

PARACHUTIST

JANUARY—FEBRUARY, 1959

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

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SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER, 1959

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SACHUSETTS

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Several members have been seeking information about many problems some being of a national scope and many being their own, local problems. In many of these cases, members have a dissatisfied feeling that the club is not doing everything they can for the jumpers.

Even if none of these letters had come to me, I know there are a great many improvements that should be made for the club and the purpose of this message is to ask all members to have patience until after our next Directors' Meeting which is November 16 and 17 in New York City.

One problem which is causing a great deal of comment and in which the club is condemned to a great extent, is the matter of compulsory insurance. After many years of complaints and pleadings by members of the club that they were being handicapped in jumping since they had no insurance coverage, and after two years of conferences, we finally arrived upon an insurance policy which the Directors thought was the best possible to obtain. The only way this was possible was to cancel all memberships and let them re-apply for membership which would include 100% coverage. We were not in a position to get a direct vote from all the members without months of delay and we had been condemned by many and praised by others for this insurance coverage which is now provided. However, I have been advised from several sources that the compulsory insurance is a sore spot for many and, therefore, our insurance policy will be given much discussion at the Directors' Meeting.

I have heard many complaints that the military is unhappy. It is our desire to do as much for the military as for any other member but it is true they do not have proper representation in accordance with the number of members who are military. Here too is a case where a great percentage of military personnel who are qualified to join the

club, refuse to do so because they are covered by insurance on their jumping as being in the line of duty.

Many of the old-time parachute jumpers who have jumped under all conditions for several years and were members of the club for many years before the sport jumping started, are dropping out of the club and refuse to go along because they feel all the emphasis is on sport jumping and many old-timers who have jumped do not feel that they should have to ask the PCA to make a professional parachute jump (if I were still jumping, I think I would feel the same way.)

Many of the jumpers, and especially on the West Coast, are violating every safety regulation ever written and they are *not* members of the club, but due to violations happening throughout the country not only regarding PCA regulations, but all common sense and judgement, you can look for regulations which might even bar parachute jumping unless this matter is corrected.

For many years I have tried to get the CAA (now the FAA) to provide regulations for parachute jumping but there seem to be reasons, legal or otherwise, that they just do not want to handle this phase of aviation. The jumper who lives up to safety regulations may feel that the FAA is unfair, but if a lot of you jumpers who are in this safety category could just realize that jumpers are making all types of jumps under all types of conditions you might be more sympathetic. There is no question in my mind that unless there is controlled jumping a surge of fatalities will take place and the house will fall down on us and everyone will be hurt from this type of jumping.

After many years of doing all in my power to help parachute jumpers and after being greatly responsible for the adoption of a parachute category by the FAA and consequently by the NAA

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to the point where sporting licenses were issued, I thought that there might be a possibility that the FAA would go along and recognize this license as official and require that only those with the license or under the direct supervision of a licensed man, would be permitted to jump. In this way, we could control the parachute sport itself. However, if 9 out of 10 prospective jumpers do not belong to the club either because of the insurance problem or because they would be restricted from jumping in any way or for any other personal reasons, then I don't see how the club is going to be in a position to police the industry.

The club has had growing pains and it has spread from a few members throughout the country and still there has not been one person who has been carrying the ball for the club, who has ever received one cent for the work he does. I personally have carried the club to a great extent in the past 25 years since it was organized, until the past 3 or 4 years when I have been devoting only a portion of my time but two of the other directors, namely Jacques Istel and Lew Sanborn, have been carrying the heavy load. Due to their work, they have been successful in getting the military services to permit military men to take part in the sport. We now come to the point where it is impossible for me to devote enough time to actually manage the club the way it should be and now that Jacques Istel and Lew Sanborn are concerned with training centers, they do not have the time required to carry the load the way they have been, and both have asked to resign as Executive Vice-President and Secretary. Their resignations have not been accepted and will not be until the Directors' Meeting, and at that time we will have to make a great many decisions on who is going to run the club and how.

My own thought in the matter is that the only possible way this club, in its growing condition, can possibly be managed is to set it up in districts and have a manager in each district who will carry out the club's purposes in that area. Each district could handle his own affairs and in this way it would be possible for national headquarters to coordinate the work involved.

