



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

That Smarts

The F-4 *Phantom* was spotted on the aft starboard side of the flight deck with the main landing gear close to the deck edge, the tail section and the trailing edge of the starboard wing overhanging the catwalk. The pilot and NFO arrived, preflighted, strapped in and started the aircraft. The plane captain was in front of the *Phantom* performing post-start checks, preparing for the night launch. He was assisted by another fully qualified plane captain, who was acting as the second mechanic. The plane captain signaled the pilot for half flaps and checked the port flap for boundary layer control air and security while the second mechanic checked the starboard flap. The plane captain returned to the front of the aircraft, in view of the pilot. He thought he received a "thumbs up" signal from the assisting second mechanic, and signaled the pilot to cycle all controls to check for freedom of movement. The assisting second mechanic had his arm between starboard aileron and flap, checking for the presence of boundary layer control air. His left hand and wrist, caught between the aileron and flap, were seriously injured.

The investigation revealed that the plane captain did not ensure that the critical areas were clear before he gave the wipeout signal. The assisting second mechanic contributed his share by not adhering to established procedures,



placing his arm between movable surfaces. Other contributing factors were poor lighting in the area and the failure of the assisting plane captain to ensure that signals between plane captain and his assistant were clear.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Holy Hannah! Funny how an investigatin' team or an ASO finds all these things wrong — after the accident! Where's the prevention program? I guess we still have a few ASO's and supervisors around who think that a safety program is investigating an incident and then taking corrective action. Not so! The ASO

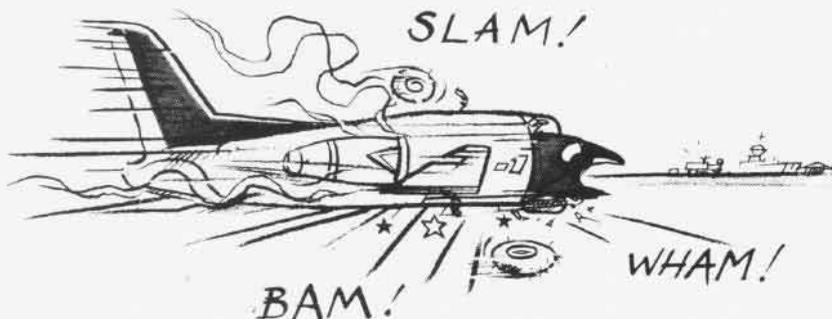
and all supervisors should be checkin' for practices and procedures which could lead to a mishap — and stop them, dead! That's accident prevention! I get mighty tired of readin' about accidents that could'a been prevented by a little effort on the part of safety officers and supervisors. Seems to me that both gents involved in this accident had a "qualified" stamped after their name — hmmm!?! Training program?

How Not To

Two lieutenants were scheduled for an airways training flight, in a T-39D *Sabreliner*, from NAS Atlantic Coast to Northern AFB via Midwest AFB. Two student NFO's and a passenger were also included on the flight which was to remain two nights at the destination before returning by the same route.

The flight to Northern AFB was uneventful and the crew went their separate ways for the weekend. On the afternoon of their departure, the crew met at base operations, briefed and filed a flight plan to Midwest AFB, the en route stop. During the preflight, the pilots discovered that a small patch of cord was showing on both mainmounts but decided the tires would hold for several more landings. The flight and landing at Midwest were uneventful. The lieutenants re-checked the bald spots on the mainmounts and decided they were good for "one more landing."

The flight to destination proceeded as advertised and, upon arrival, approach control was contacted. The weather was reported at 800 feet scattered, estimated 1,700 feet broken, 2,500 feet overcast, visibility two miles with thunderstorms and rainshowers in the vicinity. While on a GCA final approach, the T-39 pilot was advised that he was too far right and above glide slope and was given a "go-around" if the runway was not in sight. The pilot acknowledged and advised that "runway was in sight." The



GCA controller transmitted wind information which indicated a four or five-knot tailwind.

