



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Verily

Upon arrival at his destination on the first leg of an extended cross-country flight, the pilot of the A-7 entered the break at 320 knots, 1,000 feet above the surface, and experienced a series of successive compressor stalls. Unable to effect a normal landing owing to insufficient power and reluctant to risk a flameout landing because of low airspeed and altitude, the pilot requested a vector toward an unpopulated area.

En route, the composed *Corsair* chauffeur meticulously followed the checkoff list for shutting down the engine and the subsequent airstart in manual fuel control. Unfortunately, the engine refused to develop sufficient power and again produced severe compressor stalls with maximum indication on the turbine inlet temperature gauge and an engine hot light illumination.

The pilot, quite correctly, elected to secure the engine and abandon the aircraft. Ejection occurred at 190 knots, 800 feet above the ground with a sink rate under 500 feet per minute.

The ejection sequence was normal and the pilot landed in a 30-foot tree, sustaining no more than minor injuries. The abandoned *Corsair*, plumm-



meting to the earth in an uninhabited area, was a total loss.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

If this mishap doesn't appear too colorful, old Gramps selected it for just that reason. This particular young man knew his limitations, the aircraft's limitations and handled the situation in an extremely professional manner. Now if he had tried to dazzle the troops with some fancy footwork—extendin' himself or pushin' the machine beyond its limits—I'm sure he could'a made things real excitin' around that particular airport.

It ain't nice to lose one of these birds, but it's a comfort to this old man to see a driver like this make the best of it and not compound the loss by actin' foolish.

Get-home-itis

An instructor and his student, returning from a cross-country flight, decided to RON at a midwest air station to have their compass repaired. They arose the next morning to find a drizzle and freezing temperatures had iced their TF-9J and spent the day trying to get the compass fixed and the *Cougar* de-iced.

While deciding how to get home, they met another transient instructor

who agreed to have the stranded two-some fly wing and make an IFR section GCA to their home field. The Samaritan would continue on to his base. Meanwhile the hot exhaust of the recently arrived F-9 de-iced the first *Cougar*. After this, they filed, became airborne (the compass still inoperative) at about 1800 in the dark, and eventually arrived at the fix.

After commencing the penetration, the instructor flying wing was hit by vertigo but made the penetration and broke out of the clouds at about 500 feet. The leader called, "The runway is straight ahead."

The wingman, looking out at the runway, thought he was in a 30° angle of bank. Starting to close the lead aircraft, he nosed over to avoid a collision. Shortly thereafter, he felt the impact of trees striking the aircraft. He applied power and climbed just enough to strike the top wire of the station's perimeter fence. The instructor, yelling "Eject!" ejected himself, and the student ejected microseconds later, both at about five feet above ground level.

The student came flying by just as the instructor's drogue chute blossomed. At this instant, the student's drogue gun fired and the drogue piston went through and tangled with the shroud lines of the instructor's drogue chute.

The instructor landed in the bottom of a ditch some 20 feet deep with only minor injury to his face. The student landed in the same ditch and suffered serious injuries.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Oh, my achin' back! How hairy can it get! I just can't help thinkin' these fellas had a bad case of get-home-itis and they got just what they bargained for. Whenever you let your feelings override sound judgment and proven procedures, look out, 'cause trouble is right behind you. These lads didn't have time for the Alphonse-Gaston routine, but it sure helps if the rear seat man goes first.



Cross-Country Calamity

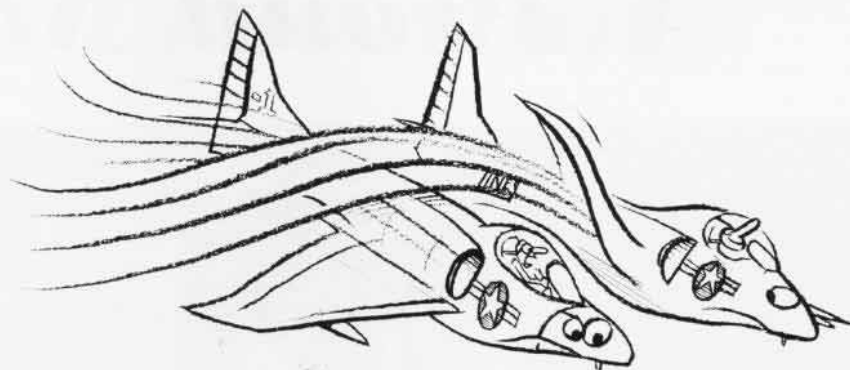
Two intrepid birdmen departed their East Coast air station in a pair of A-4B *Skyhawks* on an extended cross-country flight. The flight had been pre-briefed and included no-radio procedures. The fliers intended to make a GCA at each field with the wingman taking landing interval three to five miles out on final approach when he had the field in sight. The brief did not include night operation as no night flying was anticipated. The out-bound flight was without incident.

