



Skywriter



Monthly Newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club

March 1992

View From Above

by Paul Hemingson



At the February 5, 1992 CUFC meeting our main speaker was Mike Dupuis, a CFI from the Westpoint School of Aviation headquartered at Springbank Airport. I had asked Mike to address the topic Mountain Meteorology and Mountain Flying. He did an excellent job of sharing his knowledge of what to expect and what to avoid. The problems, pitfalls and pilot techniques required gave us a much better appreciation of the risks and the consequences.

Mike held everybody's attention with his talk. We learned much about the way the local topography and climate in mountainous areas can influence the winds. Now we are better prepared to read the terrain and anticipate what lies ahead. Mike also donated two copies of an excellent mountain flying book (Flying the Rocky Mountains of BC) published by Aerial Artworks, in conjunction with TC. This manual is the most complete I have seen on preparing pilots for mountain flight. Along with weather, techniques, and route information this publication contains maps of all approved corridors and photographs at key turning points along all the major mountain flight corridors. If you're contemplating a flight through or across the Rockies anywhere in Alberta, BC or the Yukon you owe it to yourself to get a copy and study it. I guarantee you will be satisfied with the content.

At the meeting, I reviewed some proposals that the Club will soon be making to TC regarding the new UL regulations. The CUFC is interested in promoting safe, responsible and professional UL flight, and in the main

supports the new UL aeroplane Policy. Bev Befus, Todd McArthur and myself spent a considerable time coming up with some recommendations that we think will help TC in its stated objective of increasing UL flight safety whilst giving the UL community the maximum degree of self regulation. Our recommendations dealt mainly with the areas of licensing and pilot standards, as well as upgraded standards for UL flight training schools. We tried these recommendations on the Club members at the meeting, and got a favorable airing as well as a few upgrades from the members. The upgrades added value, and I believe our recommendations will be sincerely listened to and evaluated by TC. More later, on this important topic.

I also answered a query from the Calgary Convention Bureau, and gave full Club support to lobby for a bid on their part to host the 1995 FAI International Conference in Calgary. Sure, its a long way off, but these events take time to plan. We were asked to provide displays, exhibits, and a possible fly-by demo...how could I resist giving Club support. If their bid is successful, our participation will help to show the status of UL aviation in Canada.

New UL owner/pilot Dave Boulton had an accident in his single place Hiperlite in early February, near his home and suffered some serious injuries. He is now home convalescing. Dave and I got to know each other a bit in the last month when he flew in to visit me several times. He is a fine stick and rudder man, and it goes to show that an accident can happen to anyone.

Dave asked me to relay to members that no structural failure was involved, and said his accident was due to pilot error, and to tell the guys not to get overconfident. Wise words. A word to the wise is all that's needed. Enough said.

In the February CUFC Newsletter my Safety Corner article was mistitled as well as missing the final paragraphs. The article is reprinted in this months newsletter for completeness.

Also in the February newsletter Bob Kirkby related a forced landing story and asked for some feedback. I think Bob made the right decisions, (he kept his airspeed up and landed safely) but he could have made things a little easier on himself. It is a good idea to kind of recon any strip before you take-off. Take stock of the positions of any powerlines, trees and the lay of the adjacent terrain. Conjure up what you will do if the motor quits at 50 feet, at 300 feet, at 500 feet. Yep, its the old "what if" game again. These decisions are easier to make on the ground and not force you into any radical maneuvers.

Another lesson here is the nature of vapour locking with cowled engines. I have also had problems with balky engines. I believe that cowled engines can build up enough heat if an airplane is on the ground too long, that causes a vapour lock condition. Its only conjecture on my part, but ever since my rule has been not to dawdle, and so far the phenomenon has not recurred.

I purchased a number of copies of "Flying the Rocky Mountains of BC" for club members. If you would like one see me at a meeting or give me a call. Price is \$27.00. Bob Kirkby 569-9541.

In the February Issue I missed printing the last two paragraphs of Paul Hemingson's Safety Corner, and there were a number of typographical errors as well. Here is the article re-printed in its entirety. Sorry Al - Editor.

Stall, Spin, Flash....Crash

It has been said that when a man is confronted with a life threatening situation his whole life flashes before him in rapid, kaleidoscope fashion.

