



# FLIGHTLINES

## Newsletter of the Texins Flying Club

August, 1999

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**4 August (Wednesday):** TFC Board Meeting. 6:30 PM, TKI's terminal. All members are welcome.

**14 August (Saturday):** Member/New Member meeting, donuts at 8:30am, meeting at 9:30am.

**1 September (Wednesday):** TFC Board Meeting. 6:30 PM, TKI's terminal. All members are welcome.

**11 September (Saturday):** Member/New Member meeting, donuts at 8:30am, meeting at 9:30am.

**TBD: PACE Program**, details later.

### Congratulations on these Member Achievements!

| Member        | Event                | Date    | Instructor      |
|---------------|----------------------|---------|-----------------|
| Swing Tan     | 1 <sup>st</sup> Solo | 6/10/99 | Sherman Ratliff |
| William Owen  | PPSEL                | 6/8/99  | Art Jones       |
| Mike Rominski | PPSEL                | 5/27/99 | Art Jones       |

### Highlights from July Board Meeting

Board Members in attendance: Bob Moran, Scott Mitchell, Don Essenpreis, Art Jones, Steve Aughinbaugh, Jim Burrows.

TFC Members in attendance: Mark Seglem, Dan Short, Dick Sandlin, Ash Collins, Clay Carson.

Don conducted the meeting because of Ash Collins' resignation as TFC Board President (more on this later).

The first topic of business was the request by 5 TKI tower controllers to join The Club as Associate Members. There was concern expressed that we might have an ever-increasing number of people making this request and that we needed to think about this carefully. The tower controllers believe that we have opened the club membership up to anyone since we have accepted Dave Pearce, TKI Airport Manager into the club. This is not the case; we have not opened club membership to everyone. It was noted that it was likely that if we allow the TKI Tower controllers to join the club then some of the ExecAir people may also want to join, but that it was unlikely to go beyond that. At most this could add 15 or so people. Once the details and costs of membership were understood by these people, probably only 4 to 8 people would join from this group. There was some concern that the club infrastructure might not be able to take on 10 more members, but it was pointed out that we take on about 10 people during each ground school twice a year. So this should not be a problem. There was not

a clear consensus as to how we should handle this request and it was pointed out that the Club by-laws limit the number of associate members to 5% (250 x 5% = 12 people). The board decided to table the disposition of this request until the next board meeting at which time Scott Mitchell, the Membership VP, would inform us how many associate members we already have in the club.

The next item discussed a scheduling regulation infraction by one of our club members. He was present to discuss this with the board. The details are that he originally scheduled 5682T for entire weekend but the aircraft was grounded due to a rough engine. He then scheduled 6368K for 7/3 from 1pm-8pm and on 7/4 from 6am-1pm. It was noted by a club member that 6368K not back at TKI at 9:30pm on 7/3 and is believed to have been off field all night. (The club member confirmed that he had 6368K over night at Cedar Mills.) 6368K arrived back at TKI at approximately 10:15am on 7/4 and the member was advised of his regulation infractions and it was suggested the he attend the 7/7 Board meeting where this would be discussed. During this period the tach log for 6368K showed 1.7 hours on 7/3 and 0.6 on 7/4.

This violated the following Operating rules from section 12:

h. No trainer aircraft (Cessna 150s or 152s) may be scheduled overnight without the prior consent of the Operations VP.

i. Cessna 150 aircraft are designated as trainers and are primarily for those members pursuing a primary or add-on rating. TFC-owned trainers shall not be scheduled by non-training pilots on weekends for time blocks exceeding four hours. Exceptions may be considered by the Operations VP.

The club member stated that he had a cabin reserved for the weekend at Cedar Mills and had been monitoring the TFC airplane recorder. When he arrived at the airport on 7/3 for his trip, he confirmed that 5682T was grounded. Upon checking the scheduling book, he saw that 6368K was free on the 3rd and available until 1 PM on 4th, so he scheduled 6368K as noted above. The club member apologized for not contacting the OPs VP and stated that he was disappointed that 5682T had to be grounded.

The board discussed this for a bit. It was noted that no one had complained and that this was the first such scheduling violation by the club member. It was also

noted that no one appeared have been inconvenienced by this action. It was also noted that the club member came to the meeting to discuss this and then he had reasonable explanations for his actions. The main issue was not contacting the OPs VP who stated that he would have allowed the use of 6368K for this trip if he had been asked. A motion was made to ask the club member to familiarize himself with the rules and then follow the proper procedure in the future if such a situation arises again. The board voted, accepted the motion and closed the issue.

