



Winner

Illustrations by Ted Wilbur



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Gotta be careful when making major throttle changes when you're down close to the wave tops—or the treetops, for that matter. All the sky above you is no help at all when the motor quits and you've only got a few hundred feet to play with. This student Naval Aviator simply closed the throttle too far during the break and didn't have the time or altitude to relight the engine. Also, seconds really count under such circumstances, so think ahead and execute relight procedures as quick as you can once you realize the engine has quit. Gramps is pleased that the student survived this close call.

Breakdown in the Break

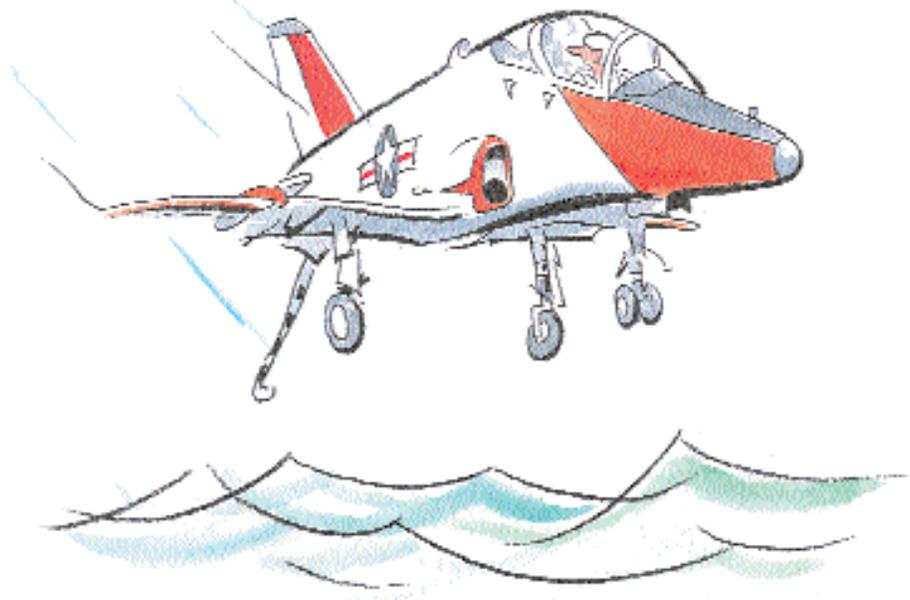
A student Naval Aviator launched in a T-45 *Goshawk* for his initial carrier qualification flight. He was number two in a flight of three. The weather at the carrier required a Case II recovery, so when the flight was cleared into the pattern the leader detached number three and descended with the student in number two on his wing.

The flight approached the break at 300 knots and 800 feet altitude. The leader detached the wingman and broke to the left for the upwind leg. Following a 17-second interval the student commenced his break and turned sharply to the left, reducing power. Approximately eight seconds later the student noticed a warning/caution tone with an associated master alert light. He checked the warning/caution panel and saw the fuel pressure caution light on. He turned off the master alert light and continued with his turn. He did not yet realize he had inadvertently shut down the T-45's engine.

A few seconds later there was another warning/caution tone with an associated master alert light. The student rolled wings level, checked the throttle position and

engine switch on. He advanced the throttle and retracted the speed brake (which was extended when executing the break turn). Realizing he had flamed out, he tried an immediate air start approximately 45 seconds after the break. This failed. He tried a second relight but this failed also. At 125 feet, abeam the ship, with engine rpm approaching zero, he successfully ejected from the *Goshawk*. He was safely recovered but the T-45 was lost.

sure is Quiet around here....





Gramps from Yesteryear:

Destination or Bust

An F7F-3N was cleared for instrument flight rules to cruise and maintain 13,000 feet from McClelland AFB, Calif., to NAS Seattle, Wash. A stationary front lay between Mt. Shasta and Medford with the freezing level predicted at 8,000 feet. The pilot was told he could fly at 500 feet above the overcast at 16,000 feet and be above all weather. However, because of lack of oxygen equipment, the pilot elected to fly at 13,000 feet in the overcast.

In the vicinity of Red Bluff, he noticed rime ice forming on the wings and windshield, so he called Red Bluff and requested permission to climb to 15,000 feet. This request was granted. At 14,500 feet and at

an indicated airspeed of 160 knots, the aircraft shuddered and went into a spin to the left. The pilot made a successful recovery.

As any further back pressure on the stick resulted in a near stall, the pilot decided to return to Red Bluff, descending at 150 feet per minute. Shortly thereafter, the plane stalled and spun to the right. Once again, a recovery was made.

A few minutes later the pilot noted a new hazard. A fire had broken out in the starboard engine and was spreading rapidly. At this time, the plane again stalled and spun violently to the left. He was unable to regain control of the aircraft.

With the knowledge that his last observed altitude was 11,000 feet over uncertain terrain, right engine on fire, a heavy load of ice and an airspeed in excess of 300 knots, the pilot elected to abandon the F7F. He landed safely on the slope of a hill. The aircraft exploded and burned eight miles further south.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Jeepers Creepers! This one is really for the birds. About the only nice thing this lad did for himself was to vacate his machine in one piece.

You usually assume a pilot holding a Special Instrument Rating and having better than 5,700 hours of flight time would have been more aware. It's possible, if not probable, icing conditions would be encountered in the clouds that the weather conditions predicted at the altitude requested. Knowing he had no oxygen equipment and the plane's only de-icing equipment was alternate air and pitot heater, he didn't use his old noggin when he decided to plow through the soup toward his destination.

Personally, I'd be interested to know what was important enough at his destination to risk an expensive airplane and possible loss of his life to get there. Could it be reluctance to admit defeat in the battle of the elements? Or could Mabel have been waiting?