

3.1.4

A Review of Airplane Encounters with Spherical UAP
in Japanese AirspaceKiyoshi Amamiya
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Introduction

Civilian airlines of Japan connect many cities scattered in our narrow country with typically short flight times (separating them).¹ There are relatively few UAP cases in Japan. There seem to be examples of the experience of witnessing UAP; they are seen by some pilots. However, a formal report often gives the pilot a (professional) disadvantage. There is more information made public about UAP by All Nippon Airways (ANA) pilots than Japan Airlines (JAL) pilots. Aircraft are not harmed by UAP (and as a rule) and pilots who witnesses them are healthy (and sane) people. A very prominent multiple witness sighting of March 18, 1965 is presented first.

Case 1.

The first pilot to report the presence of this UAP was Capt. Joji Negishi flying a single engine Piper Cherokee six-seat airplane (Tokyo Airlines, Flight 2131).² A Piper Cherokee Six is shown in Figure 1. He was enroute from Hiroshima to Osaka about 400 miles away to the ENE with two passengers. While above the northern edge of Matsuyama City on Shikoku Island in very clear air and with a full Moon (present) he radioed ATC authorities that he was "being chased by a mysterious luminous object." (The Japan Times, March 21, 1965) A photocopy of the official report of his sighting is presented in Figure 2 where his airplane is shown as an inverted T in the lower right-hand corner of the largest box. He was on a heading of 85 degrees at the time.³ He drew the UAP as a circular object seeming to converge with him from above his altitude on his right-rear side at about 1907 hrs. I have tried to reconstruct the flight paths of both airplanes in Figure 3. At about 1907 hrs the UAP passed in front of the Cherokee as shown.

¹ Text in parentheses added for clarity by the Editor.

² Probably a Cherokee Six introduced in 1965 with a stretched fuselage and seating for one pilot and five passengers.

³ North is not at top (Ed.)



Figure 1. Piper Cherokee in Flight

U F O 目 撃 報 告		年 月 日 報 告
報 告 者	住所 遷子年久木 148 職業一学校) / パイロット	氏名 根 野 隆 治 (男) (支 部 サークル) 満 41 才
同 時 目 撃 者	東 郷 都 留	計 2 名
目 撃 場 所	高 松 東 3.5 哩	目 撃 地 点 近 く の 古 墳 や 空 軍 基 地 高 松 空 港
目 撃 時 間	40 年 3 月 18 日 (午 前) 19 時 分 从 来 () 分 間 (/ 0) 秒 間 (瞬 間)	
見 た 時 の 状 態	観 測 時 () 偶 然 (ふ と) そ の 他	
天 候	晴 (雲量 0)	せ つ め い 図 (ス ケ ッ チ) ・ 写 真 か た ち の 拡 大 図
方 向	見 た 方 向 (仰 角 20°)	
向	動 いた 方 向 (仰 角 0°)	
高 度	2,500 m 位	
速 さ	変 速 滞 空 発 光	
大 き さ		
か た ち		
尾 流	あ り な し 長 さ 本 体 の 倍	
明 る さ	月 灯 明 り	
色	茶 色	
数	1	
音	なし	
消 え 方	螺旋	(写 真 を つ け る と き は , そ の ネ ガ も 必 ら ず そ え て 下 さ い)
そ の 情 況 (なるべく、くわしく、またその持ちよう)		

Figure 2. Official Pilot Report by Capt. Joji Negishi (March 18, 1965)

The flight path of the second airplane involved in this close encounter is also shown in Figure 3; it was a Convair CV-240 (Flight JA-5118), a two-engine propeller driven passenger plane. It was flying from Osaka to Hiroshima with forty passengers on board.⁴ Capt. Yoshiharu Inaba, 43, and First Officer Satoru Majima, 26, were in charge; at about 1906 hrs they had just passed Himeji (on Honshu) (Hyogo Prefecture) at about 2,000 m altitude on a heading of about 270 degrees when they first sighted a self-luminous pale greenish light approaching them at about their 10:00 o'clock position. As it approached it took on the shape of an oblong triangle with rounded corners⁵ but it subsequently appeared as a sphere. It had a sharply defined edge at all times. He flashed his taxi lights thinking that the UAP was another airplane. The object did nothing to respond and continued to approach them until it suddenly stopped and made an "abrupt turn" (near the airplane). While the historical record is not very clear on this point the two pilots might have seen the UAP at about the same time (approximately 1902 hrs. or earlier).