Ash Collins has resigned as TFC Board President but will remain a TFC Club member. The TFC Constitution covers this case in SECTION 5 - BOARD VACANCIES:

In the event of a vacancy on the Board, the remaining members of the Board shall appoint a temporary officer to serve until the next regular meeting, at which time a special election shall be held to fill the vacancy. The candidates shall be nominated from the floor at the time, and if a permanent officer is not elected at the meeting following the appointment, the temporary officer shall automatically become permanent for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Ash's term expires on January 1. The board appointed Dick Sandlin as the temporary TFC Board President. Dick was present and accepted the appointment. At this Saturday's (7/10/99) General Membership meeting we will accept nominations from the floor for TFC Board President and vote.

Jim Burrows, Safety Officer reported that ARTCC has just converted to new radar systems. During this time they were not conducting Operation Rainchecks. When Jim contacted them they said that it was about time that they started these and they would call him soon to setup the first one with the new radar systems. In addition the local FSDO has a scheduling conflict with the 9/11/99 date that we had originally planned for PACE. Jim will work with them to get a new date.

Jim also presented the improved scheduling rules/guidelines that we want ExecAir and club members to use. Two minor changes. Club members and ExecAir people are asked to include the club member number, last name and phone number when scheduling airplanes. Are records of phone numbers are hard to maintain and the inclusion of these will help if problems or conflicts occur. It was also restated that pencil should be used for writing in the schedule book instead of ink. When canceling over the phone, Club members are asked to get the name of the ExecAir person that makes the change as a confirmation of the cancellation. →

## ***Real world Lessons and Decisions***

*By Steve Aughinbaugh*

Flying is an activity that is full of decision making and trade-offs. On a recent trip to northern Indiana and back to Texas I got the opportunity to make several of these

aviation decisions and trade-offs. So this time instead of writing about the flight and sights, I thought that I would confess a bit and write about some of the decisions that I had to make during the flight. Some good and a couple not so good!

Of course the first decision for any flight is whether or not to even make the flight. For this particular flight I had many things in my favor. One is that I did not have to get there on Friday. I could leave Saturday or stop somewhere on Friday and continue on Saturday or even cancel the entire trip. I would have missed seeing my sisters, brother and mom, but there would be another time. "Get there-ities" can be a big problem that can cloud your judgment and cause you to start a flight when it would be better to drive, go commercial or just stay home.

The second good factor was that the weather was pretty stable and there was a very good indication of favorable weather en-route. I started watching the weather with increased interest 5 days before the trip. I find that watching the weather closely for this length of time gives me a better understanding of the stability and general pattern of the weather for my longer X-C flights. This time of year (July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend) there are almost always forecasts for isolated or scatter thunderstorms. This particular weekend was no exception. All week long there were thunderstorms that marched across the mid-section of the country and my intended route. A check of the AOPA member's DTN weather maps early Friday morning confirmed that the thunderstorms were moving out of my way for the most part. There was the possibility of isolated storms in southeastern Missouri and southern Illinois and southern Indiana. I was certain that I could get as far as St. Louis, so I decided to leave Friday.

One last check of the weather with a weather briefer gave me a bit more information. I find that it is good to talk to the 1-800-WX-BRIEF people and not just rely upon the written DUATS route briefing. With a briefer, I can ask questions and talk alternatives as well get their opinion on the expected trends. Decision made, time to go.

During the flight I observed the weather that I saw and compared it to what I had been told to expect. For the most part, it was just as predicted. My fuel stop was in Houston, MO. This is one decision that I made at the last minute. The plan had been to go into Salem, MO. (More about this later.) Because of clouds that developed as we entered Missouri, we had dropped down under the broken/scattered cloud layer early. Houston, MO was listed in the AOPA directory as having fuel and it was within 25 miles of Salem with a good-looking runway from the air. Decision made. We landed. They did indeed have fuel, but it took awhile for the local policeman that we had to call to get there and unlock the pumps. But the fuel was priced at \$1.65/gallon and the pilot lounge (actually more of a shack) was well air-conditioned.

