



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Encore

Four F-11 *Tigers* and eight F-9 *Cougars*, piloted by advanced training instructors became airborne to perform a formation fly-by for a change-of-command ceremony. After rendezvous, the leader in an F-11 experienced intermittent radio problems and subsequently relinquished the lead to the next senior *Tiger* driver. The F-11 airborne spare filled the existing gap and the flight proceeded.

As briefed, the flight was formed in a "V" of diamonds, *Tigers* leading and *Cougars* forming the wings. After completion of the fly-by, the flight headed for home base, maintaining the fly-by formation and intending to execute their pre-briefed "spectacular" break. (Right and left simultaneously, *Cougars* first, utilizing both of the dual runways for landing.)

Prior to arrival at home base, the flight leader contacted the tower and declared his intentions to enter the break between the dual runways in "V" formation with a flight of 12. The tower replied that the dual was not the duty runway and requested compliance with normal

traffic. After many transmissions on tower frequency and in spite of a lack of prior coordination between the flight leader, operations and the tower, the controller relented and issued the clearance to break as requested.

Meanwhile, during this interlude, an F-11 wingman made known his plight of being too heavy to land on arrival. With this new information in mind, the leader

transmitted his decision that the F-11's would not break, but that he would lead the *Cougars* in and then depart with the *Tigers* to re-enter for a normal break.

As the flight arrived at the break, the *Cougars* broke from their diamonds to the right and left. With perfect timing, the original leader, who had relinquished the lead prior to the fly-by and had maintained radio silence to this point, called the *Tiger* wingmen to execute their break. The *Tigers* were forward of the *Cougars* and were blind to the interval, but nevertheless broke.

Spectacular! Executed with perfect timing and duplication were two three-plane near-misses, one to the right and the other to the left.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Whew! Some folks get away with anything. I shudder to think what these boys had up their sleeves for an encore.

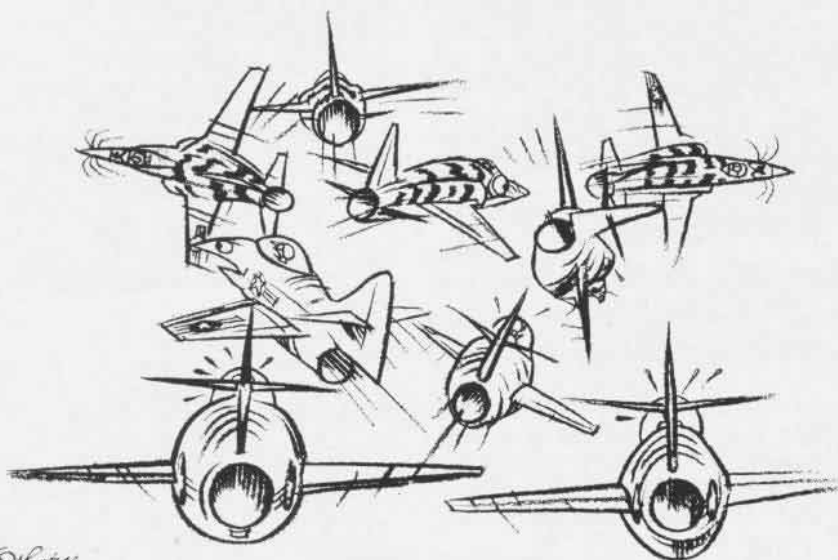
Old Gramps ain't so old he's forgotten the urge to look hot, but pullin' a stunt like this is beggin' for troubles. Calamity rendezvoused with these lads when the leader had radio problems and manifested itself with a heavy wingman, duals conflicting with the duty runway and an execution order given by a member of the audience.

A disciplined flight of *Tigers* tucked in nice and close entering the break in the old fashioned way still looks mighty sharp. We got a regular team trained to do the spectacular. This is old hat with the Blues. Let's leave it that way.

Like a Rose

A fledgling *Skyhawk* driver completed his initial day carrier qualification landings and subsequently launched for his night quals. The weather was 1,500 feet scattered, variable broken, with 10 miles visibility. Sea state was moderate with occasional pitching deck.

