

Trials and Tribulation Part Two

Yep it's me again, Hope you all enjoyed your holidays, it's a new year, and we hope for new sky's and adventures, so let's get going!

In my last Adventure I was getting ready to fly for the first time. Oh how excited was I, and there we were, my instructor and I plus the big blue sky.

I am at the point of no return, (or at least that's what I think), in my sky adventure, the part that you're going to love or hate (in my case I hope its love). The part that now means Speed = Fuel = \$\$\$\$.

Burn Baby Burn.

Yips! I am back in the 70's - John T and Saturday Night Fever! - Disco Inferno - come on guys you know you want too.

'Sorry I got mentally distracted for a moment Now back to the real world

So run up done. Taxi to the hold short line. Radio on Tower. Now it's getting real.

I say those magic words "Reid Hill View Tower C5290E ready for takeoff", then it comes back "C5290E cross 31R Line up and wait 31L", so I add some power, push down on the right rudder peddle (really concentrating now) and start the turn,

Over the Radio "90E clear for takeoff". I turn right on to 31L and am hit by the excitement of turning onto the runway and looking down that long black stretch of tarmac, it's just something I have wanted to do all my life and at this point I know this to be true.

I push the throttle in Power Full, gauges green, keeping pressure on the right rudder, keep the center line, airspeed live, speed 55kts, rotate, slowly pull back on the Yoke and up we go.

Wow what a feeling.

Of course, I am getting alarmed at this point as I look at the pitch. To me it looks like I am going to flip it over!

I push forward on the yoke, nice and calmly, my instructor sorts me out and we resume the correct climb rate.

But that was just so good, that moment when you lift off is just indescribable. I have a very small moment to myself to take it all in, and then snap - I am back again. My instructor says "ball centered. 74 kts at 700 feet. Turn left, Keep Vy climb in. Ball Centered. and don't cross into the Charlie! "

What the heck? Not again! How the hell did Charlie get up here, yes I know, it's Class C airspace!

Yep it's all new words, things, experiences. All hitting on you for the first time and at the same time - overload!

However what is interesting is working in a 3 - dimensional space, I've never thought about it before but once you embrace this your senses improve 10 fold. Everything is heightened.

For the first few minutes we fly level flight, - nothing too difficult and that's how it goes, - beginning to relax a little. We do some turns, left, right, and you start to understand simple things. It all seems easy - easy but you learn so much in a short space of time.

So we go to do more air work, turns around a point and S turns. I remember doing these, but what sticks in my head was the smell.

Nope - I know what you're thinking, but not that kinda smell. It is the fields of garlic. I never thought you would smell it at 1500 feet in the air.

What goes up must come down!

My Instructor says "OK, we will head back to RHV. BTW - do you know where we are?"

I look blankly at him, and then look out the window. I have no idea what I would recognize out of the window at this height. Perhaps TOGO'S or a Bar with a 'Drink Me' sign in neon red!

Then I look down at my chart. Oh boy - it's got more lines than Joan River's face and I thought that was impossible. I do not have a clue!

"OK, turn to heading 160, climb to 3000 feet". So I just do that. Now I am pointing in the direction of UTC (whatever that is!). On the way to UTC I learn about 'Trimming' and that is not your beard!

Thumb pressure trim up, finger pressure trim down. Like everyone else, I over trim, then re-trim and play around until I get what I think is right. Now the fun begins. Work Load!

Instructor: "Find the ATIS frequency for RHV (hint - it's on the chart)"
Me: "Ok looking, looking"
Instructor: "Do a little, fly a little".
Me: "Heck, how can I fly this and look at a chart at the same time!? OK - it's 121.65"
Instructor: "Are you sure ". So I check again
Me: "Nope, that's ground," (why do they make these things so small to see?). "Ok I have it 125.20"
Instructor: "Punch in the number here on the radio and listen."
So I do it and out comes all this info, so I go set up the altimeter and write down the rest,
Instructor: "Do a little, Fly a Little!"
Instructor: "Now call the Tower" Oh no - my least favorite activity! What the hell.
"RHV tower "I say very calmly my position and height. This time Victor is with me! Great! It went well this time with no fumbling.
Tower: "Runway 31 right clear to land"

Here we go. I never thought my senses would be so heightened.
I really listen to my instructor, "reduce power to 1900 and 100kts". So I make the power reduction, but I don't push forward. I wonder why!
"Gordon", says the instructor firmly, "push forward slowly, 100 kts and descend to 2,300 feet" I do another check gas, trim and safety. I push Forward and look for the markers, BMX track and water towers at 4 sm, then 2 sm,
Instructor "Can you find the runway?" "Yes, I See it", "Good"
Ok - we are at 2sm water tower.
Instructor: "Full Flaps, power to idle"
Oh Heck!! No power and I have this feeling of falling out of the sky. It's such a strange thing pushing forward on the yoke.
Instructor: "Pitch for 68 kts".
So what do I do? I pull back and hold on to the yoke. I really don't want to push forward again. The airspeed slowly passes 68, 65, 60 kts.
Mmmm, this is not good! Every bone in my body is saying "don't push forward you will crash into the ground! "
(Of course we all know that's not going to happen)

Here we are in the correct configuration for landing. I am trying to line up for 31 right, when I see these lights just to the left. Two banks of lights. They are all white.
Ah, I know what these are even before my instructor tells me.
"White on White you will fly all night, Red on Red your dead, Red over White your all right", Remember this always!

Now we are stable, still high and on idle, but the Top lights are starting to turn red. OK - power to 1500. It's looking good. Winds right down the runway at 5 kts. Runway is getting bigger and bigger. I am sweating and fixed on the runway (just like a rabbit in the headlights)
Still red over white - still all right then.
Then red over red. My instructor says smartly "power to 2000 now". So I increase power and the aircraft goes up. Keep the nose down. Push. Push. It's back to Red over white.
Instructor: "Power to 1500 again".
Nice and stable. Just when I think it's all going in the right direction, the Mall has its way with me. A sudden force pushes me up higher, "What was that?" I ask, still sweating. "It's a thermal from the mall" is the reply.
What do I do now? It's white over white. OK - I reduce Power to Idle and within a few seconds we are back on track.

Now I am fixed on the runway and my nose is heading downward into the runway.
I hear the word "round out - Now". I feel the instructor pulling back on the yoke and helping me.
I know I should try and relax but adrenaline comes in all shapes, colour and smells!
Keep your eyes open! - I tell myself.

I take a good look down the runway.

"Keep it flying - look at the end of the runway - keep flying". So I gently pull back. "Keep it going"
Then the stall horn sounds. What is heck is that? It can't be good! So I pull back and we drop in to the
runway. Gently. First landing. WOW.

We get off the runway and taxi back, shut down and park.

That was incredible!!

I didn't expect that feeling of Euphoria. Addictive. Intoxicating. Now I am really hooked,

After your first flight, you will have many highs and lows, which I'll try to cover in my final installment.
In many ways, I think flying improves your personal performance and I think it brings focus to you. This
helps in other ways in your life.

So next time more of my instructors jokes, adventures and just a great time.

Keep flying and wild is the wind

Gordon Bennie

PS... Calling all pilots, CFI's I need your Funny Stories , things that went wrong, things that went right
\$100 hamburger stories , anything. All names will be withheld and stories to be used at the appropriate
time so come on give me the pay dirt! It's all in good fun. Email me at gordonbennie@me.com