



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Russian Roulette, Anyone?

At 1200 feet during climb-out, the RPM dropped and the pilot turned his T-34B back toward the airfield. At 1050 feet the engine quit and the prop froze.

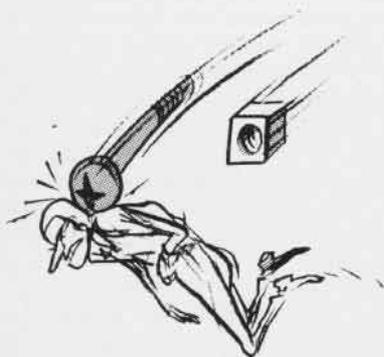
Thinking he had the field made, the pilot lowered the gear at 900 feet and extended flaps just prior to landing. However, the frozen prop created additional drag, increasing the aircraft glide angle sufficiently to cause touchdown 135 feet short of the airstrip. The aircraft made an uneventful roll-out on the runway.

Engine failure was caused by oil starvation which occurred when a bolt from the oil tank was pumped into the oil line, clogging it at a 90-degree elbow. Bolts from an oil tank inspection plate had been removed and placed in the oil tank for *safekeeping* pending the arrival of a new part. Following installation of the new part, new bolts were used in replacement of the oil tank inspection plate and the old bolts were left in the tank.



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

This pilot coulda got kilt and if I'd been in his shoes, I think I'd have started looking for the joker who



*This stuff can
kill you!*



needed a few pointers on *safe* methods of inspection plate bolt control.

Some squadrons have licked this loose hardware hazard by always placing bolts, nuts, washers, and screws in small cheesecloth bags immediately after removal from an inspection plate, drawstringing the container, and tying it to one of the bolt holes or otherwise identifying the contents. Whatever the safekeeping method, obviously it should *not* be one capable of creating a hazardous condition. Leaving bolts in oil tanks is too much akin to Russian roulette.

Just Like Clockwork

The *Cougar's* cockpit filled with smoke as the aircraft passed through 600-700 feet actual altitude. Both wingmen observed flame extending from the tailpipe in a 30 to 40 foot stream and advised the flight leader to eject.

In the pilot's words, "I reduced throttle to idle and waited patiently for a chance to ask if the fire had gone out. The cockpit was still full of smoke, and both wingmen were still advising me that I was on fire. My TPT was indicating 400 degrees; the engine was stabilizing at idle. Since the smoke had not dissipated and my wingmen were still viewing my condition with alarm, I elected to eject. Airspeed was approximately 250 knots, altitude 1000 feet above ground, and the aircraft was trimmed for a slight

climb in order to facilitate ejection."

Having made his decision, the pilot leaned forward in the cockpit and actuated the pre-ejection lever, thereby jettisoning the canopy and arming the seat. Positioning himself in the seat and placing his feet in the stirrups, he reached up for the face curtain with both hands and ejected. The aircraft was at 1000-1500 feet actual altitude, airspeed about 250 knots, and nose attitude 10 degrees above the horizon.

He's got perfect SNAP judgment



Releasing the face curtain, the pilot was not aware of any appreciable wind blast. He reached down to unfasten the seat belt, but it had automatically released and he found himself clear of the seat with no effort on his part. He immediately pulled the ripcord and the parachute fully opened at approximately 800-1000 feet actual altitude.

The aircraft accident board concluded that the primary cause of the accident was a material failure in the fuel system.



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

This pilot had 1100 total flight hours with 162 hours in the *Cougar*. When parting company with his aircraft became necessary, he knew what to do and the whole procedure went off like clockwork. The worst he got out of it was a slightly sore tailbone.

The point is, it *can* be done, and your chances are best with the airplane in a nose-high attitude. The Naval Aviation Safety Center recently published a poster entitled "Ejecting at 1,000"—a good method of spreading the word. Have you seen this poster?

Look to the Locking

The following statement appeared in the Medical Officers Report covering an R4D-8 accident in which the aircraft veered off the runway, sustaining overhaul damage: "Recommendation: Pilots should wear shoulder harness locked when landing or taking off."

Elementary, sure, but it's another reminder that you can get killed just as dead in a Gooney or Beech as in anything else. Further, it's spelled out in OpNav Instruction 3710.7A which carries a mandatory message concerning shoulder harness. Paragraph 3.a. of section VI states in part:

"Each person's safety belt and shoulder harness shall be worn and tightened prior to take-off and shall be continued in use until the completion of the flight, except when necessary activities require temporary removal. Inertia reels, where provided, shall be manually locked for all take-offs and landings and at all other times when high [G's] may be encountered."

