



grampaw pettibone

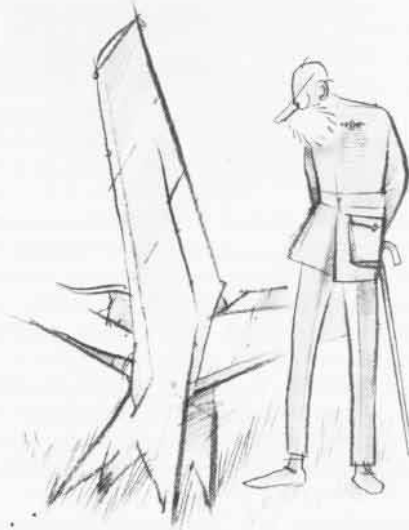
S.O.S.

A flight of six SH3As departed the auxiliary field at 0800 for an ASW training exercise. They arrived on station, seven miles seaward at 0815.

At ten o'clock, during the 12th dip, hovering at 40 feet with the sonar transducer lowered in the water, the flight leader and his copilot heard a loud noise and observed the port engine torque dropping to zero and the port turbine exhaust temperature gauge pegged at 1,000 degrees C. Speed selectors of both engines were advanced, but sufficient power was not forthcoming and a controlled water landing was made into the wind. (Emergency flotation bags were activated.)

The *Sea King* was under control, floating satisfactorily. Heading into the wind, number one engine speed selector was placed in ground idle in an attempt to regain power with manual throttle. This attempt failed to produce any increase in torque and number one was secured. Approximately 15 seconds later, number one's fire warning light came on. The copilot activated the engine fire extinguisher.

At about 1010 the crew ascertained



the fire to be out and notified the nearby NAS of the mishap. The NAS dispatched a rescue boat.

A slow downwind water taxi toward the NAS was commenced at 1015. Ground swells of about five feet prevailed from the stern. Water was entering the crew compartment through the sonar tunnel and the sonar hoist enclosure. The crewmen found it difficult to seat the sonar transducer because of the sea state and motion of the aircraft but did

succeed some minutes later. At 1045 the pilot turned into the wind and attempts were made to deploy the sea anchor for towing. This proved futile and it appeared likely there would be a long delay for the tow.

At 1050 they gave up the towing idea and began taxiing once again. Almost immediately after turning downwind, a wave lifted the tail of the aircraft and caused the main rotor blades to strike the water. The machine rolled forward and came to rest, inverted in the water. All hands evacuated immediately and were rescued by a motor whaleboat from a nearby destroyer.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

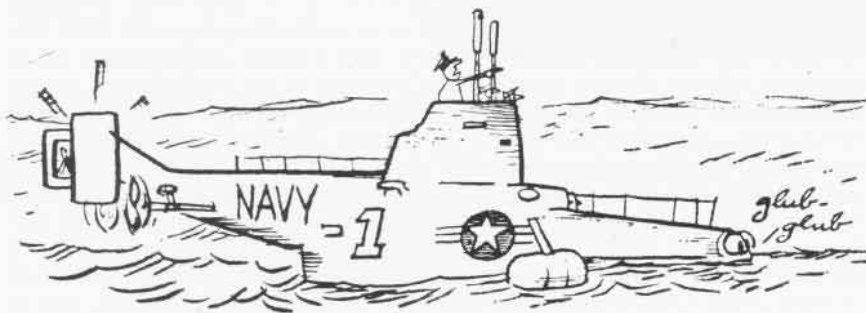
Shades of black shoes!
Looks like we gotta go back to basics. Since we ain't in the VO/VS business any more, maybe we're lackin' some of the ole horse sense we always took for granted.

No doubt these fellas found themselves between a rock and a hard place when the stator vane on the port engine gave up the ghost, but from there on just plain ole damage control and seamanship could'a saved the boat.

Seems to me it would'a been a good idea to lighten ship right then and try to get it back in the air. After that, pluggin' holes with anything available makes good sense and would'a kept the draft down to a decent level and seaworthy enough for a tug to the beach or to the carrier that passed within shoutin' distance. (September 1966)

Double Trouble

A Marine Aviator was scheduled for a routine AV-8 training flight. He reviewed the maintenance records and noted that there were some discrepancies concerning engine temperature running higher than most other aircraft. The pilot performed a thorough preflight examination, carefully following the pocket preflight checklist.



Finding the aircraft in good condition, the pilot manned up and began pre-takeoff procedures.

At takeoff, he felt that the *Harrier* didn't perform as well as it should have, "powerwise." Still, the flight continued uneventfully until he entered the landing pattern.

He was concerned over the engine temperature running high and how it would affect engine performance during a vertical landing. Noting that he had 200 pounds more fuel than the max allowed for a vertical landing under ambient conditions present, the pilot waved off his first approach. The next four approaches were waved off because he felt engine performance was inadequate — and there was some evidence of slight overheating.

Under these circumstances, it is standard for an AV-8 pilot to execute a slow landing which requires less thrust. The pilot felt that for himself, a slow landing was an emergency procedure since he had never done one in training. Therefore, he avoided slow-landing approaches.

On his sixth crosswind turn for

approach, he noted that his port fuel flasher had come on (this indicates 250 pounds fuel of which only 100 pounds is usable). At the 180 position, his starboard fuel flasher came on. He was unaware that 150 of the 250 pounds indicated were unusable.

