Combat Edge

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The Combat Edge

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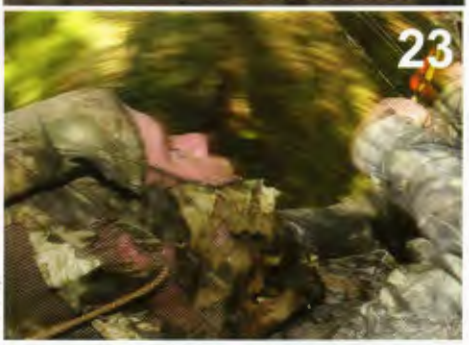
General Hal M. Hornburg, Commander

Colonel Creid K. Johnson, Director of Safety

Courtesy Photo

Photo by Lt Col Robert Seaberg



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The editors reserve the right to edit all manuscripts for readability and good taste.

Front Cover: *By TSgt Ben Bloker*

ACCent on Safety

The Secretary of Defense has set a goal to reduce preventable mishaps by 50 percent. We are making great strides toward fulfilling that goal by strengthening existing safety programs and implementing several innovative flight, ground, and weapons safety programs. Our focus in Air Combat Command is to ensure safety is an integral part of everything we do. Before turning over the reigns of Air Combat Command, I want to take this opportunity to review the safety achievements from the past year and the challenges before us.

Our flight safety successes include a 66 percent reduction in Class A mishaps during FY04 versus FY03. Scheduling dedicated safety days into the annual flying hour program has proven invaluable in focusing aviators on safe flight practices. Likewise, Flight Leadership Focus Days identified unit safety concerns and communicated them through the Numbered Air Forces to HQ ACC, where corrective actions and mishap prevention initiatives could be shared throughout the flying community. Sharing flight mishap vignettes within 5 days of an accident out-brief and stick-to-the-basics campaigns have also provided valuable training opportunities for both new and experienced aviators. All of these flying safety initiatives, coupled with our active Operational Risk Management program, have helped ACC lead the Air Force in reducing flight mishaps. In fact, during FY04 ACC experienced only five rate-producing mishaps — the lowest in command history.

Regarding ground safety, ACC was the first command to provide definitive guidance for motorcycle training when we required all riders, regardless of their rank, to be briefed on riding safety and responsibility before operating a motorcycle. As a result, motorcycle fatal mishap rates are down 11 percent, but still show we have a long way to go in this area. Our safety grams, mishap vignettes, and fatality VTCs have "put a face in front of the numbers," driving the safety message home to our ACC family. We've also established the "Airmen Helping Airmen" program, designed to prevent life-threatening accidents through direct intervention — Airmen helping each other identify and then alter risky behavior or potentially hazardous situations. These ground safety programs and your efforts have put us on our way toward meeting the Secretary's challenge.

The ACC Weapons Safety community has just completed its fourth consecutive year with "zero" weapons Class A mishaps — an extraordinary ACC record-breaking safety accomplishment. We've also achieved a 15 percent decrease in weapons Class B and C mishaps in FY03, and a 55 percent reduction in Class D mishaps in FY04. Additionally, we've closed over 50 percent of the command's open Dull Swords — helping to resolve significant resource protection issues and providing sound nuclear safety advice to the field. This active mishap prevention program, which includes a monthly newsletter, ensures Airmen are up to speed on the latest safety techniques and procedures.

You have served your country well these past 3 years, and I am proud to have served with you as your commander. Train hard. Fight hard. Do it all safely. You, America's Airmen are critical to our nation's security and prosperity. Stay focused on safety; we can't do without you.

General Hal M. Hornburg,
Commander

Photo by TSgt Ben Bloker

Fightin' Tired

By Capt Daniel Diehl, Ellsworth AFB, S.D.

Lengthy missions can change crewmembers' sleep schedules by about 12 hours for each flight, and fatigue is becoming a huge factor ...

Being deployed to a beautiful tropical island in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM might not seem like a hardship TDY, but when you are flying every third day with an average sortie duration of 15-17 hours, you don't get much time to hang out on the beach. In fact, US Air Forces, US Central Command (CENTAF) had lengthened the maximum amount of flying hours a crew could fly, and many deployed crewmembers were rapidly approaching the expanded limit. The lengthy missions also changed crewmembers' sleep schedules by about 12 hours for each flight, and fatigue was becoming a huge factor. Here is my story of one such fatiguing mission.

I had recently returned from a month at the Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) as the B-1 Liaison Officer (LNO) and was entering the flying schedule well rested. The other three members of my crew had not had that luxury. Sitting in the mission brief that evening, we were all expecting the standard 15-17 hour mission: fly to Afghanistan, orbit for a couple hours (maybe do a show of force or act as a communication relay), and fly back to the deployed location.

Because of the strenuous mission requirements, the Air Force has provided for our safety thru AFIs, regulations, and flight restrictions to include "go-pills." These amphetamines, issued through flight medicine, help crewmembers remain alert when there is no opportunity for sleep. Earlier in the year I had flown several 12-hour combat missions in the skies over Iraq and found that I didn't need the "go pills." This was reinforced during the first couple sorties on this particular deployment; therefore, I never went to the flight doc for my issue of pills. This night proved me wrong.

After takeoff and the first air refueling, the crew settled in for the standard long flight into country. Things went "normal" for the first 4.5 hours and then it began to get interesting. There was a Troops in Contact (TIC) situation developing and the CAOC wanted us to respond to the area as soon as possible. The CAOC asked how quickly we could make it into country and if fuel was an issue. Fuel wasn't a problem, so like any self-respecting pilot in this situation, I pushed the throttles up and sat back to

see what the engines would give us.

We arrived over the TIC almost an hour earlier than our tasked vulnerability period and acquired the ground troops visually. After being on station for approximately 30 minutes,

Be prepared, check out the "go pills" from the flight surgeon ...

other Air Force assets arrived on scene and we climbed to a higher altitude for better fuel consumption. Pushing up the throttles to get into country early burned all the extra fuel we needed to make our second scheduled air refueling, so the CAOC diverted us south toward a different tanker. After turning south, the CAOC informed us that if we could turn towards the northern part of the country, a tanker would be available sooner. If we were unable to refuel for any reason with the northern tanker, we would be forced to divert into Afghanistan. Diverting was not a good option for the B-1, but the CAOC assumed the risk and turned us towards the northern tanker.

The fuel we received from the northern tanker allowed us to make our second (now third) tanker refueling scheduled midway through our vulnerability window. The third tanker topped off our tanks, and during the refueling, we were directed to proceed to eastern Afghanistan and report to an Other Governmental Agency (OGA) asset. After contact, we received seven targets and coordinated for a combined attack with a number of other airframes including A-10s and AC-130s.

As the first striker over target, we became the de-facto package commander and assumed package commander responsibilities including timing and fire deconfliction between the CAOC, OGA, and the members of the strike package. During this process, we added two more refueling missions to extend our aircraft's loiter time over the target. When the mission was completed, we had provided nearly 11 hours of coverage over Afghanistan and logged a flight time of 21.7 hours, the longest B-1 combat mission ever, utilizing six tankers and logging 2 hours of total time on the refueling boom.

As we stepped to the jet that day, we had no idea that the sortie would last 5 hours longer than the normal mission. My biggest lesson learned during this marathon flight was the need to be prepared for anything. I was the only member of the flight who did not sign out "go-pills" and approximately three quarters of the way through the vulnerability period was so sleep deprived that I turned to the aircraft commander and asked him to fly for the next 30 minutes. I awoke 45 minutes later and was brought up to speed by the crew on what was going on. It doesn't take a genius to figure out that losing one person on a four-man crew detracts substantially from mission effectiveness.

B-1s have flown many longer flights, including ferry flights and global power missions. Those flights and combat missions have one major difference: there is no time to plan naps during a vulnerability period when the crew is receiving and prosecuting targets.

The other lesson I learned is that "go-pills" take about an hour to kick in. If you wait to take them until you actually need them, it's too late. It's better to have the "go-pills" and not need them than to have your combat mission extended by 5 hours and need them over Afghanistan.

Fatigue is a potential killer. In my case, there was another pilot who had taken the proper precautions, allowing me to "check out of the crew" for a few minutes. For many out there, this is not an option. So to be prepared, my recommendation is check out the "go-pills" from the flight surgeon. It doesn't hurt to have them, and you may even need them.

Black

Black line flying by Lt Col David A. Hagginbothom, Langley AFB VA

line flying

By Lt Col David A. Hagginbothom, Langley AFB, Va.

Ever catch yourself thinking or — even worse — verbalizing, "Gee, this flight's going really smooth so far" and then in the very next instant discover that the "so far" had just abruptly ended? Pilots are usually well-educated, highly analytical types whom you would not normally expect to believe in luck or jinxes. However, a few are more superstitious than a major leaguer with a five-game hitting streak. Two B-1 sorties stand out in my mind as prime examples of why aircrews should always be ready for the unexpected and the "fog of war" even during routine training missions. Correspondingly, you should never relax your guard despite being "bang on" the black line. Besides, any flight member stupid enough to utter those fateful words out loud had also better be rich enough to buy the beer.

