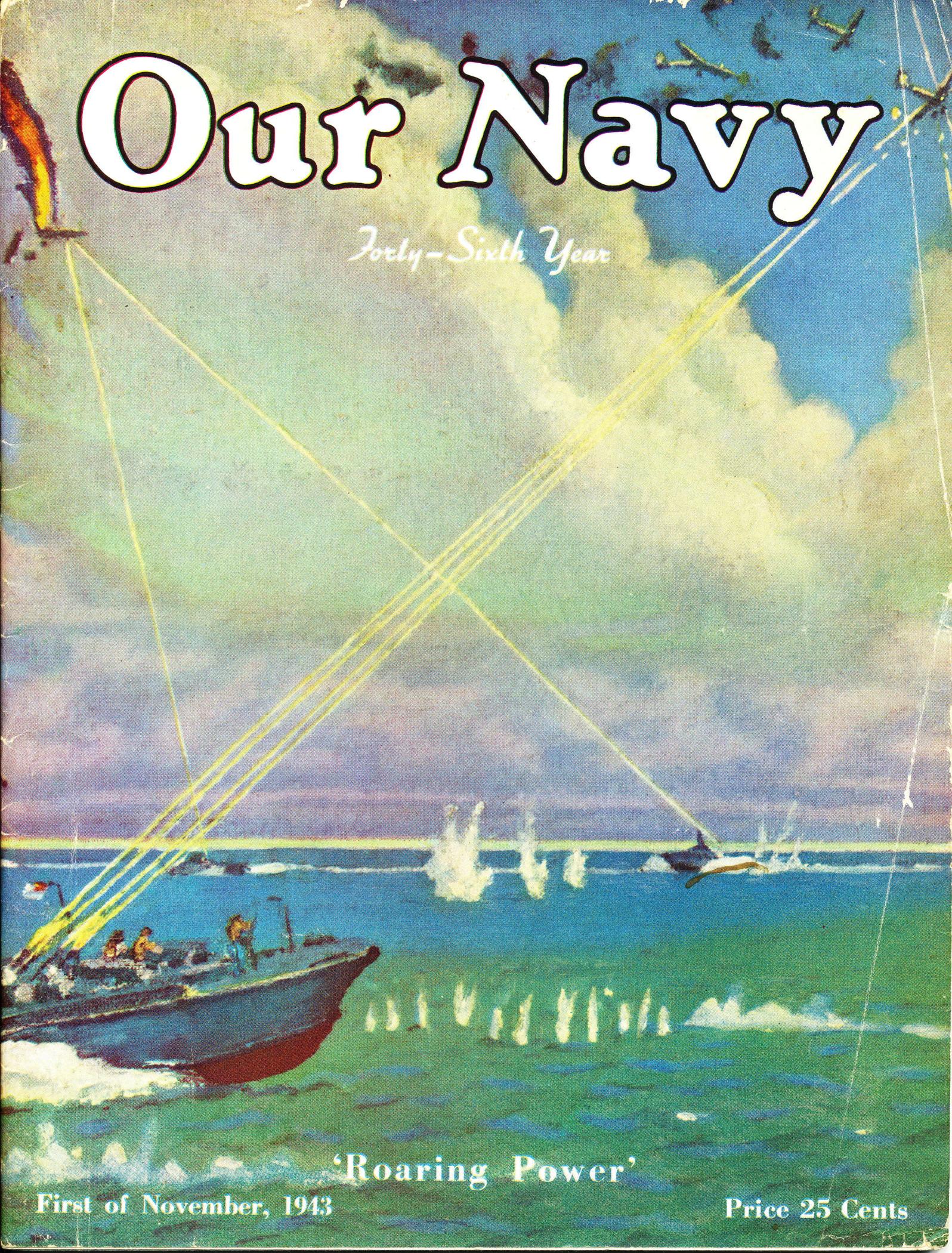


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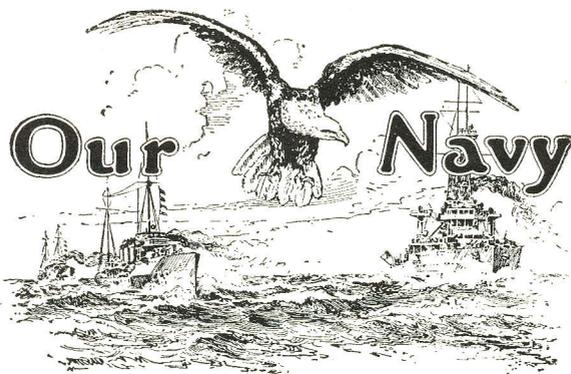


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ON THE COVER

"Roaring Power," the story of the MTBs on page 4, is exemplified by our cover illustration of PTs in action. The original oil painting was made by Lt. Comdr. G. B. Coale, combat artist, who has caught all the beauty of the coral reefed sea along with the tense drama of the torpedo boats. Because of the vertical format of our cover we were unfortunately forced to crop the original.

