



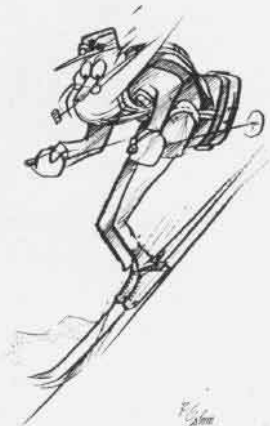
GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

I Was Shook

An F2H-4 pilot was grounded temporarily for an Anxiety Reaction which followed when an aircraft he was joining on struck the water, and the pilot was killed. A week later he was scheduled for a night hop and, although he felt very uneasy about taking it, he forced himself to go ahead. After flying around the area until landing time, he returned to the field and switched to tower frequency. At this point we take up the pilot's statement:

"As I was entering the break, I called the tower and they cleared me to follow the plane ahead of me. This I did, giving myself what I considered a good interval. This was the last I recall seeing the aircraft while I was airborne. I made a normal but fast approach and touched down on the right hand side of the runway, slightly right of centerline. My speed at touchdown was 140 knots, full flaps, and approximately 500 feet from end of runway.

"During the roll-out, I noticed an aircraft ahead of me on the right side of the runway. I started to brake my aircraft and saw that I was closing very



happened and he taxied off to the side of the runway.

"This accident could have been prevented in my estimation in a number of ways. First of all I used very poor judgment in flying this hop in the mental condition I was in at the time. Secondly, I landed fast. Last of all, I should have known exactly where any aircraft ahead of me was."



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

Son, I agree with you 99% on the ways you could have prevented this accident, but I think you should have reversed the order. After all, you did take the flight, so you must have thought your mental condition would not affect your flying too much. Your saying that you shouldn't have flown reminds me of a fella who claimed the best way to keep from getting killed in his car on the way to work was to take the bus. The next day he was running across the street to catch a bus and . . . well, when he gets out of the hospital, he is going back to driving his car.

Some pilots have a bad habit of flying when their physical or mental condition isn't normal, and most of them get away with it. But the ones who don't get away with it usually find themselves in a much worse physical or mental condition. The first thing that enters their minds is that this wouldn't have happened if they hadn't taken off. They are just as right as the bird who wouldn't have spun in if he had kept on flapping his wings or the dog who would have caught the rabbit. The only fallacy in this excuse is that the physical and mental condition are known BEFORE

take-off, and the pilot is his own best judge of whether or not he should fly. Here is how the situation looks to me.

If you KNOW how you feel before a flight, you do one of two things. You fly or you don't fly. If you don't fly, you don't crash. If you fly, you do one of two things. You find yourself more alert because of your condition, or you don't give a hoot. If you are more alert, you don't crash. If you don't give a hoot, you do one of two things. You get down O. K. or you crash. If you get down O. K., you are mighty lucky. If you crash one of two things happens; you get killed or you don't. If you don't, you are probably all shook up



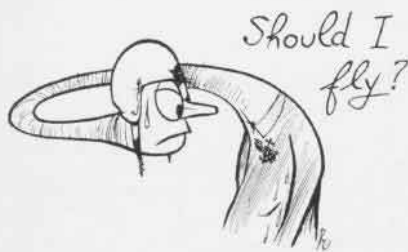
about it. If you get killed, your next of kin are all shook up. Either way someone is shook and it all goes back to the fact that you flew and weren't alert.

This just about has me convinced that no one would have been shook in this case if the pilot had kept the airplane ahead of him in sight. It wouldn't have hurt matters either if he had requested a day flight to kinda condition himself before going up at night.

'Four to Go'

Shortly after dark a F2V-6 was letting down for a landing. The co-pilot started the pre-landing check in accordance with the standard squadron check-off list, using the "challenge and reply" system. The check was completed through item 18, and the co-pilot announced "Four to go," (wheels, flaps, props, and boost pump).

