

PSYCHOLOGY

Fatigue of Jet Pilot Due to Tension Not Work

► THE EXCESSIVE FATIGUE felt by the jet pilot after even a short hop is due to worry and tension and not to work, Dr. Neil D. Warren, University of Southern California psychologist, has found.

Jet transports will have many advantages over propeller-driven aircraft, Dr. Warren pointed out. Their relative freedom from vibration will reduce one important contributor to fatigue and stress.

Jet aircraft are relatively more simple to fly. Although there will still be plenty of instruments to watch and controls to operate, the number will be fewer than in conventional aircraft and there will be an increasing tendency to make as many as possible automatic.

On the other hand, there are new and added causes of worry and tension in a jet plane. The pilot may lack confidence that he is complete master of his plane. He may fear the situation will go wrong very rapidly.

The jet pilot is always aware that just outside the plane's plexiglass windows is a most inhospitable environment. He is constantly concerned over the hazard of possible bail-out from a plane operating at such high speed and altitude. He may also have in the back of his mind a fear of loss of pressurization at the altitudes where jets operate.

Best remedy for these causes of tension is confidence in himself and his airplane, physical and mental fitness, and freedom from personal worries. An untroubled mind is one of the jet pilot's greatest assets. He should be well trained. The best training for flying a jet bomber or a jet transport is flying another jet such as a fighter.

Jet simulators are very useful, Dr. Warren said, for transition training, and they can help the jet pilot recover from the tensions in the early stages of jet flying.

Physical fitness is of greater importance in jet operation than in other aircraft, and adequate sleep and rest is important to physical fitness.

Science News Letter, June 9, 1956

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