



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Most Preventable

The lieutenant Naval Aviator manned his A-7E *Corsair* for a night practice carrier landing period. Following an uneventful preflight, start, taxi and takeoff, he proceeded to the outlying field where the period was to be conducted.

Upon entering the pattern, he commenced his approaches. The first seven were normal; on the eighth, in addition to the standard ball call, the pilot added the words "bingo pass." This comment, though confirmed by other aircraft in the pattern, was not heard by any of the four LSOs.

The *Corsair* continued its approach to touchdown. Leveling on the downwind leg following this approach, the pilot raised his gear and then his flaps. At a position slightly past the normal 180-degree position, he transmitted his intention to depart the pattern for home plate. Shortly thereafter, he was instructed by the LSO to remain in the pattern.

Following retransition to landing configuration, he flew his ninth approach to touchdown. Believing his session at the field to be over, he retracted his landing gear but left his flaps down. He then asked the LSO

for his total number of approaches.

At this point, the pilot states he was instructed to remain in the pattern for one more approach. Concerned about his low fuel caution light, he made a transmission concerning low fuel.

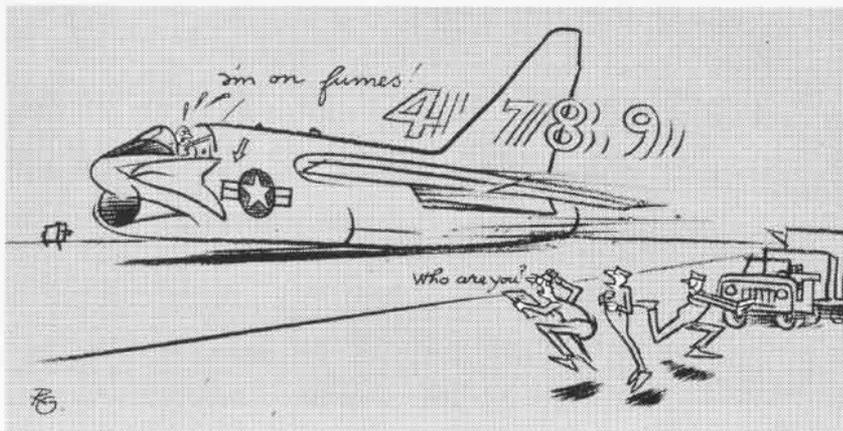


We're just a heart beat away in February. Pay attention for your wife's sake!
gramp

Asked by the LSO, he stated he had 1,350 pounds remaining. The LSO replied that he was now cleared to depart for home base and received an acknowledgement.

The pilot, misunderstanding or not hearing his clearance to depart, continued from the 180-degree position for another approach, configured with flaps down and landing gear up. He called the ball and received a late Roger. In close, he was asked his side number, which he gave. At this time, the LSOs believed he had already departed for home plate. Confusion as to who was on the ball prompted the confirmation call by the LSO. By the time they discovered that the *Corsair* was, in fact, making another approach, the pilot had arrived at ramp position. No one discovered positively that the aircraft had no gear until it passed the waveoff point.

The pilot continued the approach and subsequently touched down with his landing gear up. He initiated ejection shortly after touchdown and landed uninjured on the runway. The aircraft continued to slide, departing the runway from the right side, and became airborne again approximately 3,000 feet from initial impact. It flew, on fire, an additional three nautical miles, finally impacting an uninhabited wooded area three miles northeast.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Great balls of fire! I'm really torn up over this — again! No matter how many times we preach that a "break in habit pattern" is a setup for a checklist omission, some aviators obviously don't believe it until it's too late.

When we sit around and shoot the breeze about "rollers up" landings or passes, the consensus is that there are those who have made wheels-up landings or passes and those who are lucky. *Not so!* There are those who use checklists and those who don't. It's that simple.

Zero-Zero

The student naval flight officer and his instructor arrived at their assigned TF-9J *Cougar* to begin their preflight. The preflight was completed and the *Cougar* was found ready in all respects. This was to be the student's first flight in the TF-9J. The plane captain strapped the instructor in the front seat and then assisted the student. After he went through a seat check with the student and checked him out, the plane captain departed the wing and connected the external electrical power.

Shortly afterwards, the student developed problems with his ICS. The lineman summoned a technician and, after about 20 minutes, the problem was apparently solved.

After the instructor completed his cockpit check, he gave the student the signal to turn up. The turn-up was uneventful, the TF-9J taxied forward in order to avoid placing its jet blast on another aircraft. The chocks were inserted and the instructor went ahead with the operational preflight checks (speed brakes, flaps, etc.).

When everything was confirmed normal, the lineman gave the pilot and student the signals to pull their seat safety pins and do a canopy clearance check. At this time, the lineman noted that the student had his hands on the face curtain; the lineman yelled, waved his hands and tried to get him to stop.

Meanwhile, in the aircraft the instructor asked the student if he was clear of the canopy and the student said, "Roger." The pilot began to move the canopy forward and, in his mirror, saw that the student had his hands near the top of the seat. The pilot directed him to get his hands in the cockpit.

The student proceeded to pull the face curtain handle down over his face, and *the seat fired!* The instructor observed the student's chute open, followed immediately by the student landing on the ramp adjacent to the aircraft.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Thunderin' thunderins! I can't believe this happened — what in the world was this student thinkin' of! If the instructor hadn't taken a second look after the student Rogered that he was clear of the canopy, this lad would'a been kilt — or seriously injured.

Most certainly, Naval Aviation doesn't

need people riding shotgun who don't know what to do with their hands! In this case, zero-zero was for headwork coolness!

A Bit of Nostalgia

In these days, when nostalgia is becoming a part of our style of living, we thought it would be appropriate to reach back to some old, classic Gramps' tales from time to time. We hope you enjoy them again.

While coming in for a landing after a familiarization hop, a pilot's engine cut out completely at 650 feet. The aviator said that he immediately put on the electric fuel pump, switched to the "reserve" fuel tank and noted that the fuel gauge showed 45 gallons. However, the engine failed to catch again and the plane crashed in a small wooded area. The pilot received serious injuries.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Any pilot who will take off in a new type plane before he is thoroughly familiar with every switch, lever, button, line and gadget doesn't rate his wings.

