



grampaw pettibone

Brakes Breaks

A young crew consisting of a Naval Aviator and his bombardier/navigator (B/N) were scheduled for a flyoff from the ship to NAS home plate in an A-6 *Intruder*. The brief was normal in all respects. There were no major discrepancies detected during preflight and start-up.

The A-6 then taxied toward the number four catapult. In the vicinity of cat four, the B/N rogered the weight board informing the pilot that he had done so. A short time later the cat officer ordered the board returned for verification and the B/N again rogered the weight information. The *Intruder* was taxied into the holdback with the wings folded in order to clear another aircraft spotted just aft of cat 3. The shuttle was forward at this time.

The spread-wings signal was then given after considerable discussion among the flight deck crew regarding clearance of the other aircraft. The takeoff checklist was completed as the other aircraft was taxied clear of the area. The shuttle was moved aft and the pilot thought that tension was about to be taken. However, at the cat officer's direction, the shuttle was again moved forward and the flight director gave the pilot a signal indicating a ten-minute delay until launch. The pilot held the brakes for about five minutes while observing an E-2 launch from cat 1. The pilot then set the parking brake.

When he observed a sister A-6 being positioned on cat 2, he released the parking brake, expecting to be launched in section with the other A-6. At this time, still another A-6 was taxied alongside. A fold wings signal was given to the other A-6 for clearance purposes. The pilot then lowered his flaps and slats, and completed the



takeoff checklist again. When it became apparent that the other A-6s were to be launched as a section, he reset his parking brake, making a mental note that the brake would have to be released prior to launch. He then informed the B/N that they would have an additional five-minute delay.

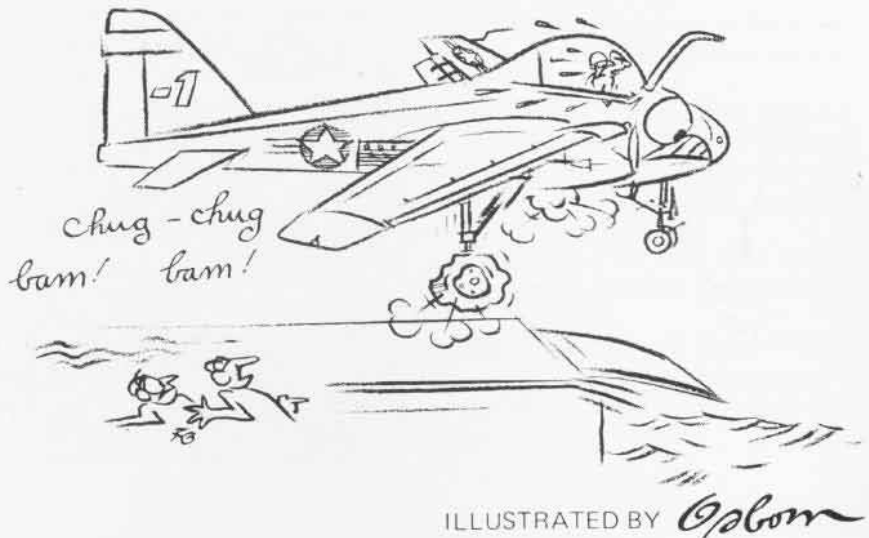
The pilot misunderstood the brief regarding aircraft intervals and was anticipating a five-minute separation between section launches. As the B/N was correcting the pilot's misconception, the crew felt tension being taken

and the pilot looked to see the director giving the off brakes/take tension signal. He immediately applied military power and performed his control and instrument checks. No discrepancies were noted by either crew member. The pilot asked the B/N if he was ready, received an affirmative reply, and saluted the cat officer. The total elapsed time from man-up to launch was approximately 70 minutes.

After approximately two-thirds of the deck run, the pilot noted a wobbling of the nose and both crew members sensed a marked deceleration. Examination of the skid marks substantiated eyewitness reports that the brakes were locked from commencement of the catapult stroke. They also indicate that the port tire exploded 35 feet past shuttle release and the starboard tire, 15 feet further. A careful study of the plat tape confirms the locations of the explosions.

As the aircraft continued its deck run, the pilot experienced an "overwhelming feeling" that the aircraft was not going to fly, and the B/N felt that the deck edge was approaching slower than expected.

The pilot ejected in approximately a ten-degree nose-up, wings-level attitude; the B/N ejected in approxi-



mately a ten-degree nose-up, ten-degree right-wing-down attitude. Following ejection, the aircraft entered a gentle climbing turn, continuing to roll right. The aircraft impacted the water. Both crew members were rescued.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Holy Hannah! What in the heck was this young fella thinking about?? One thing is obvious. He wasn't thinking about the job at hand! And what about his NFO? He was a lot of help, too!