On my first sortie with the brand new squadron commander, mission planning, pre-flight, taxi, takeoff, and departure had gone without a hitch. I had just mentally noted this when the boss announced that he was clearing off for quick relief. Shamefully, caffeine addiction is an ugly secret in military aviation! He motored his seat full down and back to facilitate getting out of the mummy-like straps, cords, and buckles. The flight went south after he returned and strapped back into the seat. Being vertically challenged, he motored the seat forward and up "SNAP! CRACKLE! POP!" was all we heard before all four of us smelled an aroma similar to burnt gunpowder. Convinced, or perhaps just fearing that the shielded mild-detonating cord had fired and started the seat ejection sequence, the squadron commander rather expeditiously hopped out of the seat, cautiously pinned it, and safed his switches.

With my visor down, mask and collar up, chin and seat straps cinched tight, I was now flying "solo!" The salient point is that there's no section three or emergency procedure simulator that covers this or any number of other peculiar scenarios. As professional aviators, we should always ask "what if" as a crew and chair-fly as many vagaries as we're capable of imagining. Evaluating the situation and our options were the first order of business and it was done as a crew. Crew coordination was superb and we had decided upon a course of action in short order and implemented it. The only thing left to do was turn the big behemoth

As professional aviators we should always ask "what if"

back to our home airdrome and fly one approach to a full stop. It was my first solo landing in a B-1, and although unusual, solid Crew Resource Management and coordination made it as smooth as possible under the conditions. During postflight checks, it was determined that the seat track had broken, causing the motor to overheat and fail, but we were all prepared for the worst-case scenario of an inadvertent ejection at altitude.

The second incident occurred just after my return from instructor school, when night "bean" requirements were plentiful and mission-ready currencies were a challenge to maintain. Our crew launched around sunset for a "canned" mission of low-level, high-altitude electronic countermeasures training, air-refueling, and transition training in the pattern. Much like my first example, everything went exactly according to plan until shortly after midnight. On 12-mile final for our first approach, the leading edge slats failed to extend. The flaps on a B-1 are interconnected to the slats; therefore, the flaps won't extend without the slats out first. It was night, our aircraft was heavy, and we were tired. Of course, *it could have been worse, it could have been raining.*

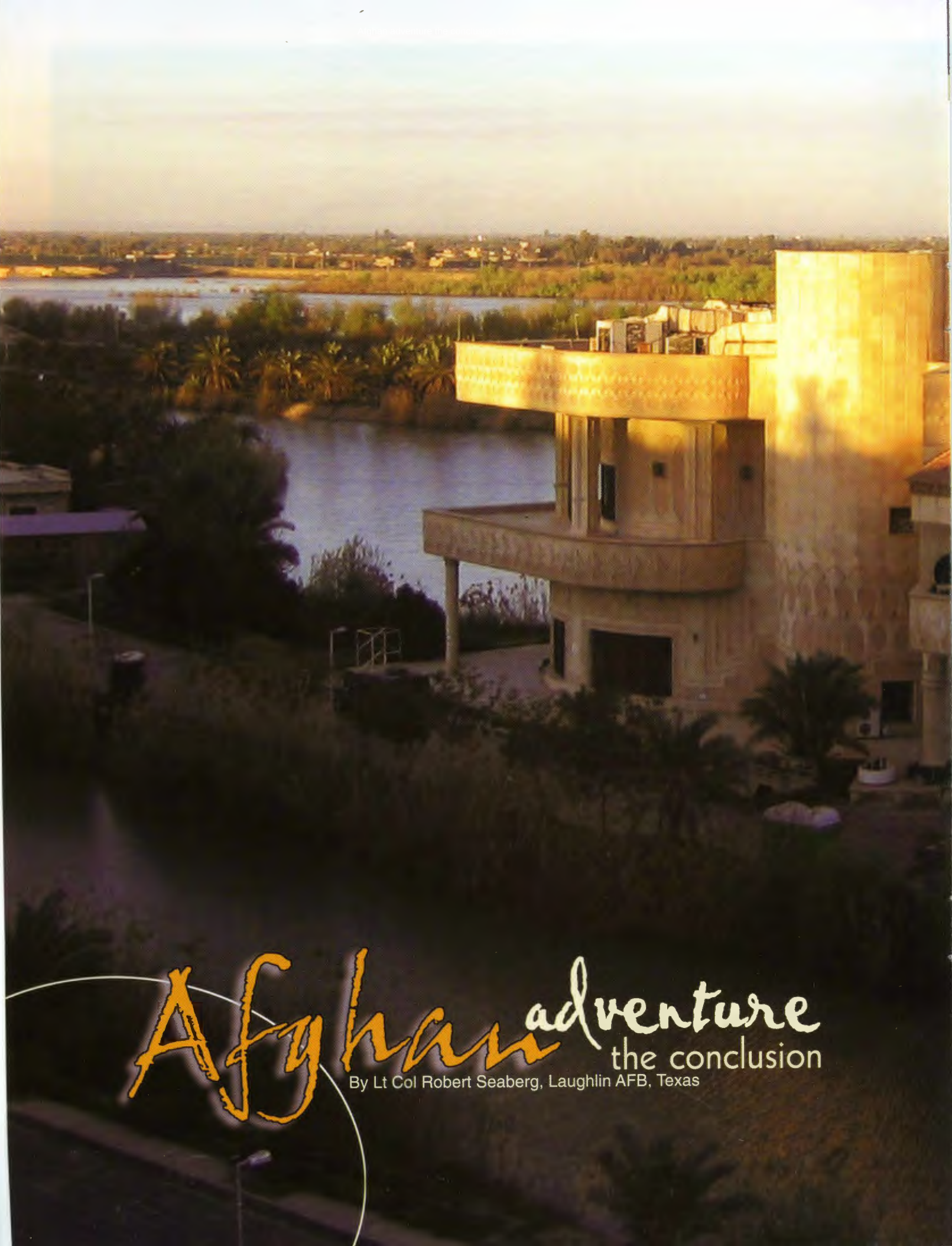
We made a low-approach for visual confirmation of our predicament and entered holding where we chatted with the Supervisor of Flying (SOF) who was now very much awake. We adjusted our gross weight down to just above the lightest we could be and still keep our center of gravity on target with full-forward wing sweep and no flaps and slats. The blended wing design of the B-1 produces enough lift that the Dash-1 warns that without slats and flaps for drag, you have to intentionally fly the plane through ground effect, down onto to the runway. After that, spoilers, displacement of the horizontal stabilizer, and eight mighty brakes usually took care of all the exponentially exacerbated amount of kinetic energy.

Our main gear touched down just prior to the SOF's truck, which I used to mark my "go-around-and-try-it-again" threshold on the 12,000 foot-long runway. The spoilers were extending as I purposely lowered the nose to the runway. Normally during landing, the pilot not flying calls out the runway distance remaining markers as the plane progresses down the runway. The cadence is usually a steady but relaxed, "9,000 ... 8,000 ... 7,000 ... 6,000." The pilot then makes a quick tap on the brakes just to check 'em, rolls out to 3,000 feet remaining, and then uses moderate braking until slowed down to taxi speed. That night, the pilot's voice was about an octave higher as he spit out the numbers "9-8-7-6" in rapid succession.

At that point my only dilemma was that every time I tried to milk the stick back to displace the stabilizer, the nose flew off the runway and we took weight off the main gear. Gratefully, an "old-head" instructor pilot had shared a kernel of knowledge with me a short time before at the instructor upgrade course. When he told me, I thought it was a completely extraneous piece of information; but, at this particular moment, I had genuine appreciation for it. Faced with only a 1,000-foot safety margin of overrun, I quickly decided to try his technique.

I pushed the stick full forward, which deflected the horizontal stabilizer and caused some drag. It is important to caution that doing this routinely will cause undue wear on the nose gear and strut, but so will running off the end of the runway so I had everything to gain. It worked like a champ and we stopped with nearly a 1,000 feet of runway remaining. Our next big fear was a brake overtemp or fire. This was mitigated by my expert braking application not to mention a healthy head wind and "lucky" chance precipitation. After the brake temps peaked just below the safety threshold and stabilized, we taxied to the parking area.

The adrenaline surge I got at 2:00 a.m. kept me wired until well after I got home and crawled into bed. Yogi Berra is attributed with the aphorism, "It ain't over, 'till it's over." You're entrusted with not just employing but also preserving national assets all the way from engine start through shutdown. Always take this responsibility seriously as you continue to FLY SAFELY!



Afghan adventure

the conclusion

By Lt Col Robert Seaberg, Laughlin AFB, Texas

Editor's Note: *This is the final part of a three-part series. When we left off last month the author and his party just received word they would have to stay on the mountain in hostile territory at least another 6 hours.*

Did I mention that it was cold? The temperature was well below freezing now that the sun was down, and ice started forming in the plastic water bottles. It was time to drink it or wrap it up inside my bag. The Marines started joking that all the helicopter (helo) would find is a bunch of popsicles, and I began to think they were right. Shivering is a wonderful thing, you can get a full body workout in one place, and I was feeling it. I thought about the Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) I had stashed in my bag, but I wasn't hungry. I figured, if the helo didn't make it, I'd probably need it in the morning.

