



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Minus the Rollers

Two lieutenant commanders were scheduled to complete a proficiency training flight in a US-2A. Although both were experienced aviators and fully qualified in accordance with NATOPS, they had minimum experience in this aircraft.

Following the filing of their IFR flight plan, the pilots preflighted, manned their aircraft and departed home field at 0830 local. They proceeded to a nearby NAS to practice approaches and landings. Since the traffic pattern was fairly active and they were waved off three times, they concluded their activities at the field and proceeded to a civilian airport.

When they arrived, they conducted a touch-and-go landing, raised the wheels and turned downwind for another approach and landing. The pilot at the controls did not call for the landing checklist. He continued his approach and recalls checking the cockpit indicator systems, and believes he saw them indicating "up," but the import did not register. At the completion of this approach, a landing flare was begun with the landing gear retracted. The starboard propeller made initial contact with the runway approximately 1,110 feet from the approach and with the aircraft sliding 3,000 feet from the point of initial contact. The surprised, uninjured pilots secured the cockpit switches and exited the aircraft. The *Tracker* sustained substantial damage.

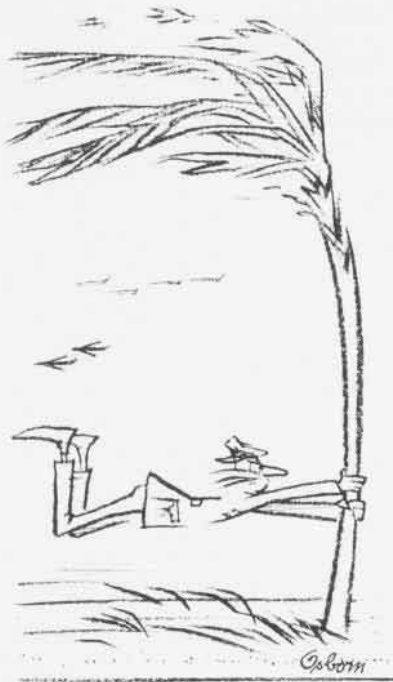


Grampaw Pettibone says:

Sufferin' catfish! Another one where the drivers failed to put their "rollers" down before landing. How do you plead, lads, guilty or not guilty?

Well, I'll enter a plea for you—guilty! Guilty of violating NATOPS!

The pilot guilty of not properly utilizing his copilot! Guilty of complacency! Guilty of not understanding



what the gear indicators were trying to tell him! Same goes for the copilot—who sat there like a bump on a log acting as ballast.

Would you believe that we had six, yes, that's right, six, wheels-up landings this past fiscal year resulting in

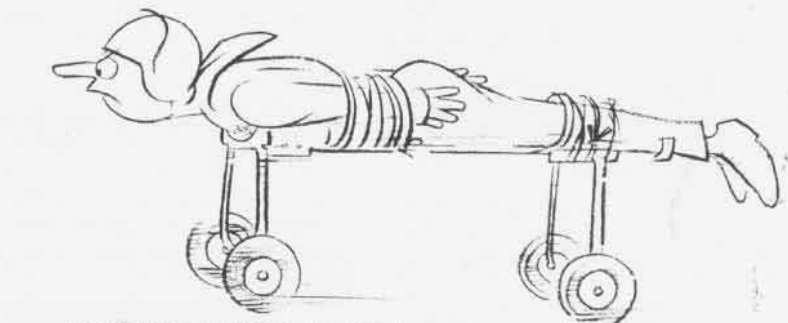
major damage? What's that? It can't happen to me? Well, it *can't* if you follow the book. Nuff said.

Zig, Zag, Dodge, Turn and Crunch

Two student pilots were scheduled for a VFR night solo bounce flight in a TS-2A *Tracker*. They were briefed on their flight by the runway duty officer (RDO). The preflight, taxi run-up and takeoff evolutions for the flight proceeded normally.

Following six touch-and-go landings and one full stop, the copilot requested and received clearance back to an area where the two pilots would exchange seats as briefed. Following the seat exchange, run-up and pre-taxi checks were completed without incident. The RDO was now contacted for takeoff.

The students were advised to taxi and hold short behind two other aircraft awaiting takeoff. While applying his brakes, the pilot noted that his port brake was not pumping up properly and directed his copilot to try his brakes. The copilot indicated that the port brake was malfunctioning; the pilot now applied both brakes hard, and the *Tracker* turned 90 degrees to starboard and stopped. The parking



Fool proof for Dilbert!

ILLUSTRATED BY *Osborn*

brake was set and the RDO was advised of their difficulty. The students now noticed a hydraulic leak in the vicinity of the port wheel. They advised the RDO and requested a tow.

As a result of a weak radio and traffic on the RDO's other radio, the RDO thought the aircraft with the brake problem was another aircraft in the line area. He instructed the aircraft to taxi clear of the taxiway if control was possible and to shut down if it was not. The students understood this to be instructions to taxi back to the line area and shut down. The pilot started back to the line area, using asymmetrical power and starboard brake to control the aircraft and relying on the parking brake to stop.

