

NEW YORK MINUTE

PROFILING A NEW YORK ANG F-51H ACCIDENT BY TED WYSKIDA

Policeman guards the stricken Mustang. Damage was extensive.

F-51H 44-64612 after going off the runway.

The date was 18 August 1951 and Capt. Paul Bronsveld Schipper was ready for takeoff at Westchester County Airport in New York. He was firmly strapped into the seat of F-51H-10-NA USAAF 44-64612, a gleaming Mustang assigned to the 137th Fighter Squadron, 107th Fighter Group, New York Air National Guard. The crew chief had told the captain that the Mustang had not flown in some time so he gave the Merlin a thorough run-up.

Everything seemed fine and he took the active and advanced the throttle to takeoff power. During the roll, the engine backfired as the Mustang neared flying speed. Captain Schipper dropped full flaps, pulled the throttle back, turned off all switches, and stood on the brakes.

The Mustang went off the end of the runway and, as can be seen in the photographs, there was considerable damage. The main gear was torn off, flaps damaged, propeller and engine destroyed.



The F-51H went down a gully, tearing the main gear out of the wing.

An investigation was started to see what caused the backfiring but an immediate recommendation to the other ANG pilots was to never lower the flaps in such a situation since such an action cut effective braking.

It would seem that the damage was extensive enough to scrap the plane, but it was decided that the F-51H would be repaired.

That was done and the Mustang was even-

tually reassigned to the 112th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, Ohio Air National Guard. However, the aircraft was once again damaged on 23 September 1954 while being flown by Richard Laufert at Akron-Canton Airport, Ohio. It seems that the Mustang was probably scrapped after this last incident. **MI**

