GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Inattention

An aviator was scheduled for an IFR flight from NAS Midcoast to NAS Southcoast. Following the preliminaries of checking the weather and filing his flight plan, the pilot proceeded to his A-7 *Corsair* and preflighted the aircraft. Finding everything normal he completed his checklists and departed NAS Midcoast.

The flight to Southcoast was uneventful. The pilot elected to conduct a surveillance approach, circling to land on the duty runway. During the downwind leg, at 2,000 feet, the pilot reported the landing runway in sight. At this time he estimated visibility to be four to five miles and requested a VFR entry to the runway. The tower cleared the A-7 special VFR into the break. However, the pilot had already started the transition to the landing configuration while turning onto the extended runway centerline and therefore requested and received clearance for a straight-in approach.

The pilot was informed that work was in progress on the runway and instructed to land beyond 2,000 feet from the approach end. The A-7 was now on straight-in final approach and

the pilot was attempting to descend and decelerate to an onspeed proper attitude condition. At this point, he made a radio transmission. This was followed by a tower transmission of approximately 25 seconds giving the pilot additional information concerning runway conditions.

With gear and flaps down, the pilot advanced the throttle to an intermediate position "with no apparent engine response." The pilot advanced the throttle to full military power. The *Corsair* was now in an excessive rate of descent and, with ground contact imminent, the pilot ejected.

The seat worked as advertised and the pilot was uninjured. The *Corsair* sustained strike damage.

In spite of the ground collision, the A-7 engine and associated material were recoverable and subjected to intensive analysis. The accident board, following a thorough investigation, failed to detect any engine malfunction or other abnormalities.

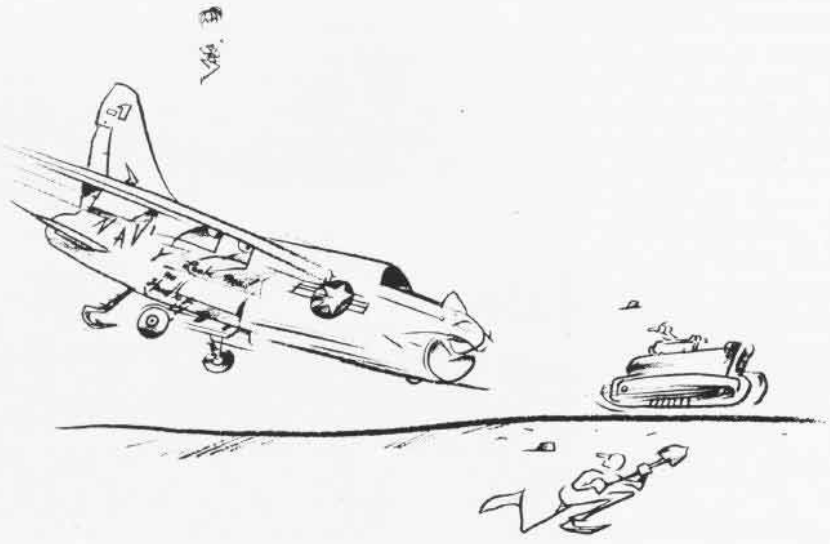
Grampaw Pettibone says:

Leapin' lizards! This gent just didn't pay attention to the "store." When a "driver" is in such a hurry to get a machine on the ground that he takes shortcuts — that's the time for "extra vigilance."

Another thing that "teed me off" was the pilot not wearing his oxygen mask as he is supposed to. What do you say about a gent who "selectively" follows Natops?

I'll say the tower didn't help much. Long transmissions on final don't appear to be too smart to me!

All in all, a pretty bad scene!