Upon entering the line area, the students were confronted by two aircraft taxiing toward them. One student applied starboard brake to turn clear and attempted to set the parking brake—without success. Since the aircraft was headed directly toward the operations hangar, he applied power to the starboard engine and turned clear of the hangar, narrowly missing a loading ramp.

Now the *Tracker* was headed toward another solo aircraft parked on the line with the engines turning. Our pilot again added power to the starboard engine and avoided this aircraft.

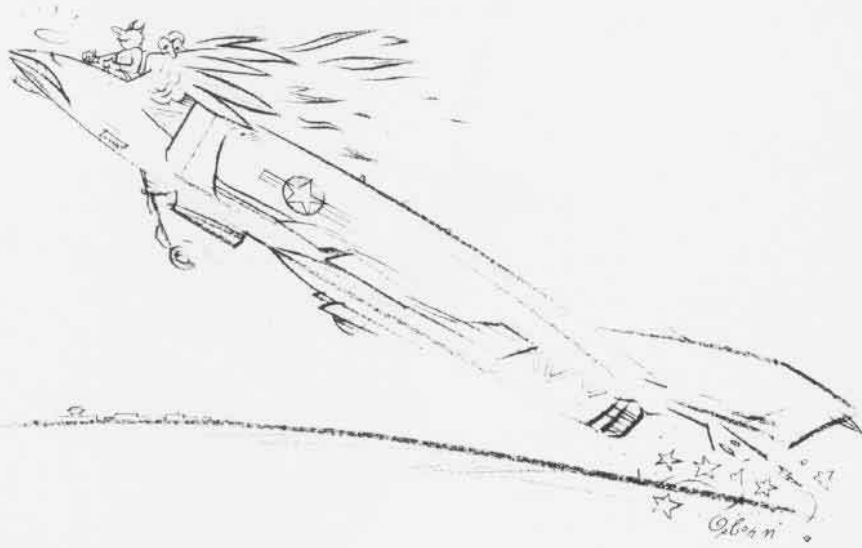
When contact with another aircraft parked on the line was unavoidable, the port engine was secured with the mixture. The port prop of their aircraft then contacted the port wing tip of another TS-2A and stopped. The starboard engine, mags, battery, and fuel were secured and both students exited the aircraft without injury.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Great balls of fire! I can't imagine an experienced Naval Aviator (the RDO) advisin' a couple of students to continue taxiing after they reported a brake malfunction—regardless of where they are on the airfield. That just ain't sound! He should'a told them to sit still.

For a while there, the students looked like they were going to handle this emergency like a couple of pros but, once advised to taxi, it was a whole new ball game—with two strikes



on the fellas in the aircraft. These two lads had one heck of a ride in—dodging three aircraft, a hangar and a loading ramp until their evasive talent ran out!

I understand the procedures for the RDO have been revised—a little late.

Watch My 'Hot' Takeoff

Two first lieutenants arrived in the ready room to brief for their local two-hour radar navigation flight in an F-4B *Phantom*. Following the brief, the pilot and his radar surveillance officer (RSO) left the ready room with adequate time for their prestart checks. Preflight, start, post-start checks and taxi were conducted without incident. Upon receiving takeoff clearance, our Marine Aviator aligned his aircraft on the runway, which was over 13,000 feet long with an elevation in excess of 3,900 feet.

During the takeoff roll, the tower made two transmissions to our *Phantom*, advising that another F-4 was at ten miles to land. The takeoff continued and the aircraft was seen in an unusually nose-high attitude at the 2,100-foot position on the runway. This attitude was maintained, then increased to a point where many witnesses were sure the tail would scrape the runway. The *Phantom* became airborne 3,000 feet down the runway (takeoff roll was later calculated at 4,000 feet) in an excessive nose-high

attitude and attained an altitude of approximately 30 feet. Observers saw the *Phantom* fall off on the right wing into a right bank of 60 to 70 degrees. As the aircraft banked, it lost altitude, passed to the right side of the runway with the right wing hitting the ground, and continued approximately 200 feet with the right wing in the dirt when the nose contacted the ground and the aircraft burst into flames. Neither crew member survived.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Great land of Goshen! Well, there it is again, gents! What have we got? A destroyed flyin' machine in which the accident board, after a thorough investigation, could not find any discrepancy which could have caused this accident, a pilot who was known by his squadron mates to have considered himself a "hot" pilot and, further, a pilot who had been cautioned recently for displaying poor headwork by deviating from NATOPS!

Lads, if you want to put on a "show"—join a theatrical group. Flying today's modern aircraft is for knowledgeable, mature and aggressive fellas "who have grown up"! Notice I said "aggressive," not foolhardy.

'This accident would not have happened if I had overslept as I usually do.'