There is one problem with regard to professional jumpers: If this were a separate section and if sport parachuting were accepted as an Olympic sport, then anyone who had been a professional jumper would probably not be permitted to be a part of any international sporting team. My opinion is that all jumpers should be in one large group and we should work for the benefit of the Club. It seems that jumpers from different sections of the country who have different problems, each feel that they are being given a bad deal, but I would like to bring one matter to your attention and that is, the most any member has to do the way things are today, is to pay his annual dues and be sensible about his jumping. We do have the sport and a few years ago it was even illegal to make a delayed parachute jump in the United States. I would like to ask that everyone hold their patience until after the Directors' Meeting. From all the correspondence that we have from different members, we are in a position to know the things they are dissatisfied with and many of them may be cleared at this meeting.

Above all, let me warn all parachutists, whether PCA members or not, to cut out jumps in high winds, opening at low altitudes and carrying new students with no instructions because this is the thing that is going to hurt us.

Let us all stick together or it will be the old saying "United we stand—divided we fall."

Joe Crane

Mason Memorial Trophy Awarded to Brydon

Pfc. Loy B. Brydon, of the XVIII Abn. Corps Sport Parachute Club, Fort Bragg, will be the recipient of the Mason Memorial Trophy for 1959. During the competition for the Adriatic Cup at Tivat, Yugoslavia last summer, Private Brydon gave the most outstanding individual performance by an American in international competition by coming in second. We extend to him our most sincere congratulations.

An Apology . . .

We sincerely regret the lapse of time since the last issue of PARACHUTIST. We lost our editor to a large publishing house and have been searching for a new one. As our funds are limited, this has been an unsuccessful endeavor and so the staff of the Bluebird Press has put together this issue.

We expect to publish future issues more regularly so that the members of the Parachute Club of America and our regular subscribers will be kept abreast of sport parachuting news.

Report On Insurance Claims

We are pleased to report that out of the thousands of parachute jumps made this past summer there have been very few injuries reported. There have been twelve claims submitted to the North American Insurance Company, of which six have been paid for a total amount of \$1,013.55. The other six are in the process of completion.

From this you will realize that the safety record of P.C.A. members is excellent. Let's keep it this way!

Ruling by the F.A.A.

The following night letter was sent to the Parachute Club of America on October 6, 1959:

Regarding letter September 11, 1959, This is authority to permit P.C.A. sport jumping members to pack their own parachutes for intentional jumps until November 15, 1959, provided your club safety rules are strictly adhered to and jump activities are monitored by club approved safety officers. Emergency chutes must be packed by certificated parachute rigger. All other FAA and local restrictions must be complied with. Formal grant of exemption from provisions of section 25.80 of civil air regulations will be forwarded to you in near future.

William B. Davis
Director, Bureau of
Flight Standards
Federal Aviation Agency

Results of Meet at Orange, Massachusetts

A very successful Meet was held over the Labor Day weekend, at the Sport Parachuting Center in Orange, Massachusetts. The winners in the over-all scoring for both events at Orange were:

1. Richard Fortenberry;
2. Loy Brydon;
3. Jacques Istel;
4. Danny Byard;
5. Harry Arter.

There was also a Meet at Houston, Texas the same weekend. We hope to have the results of this Meet and the Meet at San Diego ready for our next issue.

U. S. Navy Approves Sport Parachuting

We are very pleased to print the following letter from Vice Admiral R. B. Pirie authorizing the formation of sport parachute clubs in the U. S. Navy:

Dear Mr. Crane:

You will be pleased to know that the Navy has authorized the forming of parachute Clubs.

A copy of our Instruction establishing Navy policy in this regard is enclosed herewith for your information.

The Aviation Training Division, under my cognizance, is responsible for monitoring this program. The address is OPNAV (OP-56). Navy Department, Washington 25, D. C.

I appreciate the reference material and suggestions you most graciously provided. They have been a great help in preparing our Instruction.

Very truly yours,
R. B. Pirie,
Vice Admiral,
U. S. Navy
Deputy Chief of Naval
Operations (Air)

Mr. Joe Crane
President
Parachute Club of America
P. O. Box 212
Mount Kisco, New York
Enclosure

U. S. Parachutists Outstanding

A United States parachuting team went to Tivat, Yugoslavia the beginning of August to compete for the Adriatic Cup. The team consisted of:

Col. W. P. Grieves, XVIII Abn Corps Sport Parachute Club, Team Leader.

Maj. M. L. Shepard, XVIII Abn Corps Parachute Club, Asst. Team Leader.

1st Lt. P. B. Merrick, Fort Campbell Sport Parachute Club, Jumper.

