

# BRAVO Zulu

The crew of Night Owl 01 conducted an initial night-landing qualification of the RQ-2B unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). The flight followed a day-night reconnaissance event at MCAS Cherry Point.

Sgt. Jarad Demster (external pilot-under-instruction) had set the throttle to cruise on the downwind leg when Cpl. Matthew Nation (internal pilot) observed engine rpm drop to zero and the engine-cut light illuminate. Cpl. Nation reported the engine problem over ICS, and SSgt. Ward (external pilot instructor) took control of the aircraft. A dead-stick landing

would be necessary because the RQ-2B cannot restart its engine in-flight.

While Capt. Daniel Reber (mission commander) told tower about the situation, SSgt. Ward abbreviated the base leg to make sure the UAV cleared the tall trees bordering two sides of the runway. Buildings and personnel were on the other side. The winds approached NATOPS limits. With only altitude and airspeed calls from Cpl. Nation, SSgt. Rembert Ward maneuvered and landed the aircraft, using only the aircraft position lights for visual reference. The cause of the engine cut is under investigation.



## VMU-2

Cpl. Matthew Nation, SSgt. Rembert Ward, Sgt. Jarad Demster, and Capt. Daniel Reber



Marine Captains Andrew Miller and Joe Beals were flying their AV-8B Harrier II aircraft on a mission over southern Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. After refueling from a KC-10, at 260 knots and 25,000 feet, Capt. Miller pulled up to the starboard reform position to wait for his wingman to finish refueling. The tanker had started an easy left-hand turn when the canopy on Capt. Miller's aircraft simultaneously depressurized and shattered.

Capt. Miller immediately descended to 14,000 feet and broadcasted a Mayday call. Capt. Miller's wingman, Capt. Beals, disengaged from the tanker and provided navigational assistance. On the trip back to base, Capt. Miller determined the engine and the aircraft's control surfaces still were in good working order. Capt. Beals assisted with ATC and cleared the airspace in front of the flight. Having just come off of the tanker, Capt. Miller had 10,000 pounds of fuel on board, and he decided to dump 7,000 pounds to effect a safe landing. This process took five to 10 minutes.

Capt. Miller arrived at the airfield and circled overhead to complete the fuel dump. He then settled into downwind, executing a 105 percent, variable-nozzle slow landing (VNSL) with his wingman supervising.

The postflight maintenance inspection revealed no engine FOD or other damage to the aircraft. The canopy has been sent in for EI.

Capt. Andrew Miller and Capt. Joe Beals



Flying from USS *Thorn* (DD-988), the crew of Venom 502 was conducting routine escort support in the Strait of Gibraltar. Shortly after takeoff, 502's No. 2 engine-oil pressure slowly decreased below normal operating parameters. Lt. Schultz, the helicopter aircraft commander (HAC) told the crew of the pressure drop and executed NATOPS emergency procedures. He then contacted the ship's air-traffic controller and requested flight quarters.

They did a precautionary climb to 500 feet and circled the ship, awaiting a ready deck. When the engine-oil pressure continued to drop to near minimums, Lt. Schultz declared an emergency and requested emergency flight quarters. Three minutes later, a green deck was set, and they landed.

After shutdown, oil was seen draining from the underside of the helicopter. Postflight inspection revealed no engine oil remained in the No. 2 engine. The engine was removed and inspected; the No. 1 carbon seal had failed.

Attention to detail and situational awareness by the aircrew, coupled with *Thorn's* well-trained crew, ensured a safe dual-engine landing, instead of a more dangerous single-engine landing on a small deck.



Ltjg. Elizabeth Griffiths (copilot),  
AW2 Trey Knight, and  
Lt. Bryan Schultz (HAC)