

Wreckage of 2 aircraft found near Vegas

LAS VEGAS, Nev. UPI — Wreckage of two military planes was found Saturday — one near an 11,000 foot snowcapped peak and the other about 40 miles north of here where it sprayed a payload of live rockets on the surrounding desert.

Clark County Sheriff's deputies said ground crews were pushing up mountain slopes Saturday night in an attempt to reach a third crash site — that of a civilian plane which crashed into the same snow-capped peak two days ago.

Off duty Air Force Col. Jimmy

Helton walked out Saturday seeking help for his son who remained near the civilian wreckage. Ground teams aided by aerial flares and high-powered lights scoured slopes of Charleston Peak late Saturday to pinpoint the wreckage and rescue Michael Helton, 21.

"We don't know if he is dead or alive," said Sheriff's deputies. "We know where the plane is but have not reached the site. We may reach it tonight."

The three planes disappeared in a five day period in a search area which

became known as the "sagebrush triangle" after the "Bermuda Triangle" known for mysterious disappearances off the Atlantic Coast.

The civilian plane and an 0-2 Skymaster spotter aircraft in which the two crewmembers died crashed in the same area. The military Skymaster disappeared Friday while participating in the search for a similar Skymaster aircraft that disappeared five days earlier while on a military training mission.

The two dead crewmen found Saturday in the 0-2 Skymaster wreckage a

miles west of Charleston Peak were Capt. Lawrence K. Wilson, 27th Tactical Air Support Squadron, Bergstrom Air Force Base, Tex., and Capt. Virgil Johnson, 23rd Tactical Air Support Squadron, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz.

Wreckage of the 0-2 Skymaster which disappeared Monday shortly after taking off from nearby Nellis Air Force Base with live ammunition aboard was found late Saturday 40 miles north of here near Indian Springs. It carried two cannisters with a maximum load of 16 rockets.

A military guard was posted around the Indian Springs crash site throughout Saturday night. Teams of experts will move in at dawn Sunday to disarm the white phosphorous rockets strewn about the desert.

A military spokesman said the fate of the crew aboard the armed aircraft could not be determined until a medical team was allowed into the area Sunday. The crewmen aboard the armed aircraft were identified as Capt. Anthony J. Rosa, 27th Tactical Air Support Squadron, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. and Capt. Victor

Villelunga, 23rd Tactical Air Support Squadron, Bergstrom Air Force Base, Tex. Flares could not be dropped over the Indian Spring crash site Saturday night for fear of igniting the rockets.

During the search Saturday an Air Force helicopter crashed and four men aboard were taken to Nellis Air Force Base with minor injuries.

An Air Force Spokesman said all 0-2 Skymasters of the 12th Air Force have been grounded.

"It's always possible some thing is wrong with the planes," he said.