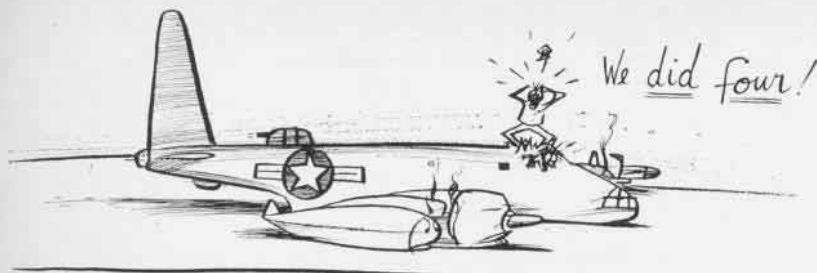
The aircraft was cleared for a straight-in by the tower to call five miles out on final. The pilot called five miles out, and he was cleared to land. At this time the tower cautioned him to land beyond the flare pots on



Should I fly?

fast. At this time I applied the brakes very hard and elected to try to pass the other aircraft on the left side. Next, I applied left brake as hard as I could, putting my plane into a skid and blowing both tires.

"At the same time I started the left turn, the aircraft ahead of me also went to the left and we collided. My right wing struck his left wing. I stopped dead on the runway. The other pilot called the tower to tell them what had



the end of runway, that the first 400 feet of runway was under construction. The aircraft touched down 1000 feet down the runway . . . wheels up. It seems that the four things done to complete the check-off list were: props, flaps, boost pump, and landing lights.



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

Well, if that wouldn't frost the punkin off the vine! I reckon this lad didn't read the little poem in the January issue of Naval Aviation News. If he did read it, then I made a mistake. It should have gone something like this:

Dilbert said, as he clenched his fist,
"Dad-burn it, I went over the check-off list!

When all complete I had four to go,
Wheels and flaps and props full low,
Boost pumps on, we're in like Flynn,
What's that, Tower, you cleared us in?



"ROG, Tower . . . J. B., slip us a flap,
Pete, flick the boost pumps and hide
that map.

Ta, De, Da! I'll just wiggle this
switch,
And there's the landing lights, not a
hitch!

Diddle-de-dum! What's next, J. B.?
We had four to go and we've done
three.

Ah yes, men, and whaddaya know?
A little shove to get the props in low.

"A little old turn and we're in the
slot.

Is there anything we coulda forgot?
Well, how could we? We ain't missed
yet—

A one, two, three, four . . . you can't
forget!

We grease her on, how smooth she
feels?
Oh, oh!, J. B., what rhymes with
heels?"

Dear Gramp:

We have an accident report that we can't sell, loan, or give away. We thought you might be interested since it could be classified as "pilot error," "error of other personnel," "material malfunction," and "miscellaneous." It resulted in Class B injury.

Here's what happened. This bird was flying in the French Grand National under the flag of old Erin, ya see. Fuel aboard was 10 plus 00, winds aloft averaging 50 knots from 340 degrees, sure and it was a foine day. Shortly after take-off the ADF went out (malfunction), compass started deviating 360 degrees (same), altimeter went haywire (ditto). Rather than return to base, he elected to dead reckon to his destination (pilot error).

To make a long story short, a few hours later, short on fuel, and 300 miles out over the Med, he spotted our carrier (miscellaneous). We were recovering aircraft at the time so he entered the traffic circle (pilot error) and made an approach. He didn't call turning base, so the LSO waved him off (error of other personnel).

Not having enough fuel to go around

again, he took his own cut (pilot error) and dived for the deck (ditto), missed a wire as he had no hook (miscellaneous), and wound up in the barrier with a broken landing gear (Class B injury).

By this time you have probably guessed why we can't get rid of the accident report. You're right. Anyway, after contacting the Irish Homing Pigeon Union, we managed to get the bird back to its owner.

You got it, Gramp. There must be a moral in it somewhere.

Respectfully yours

CDR USN



Grampaw Pettibone Says:

Bub, this is what is commonly called a left hook. I've been getting "the bird" right frequent of late, but this is a new approach. Howsomever, the way it looks to me it is incidental how the pigeon got to the ship. Maybe he stumbled onto a copy of "Pilgrims' Progress" while in France and new horizons looked good.

Maybe he got discouraged by the Dior styles for women pigeons and was headed for greener pastures. The fact is that he was three hundred miles at sea, too low on fuel for a wave-off, and anxious to get aboard.

The moral to this story—

At least, it's plain to me—
Is ne'er to lose your bearings
On a trip across the sea.

But if an unfamiliar landscape
Perchance becomes your lot,
Stay with "Lost Plane Procedure,"
Or you'll find the water hot.

If low on fuel and a speck appears,
'Twixt the ocean and the sky,
And you find your choice is nip and
tuck

For a deck that's wet or dry,

My advice is now presented
And it's the best you'll get,
Use the last remaining nip
To tuck it on the wet.