All photographs are Official Navy Photos unless otherwise identified.

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Roaring Power

Hitting the Top in Destruction Quality Are the PT's

By KEN WEINTROUT

BASICALLY it's only a plywood speedboat, squat in the water, snub-nosed and innocent enough looking as it lies alongside the dock. But packed into that cockleshell is the power of three Packard gasoline motors, and the tubes along her deck hold the murderous impact of six tons of tin fish filled with TNT—a mighty engine of destruction that can skim over the water with the speed of a demon.

And a speed demon it seems to be when the PT opens up. As the throttle is shoved forward, the screws dig into the ocean; the bow lifts and with a lurch the craft bounds ahead. White froth of the wake curls out behind and slashing spray hangs white and quivering in the air.

When the open sea is reached and the sharp swells crisscross the water, the PT shows its true mettle. It smacks the waves with hammer blows that echo through the sound-box hull; it lurches and twists, careening across the sea, but bores forward as though nothing made by wind and waves could stay its mad course. The crew clutch the nearest support and hang on, pitched and jolted from bulkhead to stanchion. The boats have proved their worth time and time again in this war—beginning with the epic of the "expendables" in the Philippines, and carrying on through all the campaigns that followed. Slashing out of the hidden bays and reefs of the South Pacific, they have roared in on the Tokyo Express, at Guadalcanal, at Rendova, at Kula Gulf—and in their wakes have left the smoldering hulks of half a hundred Jap warships.

Into this atmosphere of the daring, of the romantic, of courageous action and gambles with death, the young Navyman moves when he starts his training at the MTB Squadron's Training Center, Melville, Rhode Island.

The boats used in training at Melville are generally the new eighty-footers, an improvement over the seventy-foot craft of Bulkeley fame. Indeed, the seventy-

footers were given to such vibration that an extra nine feet was added to most of them, and the extra space, known as the lazerette to PT men, was utilized as water tanks. The added length made for better planing and steadier performance. But, essentially, the boats have not changed. They are the same low swung, hard driving, punishing craft, whose sole advantage in both offense and defense is speed and more speed. There is not an ounce of armor anywhere.

There is no waste space on these craft. Everything is miniature, and everything serves an absolute necessity. Forward of the cockpit and navigation compartment is the crew's quarters. The bunks are just metal frames with canvas stretched over them, made to fold against the wall when not in use.

"But don't worry," an old-timer tells the recruit. "You won't ever sleep in 'em. When you're underway you can't even if you were foolish enough to try, and when you're not underway, you'd rather flop on the beach somewhere."

Aft of these quarters is the navigation-radio compartment, with a door into the cockpit—the "bridge" of these cockeyed little speed bugs. Then there are two tiny cubicles, the state rooms for the Skipper and the Exec, and still further aft, the most important section of the boat—the engine room. In fact, most of a PT is engines. Everything else seems just an accessory.

Topside, there isn't much. Streamlining is one of the requisites of safety, and every effort is made to keep the freeboard to a minimum. A couple of short masts for the radio antenna and signal halyards, the four torpedo tubes, two on each side, and the machine guns, fifty caliber, fore and aft in pairs. Maybe on the stern a couple of ash cans will be racked, for one of the duties of the PTs today is to help in the sub-hunting along our seacoasts and the tortuous channels of the coral islands of the South Pacific.

It is no wonder the PT men appointed

to the school consider it an honor. They have a tradition to live up to. Although the service is young, the excitement it has offered the imagination of the people of America wraps the crew members of one of these craft with an aura of bravado. But if he comes with the delusion that it is all fun—he is quickly set to rights. He is in for a long period of grinding, exhausting training.

