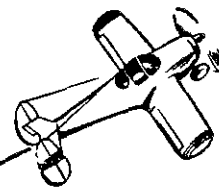


ERCOUPE
SERVICE
MEMORANDUM

No. **60**

Ercoupe **MEMORANDUM**

SUBJECT: Parachuting from Ercoupes



March 6, 1951

A recent accident to an Ercoupe in this area brought to our attention the difficulty which may be experienced in trying to make a parachute jump from an Ercoupe.

In any low wing airplane, the obvious way of making a jump from the ship is to climb out onto the wing panel and jump or slide from the wing root. In the case of the Ercoupe, as well as other low wing airplanes, any obstruction on the wing root, particularly near the leading edge, causes a flow change over the wing which increases the drag considerably and reduces the lift. It will also affect the flow over the tail, reducing the downwash influence on it, thereby tending to make the airplane nose heavy.

In the case of the recent accident brought to our attention, the parachutist climbed out onto the right wing at an altitude of about 2,000 feet. Instead of jumping immediately, he delayed his jump because he thought the pilot was making evasive maneuvers. The pilot, however, found the nose dropped and could not be brought back to the horizon with full up elevator, regardless of the throttle setting. The airplane maintained a speed of about 80 m.p.h and settled rather rapidly. This, of course, was the result of the disturbance to the air flow caused by the rather large jumper with two parachutes strapped to him.

As a result, the airplane landed virtually out of control in an open field, with a rather high rate of sink. On impact, the parachutist passed forward over the leading edge of the wing and stopped some distance ahead of the airplane; the pilot received head cuts and a broken collar bone.

This report is brought to your attention so that you may prevent its repetition by discouraging exhibition jumps from low altitudes and advising any who anticipate making parachute jumps of the possible difficulties they will encounter and recommending that they do not climb out onto the wing until they are ready to leave the airplane. Similar difficulties may be encountered if an attempt is made to carry bulky items strapped to the wing root. It, therefore, is to be noted that nothing should be fastened to the airplane in such a manner that it can influence the flow over the leading edge or upper surface of the wing.

The general dissemination of this information is of importance to avoiding additional difficulties, and your cooperation is enlisted.