GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Hold Your Fire

During the course of a regular gunnery practice, the pilot of the tow plane flew beyond the range limits. The accompanying fighter pilots, apparently engrossed in their practice, failed to notice that they were out of the prescribed area. As a result, the government received a claim for damage to private property caused by bullets fired from one of these planes.

Grampaw Pettibone says:

It was just dumb luck that no one was killed in this case. There were people very close to where those bullets struck.

Granted, it is up to the tow pilot to stay within the boundaries of the firing range, but nothing he does ever excuses the pilot of the attacking plane from firing on a foul range. Remember, the man who fires the gun is responsible for where the bullets go.

Carelessness-Enemy of Old Age

An enlisted man detailed to check gasoline pits was struck by the propeller of an SNB which was returning to the parking area, BECAUSE:

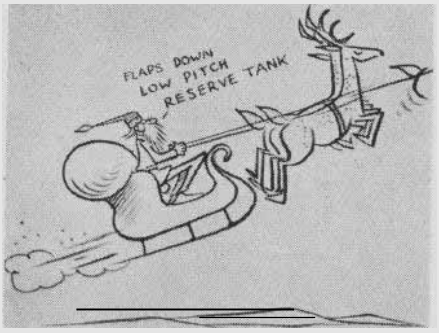
1. He failed to keep a lookout while on a busy taxiway.
2. The pilot failed to insure that the taxiway was clear, and also failed to comply with the station order requiring a wingman on all planes being taxied in congested areas.
3. The crewman in the co-pilot's seat did not keep a sharp lookout on his side. (Pilots should insure that anyone sitting in that seat is fully aware of his lookout responsibilities.)
4. The wingman assigned to guide the plane left his station before the aircraft was safely out of the congested area.

Comment-Any one of these men could have prevented this fatality by proper performance of duty. Safety regulations mean nothing unless they are enforced.

The Instructor Who Wasn't There

While practicing acrobatics, an instructor flying from the rear seat, promised to show his student something new after they had completed several snap rolls. He certainly did!

At approximately 4,000 feet, the instructor started a right slow roll, during which he *fell* out. The plane went into a spin. The student thought it was part



of the course and did nothing until he saw the plane heading for the pilot's blossoming 'chute. Then he took the controls and levelled off at 800 feet.

Here is the instructor's description of what occurred: "It happened so quickly that I was unable to catch anything to try to keep from falling. After pulling the rip cord, I looked up to see the plane coming toward me-right on me. My 'chute was just starting to open. The leading edge of the wing hit my shroud cords and jerked me around severely, even to the extent of jerking my helmet off, jerking the 'chute shoulder straps down below my waist and ripping my pants off. My leg straps went down below mv knees and I descended hanging by'my knees until I reached up and grabbed the straps leading to the shroud lines and hooked my arms through. Just before reaching the ground, I pulled myself up as best I could and lit in a sitting position with my knees up.

"The plane was equipped with narrow belts and shoulder straps. I don't know when the belt opened. I usually check my belt after any snap maneuver and assume that I did so on this occasion."

Investigation showed the leg straps were too long, owing to' improper adjustment. At the hospital, it was found the pilot suffered four broken vertebrae.

As a result of this accident. two training bulletins were issued at the station concerned, in order to stress:

1. Safety belts should be checked carefully: a. prior to leaving the line and, b. frequently during flight, particularly before and during acrobatics.
2. Correct adjustments of parachutes are necessary if they are to fit and operate as intended.
3. Instructors should ask students frequently during acrobatic flight to check their safety belts.
4. A loose safety belt becomes unfastened more readily than a snug one.

Danger Areas

An instructor was giving his student an acrobatic check in the assigned area. The SNJ was just being pulled into a loop at 9000 feet when it collided with an SBD. The SBD was attached to a near-by station and was cruising through the area in level flight. All occupants of both aircraft were killed.

The two pilots were considered equally responsible for this collision. The SNJ pilot for not insuring that the area was clear and the SBD pilot for entering a Danger Area without special authority and for not keeping a sharp lookout for other aircraft.

The investigating board made the following recommendation for eliminating accidents from this cause:

That when communicating with transient and itinerant aircraft, control towers advise them of the condition of air traffic and other invisible hazards that exist in their flight path.

Comment-In addition to emphasizing the necessity for constant alertness in the air, this accident also shows the need for pilots being more familiar with Danger Areas. Activities are responsible for insuring that their files contain only the latest aeronautical charts, kept up to date from information received through Weekly Notices to Airmen, Hydrographic Office Memos to Aviators and the Minutes of IATCB meetings. Pilots must be familiar with the Caution and Danger Areas indicated on all of these up-to-date charts.

Maintenance work at flight schedules goes on 24 hours a day at many naval air stations, keeping transport planes in running order to carry supplies of war to the fronts

How Is YOUR Judgment?

