



► **LSO / CV NATOPS PCL:**  
AFTER MORE THAN A YEAR OF  
DEVELOPMENT, THE PCL HAS  
FINALLY HIT THE STREET!!!

► **TALES FROM THE PLATFORM.....**  
FOR THE THIRD MONTH IN A ROW, SOME  
STORIES FROM A FORMER LSO:  
CAPT "BARNEY" RUBEL, USN (RET.)

► **CVW-8 HOOK SLAP**  
WORDS FROM THE OFFICER-IN-  
CHARGE CONCERNING THE HOOK  
SLAP THAT OCCURRED ON CVN-77  
EARLIER THIS YEAR....

► **THIS MONTH FROM THE  
SALTY DOGS.....**  
VX-23 OFFERS SOME ADVICE  
ABOUT FLYING EASIER AP-  
PROACHES AT THE SHIP...



*April 2011*



# *Paddles* *monthly*

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF THE LSO COMMUNITY  
THROUGH SAFETY DISCUSSIONS, OPERATIONAL UPDATES,  
AND HISTORICAL READINGS.

## **FINALLY!!! The CV / LSO NATOPS PCL**

After more than a year in development, the CV / LSO NATOPS Pocket Check List has - at last - reached the fleet. This product is designed to be the ultimate reference document for Landing Signal Officers, for use on both the platform and a training environment. It contains crucial reference information from not only CV and LSO NATOPS themselves, but also commonly-used Aircraft Recovery Bulletin information in addition to Carrier-related NATOPS information sourced from the NATOPS manual of every carrier based Type/Model/Series aircraft.

This product is designed to not only be a reference document for use on the LSO platform during actual recoveries, but also as a valuable training tool for Landing Signal Officers. Senior LSOs are encouraged to use the PCL for LSO team training as well as one-on-one instruction of junior Landing Signal Officers.

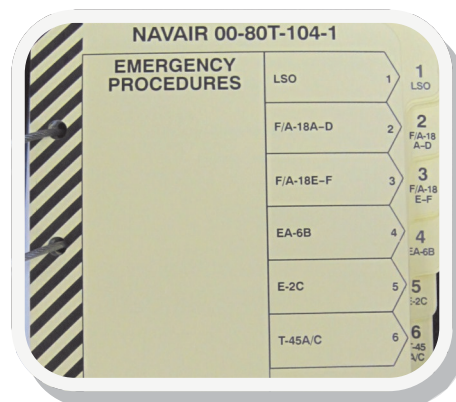
Additionally, the PCL also includes blank spaces where individual LSOs can 'expand' their PCLs with ship and air wing specific information, much like what we have now in our unstandardized CVW-specific LSO gouge books. However, like the first edition of anything, we are not expecting the PCL to be anywhere near perfect in its current form. The LSO School Staff's goal for the first edition was to get a first edition on the street, thus allowing for fleet LSOs to make real-time evaluations of the PCL. Over the course of the next NATOPS cycle, we will collect the input we receive from the fleet on the PCL's shortcomings and then submit those changes for the second version.

Although this is officially the 'first' version of the PCL, in actuality it is more of a 'beta test' version made available for everyday use in the fleet. The only way the first version evolves into the perfect version is through the input of LSOs who are out using this product every day.

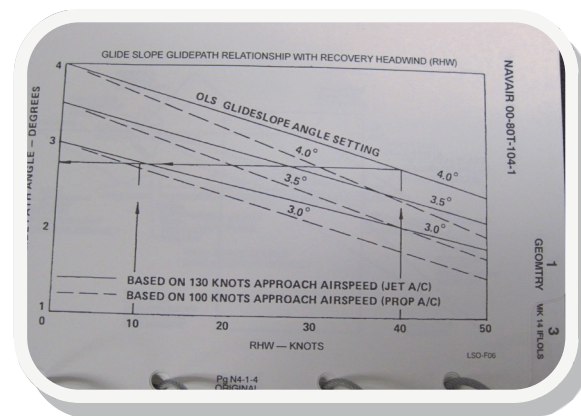
What is missing that should be there? What is in the PCL that seems extraneous and should be eliminated? Should the sections be ordered differently? There has even been a suggestion to break the PCL into multiple documents, possibly one for ARBs and basic procedures and the other for emergency procedures. We need the fleet to tell us the necessary rudder to move forward on future editions.

The initial product is out, now it is up to us to mold it into a final product

## COVER PAGE: EMERGENCY PROCEDURES



## EFFECTIVE GLIDESLOPE



## AIRCRAFT HOOK-TO-EYE VALUES: NORMAL AND ABNORMAL





## ‘Tales From the Platform’...Part III

...as written by Captain Robert “Barney” Rubel, USN (Ret.)