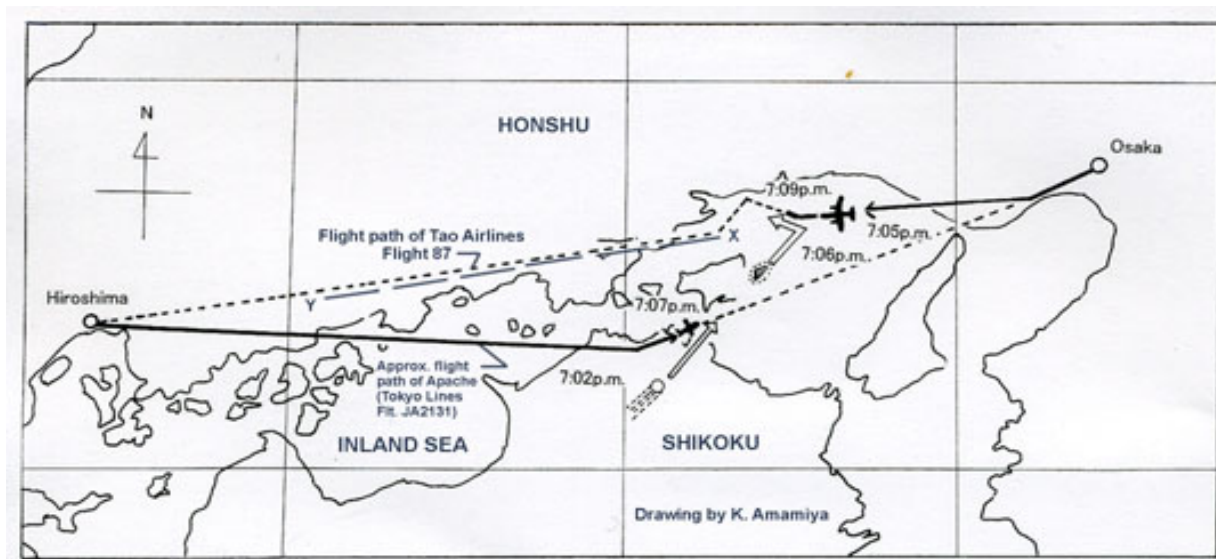


Figure 3. Flight Path of Both Airplanes and UAP (March 18, 1965)

At this point, as shown in Figure 3, the captain executed a sharp sixty degree right-hand banking turn to avoid a possible collision with the object as it approached them.⁶ After the Convair regained its original flight path the UAP remained off their left wing. Capt. Inaba reported that the two needles of his automatic direction finder swung violently and radio static was heard while the UAP flew beside the airplane. He also reported that the airplane "shook a little" during this same period. It was during this time that the First Officer overheard "...frantic calls from the pilot of a Cherokee plane who said he was being chased by a "a mysterious luminous object," while he was flying along the northern edge of Matsuyama City." (Asahi, 1965) The time was probably about 1902 hrs.

⁴ Apparently, none of the passengers saw the UAP.

⁵ Clark (2003) gave the shape as "elliptical." An account in the Mainichi Daily News (March 21, 1965) described the UAP as being "oblong." Several other English language newspaper accounts used the term "flying saucer." Capt. Inaba said he could not determine the "exact shape" of the UAP.

⁶ At some point the UAP seemed to stop (or leave the pilot's field of vision) for "...about three minutes" before finally taking up a position off the left wing for the remainder of the sighting.

The long-dashed line in Figure 3 represents the UAP's flight path beside the Convair. If point X in Figure 3 accurately represents the beginning of the period of pacing and point Y accurately represents the location when the UAP departed (disappearing in the direction of Takamatsu City) the measured total flight distance is 168 miles. Flying at about 260 mph (rated cruise speed is 280 mph) this represents a flight duration of only 38 minutes. A number of newspaper accounts at the time state that the UAP remained beside him for 55 minutes which suggests that he might have been cruising at about 183 mph (and/or perhaps was experiencing headwinds). The First Officer also tried to reach the tower at Matsuyama field about the nearby object during this period but without success.

