

EFC NEWS



February/March 2010

Editor's Notes

In this issue I would like to begin by offering "Congratulations to Mark Niznik and his wife Lindsey on the birth of their daughter Iona Megan on 25th February." - A future member of EFC perhaps? This issue contains the answers to Tom Ward's previous article on Pan calls (see the last but one issue), a profile of Alastair Mutch and the first in a series of articles of his trip to the US, with some particularly spectacular photographs!

The 19th of March saw the AGM of EFC. As usual the Marcello de Felice Quaich was presented, this year to Mark Allan – well done Mark. The AGM was well attended as usual with 19 attendees and 9 apologies from 46 members – an excellent show of support. The committee from the previous year was elected unopposed, with Malcolm as Chairman, Jack as Treasurer and myself as Secretary. Mark Allan is in charge of web issues and George continues to do behind the scenes work on membership issues. At this point a quick reminder to everyone wishing to renew his or her membership, to do so before the end of March for the bargain sum of £225.

We now have a new system for 'booking out' with ATC when you go flying. This is an online system, replacing booking out by phone. With ATC's help we are ironing out some of the inevitable bugs in introducing the system, so please bear with us while we work towards a reliable and efficient set-up. In the meantime, particularly if you are coming out to fly solo, please make sure, before you leave for the airport, that there will be someone at the club to help you submit your electronic booking out form.

Once the system is bedded down we will send out a simple guide to how to use it. This will also be available in printed format next to the club computer.

There is a related change in the initial radio call to Ground/Tower. Rather than the initial call being a request for taxi, the initial call is now a request for clearance, as follows:

"Edinburgh Ground (/Tower) GBNGT, PA28 on the flying club grass with Information Kilo, QNH 1008, request clearance for a VFR Kelty departure"

NB you have to tell them which way you want to go. Once the controller has given your clearance, you've read it back and he's confirmed your correct read back, you can then request taxi.

"Members are reminded that they should pay for their flight immediately after its conclusion. Sometimes this may not be possible because, for example, you may have returned late or all the instructors are flying and there is no one to process your bill. In these circumstances a phone call to the club next day with your credit card details to settle the bill would be very much appreciated"

Member Profile



Name: Alastair Mutch

Age: 51

Job: Electronics Engineer, Spacelabs Healthcare

Total Hours: 450 power

Flying Training: I started flying models at school and progressed to a few hours gliding at Aboyne and Arbroath when at University. Flew some power with Pegasus in Aberdeen when the

novelty of hanging about Aboyne all day hoping for a flight wore off but quickly discovered that a student grant didn't really stretch that far. Three of us then bought a hang glider and taught ourselves to fly it on the hills around Aberdeen – amazingly we survived. Indeed, one of our trio went on to fly for Virgin Atlantic.

Then followed a long layoff due to work and family commitments until I restarted flying at EFC in 2001. After a year I got fed up with the British weather and lack of progress due to lack of flying so tagged on two weeks holiday to a business trip and completed the JAA PPL in San Diego. Flew at EFC and then at Fife for a bit before joining the FY Grumman AA5 group at Edinburgh. With some encouragement from the rest of the group I went back to California to do my IMC rating in 2003 in four days – flying about in beautiful weather with stunning scenery in foggles the whole time... including an approach and landing at LAX. Restarted gliding in 2006 at Portmoak and worked through the conversion to gain my bronze, cross-country and silver badges culminating in my first diamond for height gain in February 2009 – 19,000 feet over Crieff. I joined a Jodel syndicate at Portmoak at the end of last year to build some tail dragger time so currently I have some difficult choices each weekend about what to fly.

Favourite Route: West Coast of Scotland to Mull or Plockton.

Furthest Flight: Apart from the US Tour – A round UK trip via East Coast, Andrewsfield, Dover, IofW, Exeter, Wales, Hawarden, Lake District and back to Perth over five days.

Worst SNAFU: Too many to count but a selection are:

- Pulling the mixture instead of carb heat on qualifying solo cross-country over the mountains at 9000 feet.
- Joining downwind at Hanscom Field (west of Boston) for the wrong runway.
- Getting a bit lost on the taxiways at Boston Logan airport.
- Breaking a canopy during a spin recovery in a glider – it gets a bit windy.

Future Dream: To fly to Austria or Switzerland in FY. Maybe this year...



When is a PAN not a PAN - The answers?

In the last but one Newsletter a number of problems were presented to you, which could occur on a typical flight (hopefully not all on the same flight). The purpose was to make you think which ones, if any, would result in a Pan call to D&D. First of all a disclaimer! Before looking at each individual situation, let's make it clear that what follows is not necessarily a definitive answer to each problem, it is a personal view and does not constitute EFC policy. The actions taken to resolve these problems will depend upon experience, the circumstances and the conditions on the day. A fault occurring when flying by yourself or with a non-flying Px may result in a much higher workload than it would if you were flying with another pilot.

