



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Foolish Fiasco

A pilot, copilot, and third crewman in an A-1E departed a midwest naval air station on Sunday afternoon to attend a conference on the West Coast. The flight was planned with a one-night RON at an Air Force Base en route. The pilot was cleared IFR at 10,000, and the flight was uneventful until contact was established with the AFB.

Approximately 35 miles east of the field, the pilot cancelled his IFR with the tower and requested landing instructions. He was informed that the duty runway was 08 as it was the only runway operational, and the wind was 10 knots gusting to 20 from 160°.

The pilot acknowledged the information. He realized he had a pretty fair crosswind and entered a normal left approach to the runway. Shortly after touchdown, the aircraft began to swerve to the right. When the pilot realized that rudder control was ineffective, he added takeoff power and initiated a wave-off. The aircraft was airborne at about the 3000-foot marker on the 8300-foot runway. The tower controller cleared the pilot to continue a closed pattern for a second pass and informed him that the Airdrome Officer suggested he divert to another military field in the area if the landing attempt was not successful.

The pilot continued the approach, well aware of the wind, and touched



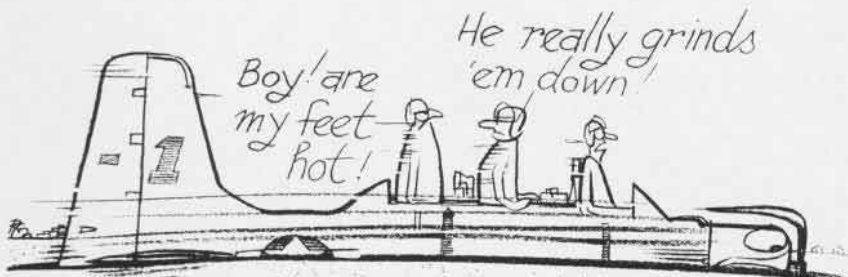
down on the port side of the runway about 1200 feet down from the approach end. He quickly retracted the flaps and maintained directional control with throttle and rudder until the aircraft decelerated below the point of effective rudder control. As the pilot lost rudder control, he added power in order to regain the runway heading, and he continued to maintain directional control with throttle and rudder until over 6000 feet of runway had been used in an attempt to complete the landing.

The aircraft left the runway with

only 1000 feet of runway remaining. When the pilot found the unprepared surface at the side of the runway relatively smooth, he lowered the flaps and added full power in an attempt to take off.

During the takeoff run on the side of the runway, the aircraft attained a speed of 100 knots before the port gear struck the barrier stanchion in the over-run area. The aircraft actually became airborne about the time the port gear contacted the barrier. The pilot immediately retarded the throttle, retracted the landing gear, and turned the mags and fuel off. The A-1E then contacted the ground approximately 200 feet from the barrier and continued skidding nearly 600 more feet before coming to rest. With both external fuel tanks torn away, fire broke out in the port wheel well area when the port tank ruptured.

The aft compartment crewman blew his canopy while the burning aircraft was skidding across the ground, and he and the copilot immediately abandoned the aircraft via the starboard wing. Both men ran well clear of the fire; but when the crewman did not see the pilot, he re-entered the aircraft through the starboard aft compartment and saw the pilot leaving by the port side. They both departed the area and joined the copilot well clear of the fire. The crash equipment arrived and quickly had the fire under control. All three men were taken to the dispensary for treatment of burns, and the aft compartment crewman was later transferred to the hospital. He had suffered first and second degree burns when he re-entered the aircraft to assist the pilot.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Well, for the love of Pete! Just what can a grown man be thinkin' when he works so hard to bust up a good flyin' machine and darn near wipes out himself and his crew? Sure, you ought to land at your planned

ILLUSTRATED BY *E. S. Gorn*

destination, but it's downright foolish to fight a bad crosswind when there are other fields in the area with runways into the wind.

This lad is sure a hard one to convince. He was not only told about the crosswind but should have had a pretty good idea of just how mean it was on that first pass. He proved again that there is absolutely nothin' to gain but an awful lot to lose when you push a thing like this.

Plumbered Pickup

A crew in an A-3B departed a West Coast NAS late one afternoon on an extended cross-country training flight to the East Coast. After one en route stop, they arrived at their RON destination shortly after midnight. The following afternoon the crew flew a sandblower flight terminating at an East Coast AFB that evening. A passenger was to meet them that evening or the next morning for the return flight to the West Coast.

The aircraft was fueled to 22,000 pounds as the first point of intended landing was to be an NAS in the midwest. The plane commander informed the crew that they would depart about 1330 the next day.

The following morning the drag chute was repacked, flight log prepared, and DD-175 filed for the first leg of the return flight. A couple of hours before planned departure time, the passenger who was to ride back to the West Coast called the plane commander and informed him that he was delayed indefinitely at a military field some 280 miles west because an accident had closed the runway. As the military field was closed, it was agreed that the A-3B would land at the Municipal Airport serving the city to pick up the passenger.

An IFR flight plan was filed for a 30-minute passenger stop at the civilian field with the same destination as originally planned. The plane commander was concerned about his fuel load for landing and was aware that there was no arresting gear available. But he decided to attempt a landing, hoping the drag chute would provide the assistance needed to accomplish a safe landing.

The weather was reasonably good en route and the visibility was eight to ten miles when the A-3B arrived at the municipal field. The tower cleared the pilot to land and advised him of

the runway length and told him the runway was wet.

With a little less than 14,000 pounds of fuel aboard and at a speed of 128 knots, the A-3B touched down about 500 feet past the approach end of the runway. The pilot deployed the drag chute and felt the aircraft decelerate as the chute blossomed. In a few seconds he felt the aircraft lurch and the control tower and crewman immediately informed the pilot the chute had folded. At a speed of about 100 knots, the pilot tested the brakes, with no effect. Gradual increased braking helped very

why a guy will work so hard to really goof things up, but good, is completely beyond me.

Here is a heavy attack plane commander with a crew and a real expensive machine entrusted to his care. He throws professionalism to the winds and plays the whole bit like a plumber.

In the first place, this lad had no business filing into a civil field regardless of how good a reason he thought he had. Paragraph 547 of OpNavInst. 3710.7B is mighty clear about jet aircraft usin' civil airports and believe me, some pretty sound thinkin' went into that paragraph. Guess it's just



little and with 1000 feet of runway remaining, the emergency air brake was pulled.

The aircraft left the end of the runway at a speed of about 60 knots, continued across a 150-foot macadam overrun, a 210-foot dirt overrun, then dropped over a 28-foot embankment before coming to rest 420 feet from the end of the runway. The pilot started shutting down the engines but, as smoke filled the cockpit, he and the other two crewmen abandoned the aircraft. The crew estimated it required about one minute to evacuate the burning aircraft. Fortunately, no one was injured. The aircraft received strike damage owing to structural damage and fire.

downright hard to make true believers out of some people. But we'd like to find some sure-fire way of doing it.

After decidin' to land at the civil airport, this lad kept right on makin' bad decisions until he pranged this big bird. He decided not to dump fuel even though he knew darn well he was so heavy he would have trouble on this 7860-foot runway and there was no arresting gear available. The tower even told him the runway was wet, but that didn't influence him one bit even tho' he had 14,000 pounds of fuel and could have made any one of several military fields in the general area.

Even if this gent had landed the 57,000-pound A-3 at the 500-foot mark on a dry runway, he couldn't have stopped it without a drag chute. With a wet runway and poor braking, it's doubtful that he could have stopped it with a chute. A passenger stop just can't be that important.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Oh, my achin' ulcers! Just