My next decision was what route to take from Houston. The original plan was to go direct to North Manchester, IN which would have taken us just south of St. Louis. A call to WX-BRIEF for a route briefing caused me to plan a route north of the St. Louis class B airspace to avoid some build-up and storms in southeastern Missouri. Illinois and Indiana were clear except the very southern part well away from where we would be. We experienced a scatter layer at 4,000 feet and climbed above it to 6,500, but as we approached St. Louis the layer below us was becoming broken to overcast. A call to flight service on 122.0 gave me a bit more information. The conditions at our destination were for a scatter layer at 5,000, but most of Illinois was broken at 4,000. The clouds in my current area were also starting to build-up. I would have to climb to about 8,500 or perhaps 10,500 to stay above it. Not having my instrument rating, I decided to descend below the clouds and tough it out in the heat and goo. The visibility below the clouds was still 8 miles or more. And I did feel better being able to see the ground all of the time. Good decision. (I am also working on getting my instrument rating. That will give me more options in the future.)

One more thing that I believe is good to do when flying in or near any weather. I tune into 122.0 and monitor it with a second communications radio. Many times you will hear briefers talking to pilots about the weather where you intend to fly as well as pilot reports of the actual conditions where you are headed. And if you are concerned you can always contact Flight Service yourself. It is amazing to me the wealth of information that you can get from flight service and the helpfulness of the briefers. On this particular trip I heard about severe thunderstorms and tornados in Iowa while monitoring 122.0. Iowa was about a 100 miles north of where we were and I knew I did not want to go any farther north! It was also confirmed that there were indeed thunderstorms and rain showers on the southern edge of St. Louis. Once we cleared the bit of poor weather it was good weather the rest of the way. A good decision to deviated to the north of St. Louis.

One more decision ... where to land? Now you might think that I should have already made that decision. But I had not. I had two choices. The nearest paved airport was about 15 miles from my final destination. Not far, but the last time that I was at my mom's I noticed a windsock just 4 miles from there. My bother stopped there and talked to the owner. It turns out there is a private farm strip there. I called the owner and talked with him about the strip. It was grass, 2000 feet long, best to land from the east and avoid the power lines to the west and also to take advantage of the up-slope from that direction. It also needed mowing and he said he would mow tomorrow. He flies a Cessna 182 in and out of there and invited me to land there if I wanted to. So I decided to at least over-fly it and make my decision then.

As we approached the area knew that I would arrive at the private farm strip with 15 gallons of fuel, more than enough to divert to IWH 15 miles south. So we headed

direct to the farm strip. Over flying the strip I could see that it was indeed at least 2000 feet and well mowed with the wind from the south-west leaving me with minor cross-wind from the left as I would land toward the west. I decided to land.

The landing was uneventful and not that much of a challenge. I did get a bit of a surprise by a culvert near the east end that caused the runway to be only about 15 feet wide at that point. I was actually lined up in the middle of the runway and touched down just beyond the culvert, so it was not a factor. I brought the airplane to a stop at about the halfway point with normal braking due to my short field landing technique and the up-sloping runway.

Turning around was interesting because most the runway is bounded on each side by 4 to 5 foot high corn and the width from corn stalk to corn stalk was about 40 feet. To turn around my 30-foot wing span I had to drag 3 to 5 feet of my wing tips out into the corn. But the corn was forgiving and caused no harm to it or my wings. With the airplane parked next to the pig feeding lot, I was back home again in Indiana! It was fun and exciting to land so close to home and on such a short strip.

But now that I was down on this runway, what about the take-off. Almost all of the airplanes that we fly can land on shorter strips than they can take-off on. My Cherokee 180 is no different. Here is where I probably should have been a bit more complete in my analysis and decision making. Just to break the suspense if you are feeling any, I was able to take-off from there without incident, in fact twice. But the first take-off did cause me a bit of concern as I lifted off. I had gone through the numbers in my mind and knew that I had taken-off in less than 2000 feet many times. But now, the rest of the story.

The next day my sister wanted me to fly her about 90 miles southwest to see her daughter in a 4-H pig show. There would be 3 of us and she wanted to know if a 4<sup>th</sup> person could go along. I had thought enough about the take-off that I knew that with the grass and likely downwind take-off that 4 people would be marginal. Probably doable, but I did want to add that extra weight and risk. So I said no. Good decision. We arrived at the airport at about 1:00 PM, the winds would give me about a 7-8 knot tail wind on take-off. Only 15 gallons of fuel, 3 people and a downhill slope for the last 2/3rds of the runway. The grass was short, about 3 inches. Oh! One more thing, it was about 95 degree F.