Anyway, the shambles of the last flight started with the suction gauge reading zero instead of between and 3"- 5". As you will remember, a zero reading on the suction gauge in-flight is likely to mean a failure of the engine driven vacuum pump. The system works by allowing air to enter the suction system and pass through the gyro instruments, in our case the DI and AI, into the vacuum regulator before being pumped out through a pipe. If the pump fails the whole system becomes u/s and whilst the gauge falls immediately to zero, the DI and AI, which have been turning at around 1200, and 1500 rpm respectively, will start to slowly run down. The trouble is, if this goes unnoticed and you continue to use the DI for heading information it will start to give you erroneous readings causing you to fly off track. In our scenario from the previous article, this could be why the lochs were not orientated with the chart and the towns didn't look right. If you do wander off track and you're not sure where you are, it may be prudent to make a Pan call to D&D to establish your position before you stumble into the CAS and Danger Areas that may be around.

Bear in mind, the Pan would be for a position fix and not for the loss of the DI or AI. On a VFR day you should be capable of finding your way around the country just getting your heading information from the compass.

Then the ASI started to wind down! What's the problem? Remember back in your training days the mantra, "power plus attitude equals performance"? What this means is, if you set the power to 2200rpm, the attitude so that you are neither climbing nor descending, then in S&L flight this should give you airspeed of around 90kts. Need to climb? No problem! Simply apply full power raise the nose so that it is around about the horizon or where it would normally be for a climb, hold it there, and then trim. Your airspeed in the PA28 will be around 80kts. Exactly what you want! Setting up the aircraft for a landing shouldn't be too much of a problem either. On base leg reduce the power to 1500rpm as you would normally do, hold the nose up for a few seconds lower some flap then lower the nose slightly and this should give an airspeed of about 70kts at a rate of descent of around 500'/m. On final approach, lower final stage flap, point the nose at the threshold and use the power to control your rate of descent. If the stall warner sounds, lower the nose slightly and add a little power but it's likely your speed will be a little higher than normal so don't be surprised if there's a little 'bounce' on landing. No need to bother D&D for that minor irritant then!

You were then presented with an alternator failure, which meant the battery was supplying the electrical power. The actions to remedy this failure are included in the checklist so there's no point in repeating them here! What can be said, however, is that if you switch off all the electrics except the radio, the battery should last around 30 minutes. Keep your transmissions short as this is when the battery uses up most of its power. If you are some distance from your destination you can save power by advising ATC of the failure and that you are going to continue the flight non-radio to preserve the battery. However, you can advise them you will call them at the next waypoint or if you are about to about to change frequency. Be aware if you do land away and shutdown it may not be possible to start the engine again as a certain amount of battery power is required.

Your next problem was dealing with an open door. This was covered in a recent article of the Newsletter so if you can't remember how to deal with it, have another read of the article.

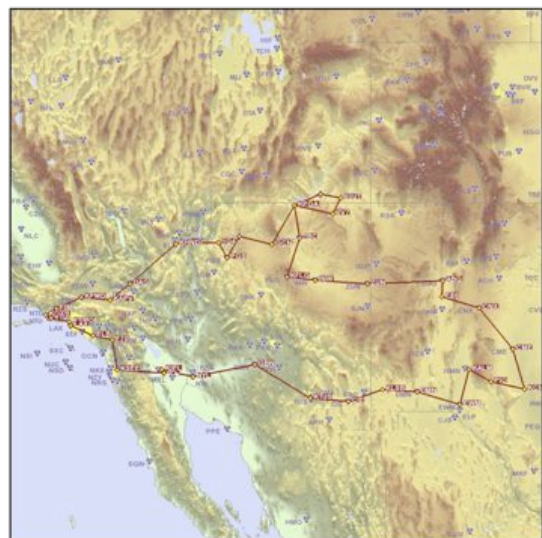
And of course, the AI went lopsided because of the vacuum pump failure. But on a good VFR day do you need an AI? If you don't know the answer to this, give up flying!

Just when you thought nothing else could go wrong, the engine gave a slight cough. This could have been due to carb icing but you noticed the fuel gauge read zero indicating a pump failure or you've run a tank dry! Switching on the electric pump restored the fuel flow and the pressure reading in the gauge returned to normal. It does happen from time to time that the gauge may develop a fault in which case it will probably read zero. However, if the engine sounds good and the prop keeps turning it indicates a fault with the gauge rather than an unserviceable pump or an empty tank.

So all of the various problems that occurred during the flight arguably the only one requiring a Pan call to D&D would be the one to establish your position. This is particularly relevant if there is some CAS or Danger Areas around. All the other problems could be dealt with whilst in the air. However, if they all occurred during the same flight you might want to start thinking about changing your aircraft or flying club as it may be increasingly difficult to find someone who will fly with you.