When I see the front page of the local newspaper with the photo of an aircraft that has augered into the ground, my heart goes out to the pilot involved. Can you imagine what the final seconds of his life were like? Forty or more years are telescoped into an eye-blink. In many cases he may know what is happening, and yet be helpless to remedy it. Running out of altitude and time to execute the antidote, the final utterance in resignation may be "Oh ____".

One moment he was flying along and the next moment he is pointed nose-down at 60 or 70 degrees with only a few seconds to take corrective action. The farm fields below were swirling around in hypnotic fashion, and the ground coming up quickly. With this view through your windscreen it goes against human instinct to push the stick ahead and stop rotation. These pilots were good men, more hours than most of us. Would any of us have done anything different? Would we have had the foresight or the time to do what we know needs doing? The value of hindsight is not that we are smarter, but that we can learn from the legacy of those who went before. Hindsight tells us where we have been, and there are some places a guy just doesn't want to revisit.

If we eliminate mechanical failure, there are only two ways an aircraft can go into the ground nose first at greater than 60 degrees. One is suicide. Let's rule that out, since pilots love life. The second is a stall-spin accident. When you see an aircraft wreckage with the tail section intact, and the front section compressed from spinner to seat belt, you're likely dealing with a stall-spin accident.

Now, you might be sitting there saying, "Stalls?", where is this guy coming from? We all know that ultralights mush, more than stall. It is true that the large positive dihedral and other characteristics of many ultralights make them quite forgiving and not prone to spinning. However, with the new crop of higher performance ultralights it is just a matter of time before these types of accidents start showing up. Many of the newer ultralights will spin. And they will spin nicely, nose down, and winding up like an Olympic Figure Skater. Couple this characteristic with the typical lower altitudes flown by ultralight pilots and you're setting up an accident situation.

Stalls happen. Every month the accident record suggests a number of stall related accidents. The most insidious is the departure or turning stall. Here is the usual scenario. Witnesses often say the aircraft was last seen at low altitude (<700agl) and stated a turn, or climbing turn. The aircraft was then observed to quickly fall off on one wing, and kept turning until it hit the ground. This is classic spin-airio, for your basic spin-airio!

Spin recovery is seldom taught and most pilots are not "current" on recovery. It is one thing to go out and practice stalls and spins. It is another thing when it happens when you don't expect it. (Do not go out and practice spins unless your aircraft is approved for it, consult your manufacturer first).

In the practice session you usually climb to 3000 or 4000 feet agl and then commonly force the aircraft to spin by slowing it up to stall-speed, then kicking in a boot-full of rudder (the ailerons are ineffective at stall-speed) and over it goes in the direction of applied and so you control the direction of the spin. Recovery procedure is usually power-off, stick ahead slightly to unstick the wing, opposite rudder to stop the spin and then a cautious pullout to normal straight and level attitude, adding power as required.

In the non-practice spin, conditions for successful recovery are less favourable. The aircraft is usually at low altitude and the spin direction is not consciously controlled by the pilot. In fact, he doesn't even know it's coming. To complicate things the spin direction may be in the opposite direction to the bank. Are you confused? So is the pilot who is unaware that a spin lies in his immediate future.

Here is how it happens. The risk of my superficial analysis outweighs the depth of shallow excuses for being technically perfect.

The spin at low altitude happens in two common flight configurations. One is shortly after takeoff, when a pilot decides to make a moderate to steep climbing turn, and secondly (again at low altitude) when a pilot is flying low and slow and decides to circle or make a climbing turn.

Let's say in both cases the pilot makes a climbing left-hand turn. The pilot is casually looking down at something that attracts his attention. The outside, or right wing, is meeting the relative airflow at a steeper angle of attack than the left, or lower wing, and stalls. It stands to reason then, that the high right wing is also the first to lose its lift and drop. As quickly as you read this line the aircraft goes from a 45 degree left bank, up and over to the opposite bank and the nose drops simultaneously. The pilot is no longer looking casually out the window.

Chances are he has both feet pushing the rudder pedals to the firewall. Whoa! What's going on? Now all he sees is a rotating kaleidoscope patchwork of farm fields. He might not even be sure which way the aircraft is spinning. Note that the aircraft may also commonly stall and roll off or spin towards the down wing, depending on the position of the ailerons, rudder and actions of the pilot. A spin in any direction at low altitude will get your attention.