(Injured in practice jump at Tivat and did not compete)

1st Lt. R. S. Schneider, XVIII Abn Corps Sport Parachute Club, Pilot.

SFC A. M. English, Fort Campbell Sport Parachute Club, Jumper.

SFC R. R. Wightman, Fort Campbell Sport Parachute Club, Jumper.

Sgt. D. R. Byard, Special Warfare Center Sport Parachute Club, Jumper.

Pfc. L. B. Brydon, XVIII Abn Corps Sport Parachute Club, Jumper.

Pfc. C. W. Hughes, 82nd Abn Division Sky Divers, Jumper.

The following countries were represented in this Meet:

Austria; Bulgaria; England; Hungary; Israel; Poland; Soviet Union; United States; Yugoslavia.

For the first time in international competition an American team came in second, being beaten only by Bulgaria. This shows what great strides sport parachuting has made in the United States in the last few years.

In another competition held at Leutkirch, Germany in June, the United States was represented by Capt. Phillip C. Miller from the Schweinfurt Club and SFC Richard B. Knox of the Augsburg Club. This was the first FAI sanctioned Meet held in Germany since 1938 and the following countries sent competitors:

Austria; Belgium; England; France; Germany; Sweden; Switzerland; United States.

The Austrians came in first as a team and also in the Individual Class II competition with Sergeant Knox coming second in this event followed by France in third place.

It is indeed gratifying to see Americans more than holding their own against such strong competitors.

PCA Board of Directors

The results of the balloting for a new Board of Directors are as follows: Mr. Joe Crane, Mineola, N. Y.; Lt. General James M. Gavin, Cambridge, Mass.; Mr. George Flinn, Easthampton, N. Y.; Col. William P. Grieves, Falls Church, Va.; Mr. Leslie L. Irvin, Lexington, Ky.; Mr. J. A. Istel, Bedford, N. Y.; Mr. Wolfgang Lieschke, New York, N. Y.; Mr. L. B. Sanborn, Orange, Mass.; Mr. D. C. Sonnichsen, Berkeley, Calif.; Mr. Maco Stewart, Galveston, Texas; Mr. Gill Robb Wilson, New York, N. Y.

We wish to reprint the following correspondence and take this opportunity to thank Colonel Stewart for his consistent encouragement during the lean years of parachuting:

Night Letter, Santa Barbara, July 23
Joe Crane, President of the Parachute Club of America.

In consideration of the best interests of the Parachute Club of America and in view of the fact that my West Coast residence precludes my attendance at regular directors meetings, I very regretfully tender my resignation as Director. My memories of many years of wonderful association will always keep me with you in spirit. At least there will be a Stewart on deck.

Colonel E. Verne Stewart,
USAF, Ret.

To Colonel Stewart

Dear Verne:

It is with great regret that we accept your resignation from the Board of Directors of Parachute Club of America.

We are all grateful for your long standing interest and service to parachuting. The growth of the sport today is due to the faith and vision of people like yourself.

I do hope that I will be able to extend my greetings to you in person in the near future.

Yours sincerely,
Joe Crane, President

There will be a Board of Directors' Meeting in New York City on November 16 and 17 at which time new officers will be elected.

Letters to the Editors

Bradford Straus
219 First Street
Horseheads, N. Y.
August 21, 1959

The Editor
Parachutist
Box 594
Mt. Kisco, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

I am sure that the Piper Club, Super-Cub series of aircraft has become quite popular as a jump ship in this country. I would like to pass along an account of an experience that happened to me last month that indicates a potential hazard when exiting from this type of ship.

I was planning a 60 second delay on the evening of July 19 out of a 150 H. P. Super Cub, but weather forced us down to 5000 feet, so I changed my plans to a 20 second delay. I was in the back seat, with the stick removed. I have found that the only way to get out of the back seat with full equipment on is to get my legs out the door and then lift myself from the back seat to a sitting position on the door frame. This means that I am facing slightly forward while getting out, since the door frame is ahead of the back seat. Even facing this way there is not much room, and the jumper is fairly closely restricted between the back of the front seat and the side of the door frame. Equipment can catch on either one of these obstructions. In this case it was my chest pack rip cord that must have caught on the rear door latch, for as I lifted myself out onto the door frame, the chest chute opened and tumbled out. Since I was facing slightly forward for an instant, I did not notice this. The first thing I noticed was the chute just starting to squid as it was catching air. My reactions were not fast enough, for I did not jump off before the chute caught air. At the moment of the opening I was sitting on the door frame, facing backwards and to the side, and was snatched off the ship while in this position. The right side of the chest pack frame caught the door frame and both the chute container and the door were badly torn up and dented. I estimate that at this moment