Tom Ward

Flying in US Western States February 2006



18 – 25 February 2006

I did my PPL in the UK mostly during 2001 and finishing in 2002 by going to San Diego - when I got fed up with the UK weather delays. I went back there in 2004 to add my CAA IMC rating and tend to regard Southern California as one of my favourite “local areas”. Ever since I have wanted to return to San Diego and head east to visit some of the more famous sights in the Western US. Looking at weather and altitudes of the fields on route I thought it best to do the trip in late autumn or early spring.

I’m “lucky” enough to have to go to the US frequently on business, and often to Southern California, so tagging the flying holiday onto a work trip would eliminate the flight costs at the expense of flexibility in planning dates. I usually managed to squeeze in some flying in the US if I’m stuck there over a weekend so my FAA license is current and I’m reasonably comfortable with US procedures and radio patter.

In January 2006 it was obvious I would have to be in San Diego during February for a conference so I decided to go for it. I roped in Gordon Edmiston to come along and share the flying. He’s also a member of the Grumman AA5 (G-BDFY) group that I belong to in Edinburgh and, being retired, has way too much time on his hands anyway. I spent some time planning the route and checking the guidebooks for what to go and see as well as pre-booking some hotels along the route for the first few nights as a precaution and checked rental car arrangements. Gordon and I reviewed the plan during the week before the trip - removing the final segment up to near San Francisco because of weather and time concerns but agreeing that the remaining bits looked reasonable.

Sunday 12 Feb.

I arrived yesterday from Edinburgh and drove down from LAX to San Diego with a stop off in Long Beach to pick up a set of charts. I had ordered an update for my Air guide on 3rd Jan but there was no sign of it before leaving home so I emailed the folks at Air guide and they sent a complete update to my hotel in San Diego. Great service.

This morning I went out to Anglo Aviation at Gillespie Field in El Cajon - just west of San Diego - and did a BFR (check ride) with Ben there. The ground school portion reminded me that I must buy a new copy of FAR/AIM and actually study it again... soon. Minimum

equipment list and minimum visibility in controlled airspace are different from the UK.



We took N2525Y - one of the PA28 Warriors - hardworking and a bit tired. The battery was almost flat so starting was a bit iffy but Ben managed. The BFR was mostly on the coast at Del Mar Racecourse in perfect visibility with, unusually, no haze and great views over downtown San Diego. The Warrior is very heavy compared with the AA5 and needs to be landed about 1 foot higher (oops!). It feels a bit like driving a tractor after getting used to a sports car. We returned to Gillespie through San Diego’s class B routing north of Miramar. Ben mentioned that the field had a mid-air a few days ago with 3 fatalities so everyone was a bit jumpy.

Gordon called from Edinburgh to say New York was experiencing heavy snow – 26 inches today. He’s expecting for his flight to Newark tomorrow to be delayed or cancelled but he has the whole week to get out and do his BFR before we head off on Saturday.

Went to work in the afternoon at the Healthcare IT conference I was attending in San Diego for the week.



Monday 13

Gordon called to say he wasn't coming! The combination of today's flight being cancelled and Continental refusing to promise a hotel in Newark if he missed a connection to San Diego tomorrow spooked him. I'm still going! Some concern on how my wife will react if I go alone though...



Tuesday 14

I managed to convince Gordon to fly with KLM via Amsterdam direct to LAX and promised to pick him up there. My wife was "not happy" with me going solo on the trip. Gordon has arranged for an instructor to pick him up Friday morning at SNO, John Wayne / Orange County / Santa Ana airport in Irvine, South of Los Angeles (how many names does an airport really need?) then do BFR on route back to Gillespie.

Thursday 16

I finished at the conference by lunchtime so I rented a car and drove back up LA and picked up Gordon at LAX. We stayed overnight in Irvine near John Wayne airport.

Friday 17

Dropped Gordon off at the airport early in the morning to do his BFR en-route back to Gillespie whilst I went into my company's office in Irvine for the day.



I drove down to Gillespie late in the afternoon to find that aircraft we were to take – a PA28-161 N2575U - had a new engine that they were still fitting. One of the instructors was scheduled to do the test flight on Friday evening – assuming they finished screwing the plane back together in time. Hmmmm.

We borrowed the flying school's Garmin 296 GPS for the trip to supplement my Garmin 196 and to allow us both to see where we were. David, the instructor, took N2575U off for a test flight about 7pm. We hung around for a couple of hours to check it all went OK whilst I spent a lovely evening updating the 296's 2 year old firmware, databases and reading the manual. Eventually we gave up and headed back to the hotel, as it started raining - not good. The weather forecast for Saturday shows rain in the morning spreading into the area and lasting most of Saturday and Sunday. Our UK IMC ratings don't help much in the US – it's all "VFR only" on this trip.



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