PT crews are smoothly working teams, and there are no stars. Every man must have a knowledge of the duties of his shipmates; and the training given each man is an intensified version of what the signalman, radioman, quartermaster, gunner and motor machinist ordinarily go through. The inculcation of his duties will include five primary courses—gunnery, navigation, communication, engineering and plane identification—and he cannot afford to slack off on any of them. He may be a radioman by rate, but the time may come when he will have to doctor a sick engine into life and navigate his boat out of a tight spot. Even the cook—if the boat is lucky enough to have a genuine cook—may have to include in his duties the supervising of motors and the working of a machine gun as well as pampering a hot plate. Likewise, the machinists must know the rudiments of navigation and communications, and they will probably double up as gunners plenty of times in their career.

And the duty calls for rugged individuals. Not only do the men take a physical beating underway, but they must relinquish all the comforts of a larger ship and resign themselves to a mode of life that would do justice to a Stylite.

Training for PT duty at Melville is no soft touch. It includes not only the five courses already mentioned, but in addition, one of the toughest physical programs in the Navy. Regular commandoes are these PT boys when they go out to join the fighting squadrons. Wrestling, boxing, judo and a series of rough, com-

THIS DESCRIBES OUR TRAINING HERE SO HANG ON TO IT SO I CAN READ ABOUT WHAT I WENT THROUGH, AS IF I'LL FORGET!

petitive games builds them up for the life they are going to have to live in the action zones. Once out there, they will need every ounce of physical endurance. They will fight by night and sleep by day—eat when they can, shave infrequently and rate a bath as a red letter event. Every patrol will be a severe ordeal, both mentally and physically.

Take the boys of Lt. Gamble's already famous PT Squadron operating out of Tulagi, from the first days of the Solomons invasion through all the action-packed weeks that followed.

"We lived ashore at Tulagi," says young Lt. (jg) Syd Rabekof, executive officer of the squadron leader, "in the abandoned buildings of a former plantation owner. Everything we had we built ourselves, but it was something just to be on the beach between patrols."

"We had a good bunch of men," he continued. "They never waited for an order. If the engines needed overhauling, the boys would start in as soon as they came back from a patrol in the morning and would work right through the day when they rated sleeping. The same with the radiomen. They wanted everything perfect."

Perfection paid off. Gamble's PTs got credit for sinking nearly a dozen Nip destroyers, four of which were bagged by Gamble's own boat, with a cruiser added for good measure.