I have attempted to draw the relative positions of both airplanes in Figure 4 from the side looking toward the south.

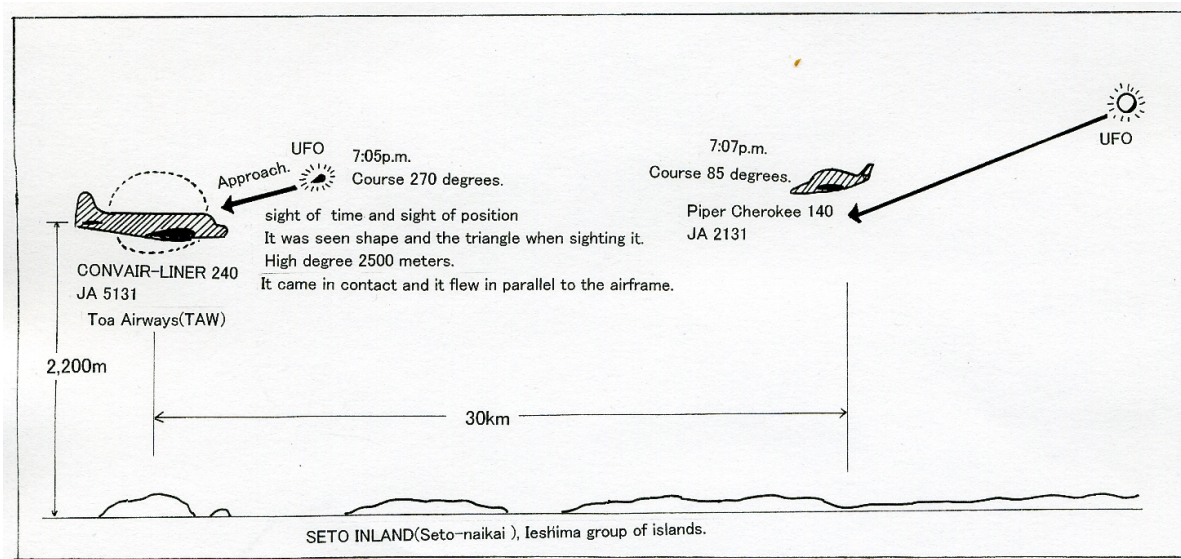


Figure 4. Elevation Drawing of Both Airplanes and UAP

Notice that the estimated horizontal separation distance between the two airplanes is about 30 km. Copies of Captain Inaba's official reports are presented in Figures 5 and 6. His sketch shows a huge rounded UAP located beyond and blocked by the last third of the end of his left wing. He said that a reflection of blue light was seen on the top of the wing.⁷

His sketches of the UAP are shown in the small square box above his main sketch. They show how the triangular shaped object changed to an approximate circle with a greenish tinge. He also wrote that the UAP was at an altitude of about 3,000 m (while he was at 2,200 m) as it approached him from his 10:00 o'clock position. He estimated its diameter to be between 25 and 30 m.

⁷ His sketch contained several notations that said, (1) The body or area of the "gleam" of the UAP was oval shaped when seen from the side, (2) It seemed to overlap the outer one-third of the left wing, (3) There seemed to be a shadow (darkening) on the body of the UAP around the area where the wing tip penetrated (editor's interpretation) into the UAP's light.

