



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Crippled Crusader

A flight of four F-8E pilots taxied out for section takeoff after briefing for an air-to-air refueling flight. Section clearance was received from departure control and the first section made a routine afterburner takeoff. The second section lined up on the runway and, after being cleared, released brakes for takeoff. After rolling approximately 500-600 feet in MRT (military rated thrust), the section leader gave the afterburner signal and both aircraft went into burner. In a few seconds, the leader noticed his wingman seemed to be falling back and realized he had a burner blow-out when he saw fuel pouring out of his tailpipe.

In order for the wingman to maintain a proper interval, he found it necessary to modulate A/B thrust during initial roll and had decreased power 1-2% at which time he experienced the A/B blowout. He immediately jammed the throttle forward hoping to re-ignite the burner. At this time, he was at an estimated speed of 125 knots with 4000 feet of runway remaining. The throttle was held in this position for one to two seconds. When the A/B did not re-ignite, he went to MRT and held it for a couple of seconds, then attempted to ignite the burner again. When nothing happened, he pushed

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the throttle back to MRT and began to rotate for lift-off. At this point, the pilot again attempted a burner relight with no results so he went back to MRT.

The aircraft was now at an altitude of four to six feet and just cleared the Davis barrier at the end of the runway. There was a six-foot perimeter fence approximately 1400 feet from the end of the runway. Just prior to crossing it, the pilot successfully kicked in the burner as the belly of the *Crusader* grazed the fence, but the left gear contacted a six-foot ver-

tical pole, tearing away about 60 feet of the fence.

The pilot climbed out in burner and entered a cloud layer at 900 feet in a right climbing turn. He leveled off at 2500 feet in broken clouds and noticed his oil pressure had gone to "zero." He immediately dropped his RAT (ram air turbine) and notified departure control of his trouble. The flight leader instructed the pilot to dump fuel and land immediately.

The pilot reduced power and began a let-down through the clouds, breaking clear at about 900 feet. When he lowered the landing gear, the nose wheel indicated unsafe so he blew it down with the air bottle.

Just as the pilot entered final, he was notified that the port gear was hanging at a 90° angle, so he waved off for another approach. He maintained good position all the way around and touched down about 3000 feet from the Morest gear. With full right aileron and rudder, he was able to keep the left wing up for 2000 to 2500 feet of roll, but, as the wing fell through, the crippled *Crusader* veered sharply and left the runway just after passing the Morest gear. The aircraft continued across the dirt between two runways, crossed another runway and finally stopped after sliding approximately 1500 feet.

The pilot had secured the engine when he left the runway. After stopping he unlocked the canopy and left uninjured.

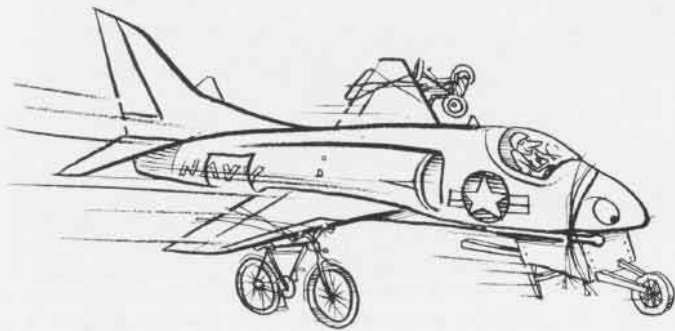


Grampaw Pettibone says:

Jumpin' Jehosophat! My knees are still weak after this one.

Seems to me this lad should have done one of two things after he realized he had a burner blow-out: either abort the takeoff and take the gear or remain at full military rated thrust and continue the takeoff. Naturally, the more runway he left behind, the more he needed that afterburner, but takeoff should have been no big problem on a 8000-foot runway at MRT.

It's pretty clear to see that this pilot was bound and determined to re-ignite



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his burner but can't see how he expected to do it by deselection for only one or two seconds. Proper procedures for this, like most things in this business, are pretty well cut and dried. Short cuts will get you just one thing—TROUBLE—and plenty of it.

position) approached the destroyer, he reduced throttle and descended to 200 feet at 140 knots. As he passed over the destroyer, he began an easy climb back to his original altitude.

The s-2 pilot (flight leader), who

about this time entered an easy climb.