The Marine OIC (Lt) decided to move us off of the ridge and into a valley that had a much better landing zone for a night pick up. Also, it would be safer since everybody and their brother saw us on the ridge all day. He left a fire team on the ridge to protect our flank, and we followed the bulk of the Marine Quick Reaction Force (QRF) as it descended to the valley below. When we reached the valley, there were a few berms the snipers could use to lay behind in firing position. The locals could still see us because it was dusk, and the closest house was only about 200 meters away.

Behind us was a relatively flat spot that looked good for a helo pick up, and to our advantage, there were mountains behind that. The Lt pointed out a few observation posts on the ridgeline above us, and then showed the three of us Air Force folks a little depression about 6-feet wide and 2-feet deep and told us to stay near it. He said, if we started taking direct fire, it was the best place for us to go to because it might provide a little cover.

I looked at my 9mm Beretta and realized if we did get into a firefight, I was going to be just an observer. I was then pretty glad to be surrounded by Marines with M-16s, M-60s, 40mm grenade launchers, and M-72 Light Anti-Tank Weapons. At that moment, I began to think I would feel a lot safer if I knew how to use their weapons, and we ought to get checked out on them before we deploy.

We all hunkered down on the ground to keep a low profile as dusk faded into night. Suddenly, a quick burst of machine gun fire came from the ridgeline above us, and everyone turned and pointed their weapons, looking through their scopes to find the origin. The Lt commented it was probably just the Afghan National Army goofing off on top of the mountain. As the tension eased, I figured it was a good time to say my prayers; so I asked God for the wind to stop, the weather to get better back home, and if this was the end, let me go at peace.

It was dark by 6:30 p.m. and the lights came on in the village ahead of us. The city calmed down a bit as folks went inside for the evening. The call to prayer came over the loudspeakers again in the town for "after sundown prayers," and the village area we were in got silent as folks prayed and then ate dinner. The Lt pulled out his thermoscope (infrared night scope), checked out the landscape and ridgelines, and passed it down the line to us curious Air Force folks. I scanned the open area behind us and could see the bright images of the recon team about 100 meters away, as they walked the landing zone looking for mines and anything else unsafe. A ridgeline scan showed nothing. Good, no Taliban.

Things were looking better for us as I remembered it was Friday evening here, which is like our Sunday at home. So, all the good Taliban were in the mosque. I scanned the village below, and everything was peaceful. Suddenly there was a flash that caught everyone's attention. Another flash and we could see a thunderstorm popping up to the east. I don't know how thunderstorms form when it's below freezing, but I figured it was going to be the perfect capstone to my Afghan adventure. What else could happen? We didn't hear any thunder, and the storm appeared to be behind the next mountain range, where we hoped that it would stay for the next 3 hours. The Marines started to get comfortable with the situation, and there was a bit of muffled conversation going on, but we all stayed low and thought about getting out of there.

I noticed the wind stopped, but it was still cold, probably about 28 degrees or colder. I lay on my back with the bag of airplane parts under my head, and looked at the night sky. It was clear and pitch-black above us, and I could see Orion's belt and a million other stars. What a beautiful sky. I heard a jet overhead. Maybe a B-1 or an A-10, but I knew it was ours, and that was comforting. I noticed at least 10 shooting stars, and other than the occasional flashes of lightning, it was a calm night. I started to think about how fortunate I was to see it. I could've fallen asleep, but I wasn't about to close my eyes because I darn sure didn't want to miss the helicopter.

At 9 p.m. the radio operator told us Bagram's weather was clear, but there wouldn't be enough moonlight till 10:45 p.m. for the helos flying on Night Vision Goggles. We were feeling pretty good because we made it this far, and I believed we wouldn't freeze before the helo pick up. We heard another burst of machine gun fire from above us, saw red tracers impact the next ridge, and ricochet skyward. The Lt said that red tracers were friendly bullets, and the Afghan's could shoot all they wanted as long as they didn't shoot at us.

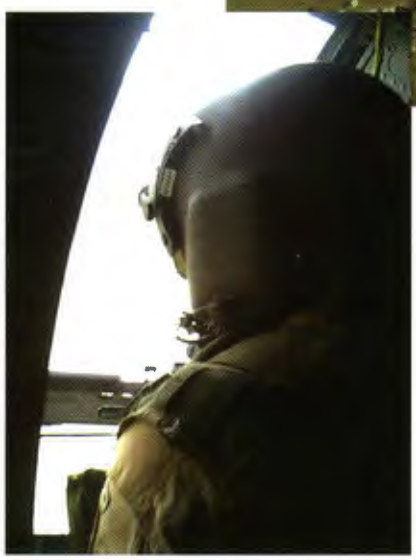
Maybe a B-1 or A-10, but I knew it was ours, and that was comforting

"Great, at least we'll know what color bullet kills us," I thought to myself.

The Lt commented it was probably some good hashish being passed around, and there was a side bet that one of them couldn't hit a rock near us. If we needed to protect ourselves, we had enough firepower to take out the post, but it was better not to use it.

It was 10:45 p.m. when we got word two CH-47s, capable of holding

about 30 troops a piece, launched from Bagram. Everyone was excited at the news, and the Lt pulled the flank guard off the ridge, sent a squad to mark the landing zone with chemical light sticks, and told us to hang with the troop leader for the second chopper. It was his responsibility to count everyone going on the chopper to ensure no one got left behind, and so, the three of us Air Force guys gathered our stuff and followed the troop leader around like puppies. The only thing worse than being stuck out overnight in hostile territory with a bunch of Marines would be being stuck out overnight in hostile territory without them.



We heard the choppers, but couldn't see them until they were silhouetted against the city lights below.

The first chopper came in low, filling the air with 100 mph dust. (Glad I brought my goggles!) It landed and picked up the first half of the Marines, as the second chopper approached slowly and then flew over us. I noticed that the dust kicked up into the blades created electrostatic sparks like St. Elmo's fire. It looked like 100,000 fireflies flying formation at supersonic speed. The second chopper approached again, lower this time.

The blades looked like they were below our position, and for a moment, I had a tinge of fear that we might get sliced and diced, but then I noticed all of the sparks going around in formation, and thought to myself: "This looks pretty cool. I guess my last memory is going to be a good one."

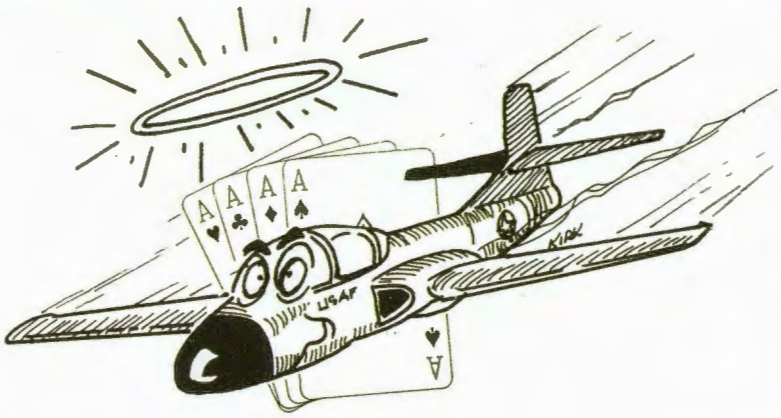
The blades got to within 50 feet of our position when the helicopter started to spin around looking out of control, and I started thinking that we were dead men. It suddenly stopped with its back end pointing at us, and touched down on top of the berm, with its ramp open. This guy was good.

The troop leader tapped me, and I ran through the flying dust and scrambled aboard the chopper. It took less than a minute for all of us to get aboard and close the back ramp. Looking through the gunner's door, I could see the first chopper take off, and as soon as he was by us, our chopper took off. The breeze blowing through his door was chilly, but I didn't care because it afforded an unrestricted view of Kabul as it went to sleep. We were on our way back to Bagram at 11:15 p.m. — 14 hours after we got off the Blackhawk.

What did I learn? First, I now have a profound respect for the young troops that do this stuff day in and day out. Secondly, helicopters are pretty cool, so I'll never dog a helo driver again, and third, I thank God I'm in the Air Force!

Seriously, there are many lessons to take away from this story. I can sum them up with be prepared and be flexible. I had no idea when I reported for work that day I would spend the rest of it hiking on a rugged mountainside, in hostile territory, investigating an aircraft accident. Remembering to bring appropriate clothing made the difference between comfort and potential cold weather injuries.

Regardless of my immediate preparation, the real work happened before my deployment. Taking advantage of all available training, like self aid buddy care, weapons qualifications, law of armed combat and special driving qualifications such as humvee or heavy equipment, is important to prepare us all for the situations we may find ourselves in when deployed. Our deployments are joint operations and it is important to be trained on the capabilities of the forces you will work with. Finally, being physically fit is an imperative. There is no crash course in cardio conditioning or 50-pound rucksack carrying. So get your training and be ready for anything. Maybe you too will have an Afghan adventure.