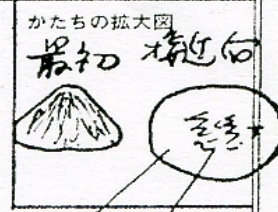
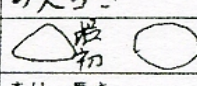
U F O 目 撃 報 告		40 年 3 月 2 日 報 告
報 告 者	住所 廣島市南區新島町586-1 職業 (学校) 通信省航空無線技士	氏名 稲葉 義晴 女 (支 部) 満友会 (サークル)
同 時 目 撃 者	鳥嶋 輝 雄 士	計 2 名
目 撃 場 所	第一回 新島研究会 6500f 第二回 竹原市上空 6500f	目撃地点近くの古墳や空軍基地
目 撃 時 間	40年3月8日 (午前) 19時6分から(3)分間、()秒間、瞬間、 (午後) 19時9分まで 19時26分-19時45分	
見 た 時 の 状 態	観測時 (偶然) (ふと) その他	
天 候	快晴 (雲量0)	せつめい図(スケッチ)・写真
方 向	見た方向 10° ^{30'} (仰角40°) 動いた方向 90° (仰角40°)	かたちの大図 最初 概形 
高 度	3000 m 位	
速 さ	音速位 変速 滞空 発光	
大 き さ	双葉様位 米海軍ネフケーン の大きさ	
か た ち	 概形 様形	
尾 流	あり 長さ 本体の 倍 (不明)	
明 る さ	最初 照射灯 概形 両用位	
色	月色	
数	1	
音	なし	
消 え 方	90°方向	(写真をつけるときは、そのネガも必ずそえて下さい)
その 構 況 (なるべく、く わしく、また その特ちょう)	最初 発見 19時5分 双葉様の着陸灯と想像した。 光様の TAX light を 3-4 回 点滅 させたとき 急に接近して 3 分間 後 雁行 編隊 した。	

Figure 5. Pilot Report by Capt. Yoshiharu Inaba


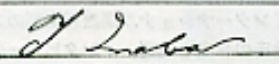
 TOA AIRWAYS	CAPTAIN REPORT	東亜航空
TOA AIRWAYS CAPTAIN REPORT		
TO: <u>運航部長殿</u>	DATE: <u>H.O. 2. 19</u>	STATION: <u>広島空港</u>
		CAPTAIN: <u>柏葉敦晴</u>
SUBJECT: <u>飛行中異常物体発見に関する報告</u>		
3月18日87便 機長 柏葉、副操馬嶋、客室原、乗客28名 19:05、コース上天候・快晴一片の雲なし、視程30哩以上、満月(15.7)		
<p>3月18日、18時55分、大阪空港離陸、VRF広島に向けて航行姫路市南西15哩家島群島上空、高度6,500呎機首方向270度、計器速度200kt天候状況上記の如く全くの快晴にして一片の雲もなく、山陽及び四国沿岸の郡小都市の夜景が望見し中天に月齢15.7の満月をいたゞき年に幾回もない、絶好の夜間飛行日和りにパイロットのみに与えられた満足感に包まれて飛行中、19時06分針路に対して、10時00分の方向に飛行機の着陸灯の光芒を発見、馬嶋操縦士に注意を促し見張りを厳重にさせて、同一方位、高度にて飛行するも、増々接近をするので、タクシー・ライトを点滅して当機所在位置を知らせると同時に、回避運動をすべきだと判断し、乗客シート・ベルトをオンにして右旋回330度方向に飛行するも左翼至近距離に雁行編隊をする、蛍光灯のやうな光を発し、大きさは光芒に包まれて不明なるも約10-15米と判断される異常物体が見受けられました。危険を感じ当該機長として原因不明の事故となつては困るので最悪状態に備えてVHFにて現在状況を送信する様に指示、最初は東亜大阪にコンタクト、したが受信不能、次に118.1MC大阪タワーに送信、これも受信不能のため126.2MCにて、高松タワーとコンタクトして日本語にて異常物体が接近雁行飛行中、高度、方位、速度、異常なしと通報しました。</p> <p>其の間19時06分~19時09分やがて異常な光芒も消え去り、20秒~30秒間位経過したとき、126.2MCにて突然「こちらはJA3231高松上空、方位085°飛行中3時00分の方向より異常な物体に追尾されております」と当機に通報されて来ましたので吾々の錯覚眩惑でなく想像をはるかに越えた常識的には考えられない飛行物体が宇宙に実在することをまざまざと発見しました。</p> <p>吾々は其後も快晴中を順調に飛行を続けて19時56分何事もなく無事に広島空港に着陸し馬嶋操縦士と地上にて異常物体について検討をしましたが奇怪千万と云うより外に表現が出来ません。</p> <p>大空には吾々の知識常識意外の何物かが存在するのを確信致しました。</p>		
以上		
 CAPTAIN'S SIGNATURE		

Figure 6. Official Sighting Report by Capt. Inaba

First Officer Satoru Majima also made a sketch of the UAP as seen from his right-seat cockpit position. It is included as Figure 7. The object is depicted as a circular ball of light seen through the captain's forward windshield.