**Captain Rubel spent seven of his thirty year career in the Navy on the LSO Platform, including a CAG LSO Tour in CVW-7. In his own words, Captain Rubel recorded these anecdotes:**

*“In the interest of preserving for future generations some idea of the mayhem we experienced, I offer the following absolutely truthful account of some notable episodes. There are no morals to these stories; they just happened.”*

**Part III of ‘Tales From the Platform Will Appear in Next Month’s Paddles Monthly.**

### ‘MOTHERSHIP’

Later that cruise, on a balmy night with scattered showers, Ike was steaming through the Straits of Sicily making her own wind to recover aircraft. I was backing up and greatly enjoying the fact that F-14 drivers did not seem to suffer the old F-4 illusion of being high and fast. The wind started to die off and the Air Boss came up on the 14MC telling us to be ready for a foul deck. All of a sudden the collision alarm sounded. I looked around the wind shield just in time to see lights come on right in front of our bow. It turned out to be a mothership for cigarette runners that had been running dark. Obviously there had been some back and forth between the bridge and CIC about a non-correlated radar blip that took a finite amount of time. By the time someone decided that yes, the radar blip was more than a shower, we were bearing down on the mothership.

I yelled at my team to grab onto something because I was sure we were going to hit. Now, for those of you who have been down in the machinery spaces of a Nimitz Class, you know that the power output of the reactors and the engines is, for all intents and purposes, infinite. The bottleneck that keeps a CVN from having the same thrust to weight ratio as a Hornet is the propeller shaft. Kind of like the dilithium crystals in the starship Enterprise. I can hear in my mind the conversation between Captain Jim Mauldin, then-CO of Ike and the CHENG:

“All back emergency Scottie!!!”

“She won’t take no more Cap’n!!”

“Dammit Scottie, I said emergency power!!”

“Scottie” obviously obeyed the Captain and pulled out all the rods. The propeller shafts must have been starting to look like the rubber band on a model airplane, but the net effect for us on the platform was that Ike became a 90,000 ton bucking bronco. Forget the collision, we had to cling to whatever we could grab onto in order to keep from being launched off into the water. Amazingly, we stopped short of hitting that mothership, which by now had lights on and was stoking its boilers for all they were worth. In that moment I imagine there was a brotherhood of soiled britches on both bridges.

(Continued on the Next Page....)

# *Tales From the Platform....continued*

## **‘THE MiG MOMENT’**

By early 1980 Ike was starting workups for another cruise. In those days we did our initial drills off Gitmo, Cuba where there was a fleet training team. Ike had sailed from Norfolk with an empty deck. We were supposed to bring elements of the wing aboard once we neared the Gitmo OPAREA. So there we were, off the southeastern tip of Cuba, at flight quarters, waiting for the wing. I and my team were out on the platform, stripped to the waist, basking in the sun and watching the dolphins and flying fish play in our wake. I heard something behind me and turned to look forward. I saw a little bug-like thing go zorching down the starboard side of the ship, bow to stern at around 500 feet. I thought, gee, that looks like a Mig-21, but nah, it can't be. It zoomed up, did a wingover and came back down at us. Sure enough, it was a Cuban Mig-21. How could this be? Nobody had said anything. Thus the following conversation on the 14MC:

“Air Ops, Paddles.”

“Go Paddles.”

“Yeah, does anyone know anything about this Cuban Mig-21 that's buzzing the LSO platform?”

“Say again?”

“Yeah, we've got a Mig-21 buzzing the LSO platform and we wanted to know what the deal is.”

“Stand by...”

One can only imagine the ensuing conversation between CIC and the bridge. Good thing there was no flag aboard. That Cuban Mig driver had a career day. If he took pictures, he probably got a Hero of the Revolution medal and a promotion.

**Check Back Next Month for Part IV of ‘Tales From the Platform ’**





## *Words from the Officer-in-Charge:*

Paddles,

I heard from many of you following the Grizzly hook slap which took place on 77 back in February. If you haven't had an opportunity to read the initial and follow-on Embarked Hazard Landing Reports which were released by CVW-8, please do so. Because CVW-8 is the first Air Wing to conduct cyclic operations with EA-18Gs, we all watch with interest as they capture and then disseminate "lessons learned" about its maiden deployment. Because of the limitations of WESS, there were some questions surrounding conditions, configuration, etc. All of those issues have been cleared up with the re-release of the HAZREP, however, there is an important point that I want to make from solely a Paddles perspective.

We must never forget that we own the process of embarked recoveries. If anything happens during one of those recoveries that we either didn't expect or hope never happens again, we must first look to ourselves and do some serious soul-searching: "Was there something I could have done to prevent it?" "Did I train my pilots properly?" "Did we violate one of our rules to live by?" While I am not making a long distance assessment about the hook slap which took place on 77, I am 100% certain that a pilot made a costly mistake behind the ship and Paddles was either unable or late to fix it. Yes, we are in a dangerous business. Yes, we often ride a perilous line between non-events and catastrophe. All of the more reason to identify poor performance behind the ship when it happens and fix it so that we don't repeat our mistakes. CVW-8 has done just that.

Keep 'em off the ramp and in the spaghetti,

Weeds



**CDR "Weeds" Wedertz  
Officer in Charge  
U.S. Navy LSO Shool**



# VX-23

## Salty Dogs

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### EASIER APPROACHES...

