

CLASSIFICATION.....

## NEWSPAPER CLIPPING

SUBJECT.....

JET OCEAN FIGHTER  
FLIES IN COAST RUNConsolidated's Fast Sea-Dart  
Takes Off on Retractable Skis  
—Wide Significance Seen

By GLADWIN HILL

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

SAN DIEGO, Calif., July 21—

The world's first water-based fighter plane—a futuristic craft that floats and take off on retractable "hydro-skis"—was demonstrated publicly today.

Jet propelled and presumably capable of supersonic speeds, the plane, the XF2Y-1 Sea-Dart, was developed for the Navy by the Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Corporation with the collaboration of several other aeronautical organizations.

Its ability to use "liquid runways" holds the promise of greatly increasing the range and flexibility of the Navy's aerial striking power.

Considered by aviation people of equal significance is the craft's application of jet propulsion to seaplanes. Up to now the necessity of keeping propellers above the water has required cumbersome understructure and has resulted in ponderous seaplanes that consequently were relatively slow.

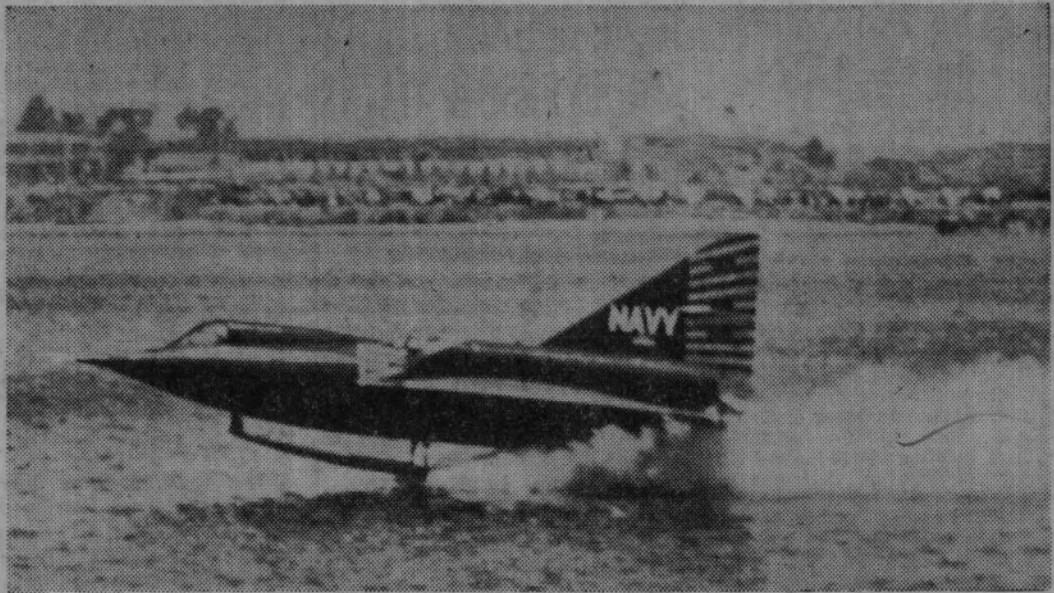
The Sea-Dart demonstrates that it is possible to take one of the fastest types of land-based combat planes and with relatively minor changes in basic design, chiefly the introduction of the "hydro-ski" landing gear, make it operable from the water.

## Wings Just Clear the Water

Airtight in its hull and wings, as all high-speed planes have to be these days, the Sea-Dart at rest floats with its wings just clear of the water. Its jet air intakes are at the top of the fuselage, where spray cannot get in. The exhaust is just above the water level in the tail.

The plane is a single-seat craft about thirty-five feet long. It has two Westinghouse engines. Most of its exact specifications, including its prospective armament for combat, still are under security classification. It has small wheels on the ends of the skis and the tail so it can taxi on land for short distances.

Flown today by E. D. (Sam)



Associated Press Wirephoto

**NAVY'S NEWEST FIGHTER:** The Sea-Dart, first jet fighter seaplane, taking off from San Diego Bay, Calif., yesterday in the first public demonstration permitted by the Navy.

Shannon, Consolidated's chief test pilot, the Sea-Dart took off after a run of forty-seconds covering about two miles. It climbed steeply and, with its skis retracted, roared through the air like a conventional jet fighter, its dart-like appearance accentuated by yellow and blue streamlining painting.

It made two aerial sweeps past observers aboard a Navy LST (Tank Landing Ship) a quarter of a mile away. It landed, its skis slanting forward like the feet of a duck alighting, in a space of about half a mile, and it took only five to ten seconds to slow to taxiing speed after it had hit the water.

## Delta Wings Design Is Used

The Sea-Dart essentially is a Marine version of the F102 land-based fighter being built by Convair for the Air Force.

Both were derived from Consolidated's experimental XF92, the land based fighter type first flown in 1948 that used the 'Delta wing' design.

In this design, the two wings and the fuselage form a triangle that resembles the fourth letter of the Greek alphabet. This shape has been found to give exceptional lift, stability and control with lightness and strength and small "drag" or wind resistance.

The major advantage promised by the new type of water-based craft is that it may permit large-scale frontline combat operations without the expensive and time-consuming construction and main-

tenance of landing fields and airstrips, many of which are soon abandoned in a war. Engineers connected with the Sea-Dart project estimated that as much as 40 per cent of the material shipped overseas to some areas in World War II had been for landing grounds.

It is considered conceivable that the hydro-ski idea might be applied to some extent in civil aviation.

## No Revolution Soon

Any notion that the innovation might revolutionize military or civil aviation, however, as has been suggested in some published commentaries, was sharply discounted last fall by John F. Floberg, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air, in a talk in New York.

"The Navy does not see this device as a panacea for anything," he said. "Hydro-ski equipped aircraft are not expected to replace any known type of ship, conventional airplane, or even seaplane in the Navy."

He said the device was "uniquely fitted for adaptation to lighter fighter types," and that "the law of diminishing returns" requiring additional power to get off the water as a craft's wake increases made it inapplicable even to heavy patrol aircraft.

Up to the development of the Sea-Dart, jet propulsion had been applied only experimentally to old style flying boats.

The Navy has ordered an undis-

closed number of Sea-Darts, and Consolidated said other plane projects involving the same principle were quite advanced. The Sea-Dart was launched last December, and flew for the first time on April 18.

Other organizations credited with having contributed to its development are the National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics; the Edo Corporation, maker of plane float gear, and All-American Airways.

*Klein*

7-22  
*RST*