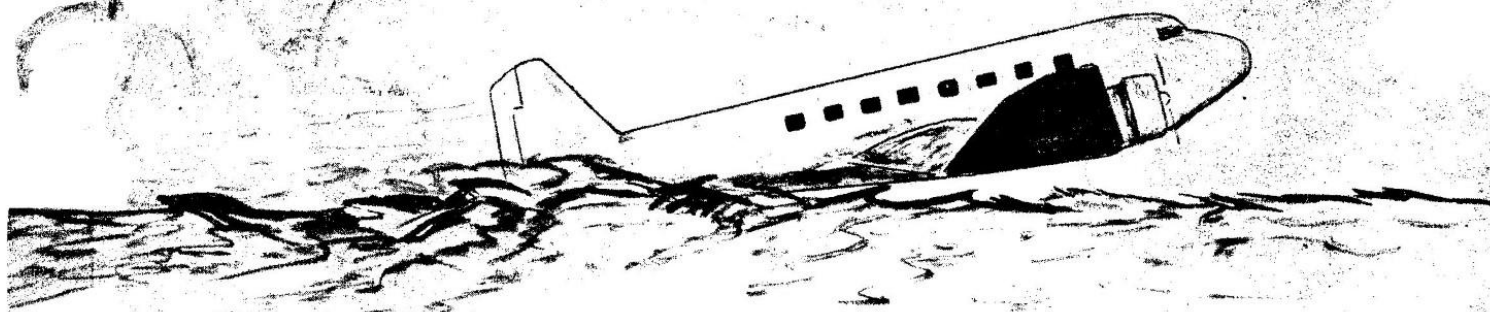
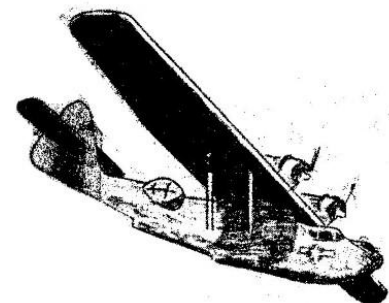


CONFIDENTIAL



# THIRTEENTH EMERGENCY RESCUE GROUP



"KEEP EM ON TOP"



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REPRODUCED BY 905 ENGR. A.F. HQ. CO. 463

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Much has been written on proper ditching procedures. Herein is set forth ditching procedure followed by pilots of four (4) types of aircraft.

Procedures followed proved to be highly satisfactory since there were only a few slight injuries and all crew members were rescued.

At end of June 1945 the 13th Emergency Rescue Group has Rescued ~~649~~<sup>649!</sup> Allied Military Personnel.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

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HEADQUARTERS  
13TH EMERGENCY RESCUE GROUP  
APO #719

Ditching report of B-24, 370th Bomb Squadron, 3 May 1945:

Our number 1 engine caught fire about one and one half (1½) hours away from the target, when at the northern tip of the Gulf of Bone. We closed the cowl flaps, cut off the gas to the engine, set RPM's to full low, throttle off, mixture in idle cut-off, and pushed number 1 feathering button. Engine failed to feather. Tried once more unsuccessfully. Used feathering button again with circuit breaker. Prop still failed to feather. Navigator was asked for ETA at Morotai with ground speed of 135 MPH. ETA was 4 hours and 10 minutes. At that time fuel supply was estimated by sight gauges to be approximately 900 gallons. To hold an air speed of 225 miles an hour, power settings of 2250 RPM and 34 in MP were used. With these power settings the fuel supply would have been inadequate to return to base. The radio operator was in contact with Morotai and had informed the ground station there of the situation and of our intention to crash land in the Bay of Tomini.

The navigator gave the heading and distance to intended place of landing one hour before reaching the crash site, when the plane was at 5,000 feet altitude. We now had 450 gallons of gasoline left. We had jettisoned all ammunition flak suits, guns, the ball turret, camera frame, top hatch, waist windows, pilot's and co-pilot's windows, walk-around bottles and all loose equipment which might have injured crew members and that which was not necessary for survival after the landing.

We decided to ditch the plane rather than parachute because all these islands were heavily wooded with rough terrain. We would not have been able to carry all necessary survival equipment with us and there was too much chance of parachutists becoming scattered and subject to serious injury alone.