While the identity of this UAP was never discovered the University of Tokyo Space Research Institute explained this event as a flight of a Ramda 3-3 rocket.

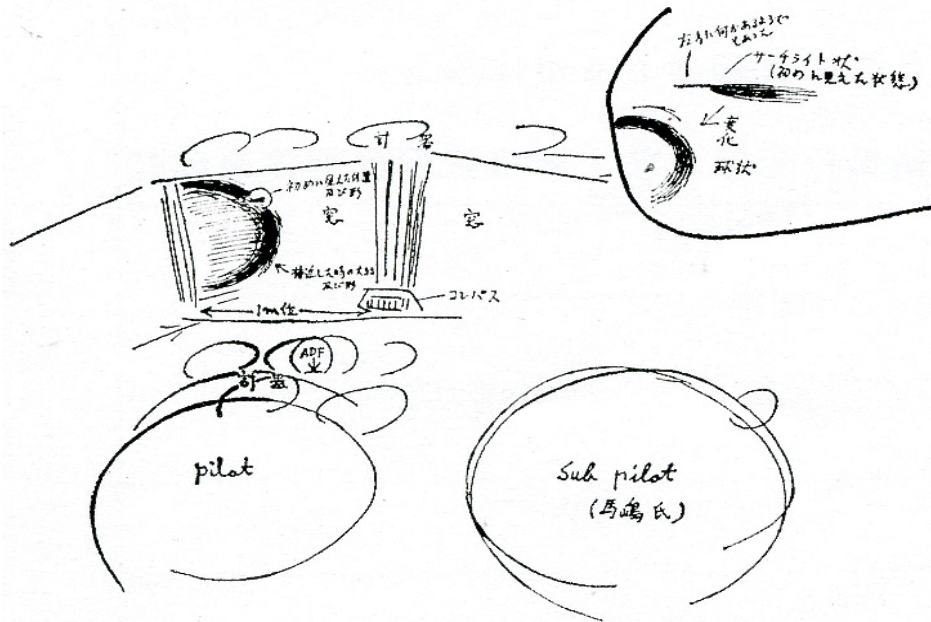


Figure 7. Sketch of UAP by First Officer Satoru Majima

Case 3-1

This sighting took place on November 27, 1981 at approximately 1705 hrs. The flight crews of two commercial airplanes were involved. (Figure 8) This case describes details only from the flight crew of All Nippon Airways (ANA) flight NH617 that was just west of Oshima Island at the time⁸ and flying almost west. The B727-200 had taken off from Nagasaki for Tokyo.

⁸ Approximately 70 miles WSW of Tokyo over the Pacific Ocean.



Figure 8. Chart of Japan Showing Locations of Both Airplanes

All four eye witnesses saw a straight line of seven or eight individual orange lights that they first thought were the windows of a B-747 airplane. The lights passed by at an estimated Mach 3. As they did so they changed from a single row to three separate rows before they disappeared from sight. Captain Nobuo Takasugi, 38, contacted ATC who informed them that there was nothing detected on ground radar. The First officer of the flight was Gentaro Osada, 33, and the Flight Engineer was Syozo Nozaki. An unidentified air traffic controller on-board also witnessed the event. No air turbulence or on-board electromagnetic effects were reported.

Case 3-2

The flight crew of ANA flight NH666⁹ was near Matsuyama City (Shikoku Island) at 10,000 m altitude when, at 1708 hrs, they saw about twenty "luminous bodies that formed a line." According to an article in *Asahi Shimbun* (December 1, 1981; Tokyo) the UAP were travelling from Uwajima toward Muroto (almost due east) at between 9,000 m and 10,000m altitude; all were orange in color. This sighting lasted about 15 seconds. The UAP was travelling at a speed "...greater than that of a jet fighter plane."

The captain of flight 666 made a sketch of the lights that is reproduced as Figure 9. The witnesses included Captain Shigeyoshi Watabe, 46, First Officer Yoshiki Uemura, and Flight Engineer Minoru Shimada, 30. By the captain's estimate the length of all twenty objects was "20 times (that of a) jumbo B747."

⁹ Lockheed L-1011.

