



grampaw pettibone

Non-Natops = Wheels Up

Two young aviators were scheduled for a day proficiency flight in the T-28 *Trojan*. The pilot-in-command (PIC) had approximately 800 hours, with 120 in the T-28. The copilot had less than 300 hours with just over 100 in the T-28. The PIC occupied the rear seat. Good flying weather was forecast. No discrepancies were noted. Preflight, engine start, taxi and takeoff were uneventful.

The flyers proceeded to a nearby airfield and entered the landing pattern for touch and go's. The PIC made three, raising the landing gear after each. Following these landings, control was passed to the copilot in front while on the downwind leg for the fourth touch and go.

Approaching the 180-degree position, the copilot read the checklist. Abeam, he called for landing clearance and reported the gear down. The T-28 was cleared to continue, following an E-2 which was on final.

While turning, the copilot called again for landing clearance and re-



ported gear down. Both pilots later stated that they saw the gear indicating down and locked. The tower cleared the *Trojan* for landing. It landed wheels up, sliding 1,000 feet on its fuselage. The surprised pilots secured the aircraft and exited without difficulty. At this time, both pilots noted the gear handles in the up position and all gear doors in the closed position.



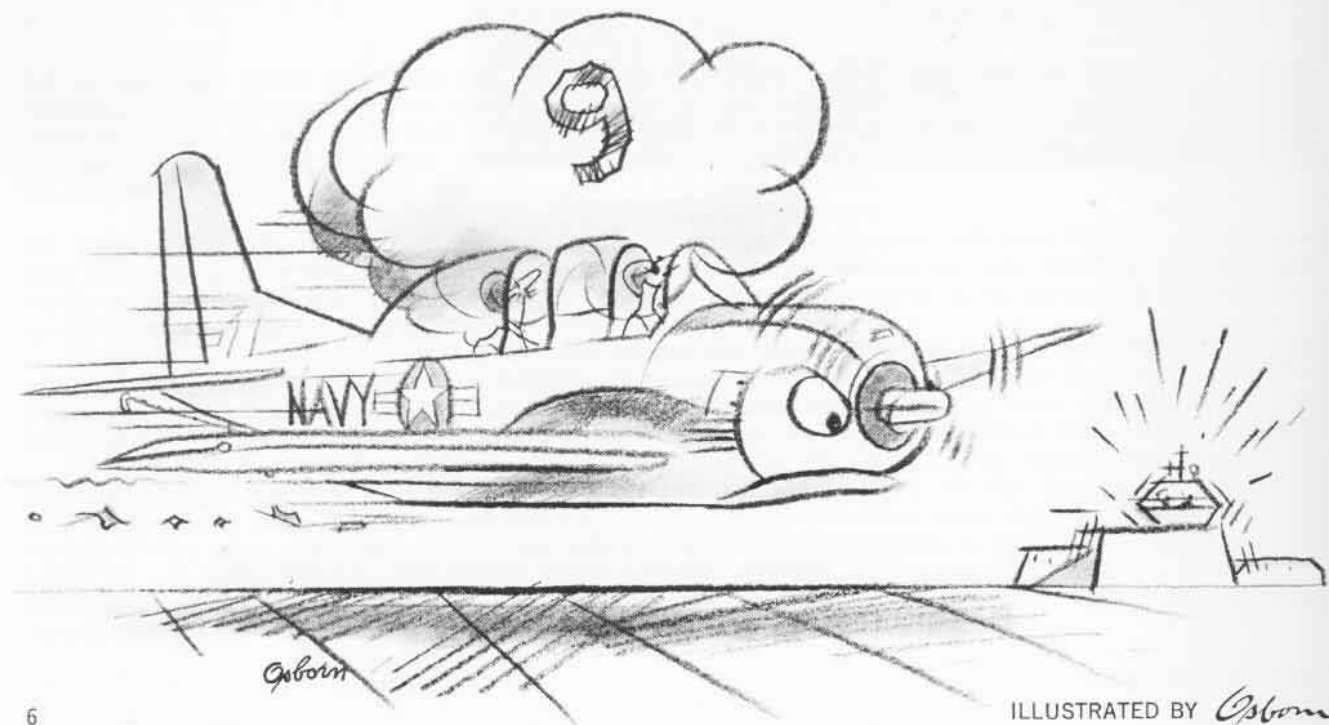
Grampaw Pettibone says:

Jumpin' Juniper! I don't believe it!?! And with *two* pilots yet! Believe it or not, in the recent past the majority of "wheels-up" landings were made in multi-piloted machines. I believe I can do the "write-up" right now on the next wheels-up landing 'cause they are all the same.