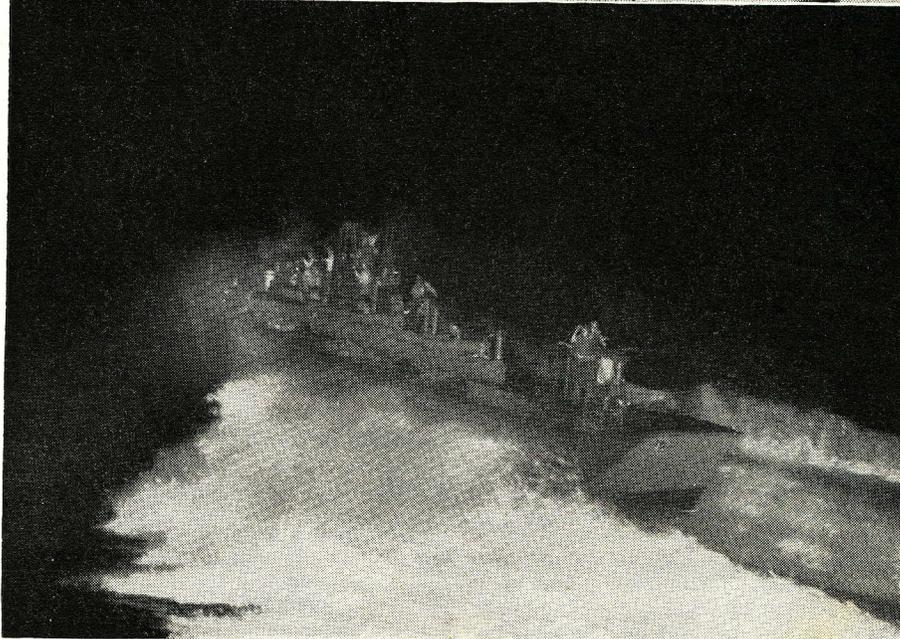
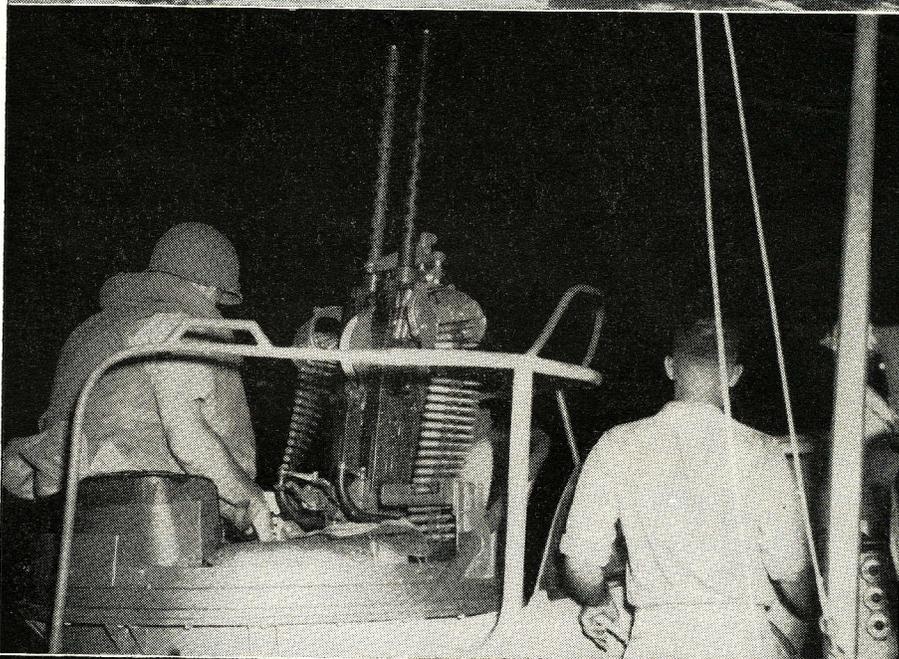
"But it was no fun," Rabekof says. "When the word was passed that the Japs were expected in that night, nobody would sleep. We'd sit around smoking cigarettes until dark, one after the other. Then we'd get underway. Luckily, the waters around Guadalcanal are smooth, usually glassy, and we didn't have it so bad that way. Only one patrol was rough—outside Savo Island. When we got that one, we'd give the wheel to the quartermaster. He was the best man at steering the boat on his knees and when shells begin flying the helmsman likes to have his head down where he doesn't make a target."

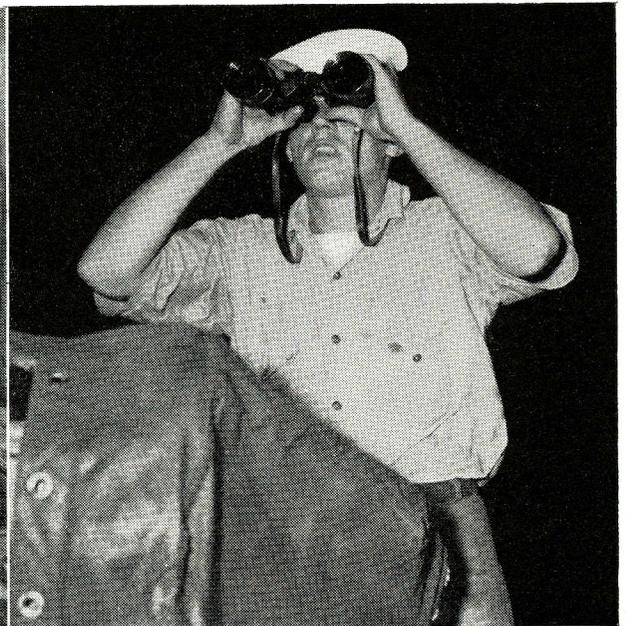
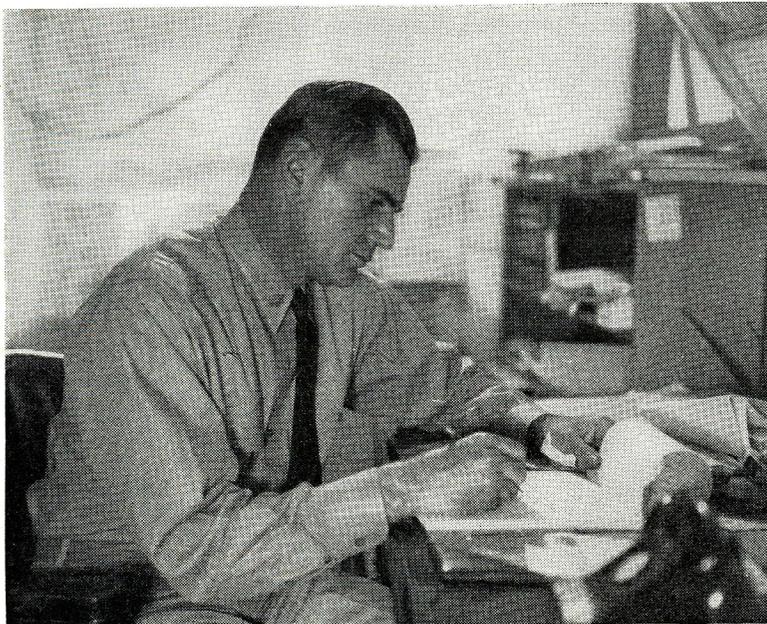
Rabekof, Gamble, and the quartermaster would take turns grabbing a smoke. "First the Skipper would step down into the cockpit, out of sight, light a smoke, and take five or six puffs. Then he'd step up, and I'd step down. Then I'd make way for the quartermaster. Sure, we had nerves. Every patrol was a little hide-and-see game with death."

