



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Dear Grampaw Pettibone:

In a recent issue you stated that it is a good practice to pump your brakes before landing to be sure you have pressure. A few pilots in this command have had their brakes lock, unknown to them, while using this procedure causing the aircraft to flip over on its back, or in the case of an F7F grinding the wheels down to the hub. These pilots believe that instead of pumping your brakes in the air it is better to land with the thought in mind of making a touch and go if your brakes fail. An arrested landing could then be accomplished.

In some pilots' handbooks it states propellers are to be pulled through by hand while in others it is recommended that the propellers be inched through with the starter. The Air Force has recommended in their "Aircraft Accident and Maintenance Review" that intermittent starter pull-through be used on the propellers of all planes.

We would appreciate any new views you may have on these subjects.

LCDR, USN

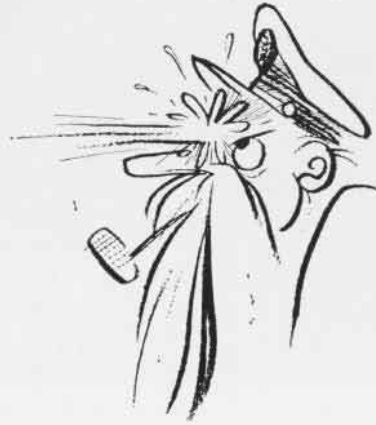


Grampaw Pettibone Says:

There have been a few cases of planes flipping over on their backs due to brakes being locked on landing, but I doubt if any were locked due to testing brakes prior to landing. Most frozen brakes are the result of excessive use while taxiing out for takeoff. The hot brakes freeze when the wheels are braked just after retracting.

The brake experts still recommend pumping the brakes on "smaller aircraft" which have a master brake cylinder rather than power brakes. It's the only way of knowing whether or not you are going to have any braking power after you touch down. If the brakes are already frozen, it won't make any difference, and, if they aren't frozen, they will be cool by the time you're ready to land and won't freeze because of the test pumping.

As far as using starters for pull through of propellers, the best advice is to check the recommendations in the handbook for each model. This procedure is O.K. provided the starter is equipped with a slip-type friction clutch incorporated to prevent damage in case of an oil lock. Most of our newer aircraft and some of the older models have this provision. However, a few do not, and in these planes, it is possible to shear the starter shaft or even damage a connecting rod by using the starter rather than the hand pull through method.



Stay Out of My Air Space

(Excerpts from the investigative report in the case of the death of A. Seagull.)

A. Seagull departed Pelican Base at 1032R. He was the number two man of a section scheduled to make a routine fishing flight. The ceiling was unlimited, but visibility was restricted to one and one-half miles in smoke and haze. The flight plan, filed with Pelican operations, indicated that the flight was well planned:

Duration of flight—one hour;
Fuel—20 grains of wheat aboard, estimating 10 grains/hour at a power setting of 60 wing flaps/minute;
Destination—Fire Island lighthouse;
Distance—20 miles;
Speed—40 miles/hour;
Clearance was given to maintain a maximum of 75 feet with no minimum required.

In the words of the seagull section leader, "We arrived at destination on time, but because of the low visibility I

decided to split the section so that more search area could be covered. I sent A. Seagull to 50' (the visibility down was good) while I stayed low for the attack. After about five minutes with little success, I heard A. Seagull open up with 'Awwk,' and then his transmitter went dead (I thought at the time he had made a live contact). I turned my head just in time to see A. Seagull collide with one of the biggest birds I ever saw. I searched the area for a trace of A. Seagull for some time, but my wheat grains were running low, so I departed the area and returned to Pelican base."



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

Yipes! What a mess! That "big bird" that the seagull section leader mentioned just happened to be an F9F-5 which was on a scheduled and authorized low level flight. The pilot, who fortunately fared somewhat better than the seagull, was flying at a relatively low airspeed (280 knots) and at about 50 feet when the collision occurred. He was only slightly injured and landed at a nearby airport without further incident.

The accompanying photo shows damage to jet.

We've had lots of bird collisions in the last few years, including one that did strike damage to a *Corsair*, but I think this is the first head-on-bird-collision involving a jet—at least the first one where the bird ended up in the pilot's lap.

In this case the pilot was in the clear because he was on an authorized low altitude flight where the possibility of such a collision is one of the calculated risks. If you have a choice in the matter, leave the altitude below 1000 feet to the birds—except for landings and takeoffs.

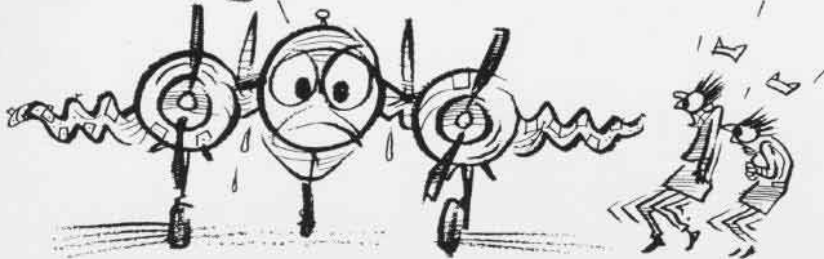
Whoa! Dobbin

The pilot of an SNB cleared from NAAS CORRY FIELD, on a VFR flight to Dallas. Take-off was normal and the pilot climbed to 10,000 feet on course. Enroute the pilot entered an area of drizzling rain, falling from a higher overcast. He was flying above broken clouds, tops generally at 8,000 feet with base of the clouds approximately 2,000 feet.