There I Was . . . Tweet Style

Anonymous

It was a fine warm New England summer day. We had just landed at Pease on a T-37 ACE out and back. I was the typical young cocky FAIP working as a supplemental TDY ACE IP at the time. The ACE program had just begun and I found its loosely structured program exciting and a whole lot of fun.

Flying in the northeast environment had its winter-time challenges, but lacked the big bruiser type thunderstorms that made my south central home base flying very interesting at times. The only thunderstorms I experienced in the northeast would be classified as thunder showers in my part of the world.

On our flight down to Pease, we noticed a lot of towering cumulus developing, but nothing to be concerned about. On our stopover weather update, the Pease weather shop briefed increasing likelihood of thunderstorm development enroute and a cell developing 20 nm to the northeast but nothing enroute back home yet. After a quick bite to eat, we returned to our T-37 for an uneventful preflight and taxi. As we were taxiing out tower called a "thunderstorm within 20 nm." Again, no problem.

As we were approaching the hammerhead, I called metro for an exact location and they stated 12 nm northeast of the field moving towards Pease. Mentally I planned for a runway 34 departure with an immediate turn to the south to keep me well clear of the thunderstorm. After quickly coordinating my desires I pushed up the power for takeoff and a flawless departure and flight back home. Another flight masterfully planned and executed? Well, when I landed, my TDY boss let me know that while enroute back home, the Pease weather shop called our base weather shop to let them know some interesting facts. That thunderstorm which I had "beaten" spawned a gust front that knocked over the wind measuring gear at Pease seconds after I had departed. Last recorded wind was 100 knots and increasing! The lesson here has been taught, learned, and reiterated over and over again at the cost of many lives. I was extremely lucky and "relearned" the lesson painlessly. You might not be so lucky.

FLY SMART FLY SAFE!

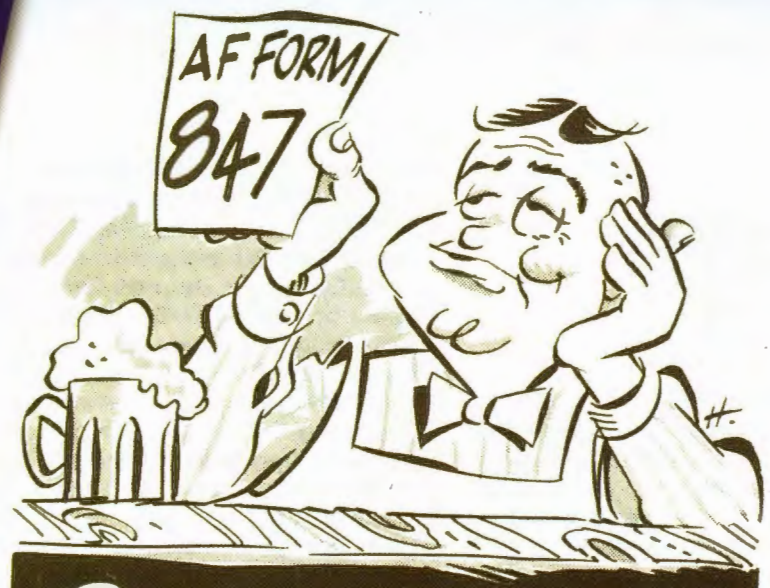
AUGUST 1991

From the Archives...

From the Archives ...

The old maxim "the more things change, the more they stay the same," has never been more applicable to the magazine than this issue of *The Combat Edge*. At the ACC Safety Conference back in March, I promised that the magazine would not look the same when the conference met again in a year. Since the April 04 issue, the staff and I have put the magazine under a microscope and have given it a new feel and direction. We've implemented new layouts, design elements, and have taken the stance that just because something hasn't been done before, doesn't mean we can't do it. With this month's new cover logo, the first logo redesign in over 5 years; the transformation is nearly complete, and we hope you like the finished product.

The magazine cannot implement change without acknowledging where we've been in the past. *The Combat Edge* began as a result of the merger of Tactical Air Command and Strategic Air Command into Air Combat Command in June 1992. With the appearance of *The Combat Edge* came the retirement of *TAC Attack* (published from January 1961 to May 1992) and



Don't tell the Bartender

BY CAPT JOHN D. MUSGROVE
Stdn/Eval Off, 836 AD
MacDill AFB, Fla.

THE USER is always the best source of information for up-dating TOs, regulations, manuals and other directives that pertain to flying. Each pilot should consider this and appoint himself a committee of one to submit changes or improvements when he considers them necessary. As pilots, we can recall many occasions when we have bad mouthed procedures and directives in briefings and bull sessions, or cussed and discussed the agency responsible for such nonsense. This is natural and just as it should be. We are the experts in this business and often are more current than the man stuck behind a desk and charged with turning out these reams of paper. What I am suggesting is that we, as expert users, give a helping hand to the weenies in the head shed and help them help us. We are deriding the wrong people when we see a mistake in a directive if we take no action to correct it. We are to blame if we know of a better way to do a job and choose the bar or bull session as our only forum. We should take action to correct it.

Here's how. Each wing has a Standardization/Evaluation flight whose sole purpose is to help turn out the best aircrews possible. If we will just sit down and write them a letter and tell them what should, in our opinion, be done, they will submit an AF Form 847, through Division DO, to TAC SEG. This gets action, since items must be reviewed by TAC. If it's a local problem, your S/E flight and DO shop should get together and work it out.

This is a unique opportunity for each of you to set policy and establish procedures that will be used TAC wide. This is particularly true in units with new equipment. For example, procedures adopted by us as the original users of the F-4C will be the basis for much of the future F-4 directives. If you want to do a job your way, tell us about it. Now is the time to start.

As a sort of footnote, I would like to mention what prompts me to write this piece. In the month of July, TAC SEG received only two 847s from all of Tactical Air Command. If we are so good that we only need two changes, this piece need not be written. If this is the case, we are so good that none of us will have occasion to partake of any more bull sessions to bad mouth the system. I, for one, would hate to see the second most popular pastime for fighter pilots die such an untimely death!

Combat Crew (published from June 1950 to May 1992). Paging through old copies of *TAC Attack* and *Combat Crew*, the first thing we noticed were the old acronyms, aircraft, lack of color photos, and the black and white hand-drawn illustrations. Upon closer examination, a common theme stood out, solid safety messages that transcended time and were as applicable today as they were when first published. With that in mind, we have included one article from each magazine here in the centerfold and will occasionally reprint applicable articles in future magazines.

Safety and flying safety in particular was important enough in June 1950 for Lt General Curtis E. Lemay to direct the establishment of a safety publication, and for TAC to follow suit in 1961. ACC Safety's mission statement is "Preserving Combat Capability through Aggressive Mishap Prevention" and our goal is to accomplish just that, with a nod to the past and an eye on the future.

-The Combat Edge Staff

Aircrew Safety
Award of Distinction

Capt Hayes and Capt Mulloy briefed as SKEETER 01 flight, a two-ship of A-10s flying an out-and-back Close Air Support (CAS) sortie from Pope AFB, N.C. to support USAF Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) training at Ft. Benning, Ga. During the initial climb to FL230, the flight accomplished operations and systems checks passing through 10,000' MSL, 13,000' MSL, and FL180. During these checks, neither Capts Hayes nor Mulloy noted any anomalies with their aircraft fuel and oxygen systems. The flight leveled off at FL230 and accomplished a Level-Off check where Capt Mulloy noted her cabin altitude to be 16,000'. According to the A-10 pressurization schedule, the cabin altitude at FL230 should be approximately 14,000'. Immediately thereafter, Capt Mulloy's Master Caution Light illuminated with an associated Oxygen Low Light. She discovered that the Oxygen Quantity Indicator needle was slowly spinning and that the Master Caution Light and Oxygen Low Light would illuminate each time the indicator decreased below 0.5 Liters. Capt Mulloy called a Knock-It-Off and quickly received the lead from Capt Hayes. While analyzing the aircraft malfunctions, Capt Mulloy began to recognize her personal hypoxia symptoms — euphoria, fogginess, mental confusion, and an inability to perform simple tasks. She requested a descent with Washington Center but, due to the hypoxia, initially had difficulty taking action to begin the descent. After Capt Hayes prompted Capt Mulloy multiple times, she finally pulled the power and lowered the nose of the aircraft. Capt Hayes instructed Capt Mulloy to gang load the oxygen regulator by selecting EMERGENCY and 100 percent Oxygen. Capt Mulloy's hypoxia symptoms also made it difficult for her to operate the Embedded GPS/INS (EGI). Recognizing that Capt Mulloy was having trouble with the EGI, Capt Hayes talked her through the process of selecting Pope's TACAN and turning direct to Pope. Capt Hayes declared an emergency with Washington Center and communicated that Capt Mulloy was experiencing hypoxia. Since Capt Mulloy continued to experience her hypoxia symptoms, Capt Hayes needed to continually prompt her to maintain a nose low attitude for the descent and to change radio frequencies during the emergency flight back to Pope AFB. Eventually, Capt Mulloy's hypoxia symptoms diminished and she landed uneventfully via a straight-in with Capt Hayes in chase. Capt Hayes' flight leadership and Capt Mulloy's ability to overcome hypoxia in a single-seat aircraft demonstrated the proper use of cockpit resource management and were instrumental in the safe recovery of the aircraft.