The thing that really gets to me here is that Natops says, "Leave the rollers down when in the landing pattern." That's simple enough. Then why the heck didn't the pilot-in-command comply. You know, I can have a small amount of sympathy for a gent who makes a mistake, but I have no sympathy for a driver who gets in trouble when he is willfully disregarding Natops. Need I say more?

Faulty Attention

On a bright California morning, two proficiency pilots in a trusty C-45 received taxi clearance to the warm-up spot for the north runway at a West Coast air station. During warm-up, the pilots were informed by ground con-



ILLUSTRATED BY Osborn

trol that wind conditions were such that they could use the west runway if they so desired. Due to the sun, the decision was made to use the alternate runway. After being cleared, they taxied toward the takeoff end of the other runway. To expedite their departure, the copilot switched to tower frequency and requested takeoff clearance en route to the warm-up spot.

The tower cleared the aircraft for takeoff and both pilots hurriedly completed the remaining few items on the checkoff list. Another C-45 was holding to the left side of the throat, to the runway perpendicular to the taxiway centerline. Both pilots of the taxiing aircraft were busy with last minute takeoff items and did not see the parked C-45 until their starboard engine contacted the starboard wing of the other aircraft. Both aircraft were substantially damaged but, fortunately, there were no injuries.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Well, now, if that doesn't tear the rag off the bush! Drivin' a bug smasher or any other aircraft around with a pair of eyes in the cockpit copying a clearance or doing anything else is absolutely ridiculous. The visibility in a C-45 is poor at best and even more reason to use extra caution during ground operations, but the same attention and caution is required regardless of the type of aircraft you're in. Maneuvers like this are gettin' to us at the rate of several hundred clams each year. There is just no defense for a guy who pulls such a trick.

This lad really didn't have a clearance problem as a United Airlines plane had just taxied around the parked aircraft. He just failed to ensure that the area ahead was clear. It's just that simple and to put it any other way would be a waste of words. Uncage the eyeballs, boy! (June 1964)

Night Ride

An instructor and his student were scheduled for a night instrument sortie in the TA-4J *Skyhawk*. The instructor had over 1,000 pilot hours with almost 200 in the *Skyhawk*. Since this was an instrument flight, he occupied the front seat.

After the briefing, the pilots proceeded to the aircraft. The instructor

Where am I...
What's up...
Where's the
plane?



told the student to strap in while he did the preflight. Preflight and start were without incident. The instructor taxied out and the plane was scrutinized by the final checker.

Leaving the final checker, the pilot did not engage nose-wheel steering or increase power. As the pilot taxied forward, the *Skyhawk* slowly drifted right. The pilot then engaged nose-wheel steering to correct the aircraft direction. The plane tracked properly with nose gear steering engaged. The pilot continued to the duty runway and held short, waiting for takeoff clearance. He completed the takeoff checklist.

The flight was cleared for takeoff and was shifted to departure control frequency. The pilot taxied into position, using the center-line lights for runway alignment. He stopped the aircraft approximately 500 feet down the runway. He then conducted the manual fuel control check IAW Naptops and received a ready-to-go from his student (now under the instrument hood). He added power and released his brakes, passing 90 percent rpm.

The aircraft began to roll, heading slightly to the right. The pilot tried to correct with left rudder but the A-4 still drifted right. In a right skid, the pilot added more rudder. The *Sky-*

hawk came back to the left of center line. During this correction, the pilot retarded to idle and thought, "If I can't get it to stay on the runway, I will probably eject."

The aircraft then went hard right with a left skid. The pilot ejected himself and the student prior to leaving the runway 2,150 feet from the takeoff end.

The *Skyhawk* then traveled 500 feet off the right side of the runway, breaking off its nose-wheel inner barrel. It came to rest on its nose and main mounts. The pilots were not injured; however, the aircraft sustained substantial damage.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Thunderin' thunderin's! This is a weird one. Even though there was some degree of driver error here, there were other factors which did not give our pilots an even shake!

This aircraft had many previous discrepancies with the nose-wheel steering and right brake. Granted, maintenance made numerous attempts at correcting the discrepancy. However, with this gripe constantly recurring, maybe it was time to call in expertise beyond the local level. All in all, there were a lot of people besides the pilot who could have helped prevent this.