Shortly after entering the rain, the co-pilot got out of his seat and started aft. At this moment the pilot noticed a dark cumulus cloud ahead and started a fairly abrupt turn to the left in order to avoid it. He lost altitude in the turn



It was hairy!



and found himself in the overcast in what appeared to him to be a gentle left bank!

In the words of the pilot: "At this time I called to my co-pilot who had stepped to the rear, to get back into the co-pilot's seat but he didn't make it. The rate of descent increased to 1,000 feet per minute and then to 2,000 feet per minute. During this period the gyro-horizon indicated a gentle turn to the left and then tumbled suddenly. With power off and steady back pressure on the yoke, the aircraft continued to descend through the broken clouds.

"Sometime during the descent, the windshield cracked in many places, the co-pilot side window blew out, but the pilot's side window was half open and did not blow out although I lost my headphones through it. I blacked out for about five seconds and then regained vision.

"At approximately 3,000 feet altitude I saw the water and realized I was diving toward it with my wings level. I then applied full back pressure and held it. The aircraft recovered level flight at about 1,500 feet altitude. During the entire descent, the 'G' pressure was terrific and my co-pilot was unable to move until the aircraft was in level flight."

The pilot landed at a nearby airport to check further on the damage. Later detailed inspection of the aircraft showed the right wing and left wing skin wrinkled at the wing formers, both engines forced downward during the high "G" pullout which wrinkled both wings to the port and starboard of each engine nacelle, aft compartment door pushed inward approximately 2 inches, and the port and starboard side of the fuselage wrinkled.

The pilot in this accident had a standard instrument rating and considerable instrument experience during the previous 12 months. However, the reviewing authority recommended that he be given a recheck with special emphasis on partial panel flight and recovery from unusual altitudes.



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

Wow! This bucking bronco was tamed in the nick of time. In a situation

this sort, it's mighty easy to concentrate on one instrument and ignore the rest . . . but that sort of instrument flying has put a lot of pilots six feet under.

When the gyro tumbled, this chap went to needle-ball and got his wings level and throttled back in time to save his life if not the airplane.

Let's take a look at a few of the items that might have prevented this hair-raising experience:

- Check all flight instruments for proper operation prior to entering an area of adverse weather.
- Don't start into "the stuff" while the co-pilot is off on an errand.
- Most important of all—use all your instruments—don't freeze your eyes on the turn and bank indicator.

A little foresight, lots of planning
Everything set, both pilots scanning,

That cloud may pack a jolt or pitch

But you won't need the panic switch.

P.S. I'll bet the co-pilot really needed that trip after the recovery.

Not You, You!

The SNJ pictured below was the victim of considerable confusion on the part of two cadets, a tower control officer, and a runway signalman. The cadets were making their final night landings after some touch-and-go practice.

The cadet in SNJ number 6 made a slightly rough landing and practically brought his plane to a halt in the process of getting it under control. The tower control officer noticed how slowly he was moving and transmitted "Plane



on Runway, keep it rolling", since another SNJ was about to land.

The cadet who had made the rough landing didn't respond promptly and so the message was repeated. This time it was heard by both cadets. To complicate matters, the cadet in the second SNJ saw the green blinking light with which the signalman was trying to speed up the first SNJ and interpreted this to mean that the runway was clear. Hence, he kept rolling along at a good clip.

When the signalman saw that a collision was imminent, he tried to give the overtaking plane a red light. Both cadets saw the red light and applied brakes. Since the second SNJ was moving at greater speed than the first, this didn't help matters much. The first SNJ came to a quick halt while the second pilot was still braking and the collision occurred a couple of seconds later.



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

This accident reminds me of that war-time gag from the days of black-outs and bomb shelters—the one where the young London lass was heard to say, "Take your hand off my leg," and then after a slight pause, "Not you—you!"

There may be a lot of ways to stop accidents of this sort, but I'm afraid the only sure way is to allow only one student on the runway at a time during night landings. Of course, this slows things down, but probably doesn't cost as much in time as will be required to repair these two planes.

If this rule can't be followed, then the next best bet is positive tower control by plane number. In this instance, the planes were not required to report turning on the base leg and therefore the tower operator didn't know the side number of the plane that he wished to "keep rolling."

Economy Rears Its Figure Squadron Appoints Officer as Bird Dog

FLEET AIR WING 11—Something new has been added to squadron organization—an economy officer.

VP-741 at Jacksonville established a first by designating an officer to look up ways to save money—not just a junior officer new to the squadron, but one fairly senior who has been around for a while and can see where short-cuts can be taken and expenditures cut. Experience in operating procedures and the ways of the Navy are essential qualifications.

The squadron stands head and shoulders among Atlantic Fleet patrol squadrons for economy-mindedness. Piling up 5,063 hours during the past six months, VP-741 did it to the tune of 183 gallons an hour and an NSA cost of \$37.08.

● NAS WHIDBEY ISLAND—VP-29, formerly known as VP-812, a Reserve squadron, has relieved VP-1 of its duties at Atsugi, Japan.