



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Show Off

Two pilots were engaged in ferrying two T-34B's from an O&R to a naval air station some 600 miles distant. Neither one was current in the little yellow jobs, so each flew a two-hour FAM hop and shot eight landings apiece before departure.

They took off at 1430 and headed west, having decided to get on their way and RON en route to the delivery point. Both were jet pilots basically and watched their howgozits carefully. They made an unscheduled fuel stop en route and arrived at their RON spot around 1900. It was a popular beachside resort area, and the city was thronged with visitors, all in a holiday mood.

Next morning, after at least eight hours sleep, both pilots had a swim and got airborne around 1530 for the last 160-mile leg of their journey.

It was a holiday, the weather was CAVU and the beaches were crowded. They turned eastward and flew low up the beach, keeping just off shore. Reversing course, they headed back westward, still flying low over the water. They deviated inland slightly to make a low pass over the local airport, then headed back to the shoreline flying at a couple of hundred feet over the surf line.

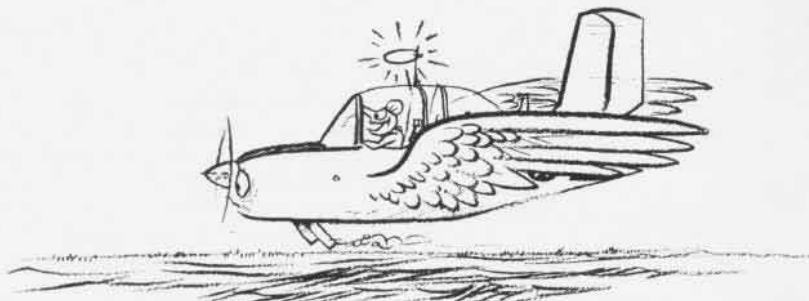
About a mile short of the end of



the beach area, the wingman banked off to the left and commenced a climb to 1500 feet. The flight leader hadn't given up yet, however, and after wavering at some fishermen, pulled up and began a roll to the left.

He scooped out badly from the inverted position and lost his heading about 30 degrees to the right. He completed the roll, leveled his wings and, pulling through pretty hard, almost made it.

The T-34 hit the beach hard, left



They are building them with halos & wings!

wing low and bounced about 100 feet, slewed sideways, hit again in a shower of sand and debris and finally stopped, a total wreck. The critically injured pilot was conscious, but could not be moved before the ambulance arrived some 20 minutes later. He was badly battered and will spend many months in the mending process.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Sufferin' catfish! Everybody has a little ham in him and likes to hear the oh's and ah's of the crowd as they applaud some magnificent performance, but if we want to stay in the military flyin' business—the answer is NO! CONTROL YOURSELF!

This unfortunate gent was an unusually well-qualified pilot. In the previous 60 days, he had flown the A4D, F4D, F9F, FJ, TV-2, F3D, AD, T-28, S2F and P2V aircraft. He clobbered himself showin' off in a light plane with a cruise speed lower than the stall speed of most of the types he was current in. He nearly killed himself with an age-old pilot trap—a free show for those earth-bound mortals below. That's the easiest way to earn an immortal set of wings yourself.

Wet Bird

A CVS was conducting night carquals for her helo pilots one very dark but clear night. One helo instructor pilot had already qualified two pilots in his HSS-1 and, after landing them aboard, had taken off again with a third pilot for more quals. A real bear for work, this man.

He lifted it off and on instructions from PriFly joined other helos in the starboard delta pattern. All went normally until they started a turn at the 180 position at about 150 feet of altitude. There suddenly was a slight vibration in the controls and the airspeed began to drop off rapidly. The tachometer showed only 2200 RPM although they'd had 2500 RPM only an instant before. The HSS-1 gently settled.

Spray was dashing all over the wind-

shield, and the pilots were obviously wheels-deep in the water, but holding it there. Both were pulling up on the collective, and neither knew what the manifold pressure was. The throttle was on as far as it would go. The pilot got off a quick Mayday and concentrated on trying to keep it flying.

With a lurch, the helo surged upward, breaking free of the grasping sea. They could see the lights of the carrier ahead and just slightly to their right as they started moving forward slowly.