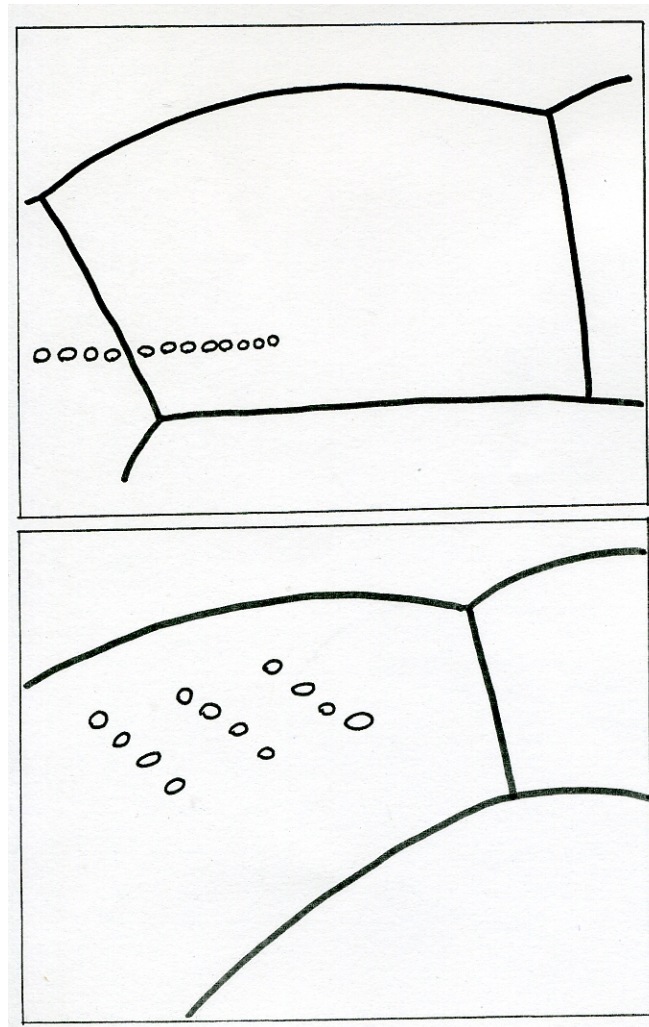


Figure 9. Drawing of UAP by Capt. Shigeyoshi Watabe

Based on the geometry that was involved, these UAP must have been located somewhere between the two jets.

Case 3-3

The flight crew of a Pan American heavy jet "Flight One" flying from Tokyo to Hong Kong also reported sighting what looked like a cigar with "...windows on a train. From the rear there was a blue and amber light that was emitted in a diamond pulsing pattern."¹⁰ At the time the Jumbo jet was somewhere between Shimizu and Kagashima at 35,000 feet altitude at about 1000Z (1900 hrs) which would place it in the same vicinity as in Case 3-1 and 3-2. The First Officer saw the UAP first through his right-hand windshield moving from his right to left. The captain wrote, "When I looked up I thought that it was traffic (there is a lot on that route). But as I watched it grow larger it progressed thru my windshield right to left and finally reduced all relative motion and remained off our port wingtip for a short period of time before streaking aft and disappearing. While (it was) abeam I felt it was so close I was considering turning away. During this time the hair on my arms stood up. I do not know whether this was fear or some sort

¹⁰ Personal correspondence to Editor dated January 10, 1991.

of electrical field. We called ATC. They had no target."

Case 3-4

The captain in Case 3-3 also mentioned that the flight crew of Pan Am Flight Five (San Francisco to Hong Kong) also saw the same object. It passed to their right. It is problematic whether the witnesses of these four airplanes (Case 3-1 through 3-4) all saw the same phenomenon due to the difference in time.

Case 4

The witnesses to this incident were three cockpit crewmen of All Nippon Airways flight NH771, a B-747. The captain was Taizo Kitano, 44, First Officer Naoki Yasutaka, 34, and Flight Engineer Akihiko Yoshikawa, 30. They were above FL310 in the region of Misawa, Aomori Prefecture near the northern tip of Japan as shown in Figure 10.