One night the Tulagi PTs caught the Tokyo express by surprise, a half dozen destroyers running supplies and reinforcements into the Japs in their stand around Henderson Field. In the first dash at the targets, a Jap ship was hit squarely in the middle, and in an instant spouted flames that towered into the night and illuminated the sea for hundreds of yards on all sides.

"There we were," says Rabekof, "right in the middle of the destroyers. They threw their searchlights on us, and pinned us like a bug on a pond. We

The "Expendables" ride by night. Moving along through the troubled waters in the South Pacific PT's with their crews are making a string of records unequalled in Naval history. Roaring Power in action.





The Commanding Officer of the Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron Training Center, Melville, Rhode Island is Lieutenant Commander W. C. Specht, USN. It is here that the crews of the MTB are taught that eternal vigilance is the price of safety at sea.

headed for the beach with every cylinder working, while the Japs put their five-inch guns on us. The salvos were smashing columns of water all around us, and the beams of the searchlights kept us locked under their fingers. Small stuff was screaming around us. I yelled at the mech to give her all she had and he thought I said to cut the motors. I almost died right then. I thought we were gonners. But it was the luckiest thing that ever happened. Our headway gone, the boat slowed down and just at that moment the Japs straddled us with four salvos, one behind, one on each side, and one just ahead of us. If we'd been going full blast, we'd have been blown out of the water by that one in front of us. We cut in the engines and ran the boat up on the beach, the Japs still cutting loose. I had taken my shoes off, but I didn't wait to grab them. Every man jumped out and tore into the brush. I ran clear to the top of the mountain to get clear of the light, and hid there until morning. I hadn't felt a thing going up, but when I came down I never saw so many thorns, jagged rocks and sharp stubs."

It is the old-timers like Rabekof, back from the fighting front, who give the trainees at Melville their inside dope. There have been men from Bulkeley's squadron among the instructors.

They impress on the boys the importance of knowing their job, learning every detail of the jack-of-all-trades duty. Each student is given a thorough introductory course in navigation, but officers and quartermasters "major" in the subject. Rules of the sea, navigational aids, piloting and aspects of seamanship particularly related to MTBs are essentials of the course in navigation. Each man must be familiar with the compass, and must be able to plot a course and make chart corrections.

All hands must qualify in semaphore, code, and blinkers. The theory of radio is gone into, along with a bit of material so that each man will be capable of making simple repairs and adjustments

to the radio equipment. The radioman, of course, is expected to do the real servicing of his sets, and he must be his own technician as well as communications man. Although CW is provided, the ship-to-ship communication is usually voice.

During the ordinary routine, each rate will perform the duties of his specialties; but PT training is based on emergency requirements, the knowledge that with such a small crew casualties are likely to force a predicament where any one man may have to fulfill the duties of other rates on the craft. Likewise, in cases of breakdown, all hands must be ready to pitch in and make repairs, and must know what they are about in doing so.

Thus it is also important that every man of the crew know the motors. It will probably never be necessary to know more than how to start and stop them, but it's best to be prepared for emergencies. Classes in engineering are held underway—a bouncy, hell-roaring classroom if there ever was one.

Often heard around Melville is: "I can't hear very well, I've just had engineering underway."

No PT is very much afraid of being surprised by surface ships—but with planes it is another matter. The plane is the nemesis of the MTB, and PT crews in training are warned over and over to be on their guard against planes. The plane identification course is, therefore, one of the most important given.