You have about three microseconds to decide what action is appropriate, assuming you recognize immediately that you are in a spin. Even a speed-reader would be pressed for time to consult the Pilot Decision Manual. You must have a conditioned reflex to pull the power, stick ahead slightly, opposite rudder to stop the spin and pull out. Can you do it with less than 1000 feet of altitude? I doubt I could. Even in a controlled spin situation, I have lost 1000 feet of altitude. If, as pilot, you don't instantly recognize what just happened, it is unlikely you will recover. The accident records show this to be true.

But, maybe there is a better answer.

The answer is Prevention. Simply, don't get yourself into the conditions where a stall-spin can happen. Recognize those phases of flight where the stall and subsequent spin are most hazardous (situational awareness) and avoid doing the things that encourage the phenomenon. The pilot aware of the stall need not beware the stall. This way you don't have to be current in spin recovery. In fact, you are likely only current in stall recovery if you had one in the last hour of flight. Spin training, and recovery, can be considered a type of insurance, for those spinny days.

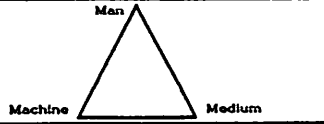
The conditions leading up to unrecoverable stall-spin are well known. Avoid them, if at all possible, or beware of what might happen if you engage in them. Those pilots who fly around nibbling at the stall are asking for the hook to be set.

NO,...I repeat NO, low and slow stuff, with low speed climbing turns thrown in. Circling and banking steeply at low altitude to impress friends, or look at something, especially with a climbing turn, has been the second last flight maneuver for many pilots.

Prevention is better than accepting it might happen and then relying on your conditioned reflex to save the day for you. It might, but then again it might not. Why take the chance?

Safety Corner

by Paul Hemingson



You Show Me Yours, and I'll Show You Mine

Sometimes we just don't see what we are looking at. I was reminded of this recently when a friend visited me.

We were travelling back to my place by truck. It was a beautiful day, and I was proud to be able to show her the countryside that I considered my backyard. I was driving slower than usual so we could admire the scenery...I guess I was kind of showing it off, but this was really unnecessary since the blue sky and mountain backdrop seemed to frame things perfectly by themselves.

We were about a mile from home when my companion, who had been staring at the passing countryside, said "See that building over there, out in the middle of that field?" I replied "Sure...Yeah, I pass by it every day." Then she asked why would anyone build a little house out in the middle of the field. She said "It looks so lonely all by itself...it must be abandoned."

Realizing that my friend was born and raised in Nova Scotia and not familiar with Western ways, I explained that it was a grain storage building, in which the farmer stored his grain during the fall harvest. She nodded, and then looking at the building again, said in a puzzled way "Well, how come it has a chimney?" I explained that what she thought was the chimney was actually an opening in the top for filling the bin.

She nodded again, and we travelled on in silence for a few seconds when she queried "Well, he should put the top lid on so the rain can't get in." This statement caught my attention, since the bin belonged to a friend of mine. So I looked at it again. Sure enough the rain cap was missing. Why hadn't I noticed it before? I reminded myself to phone my friend to tell him that the lid was off. I had passed by this grainery dozens of times and always looked at it to see if any deer were snooping around for a few kernels of grain.

On that weekend, several pilot friends also flew in to visit me. When a pilot stops in to visit me I can't help but examine his machine. It's some sort of a habitual ritual with me. I like to look at different kinds of aircraft to see how it was made, and see how the designer

handled certain design problems. I guess it's kind of an educational thing, a natural curiosity if you will. I am sure most pilots eyeball other pilot's machines for the same reasons. The thing that strikes me on many such occasions, is that I often find something amiss that the pilot owner did not realize.

On this occasion I was walking around the aircraft and stopped by the engine when I noticed that the rubber sleeve that connects the carburetor to the intake manifold was cracked. I brought it to the attention of the pilot and he was quite amazed that he hadn't noticed himself.

On another occasion, I noticed some fuel/oil type stains on an aircraft. On closer inspection I discovered that the fuel drain was leaking ever so slightly. Again I brought it to the attention of the owner and his eyes kind of lit up, and then he said, "That explains where my fuel goes...and here I thought someone was stealing fuel from me."

