



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Don't Try It

Following an uneventful preflight, the pilot and his navigator, both lieutenants, manned the RA-5C *Vigilante* for a daylight round-robin flight. They executed a radar climb following a takeoff in which the pilot felt the crosswind was greater than was forecast.

Leveling off at assigned altitude, the pilot noted a fire warning light for the starboard engine, with no secondary fire indications. The navigator also had a fire warning light indication and reported this to the pilot who retarded the throttle to idle, then cut off. But the warning light persisted.

The pilot declared an emergency with the local center and requested clearance direct to home field. The *Vigilante* was joined by another RA-5C whose pilot visually inspected the aircraft, reported no external indications of fire and escorted the *Vigilante* into the vicinity of home field.

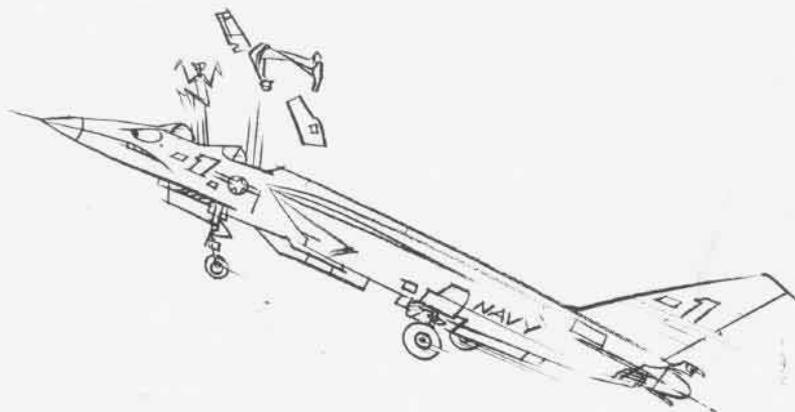
With a single engine and the impending crosswind landing, the lieutenant planned a straight-in approach to terminate with a field arrested landing. Throughout the approach, the pilot felt that the crosswind was stronger than that reported by the tower and, while on final, he noted a stiffness of the controls with a lack of response to his control inputs. The control problem combined with the crosswind resulted in a drift to the right but the amount perceived by the pilot was much greater than his actual drift. Additionally, while on final approach, the pilot noted the master caution light, plus several unknown advisory lights, illuminated.

He felt that he was going to fly over the arresting gear and rotated the aircraft in an attempt to engage it in flight. The aircraft actually touched down about 500 feet before the arresting gear, four feet from the center line. The *Vigilante* rode over the arresting gear, its tail hook striking the top of the wire—and bolted.

Failing to arrest, the pilot left



power on the port engine and maintained a nose-high attitude. He had the sensation that he was drifting rapidly to the right side of the runway and that he would depart the runway prior to the midfield gear. (In actuality, the aircraft was never more than 18 feet to the right of the center line during the roll-out distance of 4,000 feet.)



Osborn
Why can't they remember?!

He also felt that if he permitted the aircraft to drift off the runway, the chance for survival for the crew and aircraft would be very slim. So, he selected afterburner and placed the aircraft in a nose-up, takeoff attitude. Following liftoff, he didn't feel he had regained control of the aircraft and ordered the navigator to eject. Approximately six seconds after the navigator ejected, still feeling he was unable to fly the aircraft, he deselected afterburner and ejected.

The *Vigilante* continued in a straight and level flight path for a few seconds. Then the right wing dropped and the aircraft crash-landed and exploded near the end of the runway. The pilot was uninjured but the navigator sustained minor injuries.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Leapin' Lizards Lad, when you got your two-engine flyin' machine safely on the terra firma, you don't put it back in the blue with only one burnin'!

The way I hear it—this lad had a few other pilot-involved mishaps. Appears to me when a fella continues to be involved in pilot-induced accidents, it's time to give him a less complicated machine to break—like maybe a wheelbarrow! Nuff said.

Amateur Night

An F-4J *Phantom II* was returning to the ship after a routine evening training mission. The crew consisted of a commander as pilot, with substantial experience in jet aircraft, and a lieutenant junior grade intercept officer (RIO) with over 600 hours' experience.

The departure from the marshaling point and the approach were normal. The RIO reported the fuel state as "three-eight." The ship interpreted this as the aircraft weight (38,000 pounds) and, since the arresting gear was set for a lower figure, the aircraft was waved off.

The pilot radioed his fuel state and turned downwind.

At this time, the ship advised the LSO to switch to another frequency and recover an approaching *Intruder*. The mirror and arresting gear were reset for an A-6 recovery.

The F-4 continued its approach.