Capt Dax Hayes, Capt Julie Mulloy,
74th Fighter Sqdn., 23rd Fighter Group, Pope AFB, North Carolina

Crew Chief Safety
Award of Distinction

On 17 June, 2004 SrA Chad Alexander and Amn Adam Liller of the 509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron were preparing to recover the B-2A "Spirit of Georgia" returning from a normal training sortie. As they marshaled the aircraft to its final parking spot, the number three brake became engulfed in flames. SrA Alexander immediately took control of the situation and instructed the flight crew to shut down engines and evacuate. SrA Alexander and Amn Liller ensured the safe evacuation of the crew and began combating the brake fire. Within a few seconds, they were able to extinguish the fire using a 150-pound Halon fire extinguisher. The quick reaction time and expert understanding of emergency procedures enabled SrA Alexander and Amn Liller to save lives and prevented the loss of a $2.2 billion B-2 stealth bomber. To their credit, the entire ground emergency was handled without any damage to equipment or injuries to personnel. Their superior actions are a testament to the caliber of men and women in the 509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

SrA Chad Alexander, Amn Adam Liller,
509th Aircraft Maint. Sqdn., 509th Bomb Wing, Whiteman AFB, Missouri

Flight Line Safety
Award of Distinction

While performing duties required to launch a $74M B-52 bomber on a local training sortie, SSgt Holloway and A1C Beames prevented the loss of life and a valuable combat aircraft. SSgt Holloway and A1C Beames were assigned as crew chiefs to launch Skull 29 on a Functional Check Flight (FCF). The launch was plagued by multiple minor maintenance issues, and Red Ball maintenance was expertly and quickly coordinated. Problems included failure of the Hobart AC power cart, the pilot's Attitude Directional Indicator gyros, autopilot, and TACAN/VOR navigation set. After starting the number 4 engine in accordance with Technical Order procedures, engine number 5 would not start after applying fuel to the engine. Maintenance was coordinated to work on the problem. After motoring the engine to clear unburned fuel from the engine, and waiting the prescribed time for starter limitations, a restart of engine #5 was attempted. Shortly after the attempted restart, fuel vapors ignited around and below the engine. The crew chiefs took immediate action to warn the crew and used the nearby HALON bottle to quickly extinguish the flames. Their timely response prevented any damage to the aircraft. Finally, just prior to taxi, the team of crew chiefs noticed that one of the aircraft's air refueling doors on top of the jet was partially open. SSgt Holloway notified the crew, and a recycle of the system corrected the problem, preventing any damage to the system on departure and climb out. SSgt Holloways and A1C Beames' attention to detail yet again protected America's tip of the spear. The expert workmanship of the ground crew team allowed for an on-time takeoff despite all the encountered setbacks and delays. Working together, their quick action saved the lives of the five-member crew, two onboard maintenance Airmen, and an irreplaceable national resource.

SSgt Michael D. Holloway, A1C Bradley T. Beames,
2nd Aircraft Maint. Sqdn., 2nd Bomb Wing, Barksdale AFB, Louisiana

Pilot Safety
Award of Distinction

On 7 June 2004, Capt Hank McKibban displayed superb airmanship and flying ability in handling an in-flight F-16 engine emergency. Capt McKibban (call sign Lord 1) led a 4-ship of F-16s from Cannon Air Force Base on a defensive counter air mission. During the first ops check on departure, Lord 1 discovered the oil pressure was fluctuating. Capt McKibban assessed the oil pressure to be within operating limits and decided to monitor the engine instruments while continuing the departure. He climbed the aircraft to 15,000' MSL in accordance with the departure procedure and slowed to 300 KIAS. Shortly after entering the military operations area (approximately 40 nm from Cannon Air Force Base), Lord 1 received an ENGINE LUBE LOW warning. Capt McKibban initiated an immediate left turn direct Cannon, selected afterburner, and began climbing to achieve a one-to-one glide ratio to home base. He cleared #3 to a chase position for mutual support and declared an emergency. After 20 seconds of afterburner use, the afterburner failed and the nozzle fully closed due to oil loss. Capt McKibban continued to climb in military power to achieve parameters for a flameout approach and landing. At this point the aircraft fuel weight was approximately 9,500 pounds, well above a safe landing weight on a 10,000' runway at 4,300' elevation. Capt McKibban expertly guided his aircraft south of the airfield and worked together with Lord 3 to emergency jettison two external fuel tanks over an unpopulated area. Capt McKibban initiated a left turn and selected idle power after achieving proper flameout landing parameters. He turned on the emergency power unit (EPU) in anticipation of engine seizure and lowered the landing gear while performing the approach. On short final Capt McKibban selected full speed brakes and landed the aircraft approximately 800' down the runway at 185 KIAS. Realizing his idle thrust was higher than normal due to the fully closed nozzle; he lowered the tailhook and successfully engaged the departure-end cable at 90 KIAS. Capt McKibban's timely decisions and disciplined actions prevented a Class A mishap and saved the Air Force a valuable combat asset.

Capt William H. McKibban, 522nd Fighter Sqdn.,
27th Fighter Wing, Cannon AFB, New Mexico

MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS

Weapons Safety
Award of Distinction

On 26 May 2004 at the Strategic Integrated Maintenance Facility (SIMF), after a successful missile transfer of an Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM) from the Weapons Maintenance Bay to the engine bay, SrA John S. Teed and his team prepared their equipment for another missile transfer. As a monorail track channel was repositioned to allow movement of the hoist in the opposite direction, a bolt assembly securing the end of the monorail section to the wall worked itself free. SrA Teed immediately stopped the hoisting operation to investigate the problem. Realizing the seriousness of this bolt assembly to the monorail track, he quickly removed the hoist from over the ALCM and sent his team members throughout the SIMF to halt hoisting operations. Simultaneously, SrA Teed expeditiously notified the mid-shift production supervisor and SIMF Support Section, who launched a thorough inspection of the monorail system. A safety of maintenance, personnel, and weapon system determination was made to place the monorail system in a red "X" condition, shutting down all hoisting operations until the appropriate authorities were notified and the monorail system was inspected for integrity and repaired. Civil Engineering (CE) personnel arrived at the SIMF Flight to perform an investigation of the engine bay, and a thorough inspection of the entire monorail system. After the inspection, CE personnel deemed engine bay station number five as unfit for daily hoisting operations until the repair was accomplished. SrA Teed's quick thinking and keen awareness to the mishap potential of the monorail system saved the SIMF Flight and Air Force from a potential major mishap and/or accident. If it was not for his adept maintenance practices and keen sense of awareness, the Air Force would have experienced a tragic loss in personnel and/or equipment.

SrA John S. Teed, 2nd Munitions Sqdn.,
2nd Bomb Wing , Barksdale AFB, Louisiana

Unit Safety
Award of Distinction

The ADOS team — Flight Med (Flt Med), Bioenvironmental Engineering (BE), Public Health (PH), HAWC, Dental, Medical Readiness & Aerospace Physiology (AP) enhanced the culture of safety for the 27th Fighter Wing and the local community. Flt Med and AP briefed all wing pilots on the recent rise across the AF of G-induced loss of consciousness (G-LOC) incidents in the F-16. Their full-up anti-G straining maneuver review program was a critical contributor to ZERO Class E G-LOCs. Flt Med and AP mishap prevention efforts earned an "Outstanding" performance rating with ZERO discrepancies from 27 FW/SEF for the second consecutive year. Flt Med doubled their occupational health shop inspections and evaluation efforts to emphasize worker safety. They responded to three potential hydrazine exposure incidents and treated and evaluated 20 patients, and were essential for the safe HAZMAT clean up. BE identified zero safety issues or discrepancies during a 100 percent inventory of the 27 FW's radioactive materials. Together, Flt Med and the BE shop recognized an increasing trend in radio frequency exposures. As a result, the wing leadership issued a QA flash to ensure a safer working environment on the flight line. BE's collection, preparation, and analysis of over 100 water samples, protected our base water system. They tracked 58 possible pollutants in military housing's drinking water system and hand-carried the report to all 1,676 base houses, ensuring the health and safety of our military families. PH maintained the wing's personal medical readiness requirements with compliance at 87 percent, the highest in ACC! With 100 percent inspections completed this month, their food safety program management tool ensured the safety of all the wing's dining facilities and snack bars. They pushed respiratory protection compliance reports & rosters to affected SQ/CCs ensuring the program maximally enhanced on-the-job safety. Flt Med spearheaded joint water-rescue training with the SVS lifeguard staff and local EMTs, guaranteeing a safe summer swimming season. AP provided over 25 hours of human performance training to over 150 troops, emphasizing the human element in mishap prevention. One of our Flt Med ambulance crew averted disaster and was awarded a safety salute; she double-checked and thus avoided an F-16 collision on the flight line. AP launched endurance management education for the 27 FW, actualizing the AF Surgeon General's vision to institutionalize fatigue countermeasure education to reduce mishaps; 52 new troops trained this month. AP also provided dietary, herbal, and performance dietary supplement education to 56 new FTAC students, to ensure their health and safety. The 27 FW ALS cadre received stress and fatigue management education. AP helped reduce night vision goggles (NVG) mishaps by educating 23 pilots on the human limitations of night flight and common NVG illusions.

