



NAVY PLANE SALVAGED—The \$500,000 Navy attack bomber, which plunged into Chautauqua Lake July 3, was beached at 5 P.M. Thursday, by a salvage crew of the Naval Air Station at Niagara Falls. The plane is expected to be rebuilt for flying at a cost of about \$100,000. The pilot of the plane was uninjured when it crashed into the lake off Point Chautauqua.

—Post-Journal Stafffoto

Big Plane May Be Rebuilt, Fly Again

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Sunken Navy Bomber Brought Ashore

The Navy attack bomber that plunged into Chautauqua Lake off Point Chautauqua a week ago Tuesday noon may fly again, Lt. Com. Sam Sparks said Thursday afternoon after the craft beached.

The commander, directing a salvage crew of the Naval Air Station at Niagara Falls, said that a preliminary investigation revealed that the 17,000 pound plane was not damaged structurally. Damage to the bottom of the plane was still not known, however.

The mass of heavy electronic equipment may also be salvaged, with only parts of it damaged by water, he said. Virtually all of the plane will have to be rebuilt, however, probably at a cost of about \$100,000, the officer indicated.

The \$500,000 craft showed above

the surface for the first time late Thursday morning. A crane with a long cable, aided by a small bulldozer, finally beached the craft about 5 P.M.

The plane, which weighs about six tons in the water, was pulled by floats from its resting place in about 60 feet of water Sunday and towed to a point about 1,000 yards off shore, just north of Dewittville an hour later. Since that time, the crew, hampered by inclement weather, has struggled to get the bomber ashore.

Com. Sparks said that there was considerably more work to repair the plane for transportation along the highways to the Falls Base. Its 50 foot wingspread, however, can be reduced to 24 feet for this

purpose by simply folding the wings.

Jack and Thomas Kling of Mayville own the new lakefront development where the plane is beached. They gave permission to beach the plane there last Sunday. A new, wide gravel road leads from the sloping shore to the highway.

A team of six to eight divers, aided by about a half a dozen other crewmen have been working daily on the salvage job since last Friday.

The 20-year-old pilot, who was flying the plane at the time on a round robin tour out of Oceana, Va., was unhurt in the mishap. He was picked up within minutes by two Meadville fishermen.