The LSO attempted radio contact but was unaware that the *Phantom* was still on the previous frequency. Noting that the *Phantom* was getting low and realizing the mirror was set for an A-6, he actuated the "wave-off" lights.

The pilot saw the wave-off lights but, because of his fuel state, elected to continue the approach.

The LSO continued his wave-off calls but the *Phantom* was still on another frequency.

Personnel in the ship's tower assumed that the F-4 was receiving these transmissions, so they did not retransmit the wave-off instructions. And our *Phantom* touched down with the tail hook striking the rounddown, the engines at near idle as the F-4 continued up the deck over the arresting wires. There were numerous calls of "power" and "eject."

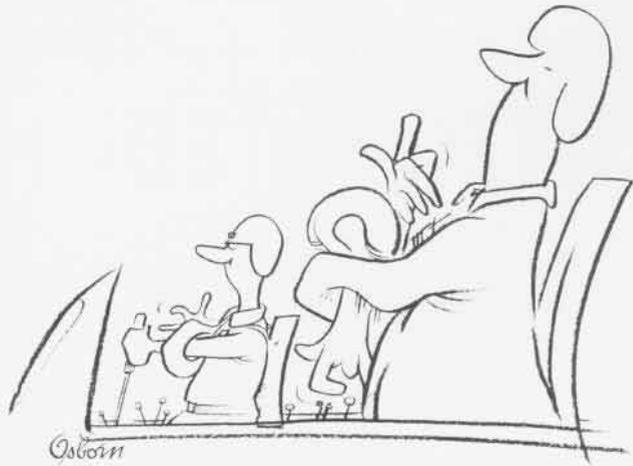
The aircraft left the angled deck; the pilot went to afterburner on both engines. Meanwhile the RIO, previously sensing the lack of power, had initiated command ejection. Both crew members were ejected safely.

The aircraft continued in a slight climb and then nosed over into the sea. The uninjured crew members were recovered quickly.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Great balls of fire! Pass me another aspirin! Looks to me like this fella thinks wave-off lights are only for



junior pilots and he'll just obey the rules that he likes—ain't that nice.

Well, Mr. Know-It-All, let me tell you a few things. This here carrier aviation business has been 'round a lot longer than you have, and for decades a wave-off was—and is—mandatory! For reasons! Your fiasco is just one of others where a few pilots think they're above it all! It's a darned shame to say you learn'd a lesson, because we can't afford these "lessons."

Granted the pilot didn't get much help from those fellas in the ship, but when other people act like a bunch of amateurs, you don't have to follow suit!

Wronghandle

A Marine captain, the pilot-in-command, and a Navy lieutenant were scheduled for a morning proficiency training flight in their T-28 *Trojan*. The flight was to be approximately three hours in duration with one hour used for bounce practice at a nearby field. Following preflight, the flight proceeded uneventfully to the nearby field for landing practice.

With Lt. Wronghandle at the controls, an IFR approach to the field was completed to get below the overcast, and the *Trojan* entered the landing pattern. After completing three touch-and-go landings, and since the pilot was experiencing some difficulty with his approaches and landings, Captain Nonstandard took control from the rear seat and demonstrated two touch-and-goes, raising the flaps on the runway.

The lieutenant took control again for an additional (his fourth) touch-and-go but received a wave-off because of traffic on the runway. Lt. Wronghandle continued the normal pattern and commenced another land-

ing approach (his fifth). Touchdown was good, approximately 400 feet from the runway threshold. Lt. Wronghandle decided to raise the flaps but instead raised the gear handle! A few seconds later (while still on the runway), an unsafe landing gear light was noted by Captain Nonstandard; both pilots felt the propeller hit the runway (they heard mild scraping and noted the left wing was low).

The pilot in the rear seat attempted to jam the gear handle down but it would not depress below the intermediate position; he decided to abort. He retarded the throttle and mixture controls as the aircraft continued down the runway, departed the runway and came to a stop approximately 1,300 feet from initial touchdown point. (The captain secured the battery, fuel and magneto switches before the aircraft came to a complete stop.) The lieutenant blew the canopy open and both pilots evacuated unassisted (rear seat pilot first) out the left side.

The aircraft, resting on its port wing, remained upright with port gear collapsed; no fire resulted. The aircraft sustained minor damage. There were no injuries to the pilots.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Great gallopin' gizzards! My blood pressure is up! Raisin' the flaps on the runway in this bird is non-standard, nonNATOPS and nonsmart. Have you wondered why? Then you missed the point of the whole tale.

It's bad enough when a pilot uses nonstandard procedures but it's worse when he teaches others these mistakes. Maybe we oughta look a little closer at the pilots we designate as "instructors"—how about it?

Both of the lads need a quick ride to the main gate with a firm goodbye!