I taxied down the runway and turned around. Reviewed the short field checklist. Flaps 25 degrees, lock the brakes, full power, release the brakes, climb the hill, then down the hill and hold the airplane on the ground to rotation speed. (Now I have practiced short field take-off, but not in the last 2 months or so. In hindsight, I should have gone out and practiced 3 or so short field take-offs just before this trip. Back to the take-off.) The fence was coming up fast and I thought that I should have more airspeed before rotating, so I kept the

airplane on the runway. At what seemed to be just before I reached the end of the runway I rotated and cleared the fence with no problem other than causing my poor sister to question my judgment and flying skills! Accelerate to Vx (78 MPH) over the pasture toward the trees. At this point the tail wind that was blocked by the terrain caused me to lose a bit of lift. I banked to the right a small amount to ensure that I was well clear of a farmhouse and trees in my path. On up to Vy (84 MPH) and retract the flaps. At this point, I decide to start breathing again and assure my passengers that that was a pretty normal short field take-off in spite of the fence being so close to their faces!

What I have learned from this is that it is one thing to practice short field take-offs on TKI's 7000-foot runway or even Aero Country's 3000-foot runway. It is yet another experience to actually have the need to do one on a grass, 2000-foot, narrow, downhill runway! I also should have reviewed the take-off performance numbers more thoroughly before I landed at such a strip. I have since reviewed the numbers and including all of the factors my PA28-180 should have used 1400 of ground roll and 2300 to clear a 50-foot obstacle at maximum gross weight. The actual conditions were well within this. I was 400 pounds under gross with at least 500 feet of spare runway. My biggest problem was that I did not lift the nose slightly during the ground roll. Instead I kept the airplane on the grass which increased the drag and probably the ground roll to 1500 or 1600 feet.

I believe that part of my problem was that I fly so much by myself with my take-offs early in the morning that I always expect the airplane to jump off the runway the same way. It would be good to get an instructor and a friend (for the extra weight) then fly up to Cedar Mills for lunch on a hot day. Then after lunch practice a couple of short field take-offs assuming that you only have 2000 feet of their 3000-foot grass strip. I know that would have helped me. I don't feel that I ever really placed my passengers or myself in any danger, but I do believe that I could have been even safer with a bit more planning.

We returned to the same field later that day with just two of us (my sister stayed at the 4-H show and came home with them, that was the plan all along, really ☺) and 35 gallons of fuel. So to remove any concern that I had, the next morning when it was cooler, I flew the airplane out of there to IWH 15 miles south. The take-off was about the same except that I did allow the airplane to fly off sooner and the climb out was better without the need to bank to avoid the farmhouse this time. My brother was watching me take-off this time and swears that I cleared the fence by only 5 feet. I am sure it was a bit more than that. But it did make an impression on him, he may never fly with me again!

Overall, this was a very good experience. I now know that I can do real world short field take-offs and have a better appreciation for the factors involved in choosing to land at such a field. I had begun reading a mountain-flying book and have since reviewed the sections on

take-off. Maybe this next weekend with the 100-degree heat I'll go out and practice some with what I have learned and read about. After all, flying and learning go hand in hand.

There was also one more thing that I learned on this trip. Earlier I noted that I decided to land at Houston, MO instead of Salem, MO for my first fuel stop to Indiana. I had done some of my flight planning use AirNav's fuel flight planner; see <http://www.airnav.com>. It had suggested K33, Salem, MO as a fuel stop since it was almost exactly at the mid-point and was listed as having \$1.65 AVFuel. The runway length and other data about this airport looked fine, but there was no contact information. Upon landing at Salem, MO on the way back from Indiana to Texas, we found that the fuel pumps were locked. OK, but the instructions for unlocking them wanted me to listen to the Springfield VOR for the combination. Of course I could not receive the VOR on the ground. The good news was that I landed at K33 with about 2 hours of fuel left. The bad news was that we had been in the airplane 3 and half-hours already and the rest room facilities were behind the same lock! No problem, we are troopers, so we jumped back into the airplane and I picked out an airport about 30 minutes further along our route, Ava Martin, MO. We did listen to the Springfield VOR and it did not tell us the combination. So much for the plans of mice and men.

Upon landing at AOV we saw neither pumps nor anything that looked like an FBO. A couple that was there with their airplane informed me that the city had pulled the pumps out about 2 months ago. Opps! At this point I was getting a bit concerned. They suggest two airports within 30 more minutes that they were sure had fuel, but both of them were out of our way. In looking at the sectional, PLK, Clark Field in Branson, MO was 20 minutes away directly in our route of flight. Our new friends told us there was a landing fee there and looked at us like we were crazy for going to PLK. But at this point I wanted to be sure the airport was big enough to have fuel and good facilities. Over 4 hours in a small airplane is a long time! I visually measured the fuel in the tanks and I determined that I had 7 gallons in one side and 4 in the other. This agreed with my fuel flow meter. I even called Clark Field to make sure that they had fuel and were capable of pumping it into my airplane.

