



No Thanks for the Tip

An instructor pilot (IP) and student Naval Aviator (SNA) were on a FAM flight in a *Turbo Mentor*. The SNA, an ensign with seven hours in the T-34C and no other flying experience, was the IP's first student in type. The IP, who trained in T-28 *Trojans*, had 500 total hours, 80 of them in the *Turbo Mentor*. Both were well rested and well fed. The brief was thorough. Neither was under any unusual stress although it was the IP's second hop of

the day. The aircraft had no significant discrepancies.

The SNA's basic air work was a bit rough but not uncommon for this stage. During landings at a practice field the student's pattern work was improving except for consistently tardy and/or insufficient transition to the landing flare attitude. Twice, the *Turbo Mentor* porpoised after touchdown due to nose-low attitude and had to wave off.

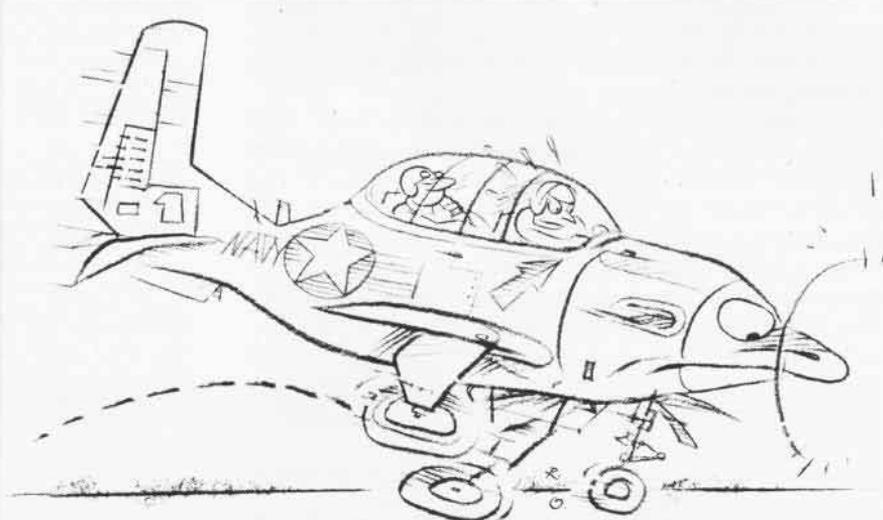
The pair worked doggedly and, after 10 touch and go's and three wave-offs, were fatigued and distressed because of the amount of work done and the perception that more was needed.

They returned to home base for a full stop. The SNA was high and close abeam downwind, requiring the IP to coach him much of the way. Approaching touchdown, the SNA raised the nose to a level attitude and continued to reduce power without increasing the flare to cushion the landing. The aircraft touched down and bounced into the air, prompting the IP to take over and add power for a wave-off. The T-34C touched down again before power took effect. The aircraft was flown around the circuit once more and the SNA made the final approach to a "flat," full-stop landing. On postflight inspection it was noted that the propeller blades were damaged at the tips. An engine change was required.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

This one furrows my brow! I'm all for hard work and hangin' in there to



solve problems. But as my carpenter cousin back in the Blue Ridge is prone to say, "Sometimes it's better to stop poundin' the peg into the beam when it don't seem to fit right. Sleep on it. Try agin tomorrow."

Both players were at fault here, the student for improper landing technique, the IP for insufficient attention at a crucial point, knowing the lad up front was struggling with landing technique. After a lengthy stay in the pattern, it's natural to grow weary. It was the IP's second go of the day and, considering the problems at hand, maybe the horse should have been brought back to the barn earlier. Another point, the T-28's response to wave-off power is quicker than that of the Turbo Mentor PT-6 engine. The IP could have been influenced by prior time in the Trojan. Had the IP intervened earlier, the engine might have spooled up in time to avoid a mishap. Tryin' hard has its merits but better technique and better judgment in knowing when enuff is enuff might have saved our favorite Uncle a power plant overhaul.