The exact co-ordinates of site of ditching were given to ground station with time of proposed landing. This was 00-25 S & 121-59 E at 1530/I. This message was acknowledged by the ground station which informed us that a rescue Catalina was on the way.

We passed over the landing site two times at about 2,000 feet while all crew members were briefed on the proposed landing and last minute preparations were completed prior to setting the plane down.

There was an 8-knot surface wind at 290 degrees with a dead calm sea. Visibility was excellent. The pilot and co-pilot were strapped in their seats by Sutton harness and safety belts. Seats were forward just enough to touch rudder controls with tips of toes.

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The pilot's and co-pilot's eyes were level with the top of the instrument panel.

As there was no armor plate behind the pilot's and co-pilot's seats, the radio operator and engineer had to take positions in the waist.

The positions of men in the waist section were as follows:

1. The bombardier, nose gunner and ball gunner were sitting, facing aft, with backs to crash belt located from rear end of left waist window to rear of right waist window.
2. The engineer was sitting between the legs of the nose gunner and ball gunner, facing aft.
3. The radio operator, navigator and armorer-gunner were sitting with backs to crash belts, facing forward with feet against ball turret top. Legs were bent.
4. Camera operator was facing aft with back against left side of bulkhead number 6.
5. Tail gunner was in corresponding position on the right side of bulkhead number 6.

All men wore winter flying equipment to act as padding against the shock of landing.

A normal traffic pattern of downwind leg, base leg, and final approach was made on a heading of 10 degrees at 2,000 feet. Down wind leg was 5 minutes past place of landing. Upon turning on approach, full flaps were lowered with 2,500 RPM and  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches MP. Air speed was 110 MPH, losing altitude at the rate of 50-100 feet per minute. This power was held to within approximately 5 feet of the water. One long ring of alarm bell was used to warn crew of immediate impact. Throttles were cut and nose raised to level position. Air speed of plane on impact was 95 MPH and only one jar was experienced. The plane skidded an estimated 50 yards on water before coming to a stop. Every man was out of the plane within one minute, the pilot, and co-pilot making their exits through their respective side windows, and all others through the right waist window.

Radio operator and engineer released the two five-man life rafts from top of the plane. The men boarded rafts, expecting the plane to sink within a few minutes. At this time, medical attention was given to those with cuts and abrasions. As plane was still afloat, we were then able to salvage and inflate six one-man life rafts. Jungle kits, blood plasma, and 6 first aid kits were salvaged from the

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water. The plane floated level, with the water line one foot above the top of the waist windows. All secret papers and cryptographic materials were destroyed and sunk in approximately 40 feet of water in a weighted bag. The sound of air slowly escaping from gas tanks could be heard after the landing but the plane was still afloat one and one half (1½) hours later when rescue was effected.

The plane received the following known damage:

1. Nose turret and navigator's compartment broke off approximately 3 feet in front of pilot's compartment.
2. Number 1, 2, and 4 props and nose section of some engines broke off.
3. Lift flap was bent at wing root.
4. There were wrinkles in fuselage.
5. Bomb bay doors were smashed up into bomb bay.
6. Number 6 bulkhead was buckled.
7. Pilot's and co-pilot's seats came loose but did not shear off.
8. Top turret and tail turret remained in plane.

The following injuries were received by crew members:

1. Pilot --Bruised left leg muscle.
2. Navigator --Scalp laceration.
3. Bombardier Bruised head and left hip.
4. Engineer --Minor leg laceration.
5. Assistant Engineer--Minor leg lacerations and lacerations of little finger of left hand.
6. Left waist gunner --Slight cut over eye.
7. Cameraman --Laceration of right leg; bruised side and chest.
8. Other crewmen --Only minor scratches and bruises.

