

### **Ten days to get license©**

Well I just completed a most interesting eleven days. I learned a great deal about myself and about flight instructing. A student from Europe emailed me and made a proposal based on some of the material I had put on rec.aviation.student. He wanted me to take over from where other instructors had left off.

He had completed all the private pilot requirements but had not passed the practical Test. Had a current medical and had passed the written within the last two years. He had a period of eleven days for me to get him through the flight test. I sent him my flying material on six disks via Federal Express for \$30 postage. He had about a week to look at it before coming to the States.

I had arranged housing at \$20 per day and aircraft rental at \$45 for a C-152. My time was \$25 for engine time only. All ground time and preparation for test was included in my engine time fee. My plan called for the use of two C-152's. One as primary and the other as a back-up. The time gave no allowance for maintenance problems. So much for the best laid plans of mice and flight instructors.

We communicated and I laid out the program I hoped to follow. Here's the way it went.

Half day Saturday 5/3 C-152

Start on his arrival at 4 p.m. and make visit to airplane, and tower. Review airport diagram and radio procedures. Review parameters of four basics with emphasis on heading and altitudes within PTS standards. We do slow flight and simple stalls. Flight Time 1.1; Total 3 hours.

Sunday a.m. 5/4 C-152

Start at 9 a.m. Review precision turns, power-on stalls and minimum controllable in the morning. Dual 1.5 Total time 3 hours.

Sunday p.m. 5/4 C-152

Landings in the afternoon as well as procedures to nearby towered airport. Dual 1.5 Total time 3 hours

Monday a.m. 5/5 C-152

Ground time spent on reading sectional and radio procedures into local controlled and uncontrolled airports. Dual .8; Solo .9 Total time 3 hours.

Monday p.m. 5/5 C-152

Routes and radio procedures required for 5 local uncontrolled airports. Dual time 2.1 Total time 3 hours

Tuesday a.m. 5/6 C-152

Dual and Solo flight to Napa Dual 2.1; Total time 3 hours spent covering Practical Test Standards and Oral review.

Tuesday p.m. 5/6 C-152

Flight planning and dual covering enroute radio and radar procedures. Dual .9 Total time 3 hours

Wednesday a.m. 5/7 C-152

Student solo Concord to King City 115 nautical miles to pick up instructor who ferried C-1282 RG to San Luis Obispo. Student arrived on

course and on time. Hood time with VOR tracking and soft field landings.  
1.5 hours solo; 1.6 hours dual

Wednesday p.m. 5/7

Aircraft down for 100 hour will not be completed over weekend. No other aircraft available.

Thursday a.m. 5/8

Familiarization flight in C-150 that was only available for two hours.  
Review of four basics stalls and slow flight. Dual 1.2 Total time 3 hours

Thursday p.m. 5/8 C-172

Familiarization flight in C-172 Uncontrolled airport procedures with landings. Dual 1.6 Total 3 hours.

Found club that would make C-150 available on exclusive basis through the following Tuesday. \$25 to join and \$39 per hour with 10 hours paid in advance. Back in business.

Friday a.m. 5/9 C-150

Proficiency with emphasis on turns to headings and holding altitude. All landings, slips, emergency descents. Dual 1.4; Total time 3 hours. METAR and TAF reading.

Friday p.m. 5/9 C-150

Proficiency Dual 1.5; Total time 3 hours

Saturday p.m. 5/10 C-150

Review of precision landings. Study of material related to Oral. Dual 1.3 Total time 3 hours

Sunday a.m. 5/11 C-150

SVFR procedures. Lost procedures, Emergencies Dual 1.7; Total time 3 hours.

Sunday p.m. 5/11 C-150

Radar procedures, unfamiliar airport diversion PTS paper work. Proficiency. Dual 2.0 Total time 3 hours.

Monday a.m. 5/12 C-150

Phase check with another instructor as well as additional review of material related to oral. 4 hours.

Monday p.m. 5/12 C-150

Check ride. Failed slips and short field landings.

Tuesday a.m. 5/13 C-150

Dual review of all slips and short field landings. Dual 1.8 Total time 3 hours

Tuesday p.m. 5/13 C-150

Passed checkride

Wednesday a.m.

On the way to Europe.

As you can see there were aircraft problems that occurred through no one's fault but through circumstance. The student, through no fault of his own, had been allowed to accumulate over 100 hours of time without mastering the basic skills of holding headings, turning to headings, and doing maneuvers while maintaining altitude. He had received some very poor instruction in the performance of the four basics. He did not and could not anticipate the use of the rudder. He moved and held the yoke

as though it would jump out of the airplane if he let go. He was always behind with the trim. Good training teaches a student to anticipate even with trim movements. Every landing flare resulted in a 30 degree turn to the left. He tried to lift a stalled wing with the ailerons. He could not land either straight nor on the center line.

His flying was instinctive, reactionary, and without accuracy or precision with regards to airspeed and control application. He flew as though he was steering a car. In one of his notes to me he indicated that there were some problems with his flying. How or why his first instructors did not take preventative or corrective measures I cannot understand. This student is a brilliant, educated man who took his flight instruction on faith. He had no way of knowing that he was being allowed to maneuver incorrectly and in an unsafe manner. What he did seemed natural.

Well, flying is not natural, much of what we do with the airplane and its controls must be done contrary to what our instincts indicate. I had to get the basic skills in line before he could make progress. There was not much to build on. I wasted four days trying to build on his prior training. No matter how I tried, even lacing a pencil between his fingers, he was unable to use the yoke with a light, one finger, touch. We did climbing, level, and descending turns at 30 degree of bank to headings over and over until he was able to combine the use of rudder and yoke to come out on headings. In the beginning he was usually off 20 to 30 degrees and using only the yoke to correct.

I learned that students seldom know what their problems might be. They will say landings when basic skills are at fault. I learned that a student will develop tunnel vision into one aspect of landing, such as pulling power off and fail to recognize that in flying, NEVER and ALWAYS have exceptions. A student is likely to become so focused on one aspect of a maneuver that he loses sight of the big picture. One general criticism of my instruction in the past has been that I do not do enough demonstration. This particular student was adamant in his resistance to any demonstrations by me. Practice does not make perfect. Practice of the right kind brings improvement.