Concluding their RO2N, the two *Skyhawk* drivers took off on the first leg of the return trip at 1820 local time. They entered the clouds on climbout and were to fly solid instruments for one hour before they broke out into a clear, moonless night at their assigned flight level of 330.

At approximately 1950, the pair changed to Metro frequency and received their destination's weather (clear; visibility, seven miles; wind 090 at 15 K.). Upon returning to en route frequency, the flight leader, unable to contact his wingman, assumed he had a complete radio failure. He then signalled the wingman his difficulties by turning on the anti-collision light and passed the lead. (No attempt was made on the part of either pilot to establish radio contact on guard frequency.)

Upon assuming the lead, the new leader requested an en route descent and, after descending below FL 240, requested and received clearance for a precision approach to the home field. The student controller supervising the approach informed the leader that this would be to runway 14 with no-gyro turns. In turn, he also queried the leader on whether he would be making a full stop or a low approach for the wingman to get down. The leader replied, "That all depends on whether he [the wingman] takes interval or not. If he doesn't take interval, I'll go around and if he takes interval, we'll land on the first pass."

The flight leader performed his landing check list when instructed to do so and his wingman transitioned smoothly (in spite of the lack of signals). At approximately three-quarters of a mile from touchdown, the wingman started to drop back and the leader assumed he was taking interval as he had on the previous landings.



Who's in charge here!

The leader then turned on his taxi light (signifying clearance to land) but immediately secured it because of the glare. He looked for the meatball and datum lights but could not see them. When he checked to his right, he could not see his wingman; this reinforced his assumption that the wingman had taken interval. He made the decision to land and touched down on the left side about 1,000 feet down the runway.

Meanwhile, the wingman thought they were landing on runway 04, based on the wind information he received from Metro prior to his radio failure. He was also not aware they were making a GCA and thought the leader was bringing him in VFR. When he saw his leader flash the taxi light, he assumed it was his clearance to land and that the leader was waving off. He looked for the meatball and datum lights but did not see them (they were operational but not turned on) and, realizing his altimeter was not reliable at this time, concentrated entirely on the lighted runway, making no further attempt to keep his leader in sight.

During the final stages of the approach, while attempting to line up with the center line about 300 feet past the threshold, he encountered jet wash from the leader. The right wing dropped and he applied full left aileron and rudder, simultaneously adding full throttle. The corrective action failed to remedy the situation.

The *Skyhawk's* right main and nose gear collapsed on impact and it con-

tinued down the runway on the starboard drop tank, nose, and the intact left main gear. An arcing right turn developed and the aircraft started to burn as it passed through the 6,000-foot marker. The remnants came to rest 85 feet off the runway, about 2,000 feet from touchdown.

The *Skyhawk* driver opened the canopy, disconnected the Koch fittings, stood up and dove out the right side of the burning hulk. In his haste to get clear, the pilot forgot to disconnect his oxygen hose and was straightened out in mid-air before the fitting just above the mini-regulator parted. Sustaining no more than minor contusions after landing on his back, the pilot stood up and ran from the burning aircraft.

The crash crew arrived on the scene in one minute, but the A-4 *Skyhawk* was a strike.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Great balls of fire! Anyone for NATOPS? Ole Gramps can't help but believe these two fellas were left off the distribution list for NATOPS or they are using 'em for doorstops. I ain't about to insult our readers' intelligence by listing the violations involved in this mishap but I will say that if this leader showed a little more concern for his wingman and stayed airborne until his buddy was on deck, the day would'a been saved in spite of them.

As so nicely stated in "The Hot Dope Sheet," 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, "Ignorance is bliss, but bliss is not a NATOPS qualification."