Not for long, however, for the HSS-1 settled in the water again, this time a little deeper and tilted dangerously to the right.

The pilot took a little of the load off his blades, and, after what seemed hours, the RPM increased and he was able to pull out of the water a second time. The helo broke free in an extremely nose high altitude, the pilot had no control of forward cyclic and the stick was banging against the instrument panel! As the helo crept forward at an agonizing five knots or so, the pilot now told the ship he was going to try to bring it aboard!

With smoke pouring out of the thoroughly wet electronic gear and only partial control, they came up over the flight deck, made a wild flare to starboard, then a flare to port. As the pilot cut down his RPM the helo settled gently to the deck, safe and sound!



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Great horned toadies! Bet this is the first helo man to log TWO water landings and a carrier landing on one hop. There's a few with ONE water landing chalked up, but they've ended up drippin' wet every time.

All you fixed-wing carrier pilots better tip your hat to this man. He's a real pro. You can't pull one out of a deeper hole than this whirlybird was tryin' to dig for itself.

Memo from Gramps:

Judgin' from the number of planes sufferin' overhaul damage due to hitting concrete runway light foundations recently, the pot hole fillers and runway shoulder graders have been doin' a little backslidin'. Get with it!



Strike Out

A pair of TV-2 instructor pilots with over 600 hours of TV-2 time between them taxied out to the approach end of the duty runway in their trusty TV-2. They were scheduled for a local instrument training flight and owing to a heavy stratus cloud layer had filed a DD-175. Conditions required an IFR climb-out, and there were several aircraft, also awaiting clearance, in line ahead of them.

While waiting, the pre-take-off check lists were run through, including the usual fuel transfer checks. Although the engine had been running for 20 minutes because of the delayed clearance, the fuselage tank did not register a burn down. The rear seat man commented that perhaps the tips, wing, or leading edge tank switches were not closed all the way even though they were in the OFF position. Both pilots agreed to disregard the discrepancy and proceed.

Finally, cleared for take-off and given climbout instruction, they took the runway. After the man up front performed a final cockpit check, done strictly from memory, the rear seat pilot took over for a hooded take-off. The take-off roll and lift-off were normal, and the front pilot retracted the landing gear as they climbed out. Shortly thereafter, at about 600 feet, one mile out over the bay and at 150 knots a loud BANG was heard by both pilots. Engine power dropped to 90%, cutting in and out. The pilot under the hood shoved the throttle full forward, yelled to the front seat man, "You've got it," and came out from under the hood.

The man up front decided to try to make it back to the field. He made a tight, rapidly descending left turn over the bay. The engine was surging constantly and their airspeed dropped

to 135 knots. The entire airframe seemed to be shuddering in an approach to a stall as they completed the turn and headed right at the seawall! He pulled the stick back and they cleared the wall and touched down gear up in a 30-degree nose high attitude, dragging the tail cone 25 feet before the nose fell through.

The impact was terrific! With two badly dazed pilots aboard, the TV-2 slid about 100 feet on its belly, then the engine surged to full power (throttle was still full forward) and it became airborne again for a short distance, hitting again, tail first, and slamming down once more. Fuel from the ruptured tip tanks ignited, but the fire never caught up with them, as they skidded wildly.

They were headed directly for a concrete and steel blast fence and both pilots applied full left rudder. The TV-2 turned sharply to the left and finally stopped, 4000 feet from point of first impact. After blowing the canopy, both pilots climbed out of the wreck, injured but alive.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Bust my britches! These two EXPERTS broke some of the most elementary rules in the books and are only alive thanks to an alert but probably disgusted guardian angel. The AAR board lads didn't take long to figure out the solution HERE. The fuselage tank, plus 15 gallons transferred while attempting to check transfer pumps, etc., ran out just when it should have, TWO MINUTES from the start of take-off roll! The fuel transfer switches WERE NOT ON!

Boot Hill is full of pilots who clutched and tried to make a 180 back into the field with a sick bird, flew with a downing gripe, or failed to use a check-off list. With three strikes on them, no wonder they STRUCK OUT!