As he rolled in on final, the pilot realized he had to put the aircraft down or run out of fuel. He had originally called for a vertical landing on his final approach but ultimately decided to do a slow landing.

On short final, he felt he was set up well and saw no need to declare a low-fuel emergency. Within a thousand feet of the overrun he noticed his IAS as 108 knots. He also observed that his fuel booster pump lights were on, indicating less than nine psi fuel pressure. Within a few seconds, the engines began to wind down and the nose started to drop. When full back stick failed to raise the nose, the pilot ejected at 100 feet.

The aircraft impacted wings and nose level, short of the overrun. It slid to a stop 256 feet up the center of the overrun. The seat landed on

the overrun 550 feet northwest of the aircraft, the pilot about 500 feet in the same direction.

During rescue operations, a crash truck traveling too fast toward the accident site, lost control, rolled over on its left side and slid to within a foot of the port side of the aircraft, which was burning. The minor post-crash fire was extinguished quickly by another crash truck and the six members of the overturned truck escaped with minor injuries.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Oh, my achin' back! What a combination of accidents! What a fiasco!

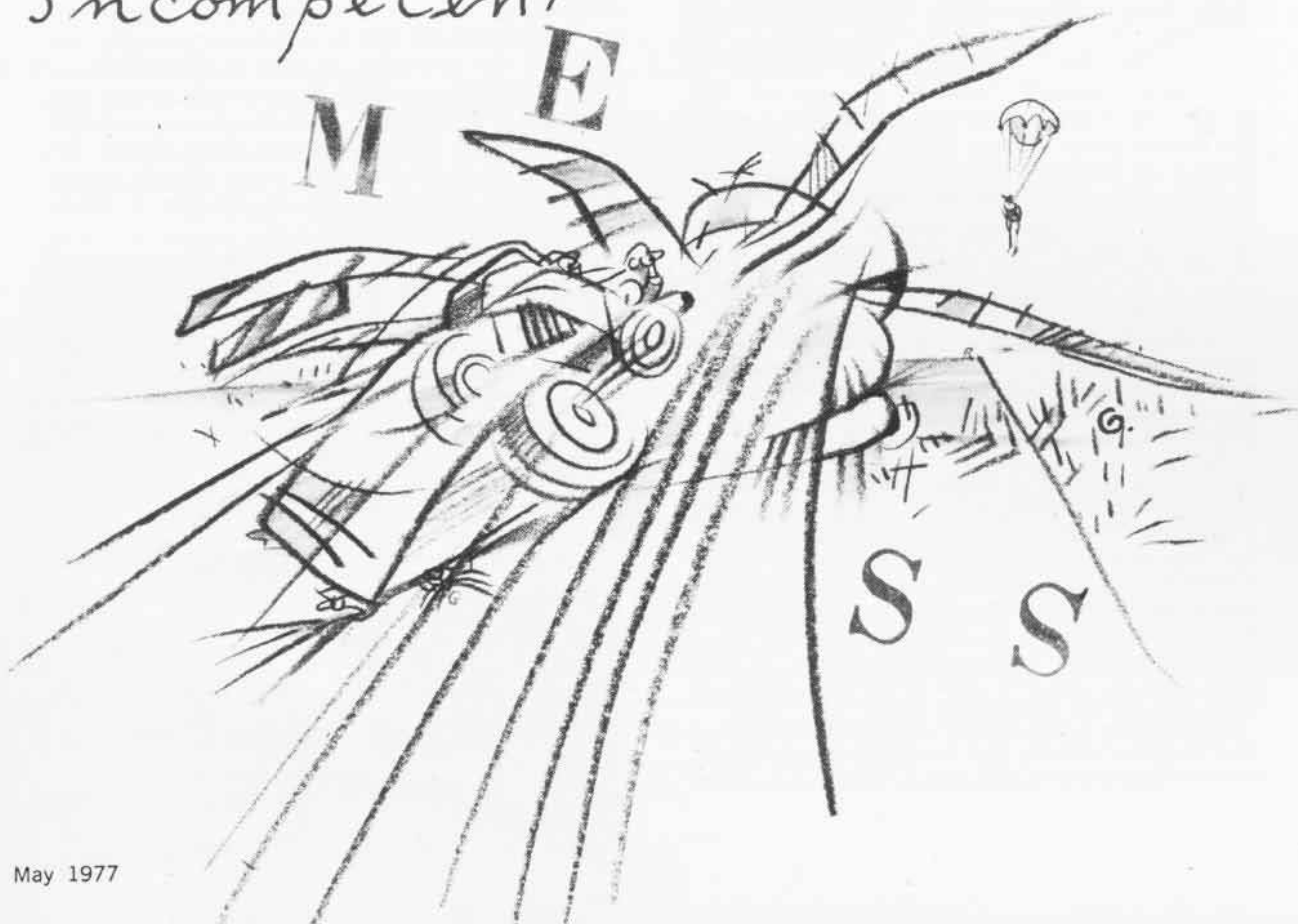
What the heck does it take to tell a pilot he's running out of go-juice? This gent had all sorts of indications, yet he plowed on. He had five opportunities — that's right five — to land, and didn't.

This is the most primitive type of accident. There's simply no excuse for it. None!

Same goes for the crash-crew driver — no excuse!

Incompetent

M E



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