27th Aeromedical Dental Operations Sqdn.,
27th Fighter Wing, Cannon AFB, New Mexico

ACC Safety Salutes Superior Performance

Maj Gentry W. Boswell, Mission Lead
Capt Brian D. Golden, Acft Cmdr
Capt Ryan K. Carignan, Offensive Sys Op
1Lt Crystal D. Powers, Pilot
Maj Joseph T. Reidy, Ops Supv
Capt Jaime I. Hernandez, SOF
Capt Jeffrey E. Strommer, Duty IP
74th Bomb Wing,
Dyess AFB, Texas

A1C Joel A. Herman,
Assistant Dedicated Crew Chief
1st Aircraft Maint Squadron
1st Fighter Wing
Langley AFB, Va.

TSgt Louis Tatroe,
TSgt Jeffery Currence,
QA Inspectors
1st Maintenance Group
1st Fighter Wing
Langley AFB, Va.

TSgt Ted W. Farmer,
NCOIC, Electrical Shop
366th Civil Engineer Squadron
366th Fighter Wing
Mt Home AFB, Idaho

A1C Jeremy S. Miller,
Egress
1st Component Maint Squadron
1st Fighter Wing
Langley AFB, Va.

Capt Chris P. Couluris,
Weapons Officer
64th Aggressors
Nellis AFB, Nev.

Capt Byron Dobbs, Pilot
Capt Christopher Chandler, Radar/Navigator
1Lt Scott Serkin, Navigator
1Lt Bryan Zadworney, EWO
1Lt Robert Fore, Copilot
20th Bomb Squadron
2nd Bomb Wing
Barksdale AFB, La.

How do you fall f

rom a Tree Stand?

By LCdr Ben Walker, Staff, USCINCEUR

Finding the answer to that question took me 34 years. Somewhere, it's written that one of every three hunting mishaps involves tree stands, and I'm among that 33 percent. Here's my story. I was back from a short underway period to prepare for deployment and was spending the week between Christmas and New Year's hunting with my father. The two of us were excited that early morning we set off for the family's hunting land. The previous day, I had sighted a 10-point buck — a monster in this neck of the woods. However, fate wasn't on my side that day. The deer disappeared into the thick bush before I had a decent shot.

My father and I scouted for a better spot to put up a tree stand. I wanted a spot that would give me a better shot if the animal returned. To my disappointment, the trees in the surrounding area were tall but thin pines. The ground around the trees was deeply padded with beds of fallen pine needles. Because I was familiar with the uses and benefits of Operational Risk Management (ORM), we discussed possible options. The first question we asked: "Was it worth spending a strenuous afternoon moving the two tree stands to this location?" The answer was easy: "With the size of that deer, heck yeah!"

The size of the available trees meant we couldn't use tree-climbing stands, but a ladder-type tree stand might work. Being concerned about the security of the stand's legs in the soft ground, I drove the legs as deep as possible. I also gathered a few stones and put them into the ground around the legs for more security (or so I thought). Once I had tied off the stand's seat to the tree, I felt sure there was no chance of the seat falling.

The second question we asked was, "Are you concerned about the tree rocking?" To be safe, I spent some time and cleared out branches and small seedlings around my stand. I had designated the left side of the stand as my throw-down area (a spot where I could toss my gun without it hitting something on the way down). This precaution would come in handy if I slipped while in the stand and needed both hands to steady myself. My father was pleased I had taken these extra safety measures. He agreed the chances for windy conditions were remote, and knowing I always used a safety strap while in the stand, he felt there was no cause for alarm.

On that fateful morning, however, there was a slight change in the weather — it was colder than usual. We parked the truck, then started removing our hunting gear and suiting up. I had it all: warm clothes, orange vest, lucky orange cap, extra bullets, water canteen, hunting license, camouflage seat cushion (yes, we believe in some comfort when roughing it), whistle, binoculars, and, of course, my trusty safety strap.

I had put all my gear in the large pockets of my jacket, except for my strap, when my father asked for some help. He couldn't find some of his gear in the back of the truck. Because it was still dark, I grabbed a flashlight and laid my strap on top of the truck. I then gathered his gear and helped him suit up.

"We have a 15-minute hike into the woods, and it won't be dark much longer," said my father. I knew what he meant. It was important for us to be in our stands at least 20 minutes before sunrise. As I watched the light from his flashlight slowly disappear down the trail, I sensed that he was ready to go and that I was holding us up. I located my flashlight, and hurried to catch my father.

It took us about 20 minutes to walk to the first tree stand, which was my father's, and I spent some time helping him get into position. As I lifted his gun to him, I realized I had forgotten to retrieve my strap from the top of the truck, and I mentioned it to him. He knew I was bothered; he always has joked that I'm a little "overly safe." With a sorrowful look, he just said, "Even if you raced back to the truck to get it, you wouldn't have enough time to get into your stand before first light."

I knew he wanted me to get that 10-point deer. He offered his strap to me, but I wouldn't take it because I wasn't going to sacrifice his safety for mine. The safety strap was there to reduce injuries in a fall. If either of us was to fall (which hadn't yet occurred), I felt I'd have a better chance of landing on my feet with little or no problem. After all, my tree stand was only 15 feet high. As a kid, I always had been able to jump off rooftops or tree limbs, hit the ground, and roll back up to my feet like a cat. "Dad, I'll be fine," I assured. My father nodded and turned off his flashlight, which I took as his signal of approval. I left for my stand, and, within 10 minutes, I was in position, with my gun in my lap, awaiting the sun to rise.

As the sun came up, I could tell it was going to be a beautiful morning — albeit an extremely cold one. I wasn't worried because I had warm clothes, including a pair of gloves. My trigger finger wasn't going to be slow this time. However, I was worried about the seat of my stand, which was made of wood. The cold weather made the seat slippery, and my cushion couldn't get a firm grip. "OK," I thought, "ORM requires a control to minimize this risk — sit in the middle, and don't move. Done."

I was getting used to the cold when I heard a sound in the distance, looked up, and saw the first signs of a stiff wind working its way toward me. "Great!" I thought, "After five days of perfect hunting weather, I'm going to have to deal with the cold and the wind." I was upset because these conditions usually make deer bed down and stay quiet. As the wind strengthened, my tree began to sway. Again, ORM creeped into my mind, and I wondered, "Is it worth my suf-

fering the effects of the cold and risking being blown about to bag this particular buck?" My answer was, "With the size of that deer, heck yeah!"

I started doubting the deer would be moving this morning. I looked at my watch, and only 15 minutes remained before it would be the same time of day I had seen that buck the day before. I convinced myself to wait those 15 minutes to give the deer a chance to show itself before getting down.

Not 10 minutes later, I heard a large "cracking" sound in the distance — another tree breaking, but not mine. As I turned to look in the general direction of the sound, a weird sensation came over me, and, before I knew what was happening, the base legs of my tree stand buckled in the soft earth. The ladder portion of my stand twisted and the seat pivoted downward to the left. With the seat as slick as ice, my cushion (with my bottom still attached) had no choice but to follow the law of gravity. The seat cushion soon separated from me and floated softly to earth. I, on the other hand, didn't.

As I fell, my body twisted in the air such that I ended up falling headfirst toward the ground. I knew that orange hunting cap wasn't going to be much of a substitute for a helmet, so I started maneuvering to protect my head. Miraculously, I was able to twist enough to land on my right shoulder and roll with the fall. My left hand with arm outstretched held the gun parallel to my body and the ground, so it didn't hurt me. However, I landed on my binoculars while rolling, and they knocked the wind out of me.

Glad to be alive, I lay on the ground, mentally checking for broken bones, while trying to regain my breath. I released my gun, reached into a side pocket with my left hand, and removed my whistle. By the time I got it to work, though, my father already was crashing through the woods, figuring he would find me under the splintered remains of a tree.

I stayed on the ground as my father looked me over, then stood up, gathered all my gear, and started the trek back to the truck. We talked about the change in the weather but really were thanking the Lord (silently) that I was able to walk at all. Once we got to the truck, I grabbed my safety strap off the top of the truck and stowed it with the rest of my gear in the hunting bags.

What lesson did I learn from this incident? The desire to complete the mission — to bag that deer — was strong with me. When someone starts talking about how important the mission is above everything else, little red flags should go up. If I find that the proper gear isn't available at work, we simply don't do the mission until the problem is corrected. The requirement for PPE exists for a reason. Away from work, I was able to rationalize that I didn't need a safety strap. The warning signs were present; I just didn't recognize or act on them.