The *Sabreliner* continued the approach and touchdown was approximately 2,000 feet down an 8,000-foot wet runway. The flaps were retracted just prior to touchdown. Shortly afterward, the aircraft commenced a slight left drift; the pilot reacted with right brake and rudder. The lieutenant realized he was going to encounter difficulty in stopping and shutting down the starboard engine to reduce residual thrust.

The left drift continued as the aircraft crossed the arresting gear and blew the port tire. The aircraft's speed at this point was 75 knots, with 2,750 feet of runway remaining. At approximately 50 knots, the pilot engaged the nose wheel steering; he was still using right rudder and right brake. The aircraft veered to the right, collapsing the port main gear, followed by the starboard and nose landing gears. The pilot secured port engine as the aircraft slid to a stop. The pilots, NFO's and passenger immediately left the aircraft because of strong fuel fumes.

There were no injuries; however, the aircraft sustained major damage. Investigation revealed that the pilots had violated NATOPS, using improper technique on landing rollout, failing to get a formal weather brief at their en route stop, and accepting the aircraft with bald areas on the mainmounts.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Sufferin' catfish! How hairy can it get? This young fella threw his NATOPS and — worse yet — his common sense out the window. This whole mess was kind of a preloaded "booby trap" — self induced by the pilots' accepting the machine with bald tires, not knowin' what weather to expect and usin' non-standard procedures.

There is a tendency to minimize this type of accident because no one is hurt; however, with gasoline fumes present, one spark and it would'a been like the Fourth of July. You lucked out there, fellas! The passenger who, it turned out, was unauthorized, now strongly advocates "travel by train."

We don't need this type of non-professionals flying our machines. Nuff said.



Last Performance

An EKA-3B *Skywarrior* launched from a carrier on a routine tanker mission. On board were the pilot, a lieutenant with over 1,500 hours, more than 1,000 in the A-3; a lieutenant junior grade NFO; and an enlisted aircrewman. The *Skywarrior* climbed to 20,000 and entered an orbit while awaiting further instructions and the aircraft which would soon be checking in for refueling. The weather was excellent, with some haze, and visibility in excess of seven miles.

In about an hour, two F-8 *Crusaders* joined for inflight refueling which was conducted at 20,000 feet on a heading of 180 degrees and at 260 knots. The refueling was normal in all respects and, after the second F-8 had finished, the *Skywarrior* retracted its drogue and received a "properly stowed" signal from one of the F-8's.

The two *Crusaders* now observed the nose of the EKA-3B coming up 15 to 30 degrees and commencing a roll to the left. The rolling maneuver continued through the inverted position. From the inverted position, the nose of the aircraft passed through the horizon with the roll now resembling an extremely nose-low barrel-roll type maneuver. The roll rate ceased with the aircraft in an approximate 75-degree nose-down attitude and on a westerly heading. The F-8's estimated the altitude of the A-3 to be 10,000

feet when it rolled to the right and appeared to pull up on a northwesterly heading. It didn't make it and hit the water in a 45-degree nose-down attitude at an estimated 400-plus knots, and exploded on impact. There were no survivors.

Investigation revealed that this same pilot, after refueling two aircraft, had performed a similar maneuver successfully a few days before. One witness stated he had observed similar maneuvers on previous cruises. The accident board concluded that this was an intentionally initiated maneuver—in violation of NATOPS.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Wild blue blunder — what a waste! All of you "throttle pushers" reading this story will agree that this was a needless loss of lives and machine. The causes of this accident repeat themselves like a broken record. Non-compliance with NATOPS. Overconfidence. Disregard for crew welfare. Yes, sir. Sad! Very sad, indeed!

Gents, you can bet on one thing — the big boys in the Navy Department are through putting up with that small percentage of lads who intentionally violate NATOPS or other existing instructions. For the ones who survive these childish, foolhardy deviations, the long green table awaits. Don't say I didn't warn you! One last Pettipointer for any potential "ham": Don't be a show-off. You may be giving your last performance.