

Land Bases . . .

By ENS. W. O. SHANAHAN, USNR
Academic Department

In the columns of the *New York Times* Alexander Seversky has been presenting with considerable force and ability his criticisms of carrier-based aviation. This critic has always enjoyed a wide audience and the latest presentation of his arguments in such an influential journal as the *Times* lends additional authority to his position.

Seversky's contention that land-based bombers alone are capable of strategic bombing is based primarily upon the performance of British and American four-motored bombers in the European theater. It is true that in this type of aircraft the allies have one of the greatest weapons of the war. The Germans, in their haste to build the *Luftwaffe*, seized upon the two-motored bomber and adapted it to mass production. Their decision proved fatal. Two-motored craft were ideal for army cooperation work, but they failed over Britain when they were employed independently of German ground forces.

There is, however, a significant difference between the European and the Pacific theaters of war. No point in Germany is now more than a thousand miles from the ever-narrowing circle of allied positions. Moreover, one of these positions, Great Britain, is within a few hundred miles of the industrial heart of Germany. And Great Britain is itself an industrial nation, with adequate facilities for building and supplying the needs of great numbers of aircraft.

Our most advanced positions in the Pacific are still three thousand miles from Japan. Existing aircraft cannot carry heavy bomb loads that far. And our air bases in the Pacific are coral islands located thousands of miles from the great centers of aircraft supply and maintenance. Distance is apparently a word unknown to Mr. Seversky!

His emphasis upon land-based aircraft rests in part on the mistaken notion that high-altitude level-flight bombers won the Battle of Midway. Against fixed targets ashore this method of bombing has been extraordinarily effective, but a dodging, twisting ship is another matter. Even skip-bombing, which the Germans introduced at Crete, would be suicidal if used against warships properly equipped with anti-aircraft guns. Since four-motored bombers have not been able to de-

stroy the enemy's fleet, and his principal bases and yards are still beyond effective bombing range, the foe must be sought out with other weapons.

On two other counts Seversky's arguments are weak. If we had neglected the development of our carrier fleet the German U-Boats might not have been conquered. Naval aircraft flying from converted merchantmen and tankers have played a major role in the Battle of the Atlantic. It may not be an exaggeration to say that without carrier aviation our shipping losses in the Atlantic would still be a threat to final victory.

A second count against Seversky is his underestimate of the torpedo-bomber. With the exception of the Italian battleship, *Roma*, sunk by German dive-bombers, all capital ships lost in air attacks have been hit by torpedoes. While torpedo-bombers can of course fly from land bases, both the tactical conception and the execution of air borne torpedo attacks are essentially naval.

One element of Seversky's criticism of carrier-based aviation no longer holds: the inferiority of ship-based aircraft. This argument rested upon the inadequate performance of British carrier aviation in the early stages of the war. None of the British ship-borne fighters was equal at that time to the *Messerschmitt*. But the British have now replaced their obsolete types with *Seafires* (sea-going *Spitfires*). Neither the American nor the Japanese navy allowed ship-borne aircraft to lag behind. Their fighters, *Zero* and *Hellecat*, and their torpedo bombers excelled land-based planes in many respects.

Proof that the United States Navy is convinced of the need for carriers is given by the announcement that three 45,000 ton carriers of new design are to be constructed. From the flight decks of these giants heavier bombers than any now in use at sea can be launched. Their added punch should make carrier-aviation even more effective than it has been in the past.

Sweet Young Thing: "Do you want to spoon?"

Sailor (playing dumb): "Spoon! What's that?"

Sweet Young Thing: "Look at those couples over there. That's spooning."

Sailor: "If that's spooning, let's shovel!"

Six Enlisted Men Advanced in Rating

Six members of the crew were advanced in rating on Nov. 1, as follows:

Robert Arvay, HA2c to HA1c; Tom B. Bond, SK3c to SK2c; Everett Bracken, Y2c to Y1c; Bryan D. Cox, Jr., SK3c to SK2c; John M. Farkasovsky, S1c to RM3c; Warren F. White, HA1c to PhM3c.

Crew Changes

J. F. Lunari, L. Greenberg, R. C. Gardner and F. E. Emmel, all Hospital Apprentices, have been detached to the Amphibious Training Base at Camp Bradford, Va.

C. F. Welz, SK3c, reported for duty here during the past week, coming from NAS, Hutchinson, Kan.

SOCCER

(Continued from page three)

Wytassie and Juszak scored goals for the winners, while Left Wing Kret scored the only Cloudbuster marker.

The contest was especially close, and both teams came through with sensational plays. The winners scored the deciding marker near the end of the final period.

Previously the Cloudbusters had defeated Duke University on two occasions.

In the starting lineup for the Cloudbusters were DeLuisi, Bickerstaff, Murby, Hewlett, Finlayson, Christman, Upson, Kret, Storath, Becker and West. For the 12th Replacement Depot Sherwood, Juszak, Jacobs, Zerdin, Wytassie, Pacheco, Avila, Ali, Addelman, Scribner, Cicerell were the starters. Cicerell, the Army goalie, played an outstanding game.

Two Shuffleboard Courts Ready for Use

Two shuffleboard courts in the lower quadrangle were placed in operation during the past week, and two others now under construction in the upper quadrangle are nearing completion.

Cadets may obtain the playing equipment for the lower quad courts from the watch office in Everett dormitory after 1700 on each weekday except Wednesday. On Wednesdays and Saturdays the equipment may be obtained at 1500 and on Sundays at 1300. Holdover cadets may use the equipment at any time during the day.

Instructions for playing the game are posted on the outdoor bulletin board near the courts.

Cadets in 37th Wanted To Work on Cloudbuster

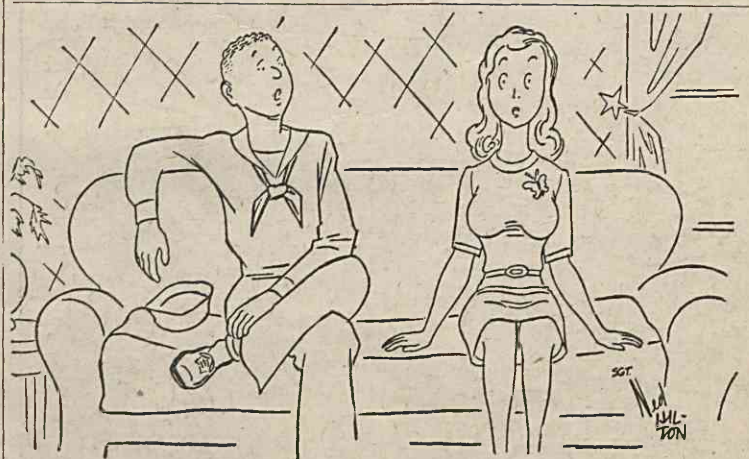
Cadets in the 37th Battalion who would like to work on the CLOUDBUSTER are urged to attend a meeting Monday afternoon at 1730 in the Public Relations Office in Navy Hall. Feature writers, sports writers, and cartoonists are especially invited to attend. The CLOUDBUSTER is your station paper, so make plans to work on it while a cadet here.

Assistant Supply Officer

Ens. Allan D. Fullerton, SC-V(S), reported aboard from the Navy Supply Corps School, Wellesley, Mass., to become assistant supply officer here.

Gold Ring Found

The owner of a gold band ring found in front of the treatment room at Navy Hospital on Nov. 1 may reclaim it by properly identifying the article in the Military Office, Alexander Hall.



"Is that so—and how did you find out that sailors are all alike?"

© ESQUIRE, INC., 1943

Reprinted from November issue of *Esquire*