Drilled and re-drilled ashore from the start in all the aspects of their new profession, it is always a thrill when the instructee gets up one morning to hear the loud speaker blaring:

"Now hear this: Divisions 8, 10 and 15 will draw the necessary underway gear before quarters this morning."

Hot damn. That means underway instruction for the newest divisions—their first real insight into the duty they have chosen for themselves. They may have been aboard the boats underway before, but today they are going to form a crew

of their own, operate as a unit of a squadron in battle tactics.

They grab their gear at GSK and get aboard the boat assigned to their division. The Skipper designates watches, and they get to their stations. The radioman switches on his receiver, tunes it onto the allotted frequency. The engineer room watch goes below where the muffled thrum of the Packards set the boat vibrating, and the smell of high octane gas is heavy in the air.

A couple of men go on lookout duty, and one lucky guy takes the wheel. He won't be on it for the whole day, however, as every man will have to show his skill before the evening sends them back into port.

The underway instruction is begun. In the cockpit, the boat captain explains the instrument panel, and answers questions about the helmsman's duties. The signalmen transmit messages back and forth between the boats of the squadron, or to shore, and down in the engine-room a class in motors is held—although this is carried out mostly in pantomime because of the roar of the exhaust.

There is no absolute regulation as to the station each man of an MTB crew will take in the ships of active squadrons. The whole set-up is loose and dependent upon the circumstances and the choice of the Skipper. Generally, however, the crew consists of a quartermaster, gunner, cook, seaman, radioman, torpedoman and three engineers. The officer quota will consist of the Skipper and the Exec.

Naturally, with a crew of this size, prolonged cruises are impossible, nor have the PTs been designed for anything more than short sorties within close range of their bases. Because of the strain of the work, they are lucky that it is like this. Underway in action patrols, the wheel watch is relieved every half an hour. And even a half hour of keeping this charging, bucking, careening craft on the course is enough to tax the energies of the best men. In

(Concluded on page 58)

Roaring Power

(Continued from page 6)

rough weather, especially, it is a rugged task to face the spray that whips back, blinding and stinging, and to keep braced against the continuous slamming movements of the boat.

The machinists down below face a job equally as tough. And no machinist is expected to breathe the deadly fumes coughed up by the high octane for more than thirty minutes at a time. Continuous breathing of these fumes can give a man lead poisoning.

PTs are predominantly night fighters, using the cloak of darkness to allow them to sneak up on their quarry with

throttled motors, and then suddenly to roar into action and use their speed to strike and get away.

All these things are simulated in the training cruises where the men learn their battle stations. Ordinarily, with the imminence of action, the quartermaster takes the wheel. The radioman plugs in a pair of phones with an extra long cord that will allow him to move around, even up on deck, if necessary. The Skipper and the Exec conn the boat. The torpedo tubes are fixed and the conning of the PT itself is important in sending the tin fish home.

The guns are usually manned by the gunner and the cook, although other rates may take their stations here, dependent on abilities and exigencies. Two machinists take the engine room watch and the third stands by wherever needed, usually by the forward torpedo tubes, the torpedoman taking the after tubes. This caution is taken to prevent a hot run in the tube in case of a mis-

fire, each tube being provided with a mallet to "punch" the fish out—give it its initial propulsion charge.

Throughout the morning, each MTB will operate by itself while the men are indoctrinated in their duties. At noon the boats lie to and the cook whips up a simple meal. But, lest the men labor under the delusion that they will always have such luxuries, some old-timer is sure to tell them that "out there" if you eat at all underway, it will be sandwiches and coffee out of a jug (if some guy can steal a thermos). The little galley of a PT consists of a two-burner electric plate and a small ice box.

During the afternoon, the squadron may drill in tactics, cutting in and out, jouncing over each other's wakes, in the complicated formations of battle maneuvers. Everything is speed and timing, the simulation of surprise attacks and speedy get-a-ways. Hit and run—the PT has no defense except its ability to turn on a dime and its speed to take it the hell out of trouble.

Closely associated with the Training Center at Melville and playing a key part in anything which the school may undertake is an operating squadron of PTs. This squadron provides the center with a group of experienced officers and men for instructions given underway.