Crew:

Lt H. H. Etherige	(P)	Cpl J. E. Ancona	(AE)
Lt R. W. Harmsen	(CP)	Sgt J.R. Conrer	(R)
It J. L. Chamberlain	(N)	Cpl P. H. Collins	(AR)
It T. F. Helms	(B)	Pvt W. E. Thomas	(C)
Cpl R. E. Dixon	(E)	Pvt N. N. Willigvette	(G)
S Sgt J. L. Hewet	(F)		

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HEADQUARTERS  
13TH EMERGENCY RESCUE GROUP  
APO #719

Ditching report on B-25-J, 70th Bomb Sq., 42nd Bomb Gp., 7 April 1945:

On 7 April 1945 I was flying B-25-J #43-27823 in a three ship shipping sweep off the east coast of Borneo.

At approximately 1145 we were hit by 40mm AA fire from a gun on the southeast tip of Tarakan Island. I was flying at 600' on a heading of 170° when right engine nacelle and tire began burning, we were unable to extinguish the fire. I feathered the prop on the right engine and ordered crew to prepare to ditch when at 500' altitude. Loose equipment thrown overboard, unable to jettison bombs. Squadron leader notified by voice.

At this time wind velocity 5 knots, wind direction 240°, visibility 5 to 7 miles, height of swell 1', crest to crest 5', slight chop.

Landed down wind, atop swell, slightly nose high, no flaps, left engine functioning, bomb bay closed. Final approach 140 miles per hour, descent 250' per minute, speed at impact 105 mph. Attitude of aircraft afloat - horizontal plane remained afloat 3 min. 15 sec.

In actual ditching all crew members were in approved positions: Pilot in pilot's seat, safety strap fastened; co-pilot in co-pilot's seat, safety strap fastened; navigator behind co-pilot's seat; engineer behind pilot's seat; radio operator on radio operator's seat facing aft, strapped in, tail gunner against bulkhead.

Pilot, co-pilot, navigator, and engineer escaped through top hatch. Radio operator and tail gunner through left waist window. Radioman and gunner received slight scalp injuries and radioman received a sprained ankle.

Ditching occurred at 1150I, inflated raft and moved away from aircraft, position 03° 18' N - 117° 36' E.

The remaining B-25s circled the downed crew for 1½ hrs. Three one man rafts, a Gibson Girl, and several boxes of K rations were dropped.

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From 1930 to 2145I two B-25s circled us. One B-25 flashed message via aldis lamp, "Dumbo on way, keep raft off land," then departed.

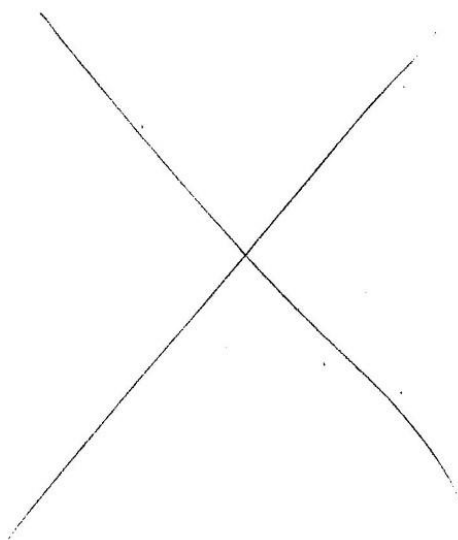
The raft was kept in a sheltered bay during the night, with exception of one time when it was carried to within 150' of coast by current. We had paddled back to center of bay by daylight.

Shortly after 0700, 8 April 1945, two B-25s arrived and covered us until a playmate arrived at 0850. The Playmate was led by two P-38s and flew directly over a 40mm gun position. The Playmate received a hit and two crew members were wounded.

The Playmate continued with rescue under 40mm and 50 cal. fire. Landed at 0902, picked up survivors, airborne 0905, proceeded to Zamboanga.

Crew:

Berg, P. L. 2d Lt. (P)	Keller, C. H. Sgt (RG)
Scott, I. B. 2d Lt. (CP)	Kuzma, S. Sgt (EG)
Melintsky, P. V. 2d Lt (Nav)	Holmes, W. S Sgt (AG)



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HEADQUARTERS  
13th EMERGENCY RESCUE GROUP  
APO #719

Ditching report of C-47-B #43-47995, 2nd Emergency Rescue Squadron, 18 April 1945:

Emergency lack of fuel was recognized at approximately 0230I, 18 April 1945, when possible ditching was forseen. At 0330 crew and passengers were told to prepare for ditching. All except emergency equipment was jettisoned. At 0415 crew and passengers ordered to take ditching positions. Positions taken; pilot, pilot's seat, co-pilot, co-pilot's seat, engineer, navigator, and passengers against bulkhead, navigators compartment.