the ship was traveling at 55-60 MPH. It will certainly be important to note that even being dragged straight back under these conditions I cleared both the tail horizontal stabilizer and the wire support under it. The pilot said he remembered seeing me in a sitting position, about 8 feet under and 40 feet behind the tail. However, he was quite nervous anyway, this being the first jump he had ever piloted, and I don't know how accurate an estimate this is. Upon examining the chest pack later, I did see that four of the top suspension lines had been cut on the wire support under the tail, and some suspension line was found on the wire. Apparently upon opening, the vertical movement of these lines caused them to be severed by the wire. Also, while coming down, I opened my main chute, since I was really traveling with only a 24' chute with 4 suspension lines cut. My main was a 28' blank gore sleeve deployed. On pulling the rip cord, at 2500', it dropped straight down, and two tugs on the suspension lines pulled the sleeve off. It caught air and blossomed well clear of the chest pack. There was no tendency for the big chute to tangle with the smaller one.

If anyone knows of a better or different way of exiting from the back seat of the cub, I wish they would let me know. Meanwhile I intend to make sure all rip cords are clear of obstructions while climbing out of this type of ship. I hope this letter will save someone else from a similar incident.

Sincerely,
Bradford Straus
Orange B-50

21 July 1959
Yuma Test Station
Yuma, Arizona

Editor
Parachutist Magazine
Box 594
Mount Kisco, N. Y.

Dear Sirs:

Reference is made to the account of the fatality of Robert Willard Clark, as related in the last issue of Parachutist.

Several years ago tests of various pilot parachutes were conducted by the Wright Air Development Center in a horizontal

wind tunnel. These tests involved the placing of a man-like dummy in the air stream in various positions such as would be encountered in free-fall, and actuating the ripcord to release the pilot parachute.

It is recalled that when the dummy was facing into the air stream (with parachute pack opposite the air stream) and the ripcord released, the pilot parachute quite often was totally ineffective due to the "blanketing" effect of the dummy. Turbulent air around the sides of the dummy held the pilot parachute close in against the dummy as long as air speed and dummy positions were held constant. When the dummy was turned 180° on its longitudinal axis (with parachute pack facing air stream) the pilot parachute was sometimes held against the parachute pack by the ram air pressure. This was the least serious of the two conditions it is recalled, and pilot chute failure occurred less frequently in this position.

The blanketing action first described above, could very well have caused the parachute failure in the case of jumper Clark. The report of witnesses as described in the 'Parachutist' article, have been misleading as the "flicker of white" reportedly seen about fifty feet from the ground may not have been the pilot parachute at the time of actuation. It could easily have been that the pilot parachute, which having been blanketed by the stable face-down jumper, was not noticed until the jumper neared the ground. I suggest as a very possible cause for the death of Robert Willard Clark, the blanketing of pilot parachute action by the stable face-down body of the jumper.

I further suggest that holding a stable face-down (spread-eagle) position through the time from ripcord pull to parachute opening is an invitation to pilot parachute hesitation or complete failure. This hazard would be overcome if the sky-diver would pull both arms into the sides (or toward the chest) at the time of ripcord pull, allowing the body to assume a more nearly head-down position which would cause the air stream to flow over the parachute pack in a manner conducive to positive pilot parachute deployment.

A report of the tests referenced early

in this letter is available at Wright-Air Development Center (WCLEH), Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio; tests were conducted by a Lt. Joseph Calhoun.

Sincerely yours,
Robert L. Oakley,
Maj., USAF
Yuma Test Station,
Yuma, Arizona

EXCERPT FROM LETTER BY
L. O. GUNN

400 South Oxford Avenue
Los Angeles 5, California

I have noticed that you have an accident corner, in the Parachutist, but, more important, no safety corner. May I suggest that a safety corner be incorporated into each issue of the Parachutist and be especially written for the novice jumper. A contest for safety slogans might stimulate interest. This column should not be too long and safety hints could be repeated, thus you would have a never ending source of material. It would seem essential that we have an accident prevention program in the Parachutist.

We think this is an excellent idea and would welcome safety recommendations from our readers.

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