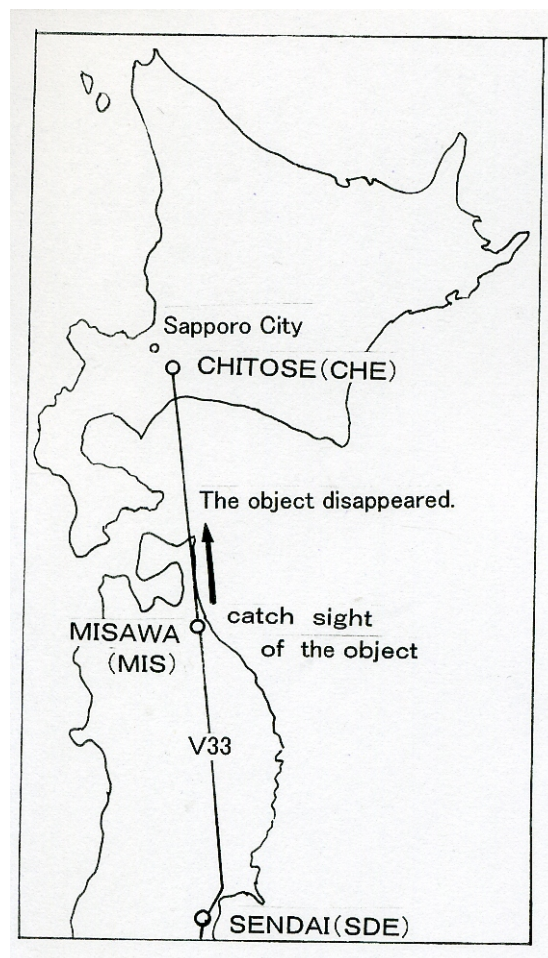


Figure 10. Chart of Flight Details of October 28, 1982

Ground control received a radio call from the flight. The captain said, "Traffic in sight ten miles." ATC replied, "No traffic." The UAP was described as being larger than an airplane, gray or light brown, and seen to rotate slowly, changing its shape from that of a cigar to a circle. No electro-magnetic effects were reported by the flight crew. It vanished as the airplane descended through FL310. One of the witnesses prepared the sketch shown in Figure 11.

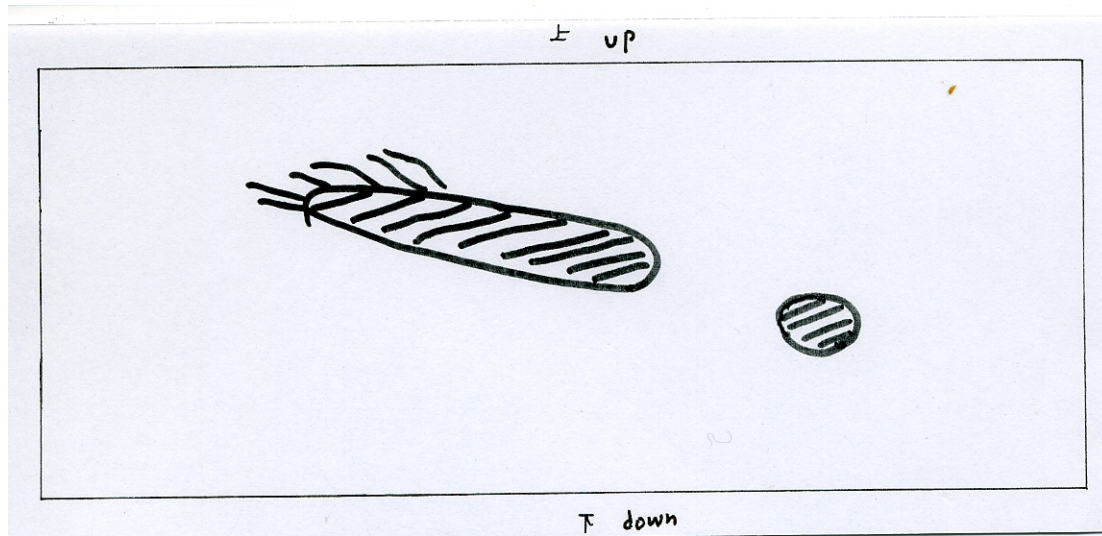


Figure 11. Sketch of UAP by One of the Three Crewmen

Reference

Asahi Evening News, UFO Chases Two Planes. UPI, March 21, 1965.