Pickle, Pause and Pull

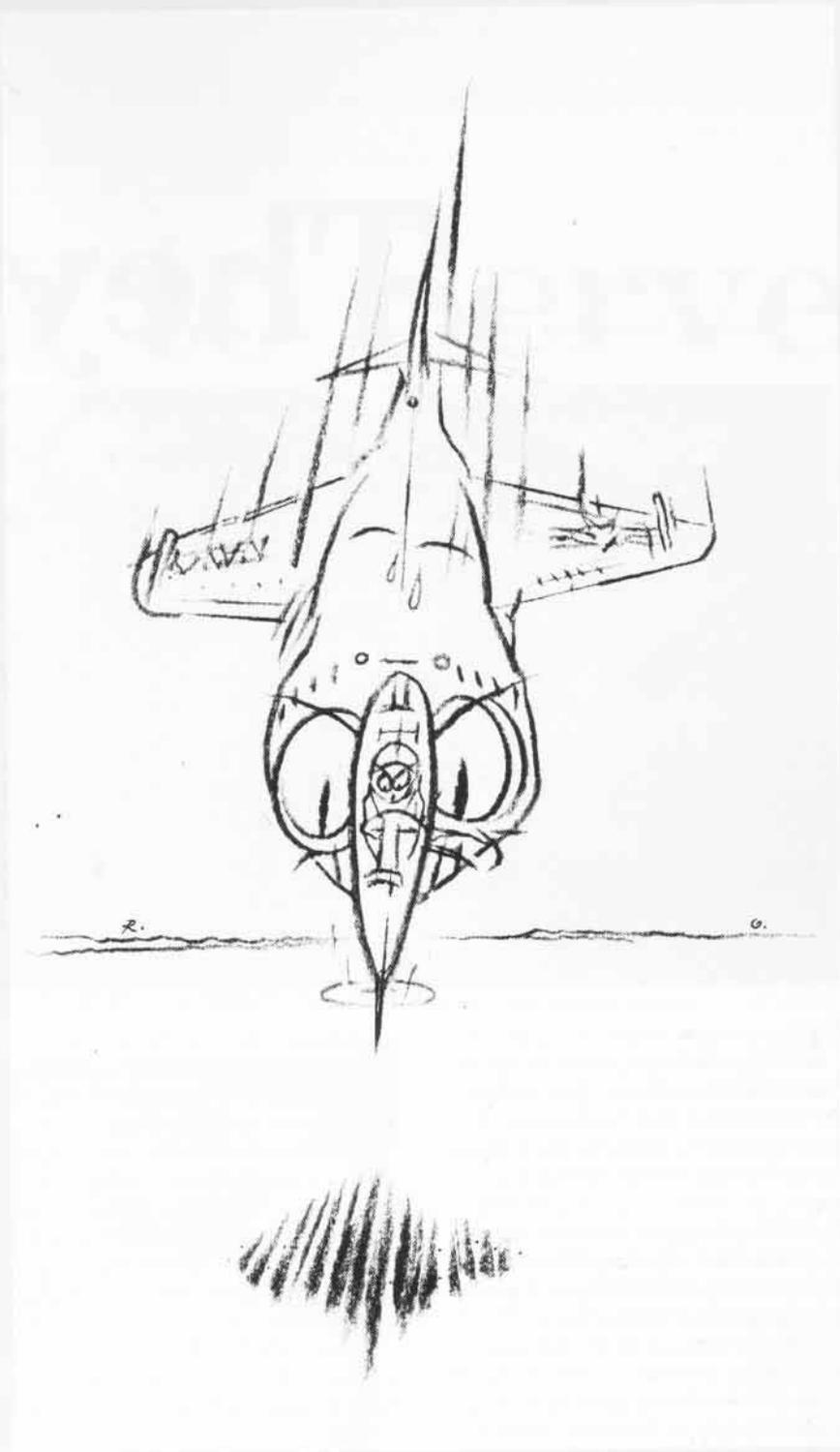
A *Harrier* pilot with 500 total hours and 200 in type was on a solo, practice bombing hop calling for varying dive angle deliveries. The target was remotely monitored by the weapons impact scoring system (WISS). In accordance with his preflight plan, the young flyer made three dummy runs before commencing live drops with Mk 76 practice bombs. His first hit was 180 feet at six o'clock. On his second live run, the bomb struck the desert floor 100 feet at 10 o'clock from the bull's-eye. The aviator called "off target," after which radio contact was lost. After a time, a search/rescue effort began. The AV-8 had crashed approximately 1,000 feet beyond the target with wings level in a 15-degree, nose-up attitude. The pilot was killed, the *Harrier* destroyed.



Gram paw Pettibone says:

Sad. Sad. Sad. The true cause of this loss wasn't determined but a very possible reason is an old foe of those who train for combat: target fixation.

Dive angles can't be judged through



WISS, but the sequence for the hop being flown called for four live 30-degree dives before steepening up to 45. It's likely the pilot intended a 30-degree dive on the fatal run. Could be that, in his zeal for a better hit, he pickled late and/or a bit steep and ran out of recovery room.

Pickle, pause and pull is a fair thumb rule. But when you're barreling down the chute toward the target, especially in single-seaters, thumb rules aren't enuff.

Concentrate, track, scan and pull up on time. It's as simple and as demanding as that. Enuff sed!