

# Riser, Jens Engelstad

**Age:** 25

**Nationality:** Norwegian

**Rank:** Sub-Lt.

**Unit:** Royal Norwegian  
Naval Air Force

**Occupation:** Pilot

**Service No:** ?

**Birth:** 9 December 1914  
Romerike, Norway

**Home Town:** Oslo, Norway

**Death:** 18 March 1941

Crash of Northrop N3-PB No. 5  
Patricia, Bay, BC

**Burial:** Commemorated at “Lost Airmen of the Empire”  
North Saanich, BC, Canada

**Others:** Lt. Kaare Kjos (Gunner)





## Details of Crash

At about 10:00 am on 18 March 1941, three airmen from the Royal Norwegian Naval Air Service took off in Northrop N-3PB No. 5 from Patricia Bay seaplane base.

The men aboard were:

Lt. Erik Bjerneby (Observer)  
Lt. Kaare Kjos (Gunner)  
Sub-Lt. Jens Riser (pilot)

The aircraft reached 300' altitude and began a steep turn to the left. After 120° into a turn, the aircraft stalled and hit the water, port wing low, and burst into flames. Two RCAF personnel, LAC's Coulon and James, saw the crash and rushed to the scene in their boat. They encountered a curtain of flaming gasoline, but managed to reach the aircraft and pull out Lt. Bjerneby. Two other RCAF crash boats reached the scene and tried to extinguish the flames, but the wreck sank with Lt. Kjos and Sub-Lt. Riser still aboard. LAC's Coulon and James received the British Empire Medal for their bravery. The cause of the accident was determined to be low speed in the turn, which caused a stall at low altitude

In June 1941, Finn Strand Kjos, the brother of Kaare Kjos, was killed in a crash of the same type of plane when he was instructing a pupil at Island Airport in Toronto, ON, and collided with a ferry.



Navy divers searched for the bodies of the two missing men and managed to recover that of Lt. Kjos the day of the crash. The search continued until the body of Sub-Lt Riser was recovered on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

On March 21<sup>st</sup>, a memorial service for the two men was conducted at the seaplane

hangar. Their burial place is unknown. On March 22<sup>nd</sup>, the RNNAF Unit departed from Patricia Bay.

From Victoria Times Colonist March 19, 1941

## Two Die When Plane Crashes on Water at Patricia Bay Airport

**Pilot and Gunnery Officer of Royal Norwegian  
Naval Air Force Killed, and Lieutenant Severely  
Injured in Fatal Side-Slip at Low Height**

**M**ARKING the first air fatality in the Patricia Bay region of the Western Air Command, a seaplane of the Royal Norwegian Naval Air Force crashed shortly after taking off on the water at 10 a.m. yesterday, taking the lives of two officers and severely injuring a third. All were officers in the Royal Norwegian Naval Air Force.

An official statement issued by the Western Air Command, R.C.A.F., described the accident in the following terms:

"A flying accident to a seaplane aircraft of the Royal Norwegian Naval Air Force occurred at the Royal Canadian Air Force station at Patricia Bay at 10 a.m. this morning, causing the deaths of Pilot Sub-Lieutenant Yens Rilsner and Gunner Lieutenant Kaare

Kjos, and severe injuries to Observer Lieutenant E. Bjornedy. The aircraft was engaged in operations and had just taken off. It slipped into the water from a turn at low altitude, and sank immediately. Salvage operations are under way to recover the bodies of the victims."

Official investigation has been ordered, as is customary in cases of air crashes. Meanwhile, with the

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assistance of the Provincial Police, parties were organized to commence salvage operations on the seaplane to recover the two bodies. Lieutenant Bjornedy, severely injured, was rushed by ambulance to the R.C.A.F. hospital at Patricia Bay.

By nightfall divers had recovered one of the bodies, which was taken to a local undertaking parlor. At a late hour last night the injured officer's condition was reported serious.

The crash occurred less than a month after two other Norwegian airmen, Instructor Harald Kruse and Flying Pupul Erling Jorgensen, were killed when their plane crashed into the waters of Burrard Inlet, near Vancouver.