even though the drinker is not visibly intoxicated.

This brings us to another misconception. It is generally believed that impairment goes up in direct proportion to the amount drunk; i.e., that two drinks will have twice the effect as one drink, that three drinks will have three times the effect, etc. Nothing could be further from the truth. Research has shown, for example, that if a 160 pound man drank four cans of beer in three hours his chance of causing a crash would be about twice what it was when he had nothing to drink, with five cans of beer the likelihood would be four times greater, with six beers, six or seven times as great and that with eight cans of beer the likelihood of causing a crash would be about 25 times as great as if he had had nothing to drink.

This also ties in with the earlier statement that the concentration of alcohol in the blood can continue to rise for 45 minutes to one-and-a-half hours after the drinking stopped. Simply illustrated, it means that if one takes his sixth and seventh cans of beer shortly before leaving a party his chance of causing an auto crash will rise from about six times greater than if he had nothing to drink (at the time he left the party) to about 25 times greater less than an hour later. That is because the alcohol from his last few drinks is still entering the blood and the concentration of alcohol continues to rise. The impairing effect of those last two drinks is several times greater than the effect of the first two drinks. For practical purposes this should rule out that “one for the road.”

—Don’t play Russian roulette:

While discussing the nature of impairment mention should also be made of another phenomenon that seems to occur too often in the military. Although the game of Russian roulette is generally frowned upon and most military personnel would move to discourage such a contest, very few would recognize the danger in a drinking contest. As a matter of fact, the drinking contest may be equally as deadly as the game with the loaded chamber. This usually happens after the participants have already had a few drinks to relieve them of their inhibitions and judgement while at the same time bolstering the male ego. In one way or another they are challenged to drink a large amount of alcohol in a short time. Fortunately, the pylorospasm described earlier may intervene and cause the contest to abort in a usually ignominious fashion. On the other hand, there are too many cases in which the contestant succeeds in the ingestion of a large amount of alcohol and he rapidly proceeds through the stages of being high, drunk, stuporously drunk and “passed out.” This is where the danger lies. There may be sufficient alcohol still in the stomach which, if it continues to absorb into the blood, could cause the concentration to rise to perilous limits. Whereas those around him, who quite likely had also been drinking, regard his passing