What did this lesson cost me? Remember the deployment I mentioned at the start of this story? Well, I never made it. "A freak fall" is what the doctors called it. I had torn three tendons in my right shoulder and wasn't able to lift my arm more than 45 degrees from my side — not good when you're a pilot. I had surgery a month later, and, because recovery time was going to be long, and my status wasn't known, I was forced to delay my command as the Officer in Charge (OIC) of a helicopter detachment. That is what hit me the hardest. My failure to use my safety training cost me an opportunity that I had worked hard to achieve. I also had to endure the ridicule of my peers, who coined call signs such as "Right Wing Low," "One Wing," and "Zephyr" (a rogue wind).

I heard a "cracking" sound, another tree breaking ...

I learned my lesson, and I recovered from my injury and am back flying. The Navy even found another opportunity to send me on a later deployment as the OIC of a detachment. I would like to pass on this wisdom from my father: "Things happen for a reason. It's always less painful to learn from others' mistakes, but when it's your mistake, you tend to have a clearer insight to the how's and why's. Tell your story, and let others learn from it. So what if they laugh, it's a small price to pay, and it easily could have been worse."

Editor's note: *Reprinted courtesy of Ashore Magazine*


BOMB

No Incident is too Small

By TSgt Peter D. Moreau, McGuire AFB, N.J.

It started out as a cool fall day in England. It was a typical day for an ammo troop in the conventional maintenance shop, processing 20mm ammunition, chaff and flares, and of course, building up BDU-33 practice bombs. I was in the office area doing paper work while the assigned crew was out building up several hundred BDUs for the upcoming week's requirements. The next thing I remember is SSgt Snuffy bursting into the office area frantically yelling at everyone to evacuate. We all know as ammo or any other type of weapons troop that this is a gut wrenching feeling. Without asking questions we cleared the area as trained.

At the evacuation meeting point we found out the story. One of the troops assembling the BDU-33s dropped one on the floor. The practice bomb had its MK4 Mod 3 spotting charge installed, but no plunger or safing gear installed yet. The spotting charge severed in the middle and spilled its contents, causing the crew chief to immediately evacuate the building.

Emergency personnel arrived within minutes to take care of the situation. After half an hour or so, they removed the hazard, and cleared the scene, allowing us to go back to work. We were definitely angry that we were evacuated for such a small, seemingly insignificant incident. I remember everyone joking with the involved crew chief about his frantic reactions to the situation. Everyone thought he overreacted due to the nature of the explosives he was working with. I also remember being part of the group making fun of him. As time went by, the incident became a memory, but the crew chief never really lived it down.

Several years later while enduring the hot summer months in Turkey, the BDU-33 incident came back into my life. I remember reading an article in the base newspaper about a specific weapons load crew. They were being recognized as the "Top" load team for their deployed unit. It was a pretty impressive article about some of the Air Force's top weapons loaders. I bring this up because a week or so after this article there was a follow-on article about the same exact load crew. This article was not so glamorous. The article was about two weapons loaders who were seriously burned while loading BDU-33 practice bombs. While performing an operation that this crew had performed thousands of times before, a BDU fell to the ground and functioned as designed. Unfortunately for these weapons loaders on this day, it was a little earlier than planned. At least two of the loaders were evacuated to Germany for medical assistance. I'm not sure how the story ended, but I hope they all made it out with minimal, or should I say, non-permanent damage.

This incident compared to the earlier BDU-33 incident made me realize I had a bad attitude towards some of the small, repetitive operations we perform thousands of times without a single thought of the dangers we face. It was only a MK4 Mod 3 spotting charge on that cool fall day in England that we laughed about. But several years later that same spotting charge sent two of the Air Force's top troops to the hospital with severe injuries. I can tell you now that my eyes were opened up to a level they should have been opened to right from day one.

We preach safety as ammo or weapons troops, but do we really practice it 100 percent of the time?

We preach safety as ammo or weapons troops on a daily basis, but do we really practice it 100 percent of the time? I can tell you that this ammo troop has done it ever since and will continue to live safety and teach safety until I no longer breathe AMMO (which will be the day I die)! There is no job small enough to disregard **SAFETY!**

101 Critical Days of summer Recap

By SMSgt Cliff Motley, Langley AFB, Va.

A Command Reduction in Safety Mishaps During the "101 Critical Days of Summer" Campaign!

By acting responsibly, and partaking in better Personal Risk Management practices, personnel in Air Combat Command helped reduce non-fatal mishaps by 11 percent and 16 percent in fatal Class "A" mishaps during this year's "101 Critical Days of Summer" campaign.

Compared to the FY 03 summer campaign, ACC experienced the following reductions in safety mishaps during the FY 04 campaign: automobile mishaps fell 35 percent from 35 to 23 and on-duty accidents decreased 21 percent from 39 to 31. In the miscellaneous arena of slips, trips, and falls, mishaps were reduced by 20 percent; our lowest rate in 5 years! Nevertheless, both sports and recreation and motorcycle mishaps increased during this year's safety campaign. Injuries in the Sports and Recreation category increased overall by 2 percent, primarily because of the slight increases in both softball and cycling injuries.

With an increase in the popularity of motorcycles, motorcycle injuries also increased during the summer campaign by 28 percent, from 23 to 32 mishaps. However, the number of fatal motorcycle mishaps decreased by 20 percent during the summer campaign and has decreased by 23 percent for the year. The command's reduction in fatal motorcycle mishaps can be primarily attributed to the Air Force and ACC's motorcycle safety initiatives. Because of the increases in motorcycle fatalities throughout the Air Force over a 5-year-period, an Air Force-wide motorcycle safety initiative was mandated ... the USAF Worldwide Motorcycle Safety Summit. As a result of the motorcycle summit, ACC mandated complete program reviews of all unit motorcycle training courses to foster the development of improved rider skills for assigned personnel. Through this initiative, a motorcycle mentorship program was developed resulting in mishap reductions and improved rider skills for our personnel with little or no riding experience.

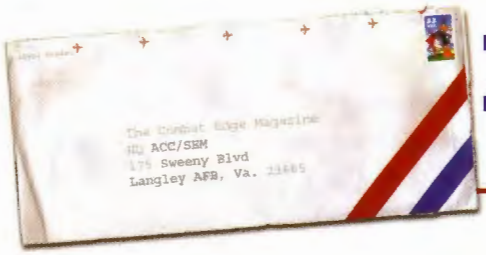
So far, the statistics indicate that ACC personnel are employing the basic principles of Personal Risk Management. More precisely, our command's mishap reduction accomplishments can be directly attributed to vigorous safety planning by the command's safety professionals, proactive safety initiatives within the command, and the direct involvement by our leaders, managers, and supervisors.

In another telling statistic, ACC reduced the number of fatal mishaps during this year's campaign by 16 percent. While having fewer fatalities is a positive trend, it doesn't mean the work is over.

According to ACC Vice Commander Lt Gen Bruce Wright, "We lost 9 ACC members to fatal mishaps this summer — 9 irreplaceable warriors. The official end of that campaign provides us the perfect opportunity to re-educate all our Airmen on the basic principles of ACT. ACT is simple: **A**ssess the situation, **C**onsider the options, and **T**ake appropriate actions to stay alive." It's simple; everyone can use the principles of ACT to accomplish personal risk assessment. The ACT principles were a big part of the "101 Critical Days of Summer" campaign; however, it was not the only safety initiative used to help our personnel stay safe.

Another cornerstone of success was the implementation of the "Safety Game Plan." The "Safety Game Plan" required each ACC unit to develop, implement, and monitor programmatic solutions to any potentially high mishap area. By trending high mishap areas, concentrated safety focus was placed directly into the Achilles' heel of areas requiring increased emphasis. The "Safety Game Plan" placed the proper emphasis on personal safety both (on-and off-duty); however, if personnel continue to take unnecessary risks and not foster a change in their behavioral paradigms, mishaps will continue to increase.

Remember, to ensure we can accomplish the Air Force mission we need everyone in ACC alive and well.



Letters to the Editor

From e-mail:

"Why did you use minefield clearance pictures for that reprint story on the Bagram Safety office? First, I thought it was going to be a story on land mine safety. It was just safety guys reading out of their continuity book. The pictures give the false impression that the safety office clears minefields."

—A-NON-E-MOUSE

Our Response:

My first response was to get defensive and I was about to push the launch button on an e-mail missile when I realized that someone not only had read the magazine, but had taken the time to respond, and provide feedback. I safely pinned the e-mail missile and responded with *"as for the photos, many times the photos we use were not shot to run with an actual story. It is our intent to try to best illustrate a story with the photos that are available to us. Therefore, a photo that we publish may have been taken at an entirely different location for an entirely different purpose..."*

As for the article, *The Combat Edge* is a "stringer" publication that is dependent upon article submissions from its readers, i.e., YOU, for material to print. It truly is the reader's magazine. If you think the Bagram story reads like "safety guys reading out of their continuity book," please take the time to write a better one, submit it, we'll help you clean it up and then publish it. **Readers:** you have the power to affect change, if you don't like the content of the magazine, give me something better to print, it's really that simple. My Point? "Don't curse the darkness, light a match."