The first approach resulted in a wave-off for being too heavy and



was graded as a "fair pass." He called the ball with a state of 3.2 on the next pass and was right on glide slope. Approaching the close-in position, he started to go a little low. Paddles called for power which started him back up on the slope. Just prior to reaching the center, paddles heard an excessive reduction in power, immediately called for power and followed with wave-off on the radio and lights.

The pilot responded with 100% power and struck the ramp with the main gear, aft fuselage and tailhook 12 feet left of the centerline on the angled deck. Continuing up the deck for approximately 250 feet in a shower of sparks, flying debris, and hydraulic fluid, our man in extremis had thoughts of pulling the curtain, but vetoed this course of action in deference to the imposing superstructure on his right.

After passing the island, things looked up. The bent and bruised hawk became airborne, engine instruments read normal, flight controls responded, and salvage of the remains appeared feasible.

Another *Skyhawk* was on the downwind leg in the pattern and was directed to rendezvous, assess the damage and accompany the disabled bird on his divert to the closest air station.

The escorting aircraft directed his charge to "clean up," but this proved futile as a hydraulic failure had manifested itself as a result of the ramp strike. A rendezvous was attempted en route, but never accomplished because the escort overshoot and was further hindered by a broken cloud layer. The escorting aircraft did get a glimpse of the damaged machine and it appeared

that one main landing gear was missing. This information, however, was not passed to the distressed pilot.

Arriving over the beach with inoperative TACAN, the pilot of the crippled A-4 (after some difficulty) located the field and requested an immediate approach. The tower replied with a request for a fly-by for a gear check and was rapidly rebutted as fuel remaining indicated slightly under 400#. Needless to say, there was insufficient time available to foam the runway and the approach was made with the pilot still unaware of the extent of damage he had incurred. (Nose gear was down intact, port and starboard gear were missing; however, the starboard strut was in trail, the port stub was properly extended about six inches below the droptank, and one foot of the hook shank was missing.)

On touchdown, the aircraft slid approximately 1,500 feet before reaching the Morest pendant. The port gear stub momentarily engaged the pendant, causing the aircraft to swerve to the left and correct the right drift which had developed. The plane skidded an additional 150 feet and came to rest. No fire ensued. The pilot unstrapped and got out of the cockpit uninjured.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Egads lads! Somebody coulda got hurt. With his luck, this lad shoulda been in Las Vegas. There ain't many people who can beat odds like that.

Cheatin' the grim reaper on the ramp strike was pretty good, but puttin' it in on a dry runway with an unknown combination of legs and walking away from it without any in-

juries really tears the rag off the bush.

As things turned out, this youngster came out smellin' like a rose, but NATOPS says he shoulda read the instructions on the inside of the face curtain when facin' a landin' on the beach in this configuration. The escort, by not rendezvousing to assess the damage, could have compounded this into a second and fatal accident. What you don't know *can* hurt you!

Attaboy

One fine day a student aviator departed his basic training field in a T-28 on a scheduled solo acrobatic flight. He proceeded to the local training area and commenced wing-overs and barrel rolls.

After completing several of these acrobatics at 5,000 feet, he noted the sump plug light came on. A haze of blue smoke filled the cockpit. Without further ado, he put on his oxygen mask, reduced manifold pressure/RPM, and notified home base of his difficulties.

As he was near an outlying field, the distressed student set up a 130K descent toward this field and commenced a righthand, precautionary, emergency landing pattern for runway 04, hitting the high key at 2,500 feet and low key at 1,700 feet. As he reached the 90° position for runway 36, the #7 cylinder exploded, tearing off the cowling on the port side of the engine and increasing the sink rate considerably. With the emergency compounded, the lad elected to land on runway 36. He intentionally left the gear up to insure making the field, closed the throttle, and placed the mixture control in idle cut-off. (The crash truck was in its normal parking position on runway 36 as 04 was the duty.)

Committed to 36 (in spite of the parked crash truck and a runway watch frantically waving him off), our hero glided over the truck and touched down at 3,100 feet. The plane skidded for 1,000 feet and came to rest 80 feet from the end of the runway. There was no fire, and this cool youngster, uninjured, stepped smartly from the cockpit.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Give that lad an "Attaboy." It's mighty soothin' tonic to the old achin' ulcer when I come across a lad overcoming a sad situation like this.