Another lesson learned. When flying into remote areas like southwestern Missouri make sure that your fuel stops actually have fuel that you can get to before you land. I should have checked another source on Salem and I could have checked with flight service for NOTAMs on AOV. The good decision that I made was making the first landing with plenty of fuel reserves.

By the way, Clark Field at Branson (listed under Point Lookout, MO) is a very nice airport on top of a bluff with a good FBO and rental cars. And it is also about the right distance from TKI for a good weekend trip. I'll have to make plans to go there in the future. The fuel is a bit

more than surrounding airports, \$2.15 versus \$1.65 and the landing fees are waived if you buy a reasonable amount of fuel. But when you really need fuel, the price is not a big issue.

I hope that you enjoyed reading about some of my decisions and the thought processes that went into them. Perhaps some of you have some experiences that you have learned from, even some from long ago, you might want to send me a note about it and I'll write it up for you in the next newsletter. Enjoy. →

## **TFC Aircraft Scheduling**

*By Jim Burrows and Steve Aughinbaugh*

### **How do I reserve a club airplane?**

Aircraft scheduling is done by calling the McKinney schedule book number and telling the person answering when you want to fly and what type of plane. It helps to have a list of the tail numbers handy when bartering for a plane and time (see the last page of this newsletter for complete list of numbers). ALWAYS include your last name, member number and phone number when reserving an airplane.

Some things to remember: Only 1 aircraft reservation is allowed to be scheduled beyond 10 days in the future. And, be very explicit when scheduling airplanes over the phone. The people at the airport are human and may make mistakes, so be sure to have them read back the date, time, airplane, last name, member number and phone number for your reservation.

If you schedule yourself or someone else while at TKI, be sure to include the same information.

### **How do I change or cancel a reservation?**

Well, it's pretty easy - just call the reservation line, and have them change it (all reservations are in pencil...). But here are some key points.

Be sure that you get the correct date and flight and get the name of the person erasing/cancelling the reservation as a confirmation. No shows are extremely frustrating to the rest of the membership. PLEASE call and cancel if you can't use the time you have scheduled. Club rules state the penalties for no shows, but if everyone is courteous we will not have to use them. Call and cancel your reservation when you are grounded due to weather. Do not assume that no one else would be able to fly either. An IFR pilot may be able to use the aircraft. If you will be late getting to the airport call and change your reservation BEFORE the earlier scheduled time has passed. If weather or a maintenance problem keeps you from returning to TKI on time, call and extend your schedule. You should also call and leave a message on the aircraft status recorder so the status of the aircraft can be made available to the whole membership and minimize other people's inconvenience.

## **What if the schedule book doesn't have sheets in it for the month you are interested in?**

Generally we keep schedule sheets for the next 3 months in the book at the airport (do not use any other forms for scheduling). If the book does not cover the period you need to schedule, enter the advance schedule information you desire in the book's binder tab to the left of the new month. Then call or email the club communications officer to let him know that the schedule sheet are needed. →

## **Fleet Usage Statistics**

|                  | <b>Hours</b> | <b>Member</b>  | <b>Total</b>   |
|------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Month</b>     | <b>Flown</b> | <b>Flights</b> | <b>Flights</b> |
| <b>June</b>      | 274.3        | 137.0          | 237.0          |
| <b>July</b>      | 322.9        | 130.0          | 274.0          |
| <b>August</b>    | 314.4        | 140.0          | 269.0          |
| <b>September</b> | 209.6        | 120.0          | 172.0          |
| <b>October</b>   | 191.1        | 110.0          | 175.0          |
| <b>November</b>  | 140.1        | 91.0           | 132.0          |
| <b>December</b>  | 142.6        | 71.0           | 112.0          |
| <b>January</b>   | 161.5        | 93.0           | 150.0          |
| <b>February</b>  | 224.2        | 109.0          | 201.0          |
| <b>March</b>     | 155.1        | 96.0           | 155.0          |
| <b>April</b>     | 175.8        | 98.0           | 167.0          |
| <b>May</b>       | 272.3        | 125.0          | 237.0          |
| <b>Average</b>   | 215.32       | 110.00         | 190.08         |

These statistics are collected by the Controller and will run a month or two behind. The Member Hours column is the total number of billable hours flown by all club members. The member flight column is the number of different members that have flown at least once during the month. The Total Flights is the total number of flight log entries for the month. →

