimed the lives of other sports figures, including former

unbeaten heavyweight boxer champion Rocky Marciano whose small plane went down near Newton, Iowa, on Sept. 1, 1969.

Only three months earlier, Rafael Osuna, one of the world's top tennis players, was one of nine persons killed in a crash near Monterrey, Mexico.

Gulfer Tony Lema died in a crash in 1968 and baseball star Kenny Hubbs was killed in a crash in 1964.

A Huge Ball Of Fire . . . And That Was It

By JACK SEAMONDS

"It appeared to be burning before it hit the ground. Then we saw a huge ball of fire rise from the hillside. . . and that was it."

Thus Steve Stanley, Federal Aviation Authority flight services official, describes the tragic crash Saturday of a Southern Airways DC-9 charter flight, a crash which, according to Stanley, left no survivors.

"We knew that the Marshall team was due in at 7:35, so we were watching for it. At exactly 7:35 we heard the engines, and were watching the area west of the runway."

According to Stanley, visibility was poor, and he and other officials could not see very clearly through the fog.

"Just before the plane approached the runway, the

lower lost contact with the pilot. He never regained contact, and we then put emergency rescue procedures into operation."

"The plane exploded when it hit the ground, and shot flames four or five hundred feet into the air." The crash occurred some two miles west of the runway.

"We called fire departments from Ceredo, Ashland and Huntington, and they were still attempting to bring the fire under control late Saturday night."

A temporary morgue was set up at the National Guard Armory, and volunteers were beginning to bring in bodies of the dead.

Friends and relatives of those aboard the plane were taken to the airport restaurant to await word of any survivors.

'They Were Fine Young Men,' Carolina Coach Says

GREENVILLE, N.-C. (AP)—An East Carolina University football player said Saturday night the Marshall University players whose plane crashed and burned were "a good team to play against."

"They were very fine young men," said William Mitchell, a junior defensive halfback who played in ECU's 17-14 win over Marshall Saturday afternoon.

Mitchell said East Carolina Coach Mike McGee had come to the football team's dormitory to break the news that the Marshall players chartered aircraft had plummeted to the ground as it approached the Tri-State airport at Huntington, W. Va., on the way home from the game.

"Everyone took it kind of hard," Mitchell said. "It meant a great deal to me."

Mitchell said he had shaken hands with several members of the Marshall squad as the game broke up and the athletes headed for their locker rooms.

"They were congratulating us on a fine game," he recalled. "And we were congratulating them."

Director Clarence Stasavich said he chatted with Marshall Athletic Director Charlie Kautz just before the coach left with his team and some boosters to board the ill-fated airplane.

"I told him, I said, 'Charlie, I hope you have a nice flight back,'" Stasavich said. "And that was it."

Stasavich said he and

Kautz were discussing arrangements to schedule more games between the two schools.

"We talked about the game briefly, about last year's records, and that they were interested in rescheduling us," he said.

Stasavich said his conversation with Kautz finished shortly after 5 p.m. and that

the team and others in the Marshall party boarded two chartered buses to take them to Kinston Airport about 30 miles southeast of Greenville in eastern North Carolina to board their DC9 Southern Airways plane for the trip home.

Stasavich praised the play of the Marshall players and singled out quarterback Ted

Shoebridge for "a very fine second half."

"They played very fine football," he said. "It was a splendid football game."

Coach McGee, just before leaving to announce the crash to his players, issued a statement expressing his sorrow: "Our hearts and prayers go out to their families," he said.

Friends Gather At Hospital To Wait, Hope For 'Miracle'

By JOHN DUNCAN HUNTINGTON (AP)—About 25 relatives, wives and friends of persons aboard a DC9 Southern Airways jet that carried the Marshall University football team and crashed near here Saturday night gathered at a Hunting-

ton hospital—"hoping for a miracle." Hospital officials have set up a conference room for the friends of persons aboard the plane. No survivors have been reported in the crash. The crowd, mostly women,

wept uncontrollably. At least 10 girls crumpled to the floor of the conference room.

"I just can't believe it could happen," Wally Miller, a senior Marshall coed, said. "It could happen at some other school maybe... but not to people you know."

Mrs. Roger Childers, wife of a Marshall student trainer was helped from the hospital. Her husband was starting linebacker at Marshall, but had to undergo brain surgery and could not compete this year.

Yvonne Lettowich, a Mar-

shall coed and girlfriend of one of the team's receivers, screamed: "It can't be. It just can't be." "It's just unbelievable, said Wayne Berry, a Marshall student who had seven fraternity brothers aboard the plane.

Pictures at the scene of the wreck, shown on Pages 1, 13, 33, were taken by Jim York, Maurice Kaplan, Lee Bernard, Havern Summers.