Commanding officer of the training center is Lt. Comdr. W. C. Specht, USN. Following his graduation from the Academy, Comdr. Specht went aboard the ARIZONA for a two-year tour of duty. Then followed China duty on destroyers, a cruise with the PITTSBURG and the tanker PECOS. Then he went to destroyer duty on the West Coast and to the administration of the Fleet Torpedo School at San Diego.

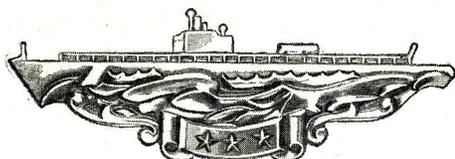
In December, 1940, he was ordered to MTBs, then a new and untried service. He was C.O. of the original Ron I. Following this he organized and headed the MTB Familiarization School at Newport, R. I. Comdr. Specht took Squadron I to Pearl Harbor in August, 1941, and stayed there until February, 1942. During the stay, he watched his old ship, the ARIZONA, go down under Jap bombs. Since February, 1942, he has been commanding officer of the MTB Training Center at Melville, bringing to the school his long experience with the roaring little speed boats.

Lt. Comdr. D. J. Walsh, Annapolis, '27, is the executive officer of the Training Center. Before coming to Melville, he was the executive officer of the PT tender NIAGARA. Like the C.O., he is no newcomer to the MTB program.

Under the leadership of these two officers, a competent staff of instructors has been assembled. Many of them have been honored with naval citations for the work they have done on PT duty. The presence of men who were at Pearl Harbor, who fought in the Solomons, who knew Midway, means more than mere experience. These men are a morale force. Students are always eager to question them, and do so at every opportunity.

In spite of the rugged course, the PT trainees' chart during their stay at Melville—seven classes during the day,

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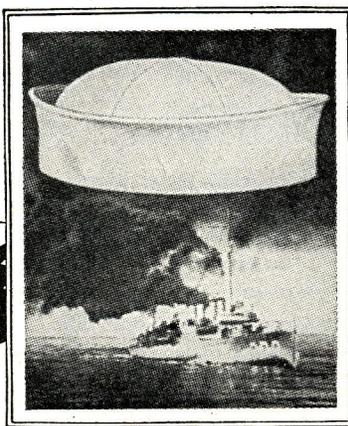
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night classes, boat cleaning details, night tactics, watches and a dozen other odds and ends for any loose moments—there is still time for a movie at the auditorium now and then, a game of soft ball, or an evening shooting the breeze in the Quonset huts in which the men are housed. And, of course, some of the men find time and energy to walk up the hill—what a walk! what a hill!—to make a liberty in one of the nearby towns.

But it behooves them to keep up with their studies. If they don't keep up to the mark, they will find themselves restricted on weekends—weekends they'd planned to spend in New York or Boston.

Yes, it's a rugged life they live at Melville, but the boys know it's child's play compared to duty in the Solomons or Sicily.

Still, there isn't a man who doesn't look forward to graduation day. Usually, at that time, he goes to a forming PT squadron. Occasionally he must go directly to an operating squadron as a replacement. But, in either case, it means he is on his own boat, he is part of a real PT crew at last.

And he knows the day is not far off when he will be on actual patrol; and that is the day he has been looking forward to ever since he set foot on the dust, or the snow at Melville. Now comes the real thing, when his boat will roar out of the night, the Skipper will conn the craft and shout, "Fire torpedoes!"

H. P. Exam No. 3

Answers to H. P. Exam No. 3 will be found in column 2.

Several of you sailors have written in and said you liked these ten question aviation exams. We aren't experts, and certainly our system of marking isn't scientific; but we like to please—so here are ten more questions. Get out your pencils and see how well you can do.

(1) Can you name two of the many planes that are used both by our Army and Navy?

(2) What is the correct pronunciation of the word "altimeter"?

(3) Name three of the four forces acting on an airplane flight.

(4) Name three of the four different types of propellers.

(5) We speak of "detonation" in an aircraft engine—or even in an automobile engine—what is it?

(6) What is the "octane" rating of a gasoline?

(7) Why is it dangerous for a pilot to fly through a thunderhead cloud?

(8) Name the three control surfaces of an airplane—what makes a plane go up or down, right or left?

(9) What is the name of the Japanese aviation company that manufactures the ZERO?

(10) Here are five planes. Get three of their nicknames.

