

Close Shave

An A-3D returning from a night training hop crossed the ramp of a big CVA with the meatball right on the money. The hook picked up the number two wire after the touchdown and the arrestment seemed normal. Suddenly, the wire BROKE, and the big plane lurched forward with full power on --- but SLOW! As the *Skywarrior* cleared the flight deck, the pilot cleaned up his landing gear and concentrated on holding his attitude and airspeed. All three men aboard held their breath as they watched the altimeter unwind.

The A-3D shuddered as it spanked the water. The pilot gently eased the yoke toward him as the fuselage lightly slid through the dark water. After a few seconds, the aircraft broke free of the sea and climbed swiftly.

Vectored by the carrier, the bomber flew to a nearby island airfield and landed safely. Inspection of the A-3D revealed that the underside of the fuselage aft of the bomb bay door and the port engine nacelle had been dragged through the water. The LSO logged the narrow squeak as an arrested landing, a bolter, and a water touch-and-go.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

How close can you get to wet feet? This pilot is a cool one, but if he has many more like this, I'll have to check the competition before I unlimber one of my tall tales at any "Happy Hour" where HATWing One is represented.

Just goes to prove you ain't got an accident till she smashes to a stop, so keep flyin' it.

You may luck out. This crew did.