When the overrunning pilot saw the other pilot begin to climb, he immediately made a steep climbing starboard turn in an effort to avoid a collision—but was too late. Both pilots felt a hard jolt and heard a loud thud as the two aircraft came together.

After some initial communication difficulties, the pilots joined in a loose formation and visually checked both aircraft for damage. En route to home base, they checked the flight characteristics of their aircraft and experienced no control problems. Each of the aircraft made a straight-in approach to a normal landing.

Post-flight inspection revealed both aircraft had received Delta damage in the collision. The flight leader's aircraft had a hole in the underside of the fuselage aft of the bomb bay; the other aircraft had a damaged starboard wing and propeller.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Great balls of fire! That wasn't a close shave. It was a narrow escape.

There's just no excuse for a thing like this to happen. This flight leader showed about as much sense as a blind gooney bird.

I have no idea what this guy's experience in formation flyin' is, but you can be darn sure that nobody ever taught him to join up this way. There was no reason for him to join on the other aircraft in the first place. If there had been, then the flight most certainly should have been briefed that way.

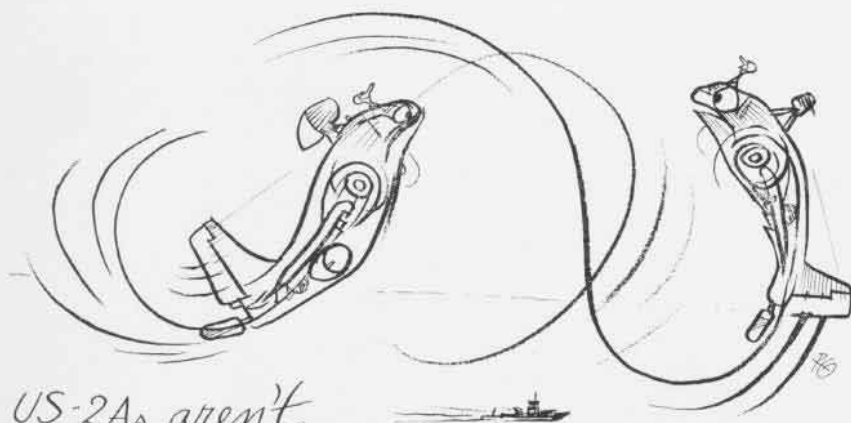
Briefin' forms were developed for a real good reason. Not usin' them is a gross lack of common sense.

Memo From Gramps

Could you survive? Are you positive that you could survive if you were forced to abandon your aircraft? Do you know your forced landing, ditching, bailout, ejection, parachute separation procedures? Once in the water or on land, do you know how to use your survival equipment—every piece of it?

Take a long hard look at the most important guy in the world, No. 1. If the answer to all those questions isn't a big fat "Yes," you'd better get with it, son, and fast.

All aviation training is aimed at just one thing—COMBAT READINESS. Survival is a big part of that readiness.



*US-2As aren't
Dolphins!*

Foolish Formation

Two US-2A were assigned to conduct an exercise with two destroyers off the West Coast. Prior to takeoff, a short informal brief was conducted between the pilots of both aircraft. A briefing form was not used by the flight leader as required by squadron policy. About the only thing discussed was the possibility of bad weather developing in the exercise area.

The flight leader took off approximately six minutes before the second s-2 and proceeded to the operating area where he rendezvoused with the destroyers only a few miles off the coast. After establishing radio contact, the lead pilot made several low passes by each destroyer to check hull numbers. The second s-2 arrived over the destroyers a few minutes later and also established radio contact.

The destroyers instructed the aircraft to orbit and stand by to commence the exercise in approximately ten minutes. Both s-2 pilots had made individual identifying low passes. After receiving orbit instructions, the #2 aircraft entered a port orbit at 500 feet one mile aft of the destroyers.

Just after entering the port turn, the #2 pilot observed the other s-2 about one mile behind him in a trail position. The port orbit was continued and, as the #2 pilot (in lead

had been flying in a trail position, added power to 2300 rpms and 35 inches during the port turn in an effort to make an unbriefed running rendezvous on the other aircraft. During the descent of the s-2 in the lead position, the trailing pilot allowed his airspeed to increase to around 170 knots which established a very rapid closure rate. As he reached a position just to starboard and above the lead aircraft, he quickly told the lead pilot not to pull up as it was evident he would overtake him. The lead pilot failed to receive the transmission and

scratch TWO!