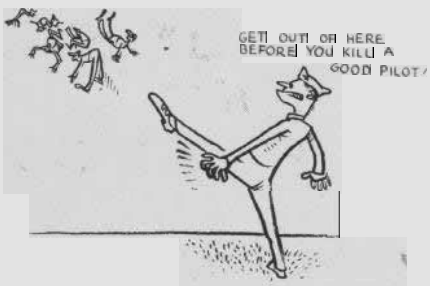
A careful analysis of formation accidents led a Corpus Christi squadron to conclude that the pilots were poor at judging angles and distances. Training along these lines was given by arranging: airplanes on the ground and requiring all pilots to sit in the cockpits and see what the planes looked like when properly spaced.

The initial theory about poor judgment in this matter was largely proved when numerous pilots, including instructors, were so incredulous that they personally measured distances and angles before they were convinced that the spacing was correct.

Pin Feather Wonders

Just prior to finishing their primary flight training, six cadets were scheduled for formation practice. The students took off in their respective sections and 30 minutes later were observed at low altitude, "chasing tails" over rough terrain, outside of the designated training area. Shortly thereafter, two of the planes collided, "resulting in destruction of one aircraft and damage to the other. Both pilots escaped uninjured.

All six students were found guilty of



"gross violation of air discipline" and were dropped from training.

late To Class .

A TRM pilot allowed his fuel tank to run dry while operating at low altitude. He immediately shifted tanks and started his auxiliary fuel pump, but since there was insufficient altitude to regain suction, he was forced down at sea.

The pilot's statement included the following: "A good lesson I learned is to switch gas selector valve at a higher altitude. There is too little time to act at 75 feet."

Grampaw Pettibone says:

I refuse to get mad at this pilot -I'm glad he finally got the word. But it's tough to have to watch pilots learn everything the hard way. In this case, a little serious attention to Flight Safety Bulletins 7-44 and . 25-44 would have taught him the same thing and at a much cheaper rate, to say nothing about the danger involved.

Taxi accident: "He taxied too fast and didn't look where he was going."

Careless Inspection

An SB2C-3 had just landed aboard a carrier and was taxiing up the deck when the starboard landing gear gave way, resulting in serious damage to the plane. Subsequent check showed that a piece of line had been left in the wheel well which, when the wheels were extended, fouled in the locking pin.

Grampaw Pettibone says:

It's easier to sweep out your plane before flight than to sweep it up later.

Correction

Three suggestions of a cv squadron were included in the article, "Cockpit Tips For Combat," in the 1 September issue. These were: 1. That goggles be worn to minimize the danger resulting from shattered glass. 2. That whenever an aircraft is on fire, oxygen masks with diluter valve turned to *off*, be worn as a defense against breathing smoke. 3. That oxygen masks with diluter valve turned to *off* be worn at all times within range of enemy AA, as a general protection for the face and as a defense against breathing smoke, should the aircraft catch on fire.

Items 1 and 2 are considered sound, but item 3 is considered impracticable owing to the danger of depleting the oxygen supply. If desired, the oxygen mask may be worn, but the diluter valve should not be turned *off* unless smoke actually is present in the cockpit.

GRAMPAW'S SAFETY QUIZ

All aviators should know the answers to these questions. In the air, the penalty for not knowing may be death. If you miss an answer on the ground, penalize yourself by looking up the reference.

1. When in doubt about the presence of icing conditions, should you use alternate air?
2. How much alternate air normally should be used?
3. When landing or maneuvering in preparation to landing, which aircraft have right of way?
4. How long does it take a pilot to check his idle mixture?
5. When should the idle mixture check be made?

Answers to Quiz on Page 48

It Didn't Have To Happen

While at low altitude, the engine of an FM-l cut out, necessitating a forced landing in a stumpy field. The aircraft was demolished in the ensuing crash. The pilot's seat gave way, allowing him to be thrown forward so that his head struck the gunsight, causing a compound fracture of the skull.

An examination of the crash showed that the pilot had been wearing his shoulder harness and that it was properly locked, However, the straps were not over the reinforcing bar as they should have been, but were led directly over the top of the seat. This caused the top of the seat to give way during the crash, and undoubtedly was the main factor in its ultimate failure. Had the shoulder straps been passed over the reinforcing bar in accordance with Technical Note #28-43, there probably would have been no seat failure, and the pilot would have been injured only slightly or not at all. This opinion is based on the results of numerous similar crashes in which shoulder harnesses were properly used.

Comment-It is recommended that pilots review Technical Note #28-43 which shows pictorially how shoulder straps should be passed over the reinforcing bar. A visual check should be made by pilots when entering the cockpit. Plane captains also should be cautioned to include this item in pre-flight inspections.

Three Points on landing

On coming in to land, an SNJ-4 pilot recently dropped his plane in and went into a ground loop. The Trouble Board was unimpressed by his excuse of "oil on the windshield." They pointed out that his was not the first oil-spattered windshield. In their opinion, his trouble was "100 percent carelessness."

For the benefit of such careless pilots, they pointed out that "no airplane yet invented will land itself" and offered the following definition of a three-point landing: "One in which both front wheels and the tail wheel touch the ground at the same time-not one wheel, one wing tip and the tail wheel."