Approximate position at this time was 133 miles from Biak, bearing 032° (lat 0°37' N, long 137°30' E). Altitude crew warned, 9000'. weather at ditching point: clear - scattered clouds 3-5000', visibility zero (due to darkness), wind velocity, 18 knots 330°, height of swell 10-12', distance crest to crest 40', extent of chop, very rough.

Rate of decent was 100' per minute, wheels retracted, no flaps used, engines functioning, final approach 80 mph, airspeed on impact 80 mph.

Landing was made at 80 mph directly into wind and into swells, aircraft in approximate three point position, approximate 18-20 in. of mercury 2400 rpm on engines. Instrument descent and landing. Plane skidded estimated 200'.

Ditching was completed at 0430. Pilot and co-pilot escaped through top hatch, remainder of crew and passengers escaped through cargo door. There was no injuries, and very little damage to aircraft.

Emergency equipment consisted of one five man, one seven man raft, and gibson girl radio. Rafts were inflated and moved away from plane. Plane floated 30 minutes.

At 0700 gibson girl set up and operating. At 1730, 18 April 1945, two C-47s homed in on gibson girl, dropped raft and pyrotechnics, also signalled that ship was on way to position.

Destroyer and hospital ship arrived at 2130, both had homed in on gibson girl. All personnel taken aboard hospital ship.

Fix was obtained by ground stations, Palau-Manus Is.-Biak-Darwin-Units of British Fleet.

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Crew:

Rohlfing, Robert L. 1st Lt (P)  
Pritton, Warner A. 2d Lt (CP)  
Beavers, James E. 2d Lt (N)  
Brim, Onis W. Sgt (E)

Passengers:

Mekeon, Donald F. 2d Lt  
Wollum, Henry M. 2d Lt  
Carothers, Arthur G. 2d Lt  
Labontg, William J. 2d Lt  
Mellstrom, Levern, M. 2d Lt  
Greenfogel, Maurice Sgt  
Quinn, Joseph M. Cpl  
Ludwig, Ernest Cpl

C O N F I D E N T I A L

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HEADQUARTERS  
13TH EMERGENCY RESCUE GROUP  
APO #719

Ditching report on P-38J #44-23074, 68th Fighter Squadron,  
347th Group, 18 October 1944:

On 18 Oct 1944 I took off from Middleburg Airbase, at 0530I, on an escort mission to Balikpapan, Borneo. Due to malfunction of lines, I was unable to draw gas from my 165 gallon belly tank so I jettisoned both belly tanks and turned back after having completed seven hundred (700) miles of the mission. At this time the aircraft was running smoothly.

Midway from Wiego and base I smelled something burning, like paint, so I turned my gun heater off. This seemed to clear the smell a little, then I also turned my radio off for awhile. All instruments checked OK just prior to trouble.

While turning North to South toward the field, at 800', my right engine started to sound like a motorboat and the mercury dropped 5" to 10". I gave the left engine 40" of mercury, cut mixture controll and throttle on right engine, and called tower for emergency landing.

As I started to feather my right engine, my left engine started acting as my right had done, so I switched back to right engine. At this point both engines sputtered, with mercury varying from 5" to 20" and white smoke started filling the cockpit. I looked to the left and smoke was pouring out of the left supercharger. I had lost altitude to 100' at 135mph and was losing altitude rapidly so I called the tower saying I was making a water landing.

I released my canopy and white smoke poured out. I braced myself with harness fastened, arm on gun sight and head on arm. I put flaps down  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  to keep nose up, chopped throttle, and landed straight ahead parallel with swells which were 8' high. Landed at 90mph. Stalled into water. There was no much shock upon hitting water. The plane skidded approx 100'. I got out, walked out on wing and when plane started to sink, inflated my raft. Plane remained afloat ten to fifteen seconds. I sustained no injuries and was picked up by P. T. Boat after being in water 30 min.

Capt Richard J. Love (1)

C O N F I D E N T I A L