



grampaw pettibone

Landing by Committee!

The instructor and his student manned their T-28B for a routine familiarization flight, the instructor in the rear cockpit. The brief, preflight, start, taxi and run-up were uneventful. The flight was routine until a practice precautionary emergency landing – PPEL – was initiated at 1,500 feet.

The duty runway at a nearby outlying field was selected as the intended landing site. The student performed the PPEL in a relatively satisfactory manner until on final with the aircraft dirty. The turn to final approach was accomplished at 150 feet. The student began to flare the aircraft and the instructor, noting the airspeed at 90 knots, added some power.

The student glanced at the airspeed indicator (prompted by the addition of power) and noted 85 knots. Somewhat distracted the student responded by lowering the nose. Quickly, before the instructor could react, he returned to the landing attitude. The aircraft at that moment landed very hard. After touching down, the aircraft was taxied to the side line and shut down for a visual inspection. The fuselage skin was found to be cracked. Estimated cost of repair: \$7,475.00.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Holy piston pumper! Instructor pilots: Remember the neck that's out is your own. If the new feller learnin' to fly is within the realm of reality, let him do his own thing. If he has started goofin' it all up and you're getting nervous in the service, take total control of the aircraft. Don't nursemaid new kids by sorta takin' action in the short hairs. You're just distractin' 'em more. When you're close to the ground, either take positive control or let the newbee do his thing. Landing an aeroplane is an



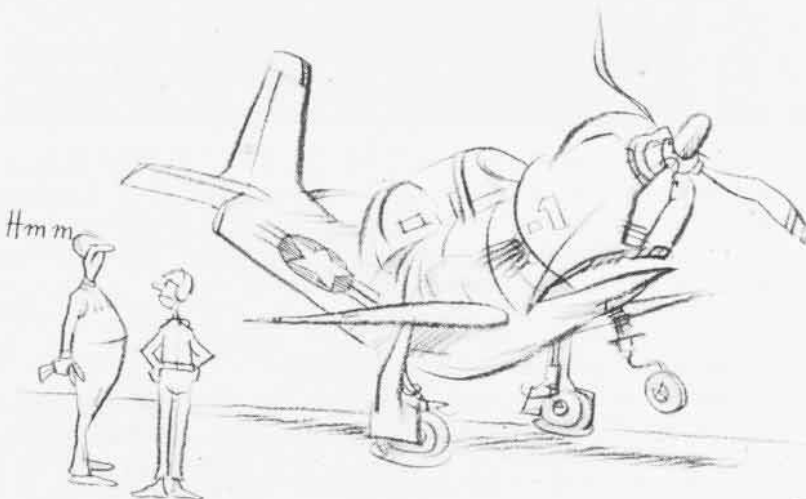
adventure that requires total concentration by the driver at the controls. Landings made by committee can cause broken butts. Don't critique, instruct!

Crunched Crusaders

Two pilots on alert duty scrambled in their F-8s for a practice intercept mission under GCI control. While they were airborne, a rain shower moved across the field. As it was squadron policy to make Moresst landings where the runway was wet, the squadron duty officer advised the tower to expect the two aircraft to make Moresst landings.

After being airborne a little over an hour, the two *Crusaders* returned to the field. They were advised by the tower that the runway was wet but braking was fair to good. The flight leader elected to make a normal landing and the wingman took a normal interval after break.

The flight leader landed on the right side of the runway and, during the roll-out, the tower cleared him for a right turn. Since the braking action was good, the lead aircraft was slow enough to turn off at the 6,000-foot



marker, but when he saw the de-arming crew on the left side of the runway, he announced over the radio that he was turning left.

The wingman touched down on the left side of the runway a little fast and started braking at the 4,000-foot marker. In less than 1,000 feet, the starboard tire blew. Realizing the other aircraft was still on the runway, the pilot applied heavy port brake. As the wingman neared the end of the runway, he suddenly saw his leader turn in front of him. He immediately applied right brake in an effort to pass behind him. Instead the nose and port wing caught the tail assembly of the other F-8 and spun it around 180 degrees. Both aircraft were substantially damaged, but luckily neither pilot was injured.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Giminentlies! I've heard of a lot of ways to foul up your buddies but this takes the cake. Guess a lot of people have been laborin' under false impressions 'cause I thought everybody knew better than to turn across the path of the aircraft landing behind you.

This flight leader elected not to use the Mostest gear even though it was squadron doctrine on a wet runway, failed to follow tower instructions in order to clear the runway safely and then, to really cap things off, turned in front of his wingman rolling out behind him. I'll admit a lot of things have changed in the flyin' business the past few years, but tricks like this have been taboo since the days of the open cockpit and streaming white scarf. (March 1965)

First Aboard

One of the good feelings in carrier aviation comes when a pilot receives his Charlie time, breaks and flies the approach, arriving in the groove just as the flight deck is signaled ready to recover aircraft. Usually the ship is turning into the wind, planes are being towed clear of the landing area, and the arresting gear is checked and set as the first plane to land is flying the pattern. If the ship is not steady on recovery course, it's a demanding

chore for the initial aircraft to set up for a good start.

There are nonstandard visual cues and no real indication at the 180-degree position if the ship is turning into or away from you as it subtly seeks the best wind. This story relates some of the problems encountered and is a reminder that the flyer in the first aircraft around the pattern must concentrate extra hard to get a good approach set up. Pilots should not be too proud to wave off an uncomfortable approach.

An experienced Naval Aviator who was consistently a top performer in air wing carrier landings returned to the ship from a routine flight. Weather and visibility were good and a case one, VFR recovery was directed. This pilot was in the first aircraft to land and a routine break entry was initiated. The ship's expected final bearing was broadcast and the downwind leg was correctly flown. Preoccupied with fuel dumping and the landing checklist, the pilot failed to note the ship's steady, slow starboard turn. Overshooting at the 90-degree position and angling through the 45-degree position, the aircraft arrived close and high in the groove. From the platform the air wing LSO noted the ship's motion and the pilot's apparent difficulties with alignment. However, he felt he was within safe limits to continue the approach.

Just after entering the groove, the ship's course altered slowly to port causing the plane to drift slightly right

of center line. Smoke from the ship's stacks began drifting over the ramp area degrading visibility. The pilot noted his early glide slope position to be one ball high. Approximately four seconds from the ramp the ball began to rise. The pilot responded by dropping his nose and reducing power.

Crossing the ramp, a final correction for right drift was accomplished by dropping the left wing. Just prior to touchdown the pilot went to "military" power as the LSO suggested "Easy with it!" The aircraft was arrested, catching the last wire. The LSO downed the aircraft for a hard landing inspection which revealed the plane had sustained Charlie damage.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

No grade - OCCIM - NEP-DECICAR - CDTL. Egads, lads! Somebody could'a got hurt. This type approach has been flown by many pilots. Takin' your own wave-off when you're not set up beats a "No Grade" any day. Landing grades are nifty trend indicators - that's all. If the pressure to be #1 in the air wing gets so high that pilots are influenced to salvage bad starts - we've lost the big picture. This pilot was influenced to continue this poor approach because he "thought" he would hurt his landing grade average by taking his own wave-off. No penalties for OWOs. Don't depend on the LSO to relieve you of your responsibility to fly the airplane. Get a good start and be aware that many times the first plane aboard must work harder at achievin' the standard.