If you check your Rhino or Rhino with an AEA page (Growler) PCL you will see that you can touchdown at the field with two autopilot modes engaged, Model I ACL and FPAH/ROLL. You may have done a Mode I to the deck before but have you ever done a Flight Path Attitude Hold to the deck? FPAH is my favorite autopilot mode. I used to use it only at altitude but I have discovered it can be really useful closer to the ground.

Unlike Attitude hold in the legacy which maintains a pitch attitude, FPAH (Flight Path Attitude Hold), like the names implies, maintains a flight path. So wherever your velocity vector is pointed is where the jet goes. When the Super Hornet was first designed and tested, FPAH was intended to be used to help you land at the boat more easily. Unfortunately, everything in the test world is driven by cost and schedule. During the initial sea trials of the Rhino, they simply ran out of time to do the planned landings at the boat with FPAH engaged. So, instead of delaying the Super Hornet they just skipped it and we have never had the money to go back and finish the tests. Hence we are not allowed to land at the boat with FPAH.

Here is a homework assignment for you: Next time you are at the abeam at the field click the ATC button and engage FPAH and ROLL AP modes. At the 180 roll into a 25-27 deg AOB and set the velocity vector (VV) a few degrees down to make the gouge triangle in the HUD. Then let go of the stick. (If you need to make a bank angle correction use a bit of lateral stick.) Next, at the 90, push the VV down until you see 400-500 fpm and let go again. Finally, at the wings level transition, put the VV at 3 degrees down and level the wings. If the VV is not next to the lens you may have to touch the stick one or two more times for a small re-correction before touchdown. You will be amazed how easy it is to fly a nice approach almost completely hands off. No power-pause-turn, no wings level transition. DISCLAIMER: Still guard the stick and throttle, be a good pilot, and fly a SAFE pass.

The next assignment is to engage FPAH/ROLL on a PAR. Another secret of this mode is that every click of trim is about 100-200 FPM rate of climb or decent. Approaching glide path input 4-6 clicks of nose down trim (thumb goes up) and watch the jet start a 500-700 FPM descent. The rate of change is a little slow so do it early or move the VV with the stick. Once on a nice final a click or two of trim fixes the slightly below/above glide path deviations. So easy the *E trade* baby could do it! You guys are all big boys so use this info as you like - just don't touchdown on a carrier with FPAH engaged.

I mentioned the cardinal sin of putting the velocity vector next to the lens at the field. We are not allowed to do this right since it doesn't work at the ship because it's moving away from us at 25 knots. What if you could type in the speed of the ship via the UFCI or get it transmitted to you over a magical data link (MIDS, SINS, JPALS) and you had some powerful computers in the jet that could do some trigonometry. You would get something called a ship stabilized velocity vector. Combine this with FPAH/ROLL and now you put the thing on the thing and OK 3 wires for all my friends. The *E trade* baby gets a top hook patch! I joke about the *E trade* baby but none of the systems required for a ship stabilized velocity vector are beyond today's technology. Next month I'll talk more about stuff like this and how the "carrier" aviator may become a thing of the past.

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## What's ahead...

### IFGT:

04 - 15 April (*Class is Full!!!*)  
 09 - 20 May  
 06 - 17 June  
 08 - 19 August (*Class is Full!!!*)  
 19 - 30 September  
 17 - 28 October

### FRS/TRACOM:

03 - 05 May  
 28 - 30 June  
 30 August - 01 September

### Air Boss:

None Currently Scheduled

### OAG:

24-27 May

All classes begin at 0900 on the convening date, building 150, NAS Oceana. Orders should be handled through squadron or CAG admin. Contact YN2 Wallace with any administrative questions.

## OAG AGENDA FINALIZATION!!!

The Landing Signal Officer Operational Advisory Group Conference in Key West from 24 to 27 May.

The Agenda is all-but finalized and the specific day-to-day schedule is currently being smoothed by the LSO School Staff. Additionally, make sure to get those CV / LSO NATOPS change recommendations in as the deadline is fast approaching.

For any questions or concerns about the OAG Agenda, please contact Captain 'Barf' Byers at (757) 433-2518.

## GONE, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN....



A solemn reminder that the release date of this edition of Paddles Monthly (31 March 2011) marks the first anniversary of the loss of one of our good friends and colleagues, LT 'Abrek' Zilberman.

## OAG Room Reservations....

Registration for this year's Operational Advisory Group Conference is being conducted in an identical fashion to last year. In order to make sure that all conference attendees will be lodged at Fly Navy - the site of this year's conference - you must complete two specific steps:

1. Contact Navy Gateway Inns and Suites via their toll free number: 1-877-NAVY-BED and register for the applicable dates using your personal government travel card. Do not contact the front desk in Key West directly. They cannot help you.
2. Once you are registered, email our Marine representative - Captain "Barf" Byers at: [bradley.byers@navy.mil](mailto:bradley.byers@navy.mil) and formally register with him for the OAG. This must be complete NO LATER THAN 24 April.

Important: Both steps must be completed in order to guarantee a room at the Fly Navy. We will submit the list of registrants to the staff at Fly Navy, they will match those names with reservations and then assign rooms in the Fly Navy Building. Failure to complete both steps before the April 24th deadline will result in our not being able to guarantee lodging at Fly Navy.

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