Bagram Airmen Keep
Safety a Priority

We've made several layout changes to the magazine since April, and it will continue to evolve and change. Unfortunately, one thing that hasn't changed is the number of article submissions (too few) and feedback on the magazine (too little). Go figure, Airmen will swap e-mail messages about the latest Darwin Award winners, but they won't take time to submit information to the magazine. Few take the time to fill out formal surveys, so I DARE YOU to clog the magazine e-mail box (acc.sem@langley.af.mil) with stories, ideas, feedback, complaints or what you had for breakfast. I'm not picky; I just want confirmation that someone is seeing what is printed, and getting something out of it. I'm an optimist and I'll let you know if you've succeeded.

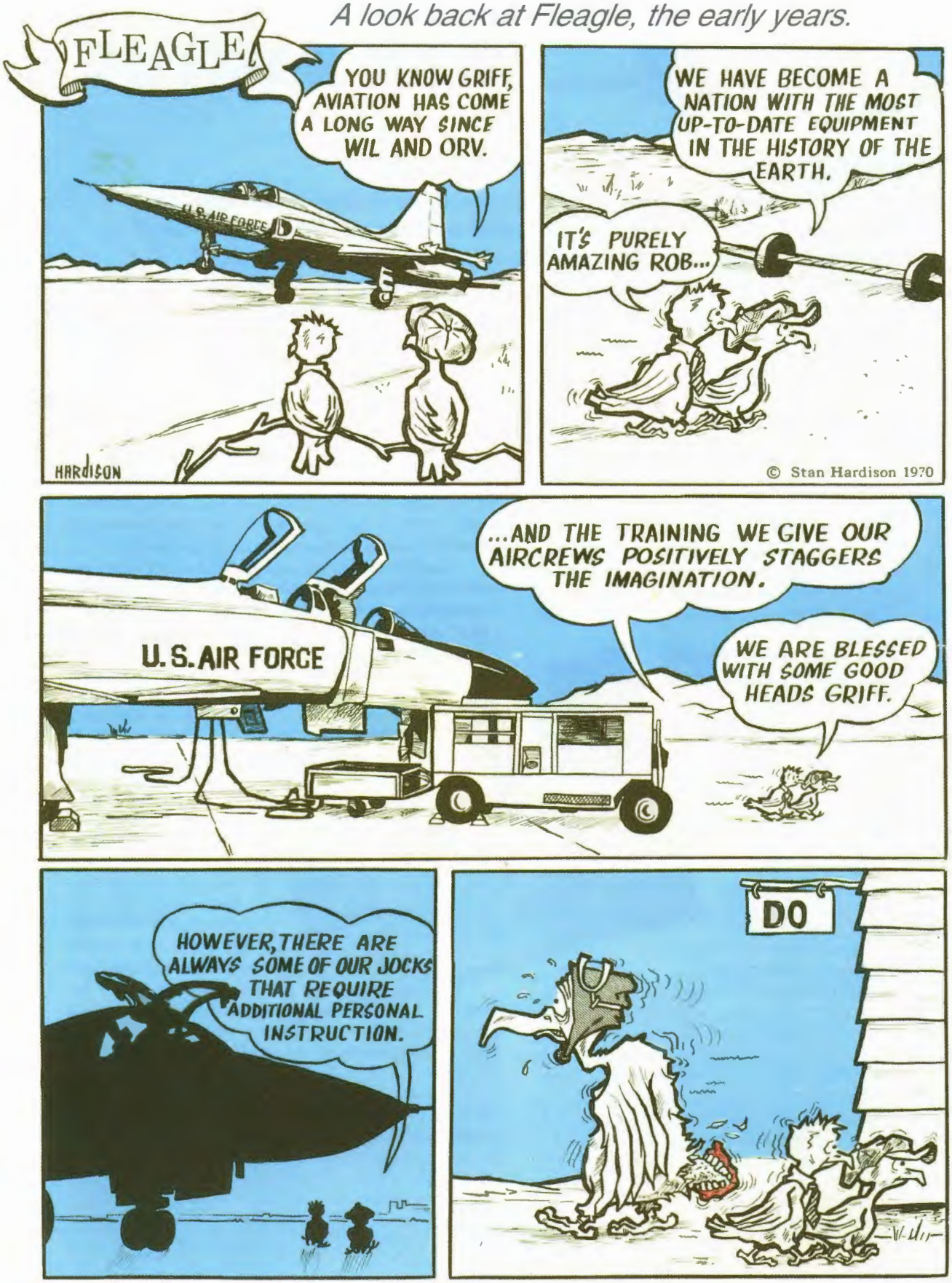
Mishap prevention is serious business, but readers can only take so many stats, gloom, and carnage before tuning out and we achieve nothing. We want to strike a balance between providing solid safety information, while striving to take ourselves a little less seriously. I believe we can be a little less formal while still getting the safety message across to the reader.

I believe pain is a good teacher, and first-hand experience is valuable, but I prefer to learn from other people's mistakes because it hurts less. We observe, or have "There I Was" and "Lessons Learned" experiences on- and off-duty nearly every single day. We re-tell those stories to our neighbors, friends, and coworkers, but there is an even larger audience out there that can benefit from them. This is altruism at its finest; if you did something really stupid like disabling the safety features on your chain saw and lost a finger as a result, tell us and we'll tell everyone how stupid you were, and what you learned from it. It's far better to have one nine-fingered Airman in ACC than nine, one-fingered ones. Joking aside, if you would be embarrassed by telling your story, or think you'll get in trouble, we'll withhold an author's name and print a story listing the author as "A-NON-E-MOUSE (a-la *Combat Crew* the old SAC Safety Magazine)" as long as we here in ACC Safety have the original author's name and can verify the story.

Take control of the process, make the magazine better, and remember: you don't have to be a Pulitzer Prize winning author; you just need to tell a story with a good ground, flight, or weapons safety message and pass it on to us.

—Editor

A look back at Fleagle, the early years.



FY04 Aircraft

As of September 30, 2004

	Fatal	Aircraft Destroyed	Aircraft Damaged
8 AF			engine
9 AF			
12 AF			
AWFC			
ANG (ACC-gained)			engines, brakes
AFRC (ACC-gained)			

FY04 Ground

As of September 30, 2004

	Fatal	Class A	Class B
8 AF		9	1
9 AF		8	1
12 AF		10	1
DRU's		1	1

FY04 Weapons

As of September 30, 2004

	Class A	Class B
8 AF	0	0
9 AF	0	0
12 AF	0	0
AWFC	0	4

Aircraft Notes

September yielded 2 Class As in ACC. Both were drones: one QF-4 and one Predator. Now for the good news ... ACC's Class A rate for FY04 was 1.34 per 100,000 flying hours. Statistically, FY04 was the safest year in ACC history! Over the past 12 months we lost one aviator, 2 Fighting Falcons, 1 Eagle, 1 Warthog, 1 QF-4, and 5 Predators. In case you're a math major, the cats and dogs were 2 Class A mishaps where the aircraft was fixable and 3 trashed engines. You're right, none of this is "good" news, but our challenge is to minimize the "bad" news. FY04 numbers say we're on the right track. Check yourself before you wreck yourself. Fly Safe!

Ground Notes

ACC finished FY04 with 28 Class A mishaps, a reduction of 3 (10 percent) from FY03. There were 27 fatalities, a reduction of 2. There were 8 PMV2 mishaps, 15 PMV4 mishaps, and 5 sport and recreation mishaps. In the Class B arena we experienced 3 mishaps (all permanent partial disabilities) as opposed to 2 in FY03, a 33 percent increase.

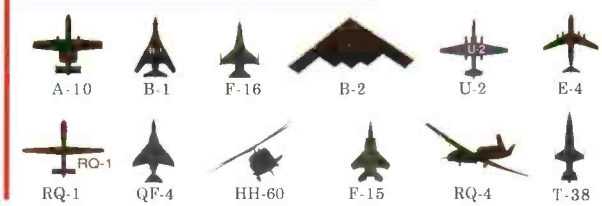
Weapons Notes

The end of this fiscal year has capped off another banner year for weapons safety. We had zero Class A mishaps but a slight upward trend in Class Bs and Cs. However, Class D mishaps and HAPs are on the downward trend. We need to stay focused on all areas, implementing any and all measures to keep weapons safety at the forefront of the minds of all Airmen. Keep up the great work!

Legend

Class A - Permanent Total Disability; Property Damage $1,000,000 or more
Class B - Permanent Partial Disability; Property Damage between $200,000 and $1,000,000
Class C - Lost Workday; Property Damage between $20,000 and $200,000
* Non-rate Producing

Symbols for Mishap Aircraft



Farewell Gen Hornburg

Gen Hornburg,
May your retirement road be without bumps, your skies without clouds and the wind always at your back.

From the ACC Safety Community