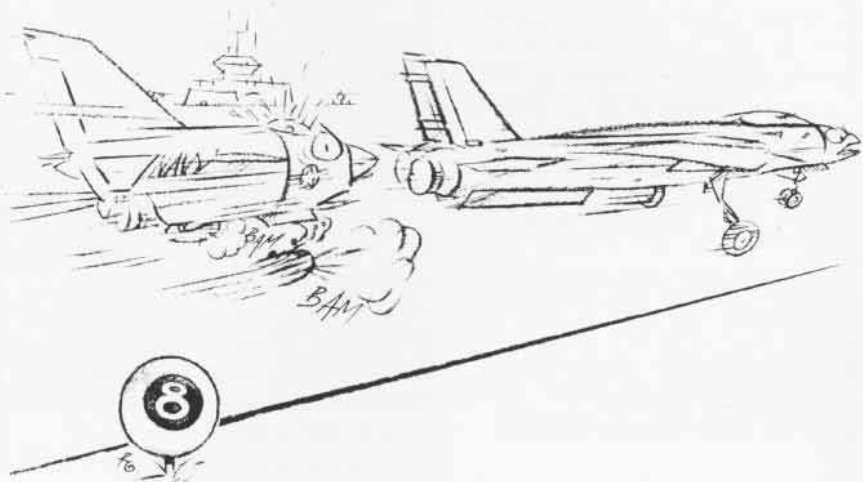


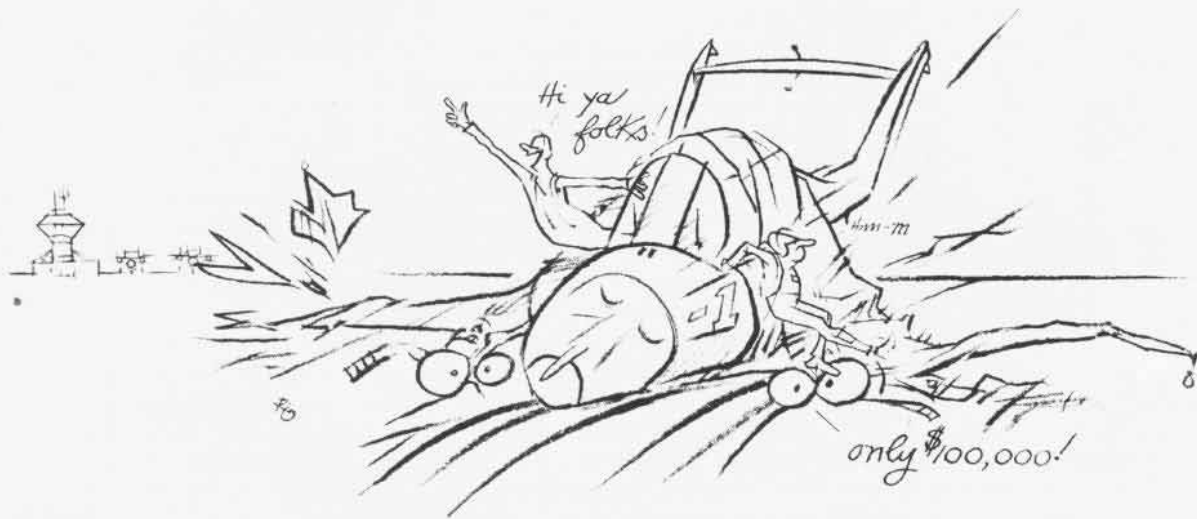
8 Board and Counting

A first-tour lieutenant, fresh from the fleet readiness squadron with 130 hours in the *Phantom*, was landing at NAS West Coast. His RIO was also a first-tour type but with cruise experience. The lieutenant was the first nugget pilot crewed with the RIO. The pilot's ICS and UHF were not working properly but everything else was

in order. The F-4N separated from a wingman at the three-quarter-mile point and touched down behind an F-14 *Tomcat* with what appeared to be normal interval according to the tower and crash crew personnel, plus a witnessing pilot. The exact interval distance was undetermined. The pilot deployed the drag chute on touchdown but it didn't blossom for about 1,000 to 1,500 feet of the rollout. The RIO called for the chute three times, on touchdown and twice more before it opened. The pilot couldn't reply to the back-seater due to his radio problem. The pilot sensed an excessive closure rate on the *Tomcat* without the chute and believed he didn't have enough room to take off and go around. The tower controller estimated that the F-14 was 5,000 feet from the approach end of the runway at near taxi speed when the *Phantom* pilot, traveling at about 115 knots, commenced light braking.

After passing the 8 board (8,000 feet remaining), both main tires blew. The aircraft was on centerline at the 7 board but began turning left in a right skid, completing a 160-degree ground loop on the runway's left shoulder. The starboard main gear collapsed as the aircraft came to a





stop, dropping the wing to the ground. Neither flyer was hurt.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

My achin' acorns! Another judgment call that costs. Although reliable witnesses said the Phantom and Tomcat had proper interval, the pilot believed he was in extremis and began braking early. The F-4B/N NATOPS states that "Normally, wheel brakes should be used only below 100 knots since the probability of blowing a tire decreases significantly with a reduction in ground speed. . . . At high speed, brake pedal deflections as small as 1/16 inch have proved sufficient to blow a tire."

Old Gramps thinks the RIO's repeated calls for the chute early on in the landing didn't help to keep the cockpit climate "cool," although the pilot says the transmissions didn't bother him.

Postflight checks revealed no electrical continuity discrepancies in the nose gear steering system, yet the Phantom went out of control as it slowed down. Could be the pilot thought the worst was over and relaxed his vigil.

I've said it before and I'm sure I'll

have to say it again: Know your machine. Stay ahead of it. And remember, a pilot is often like a quarterback dropping back into the pocket lookin' for a receiver while six huge linemen are bearin' down on him. Quick and correct decisions are a must for safety and health.

Bronco Belly Burner

A replacement pilot and his instructor were on a FAM flight in an OV-10 *Bronco*. After a pair of touch and go's, and one stop and go, the tower cleared the *Bronco* for a right crosswind turn in the pattern. The replacement pilot was in the turn at about 600 feet when the IP gave him a simulated port engine failure. The pilot leveled his wings, added power on the good engine, raised the gear and started a climb. He told the tower he had a simulated emergency and that he would extend the upwind leg.

Shortly thereafter, without further transmissions, the tower cleared the *Bronco* for a touch and go. The crew did not make the standard position report and gear check at low key where they arrived a little high and fast. From here on, the instructor

pilot (IP) constantly coached the replacement pilot (RP). The OV-10 landed on the centerline drop tank about 1,600 feet down the runway slightly left. Neither flyer realized they had made a wheels-up landing until the aircraft stopped. The IP initially thought the nose gear had collapsed. The engines were secured just prior to stopping completely and the flyers egressed uninjured.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Bust my bronco! Another case of tryin' hard but not seein' the forest for the trees. These fellows got so caught up with the simulated engine-out emergency they skipped the basics, like putting the wheels down. It just burns my belly to hear about these wheels-up fiascoes.

The RP made proper gear check calls on only one of the previous approaches but the IP didn't correct this trend. On the mishap approach, the tower issued a landing clearance unusually early in the pattern. But it's still the folks at the controls who are responsible for lowering the landing gear. 'Nuff sed!