- (1) BD
- (2) PV
- (3) SB2A
- (4) F2A
- (5) PBM

Answers to HP Exam #3

(1) a. "Billy Mitchell"—the Army's B-25, the Navy's PBJ.

b. "Havoc"—the Army's A-20, the Navy's BD.

c. "Liberator"—the Army's B-24, the Navy's PB4Y.

d. "Ventura"—the Army's A-36, the Navy's PV.

(2) Webster gives the correct pronunciation as "altim'eter".

(3) Lift, drag, weight, thrust.

(4) a, fixed; b, variable; c, controllable; d, hydromatic; e, electric; f, counter-rotation; g, aeroprop.

(5) Detonation in any engine is the explosion (and not a burning) of the remaining fuel charge within the combustion chamber caused by excessive pressures and temperatures.

(6) Octane rating is the ability of a gasoline to suppress detonation—the higher the octane rating, the more burning, the less exploding.

(7) Because of the danger of a, icing; b, hailstones, c, extremely turbulent air; d, electrical discharges.

(8) 1. Vertical rudder; 2. Ailerons; 3. Elevator.

(9) Mitsubishi.

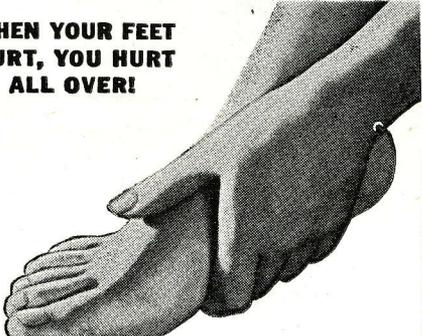
(10) 1. Douglas "Havoc". 2. Vega "Ventura". 3. Brewster "Buccaneer". 4. Brewster "Buffalo". 5. Martin "Mariner".

Mother (entering the room unexpectedly) "Why, I never. . ."

Daughter: "Oh, mother, you must have."—*Sub Base Gazette*

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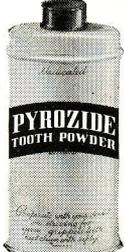
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Father: "The man who marries my daughter will get a prize."
Sailor: "May I see it?"—Hoist

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Inside of cellophane exterior are 66 mesh screen "baffles" which whirlcool smoke—retain flakes and slugs—minimize juices, raw mouth, and tongue-bite. Improves taste and aroma of your favorite smoke.

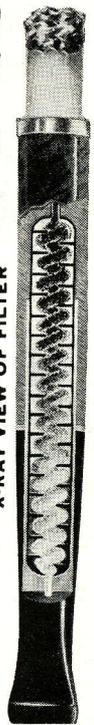
This filter is the "heart" of Medico Filtered Smoking. When discolored, put a fresh one in your pipe or holder. Costs only ONE CENT. Do not miss the benefits of mild, sanitary, Filtered Smoking.

Something wonderful goes on inside

ABSORBENT FILTERS for Frank MEDICO
PAT'D BAFFLE SCREEN INTERIOR WITH "CELLOPHANE" EXTERIOR



GENUINE FILTERS FOR MEDICO PACKED ONLY IN THIS RED & BLACK BOX



X-RAY VIEW OF FILTER

\$1.00

With women in the Service . . .

First in Fashion

Khaki, blue, or forest green . . .
whatever you wear . . . you'll find the cigarette
for milder smoking pleasure is

Camel

R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, Winston-Salem, N. C.



WAVES—You get up at “reveille,” go to bed at “taps.” Because, when you’re in the WAVES, you’re in the Navy. And, if you smoke, you’ll quickly learn the Navy favorite is the cigarette with that famous flavor — Camel.

WACS—Maybe you chauffeur a jeep; maybe you learn radio and free a radio man to fly; but, by the time you’ve finished training, you’ll know your Army... from khaki to Camels—the service favorite.



SPARS— That job you take at a desk means another Coast Guardsman free to fight on deck! And, if your taste runs to the extra mildness of slow burning, you’ll be smoking Camels — the Coast Guard favorite.

First IN THE SERVICE

Actual sales records show the favorite cigarette with smokers in the Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard is Camel.



“BE A MARINE—free a Marine to fight” is the motto of the Marine Corps Women’s Reserve. Uniform above is by government issue, cigarette by Camel; and that means the smoking situation is “well in hand.”

THE “T-ZONE.” Taste...throat... that’s the proving ground of any cigarette. On the basis of the experience of millions of steady Camel smokers, we believe you will like Camel’s blend of costlier tobaccos. Try Camels. See if they don’t suit your “T-Zone” to a “T.”