Boy, as usual, there were all sorts of corrective actions suggested after the fact. Sure wish we could accomplish more prevention by discussin' "potential accident situations" *before* they occur. Oh well, enough ramblin' on.

Super Hot

Our pilot was to be the number three aircraft in a flight of three F-8s. He had approximately 800 total hours with over 450 hours in the *Crusader*. The briefing was normal in all respects. The weather was clear with visibility in excess of 15 miles and the winds were calm.

The pilots manned their aircraft and taxied without incident to the takeoff runway. Upon receiving clearance, the flight took the duty with our pilot in the #3 position as briefed. After #2 had rolled 700 to 800 feet, our pilot released his brakes to commence his takeoff roll. Afterburner was selected, all engine instruments were scanned and found to be normal. The *Crusader* accelerated normally with rotation established as per normal takeoff procedures and the nose began to rise from the runway.

When the pilot felt he was flying, the gear handle was raised. Just after this, the pilot encountered jet wash and wake turbulence. The F-8's nose pitched up and the right wing dropped as the aircraft settled back on the runway.

The pilot tried to keep the aircraft flying but the ventral fins contacted the runway making further rotation impossible. After full fuselage contact, he initially decided to ride it out, deselected afterburner and pulled the power to idle. Shortly thereafter, the aircraft yawed and rolled right, dragging the wing tip.

At this instant, our pilot changed his mind and decided to eject. After a

normal ejection, the aircraft continued down the runway finally departing it with 2,400 feet of runway remaining. It came to rest in sand with the engine still turning.

The aircraft sustained substantial damage. The pilot was not injured. Tire marks on the runway indicated that gear retraction was initiated very shortly after the NATOPS computed distance for takeoff roll was reached.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Holy Hannah! Amazin' the number of "super hot" pilots we have or at least pilots who *think* they're super hot.

After the investigation was over, the board recommended a change to NATOPS, rebriefing of pilots, etc. However, the cause of the accident was not clearly spelled out by the board. Fortunately, a subsequent endorser said it like it really is, or should I say was . . . "the cause of this accident was poor judgment on the part of the pilot" . . . and to again borrow another line from the same endorser — there is a helluva difference between *professionalism* and *exhibitionism!*

Free Flying Lessons

A young pilot reported to maintenance control for a brief on a maintenance test flight in a UH-1N *Huey*. One of the maintenance personnel, a qualified aircrewman, requested that he accompany the pilot as the crew chief. The pilot and crew chief proceeded to the aircraft and completed the preflight inspection. The engines were started. The crew chief checked for leaks. The start and cockpit checks were normal. No leaks were noted.

The crew chief then took a position in the copilot's seat (left) and the pilot received clearance from the tower to position the aircraft on a prescribed hover area. The pilot proceeded to that area and performed a required power assurance check on each engine. The check was satisfactory. After check completion, the pilot made a vertical takeoff into a four-to-seven-foot hover. The pilot granted his crew chief permission to

attempt to control the aircraft during the hover. Simultaneously, the pilot physically monitored the flight controls.

After about one minute, the crew chief's control movements caused the aircraft to move to the right and aft. Noting this, the pilot increased the collective. The nose of the aircraft yawed to the left. The pilot attempted to regain control of the aircraft through use of the directional control pedals but was unable to do so due to the crew chief's excessive pressure on the pedals. The pilot told the crew chief that "he had the aircraft." However the crew chief increased cyclic input to the right and the pilot was unable to move the cyclic to the left forward position against the crew chief's pressure.

The aircraft hit the ground and came to rest on its starboard side. The transmission departed the aircraft and landed approximately 20 feet from the helo. One main rotor blade was destroyed on impact. The tail rotor blades struck the ground and were severely damaged.

The two men departed the *Huey* through the left cabin roof window. They were both uninjured.

The crash crew arrived at the scene and extinguished a small fuel fire in the engine intake and transmission housing area. The aircraft sustained substantial damage.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Holy Hannah! I can't believe my eyes. This pilot turned the aircraft over to a non-aviator at a most critical phase of flight — and on a test flight yet! This takes the cake as one of the dumbest maneuvers I've read about in years.

In addition, once he allowed the crew chief to fly the aircraft, the pilot was not even smart enough to know when to "take over" so he could salvage a bad situation.

Being a suspicious cuss, I wonder what kind of leadership exists in a unit where a junior pilot, without even a second thought, allows a non-aviator to control an aircraft in direct violation of Natops! Well, a lot of heads rolled over this one. Nuff sed!