I am not particularly clever. Nor do I consider myself gifted with extraordinary observational powers. I know this is true, because I have had other pilots look my machine over and find something amiss.

For example, I recently stopped in at a local uncontrolled airstrip and a friend of mine was looking over my machine and happened to look in the cockpit to see what kind of instruments I had.

I don't think his head was in the cockpit for more than five seconds when he turned to me and said. "Did you know that the left rudder pedal cable is off its pulley?" What could I say..."Sure, I know...I like to fly around and fray my rudder cables, and besides the extra rudder pedal force is good therapy for my weaker left leg."

I looked at the pulley. Sure enough the cable had slipped off the cable and was running between the guides. How could I miss seeing something so obviously wrong during my preflight? Other questions came to my mind. How long had this been going on? Was the cable already frayed? Did this explain why I had not been getting good pedal feedback from rudder pressure? Was this the reason why I had thoughts that someone had tweaked my trim tab? I felt like an

imposter. How could I call myself Pilot in Command? All these articles on safety, and I just missed an obvious thing.

It is easy to miss things. We all do it. We are constantly being conditioned to not observe things properly by always finding things okay. I think the reason we miss some things is that after a while we begin to take things for granted. In our preflight, we check the same things. After a few dozen or hundreds of preflights and always finding things okay we begin to assume that things are always okay. We look without really seeing. Familiarity and repetition appear to condition us to be blind to what the unconditioned but knowledgeable eye sees.

I propose a little friendly challenge for UL pilots. Someday, when you're at the airport and it is too windy to fly, or you're just sitting around hanger flying, here is something interesting to do. Have a friend check over your machine, and you check over his machine. Be thorough, just as if you were going to fly the machine for the first time. I am willing to bet that you will both find some minor things wrong or requiring attention on each other's machine. Some of these things may be news to you, or your friend!



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Meetings of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club are held the first Wednesday of every month at 7:30pm at

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Calgary, Alberta

Around The Patch

by Stu Simpson



Video Review - Advantage: Hornet, produced by Garbex Productions (62 mins.)

Advantage: Hornet was first released in 1987 and was one of the first full length videos to deal with the McDonnell Douglas F/A-18 Hornet dual role fighter. It is a Canadian production and as such has a unique and pleasing Canadian slant to it.

Predictably, the tape starts off with early test footage of the Hornet. We see film of the various aspects of the extensive test program that MACAIR (industry jargon for McDonnell Douglas) conducted. This includes cockpit tapes, weapons firing trials and some absolutely amazing film of the landing gear torture tests.

An interesting side note here; Canadian CF-18's still retain the carrier capable landing gear of the original design. This was done to avoid the cost of a re-design to land based gear.

The next segment in Advantage: Hornet deals with the plane's electronics; The black boxes that make the Hornet work as a weapons system. Included here are several shots of flight in the simulator, which is extremely realistic. Its easy to see how 40% of the time required to be rated in the Hornet can be gained in the simulator.

The highlight of the tape, though, is a copy of the Heads-ups-display (HUD) tape of a CF-18 doing an airshow demonstration flight. The pilot is Capt. Chuck Caron and he provides an excellent voice narration of the demo flight as it happens. Through Caron, we learn what a Hornet pilot thinks as he's flying and get an inkling of what it might be like to pull 6 or 8G's. There are a few breaks in the continuity of this particular sequence, but it does not detract from the overall effect.

After Caron's hop, the tape jumps inexplicably to show a pilot doing a preflight walk-around on an F-16. It leads to an eventual series of dogfighting footage, but it's confusing and left me with the impression that the producers were merely trying to fill time.

The major beef I have with this production is in the last 10 minutes of it. We see the tail pipes of a CF-18

through the HUD of another as they fly low level over what appears to be northern Quebec. And that's all we see. The sequence goes on with a music sound track until the end of the tape. If you haven't been satisfied with the several minutes of HUD tape already included, these minutes will do it for you. But chances are you'll feel as I did that the producers were, again, just filling time.

However, this is an excellent video documentary on Canada's fleet defence fighter. True, it does drag in some spots, but it is more than made up for with the interesting, rare, and just plain exciting footage on the rest of the tape. ADVANTAGE: HORNET is a very good pick and a valuable part of any aviation library.