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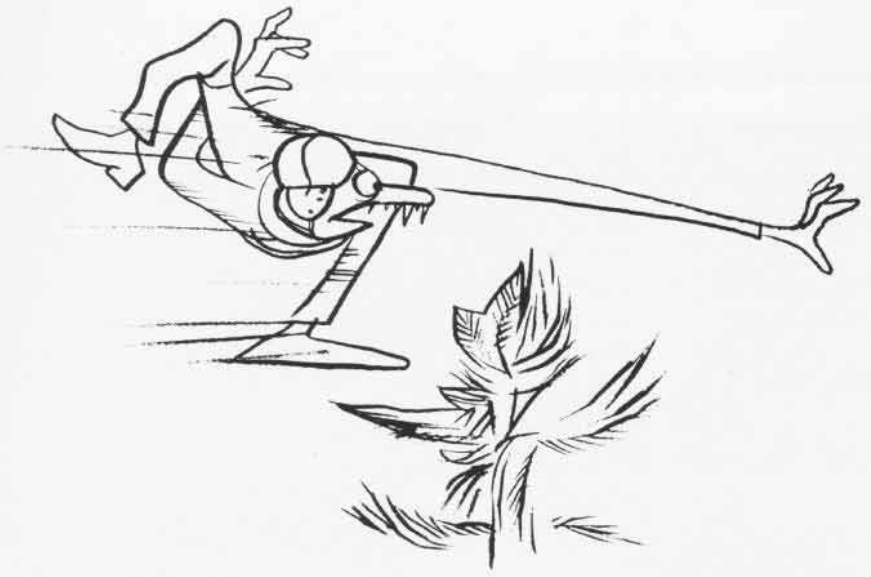

Tree Topper

An A-1H pilot was on a routine ferry flight between two East Coast air stations when he heard on two occasions a sound similar to backfiring. No vibrations were associated with the noise and, after checking the engine instruments, the pilot decided things looked about normal. The following readings were noted: CHT, 210 degrees C.; CAT, +5 degrees; oil temperature, 72 degrees; and oil pressure, 86 psi.

A few minutes later the backfiring occurred again. The only engine instrument change noted was an increase in the CHT to 220 degrees. The pilot selected rich mixture and the CHT returned to 210 degrees. He then selected alternate air and observed the CAT increase to 32 degrees. Approximately 15 seconds later, direct air was selected and the CAT returned to +5 degrees. The pilot returned the mixture to the normal position and decided to land at a civilian field, approximately 15 miles from his position.

He contacted the tower and received clearance for a precautionary landing. Abeam of the runway, at an altitude of 2,500 feet, the A-1H was cleared number 2 behind a C-130 on a 2 1/2 mile final. The pilot took interval on the C-130 which put him an additional 3/4 mile downwind of the 180-degree position.

As the pilot started his turn to base leg, the engine quit. He immediately declared an emergency and continued the approach. As he passed the 90 degree position, it became apparent that he would not make the runway, so he reversed his turn and headed for the only clear area in sight. On short final to the cleared area, the pilot lowered the flaps at tree-top level and hit the top of the first tree at about 105 knots. One or two seconds after the collision, the engine started firing. The burst of power was sufficient to regain flying speed, so the pilot turned back to the runway, made a normal landing and taxied to the ramp.

The aircraft sustained substantial damage on the impact with the tree top but the pilot was uninjured.

Grampaw Pettibone says:

Egads, lad! Somebody could've got hurt! Just what does it take for a gent to get the message that he just might have a load of carb ice? Conditions were ideal for this sort of thing. After going to rich mixture and alternate air, engine operations smoothed out. So why return to a setup that caused the trouble in the first place?

A CAT of 32 degrees C. is well within max operating limits for this engine, but it's pretty evident the pilot just didn't know too much about his machine. Even after decidin' to land and have a look-see, our boy fails to declare an emergency and lets himself get sucked way out of position for even a precautionary landing.

This whole embarrassin' bit is a result of the pilot's not knowin' his bird and then usin' poor headwork in an emergency. (August 1965)

Single Engine Emergency

The right engine suddenly failed when a PBJ was ten miles from the field at 1,000 feet altitude. The pilot advanced power on the port engine but, having allowed the airspeed to drop below that required for efficient single engine operation, he was unable to maintain altitude. The propeller was not feathered. Slow speed made necessary an exaggerated amount of rudder and rudder trim for the power being used. Hatches were open preparatory to abandoning ship.

All of these errors resulted in excessive drag. The plane just barely made it back to the field where it crashed due to a hurried and poorly executed landing.

Grampaw Pettibone says:

The winning jockey in a horse race is usually the one who knows how to get the most out of his mount. It's the same in aviation; the winning pilot is the one who knows how to get the most out of his plane because he knows *all* its flight characteristics.

Despite the engine failure in this case, there would have been no crash if the pilot had known his business. Merely knowing how to take off and land isn't enough; you've got to know how to handle your airplane under all circumstances.

Single engine operating technique is a *must* for all twin-engine pilots. Squadron COs should ensure that their pilots are proficient in this technique. (May 1945)