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GEMINI SURVIVAL EQUIPMENT
CASE IV

The survival equipment displayed in Case No. IV was flown on the Gemini XI mission. On September 12, 1966, Gemini XI went up with Astronauts Charles Conrad Jr. as Command Pilot, and Richard F. Gordon Jr. as Pilot. This mission completed 71 hours and 17 minutes of flight and achieved several important "firsts" in a highly successful mission.

All of the components, with the exception of the Life Raft unit, fit compactly into the Survival Pack container shown in the case also. The Survival Pack contains the following equipment:

The Radio Beacon is a signal and communications device. It is 7 5/6 inches high and weighs 6 pounds. It operates on a 243 megacycle frequency. With a single battery, it will broadcast a beacon signal continuously for 24 hours.

There are three water containers in the kit, one of which is displayed here. They are made of aluminum and contain five pounds of sterilized water each.

The Medical Kit contains injectors for pain and motion sickness, sun lotion, zinc oxide, compress bandage, water purification tablets and tablets for pain, stimulant, nausea and diarrhea.

Designed to convert sea water to desalted water, the Desalter Kit is composed of 8 chemical tablets, a mixing bag which will contain approximately 16 ounces of sea water, and mending tape. When the tablet is mixed with sea water, the salt precipitates and the remaining desalted water is filtered

as it is released through a small metal valve on the bag which, when opened, forms the drinking spout. The bag may be reused by rinsing in sea water.

The Combination Light is a miniature survival kit in itself. It contains a siren whistle, signal mirror, strobe signal light, flashlight, knife blade, 3 needles, 4 fish hooks, heavy nylon thread, flint striker and cotton balls, compass, water proof receptacle, and water purification tablets.

The machete is ground to a sharpness which will shave hair. Opposite the cutting edge is a sawing edge. The sheath is fabricated from heavy gage nylon webbing and is designed to hang from a belt.

The sun glasses are especially designed for the GEMINI and APOLLO programs. They have a soft fabric frame and are adjustable to head size and face contour.

The Life raft unit consists of a flotation tube designed to support 300 pounds on a water surface for an extended period. The cylinders, loaded with 155 grams of CO₂, are the main source of inflation. The raft is inflated in approximately 25 seconds. It may also be inflated through an oral inflation valve. The crewman boards the raft by pulling himself up with the straps attached at convenient points for that purpose. When released, the anchor serves to retard drifting and keeps the raft headed into the wind. At the end opposite the anchor are two sea dye markers which dye the sea water a yellow-green color when opened. Attached to the edge of the raft is a sunbonnet designed to shade the suited astronaut without his helmet from the direct sunlight. The sunbonnet may also be used as a bailing device.