Understatement of the Month:

It wasn't until I had landed wheels up that I realized I had forgotten and failed to put my wheels down.

That Old Handwriting

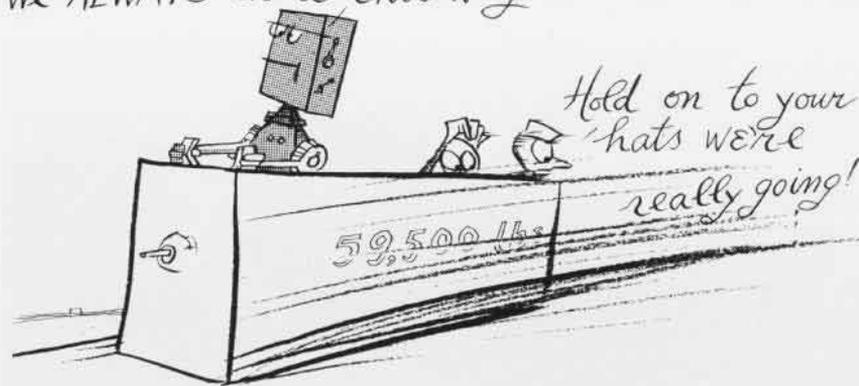
In late January, a P2V-5F arrived over its destination following a four and one-half hour flight, the last three hours of which was flown under actual instrument conditions.

Clearance was given for a standard ADF approach and the tower advised the pilot of the following conditions: surface wind 150° at eight to 12 knots; runway covered with thin layer of slush on sanded ice; and braking action medium to good.

The aircraft broke out of the overcast at 800-900 feet, whereupon the pilot was granted his request for clearance to execute a low visibility approach to runway 19. However, this approach was discontinued on base leg owing to restricted visibility in a snow shower which blanked out visual contact with the runway.

The pilot was cleared for a second low visibility approach to runway 19 but again the approach had to be broken off. He then requested a down-

We ALWAYS do it this way!



Slick Trick!

wind landing on runway 01. The tower approved with instruction to "maintain visual all the time and make a short approach."

A low visibility approach was made with the 59,500-pound *Neptune* rolling out on final at 500 feet with 130 knots indicated airspeed and with flaps at 20°. The airplane crossed the runway boundary at 50 feet with 120-125 knots indicated, flaps still at 20°, and touched down 3,200 feet up the runway. The remaining 2,700 feet of icy runway was insufficient for stopping purposes in spite of the immediate use of full reverse pitch and brakes.

The props were taken out of reverse pitch momentarily to enable the pilot to regain forward visibility which had been lost by blowing snow kicked up by prop reversal, but full reverse pitch was immediately reapplied.

The P2V ran off the end of the runway, tobogganed down a steep incline for 400 feet, went through a snow bank, knocked down some runway approach lights, continued across an ice-covered ramp and crashed through a wooden hangar's closed doors, collided with a civilian aircraft parked inside the hangar and then caught fire.

All members of the crew were in ditching stations throughout the fiasco and were unhurt except for two crewmen who received slight injuries incident to leaving the aircraft after it finally came to rest.



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

There's little doubt that the tower's report of "medium to good" braking action was overly optimistic

and may have influenced the pilot, but it's pretty obvious that the pilot failed to appreciate the hazards of landing *downwind*, long, fast and with only partial flaps on an icy runway. Even after touching down—at 100 knots—he could have made it a touch-and-go in order to try for a slower, shorter, upwind, full-flap landing.

The pilot had 1,860 total flight hours—all but 350 of it in P2V's! But here's the rub: the approach speeds and flap setting used on this landing were the same as those he normally used for landings at Keflavik, Iceland at heavier gross weights (owing to fuel requirement for proceeding to alternate airfield at Prestwick, Scotland) and often under gusty crosswind conditions. Standardized procedures are fine up to a point but they shouldn't leave a guy in a rut.

The handwriting on the wall came in loud and clear for the tower operator if not for the pilot for he hit the crash alarm before the aircraft touched down, and the fire trucks were on the way. Prior to touch-down he advised the pilot to go around, but no wave-off attempt was made because the pilot was confident he could stop on the runway.

Every landing is a separate evolution warranting special attention. "Mechanical flying" just won't do. A pilot worth his salt evaluates the situation concerning aircraft weight, runway length, braking conditions, wind direction and velocity, and then cranks in the proper adjustments to produce the optimum flight pattern, approach altitudes, airspeeds, amount of flaps, etc., to get the job done.

There's no other *right* way, and an airplane driver has to remember this fact to get 'em down (and halted) with the aircraft and crewmen intact.