



## Sea Stories

send your sea stories to [mel.harder@snet.net](mailto:mel.harder@snet.net)

### From Lee Doyes, USS Tracer

One of the benefits of being on a west coast ship was you could recover Japanese fish net balls. They at that time were made of glass. They came in various sizes. Primarily, three; large, medium and small. Pictured is a medium one approximately 10" in diameter. Some were as small as 3 or 4 inches and as large as 16 inches. Most of the ones my ship saw and recovered were 6 to 10 inch size. They became a prized item and a priority list had to be made. The OOD and crew on watch that spotted them usually got first choice. They broke loose from fish nets and the Japanese Current carried them north skirting the Aleutian Islands and down the eastern Pacific through our picket station. When found they had part of the fish net attached and usually moss covered making them hard to spot. Some were broken in the recovery attempt when a metal hook was used to try and hook the net portion. They were usually spotted in calm seas (which was seldom). They are seldom used now days as plastic balls are cheaper and more plentiful.

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## **Berserk Sailor Shoots Shipmate**

Youth Kidnaps Pair in Attempt To Escape Before Court-Martial

BOSTON, Nov. 18, (UPI)—A full-blooded Indian sailor went berserk aboard the U. S. S. Investigator early today, kidnapped two shipmates, shot one of them and fled in the wounded man's car to Providence, R. I., where he was captured.

The Navy said Machinists Mate Fireman XXXXX, 22, of Poplar, Mont., had been scheduled to stand summary court martial later today for going AWOL.

He was arrested early today in downtown Providence after breaking into a home and fleeing with the owner's civilian clothes.

Victim of the shooting was Ronald Hicks, 19, of Atlanta, Ga, who was shot in the lower right jaw. He was reported recovering after surgery at Chelsea Naval Hospital.

The Navy said XXXXX first whipped out a .22-caliber pistol in the engine room of the ship and threatened to kill shipmate William C. Arlington, 26, Clio, Ala.

"You don't scare me with that gun," Arlington said. XXXXX fired twice close to Arlington's head and ran on deck where he found Chief Petty Officer Robert Brown, St. Joseph, Mo., and Terry L. Thompson, Janesville, Wis., messenger of the watch.

Brown refused to come ashore with XXXXX and the berserk sailor fired into the deck at his feet. Brown still refused. As XXXXX was forcing Thompson ashore at gunpoint, Hicks and Jack M. Ryan,

Winchester, Va, another enlisted man, were coming aboard from shore liberty. XXXXX forced Hicks and Ryan into Hicks' car, the Navy said. Thompson broke away and reached the guard at the gate as the car sped by.

When Hicks refused to turn into a one-way street, XXXXX shot him in the jaw, the Navy said. Ryan persuaded him to let them out of the car and took Hicks to the hospital with the aid of police.

Note: XXXX is where I took out individual's name.

The weather was calm, just the usual ground swells, so there wasn't too much concern over the transfer. The ships were in constant communication via flashing light. The ship transferring to us said they had the man in a straight jacket and recommended to us we do the same. For safety purposes they would remove him from the straight jacket during the actual transfer in case he went in the water. The group on the receiving end was briefed and was prepared to put the guy in a straight jacket when he hit the deck. These guys made the Green Bay Packers starting line look small.

The chair came up and the man came across without a problem. When he landed on our deck, they pulled out the straight jacket and the fight was on. This guy was not going to put it on. Our guys won after a little wrestling match. As soon as he was subdued, the flashing light came on from the other ship. "Wrong nut. That one is just an officer going on leave." The officer was released and the second personnel transfer was on. This time the guy got out of the chair and held his arms out and put on the straight jacket.

We came home to Davisville a few days later with one calm patient to transfer to Quonset and one Ensign with a black eye to go on leave.