You should be able to order Advantage: Hornet from your local pilot supply shop or through one of the many pilot supply catalogues floating around out there.

Abbotsford Adventure Update

by Stu Simpson

Well, as some of you may have heard, we have encountered a minor setback for our trip. We are not invited to participate in the Abbotsford Airshow. It is a bit disappointing, but will likely turn out to be a benefit for us.

It means we will not be tied down, having to be at the airshow for three days. It means we can have a much more relaxed trip, without having to worry about being in the lower mainland by a certain time. We'll be able to make little side trips as we want and have more freedom to go where we want, when we want.

There are some other developments too. It looks like we will definitely have two separate flights leaving on separate dates. Don Rogers, Todd McArthur and your faithful scribe, will be leaving on August 3rd, as originally planned. Bob Kirkby and Jim Creaser are only able to take a week off from work, so they'll be leaving August 5th and returning August 12th. It looks

like Bernie Kespe and his wife Ida will be ground crew for that week. Everyone will eventually meet up somewhere in the lower mainland.

Just a reminder, we will be making a day trip to Banff and the Eisenhower Junction area sometime in May. We're also planning a weekend trip to Radium and the Columbia Valley in June. Everyone is welcome to participate in both trips.

We also want to thank Mike Dupuis of Westpoint School of Aviation. Mike was guest speaker at the last meeting and gave a superb lecture on mountain flying. He also donated a mountain flying kit to the club. I liked it so much, I bought the company. Well, not really, but I did buy a kit.

It's called "Flying The Valley's of British Columbia". The kit includes actual photographs of about 70% of the route we plan to follow. It provides MEA's and detailed maps of the terrain along each route, and has a complete book on mountain flying. Even if you don't make the Abbotsford trip, I recommend you get one of these kits. They are excellent.

That's about all for now. We'll keep you informed as new developments occur.

Classified

Ivo Prop - updated 3-blade, ground adjustable, 60", composite blades. New - \$300. OBO. Paul Hemingson 931-2363.

Rotax 503 - single carb, excellent condition. \$1200. OBO. Paul Hemingson 931-2363.

Chinook 2 place - with floats, Rotax 447, needs some work, \$4000.00. Terry Spokes 533-3748.

FireStar - Rotax 377, instruments, enclosed trailer, \$7000.00. Jim Creaser 226-0180.

Ritz Standard A - completed and ready for covering. Includes covering materials, Zenoh engine, \$2000.00. Jim Creaser 226-0180.

Lazair - Estate sale. Needs recovering but selling for parts. \$1000. OBO. 262-3959.

Classified ads are free to CUFC members. Call Bob Kirkby, 569-9541 to place your ad.

Flight To The Frozen Ghost

by Stu Simpson

I could see the Beaver and the Chinook on the horizon about 2 miles east of where I was, and I got more excited as I readied my airplane to join them.

It was Todd and Don flying their airplanes from Indus to Thompson's Ranch airfield, a place we simply called, the "Glider Strip". I was going to hop over from my strip and meet them. From there, we would all takeoff together and head northwest to meet some friends of mine on the ice at Ghost Lake.

The weather for the trip was very good. The temperature was about 3 degrees, with a light west wind. The western sky displayed a prominent and well-defined chinook arch giving high cloud cover. But it was clear that any mountain wave activity was travelling well above the altitude where we would be flying.

I thought about all of this as I sat in my single Beaver while the motor warmed up. Finally, everything was

ready so I powered up and blasted off.

It was a five minute flight over to the Glider Strip. Todd and Don were eager to go, so they fired up and one by one we rolled down runway 25 and into the winter sky.

We headed northwest, in loose formation, to pick up the highway we would follow north. As we droned on in the smooth afternoon air, Don was flitting around the formation trying to get the hang of flying close to other airplanes. He hadn't done any major formation flying before this day. But we were all having a ball. I called Todd on the radio and informed him that I was rating the day as 2-thumbs-up so far. He readily agreed.

When we were about twelve miles south of Springbank airport, Todd suggested I call and advise the tower of our route and intentions. So, I flipped over to 118.4 and did just that. The controller told us to remain clear of the zone and advised me he would inform other traffic in the area about our presence. He also wanted us to call him when we were west of the airport. I agreed and then switched back to 123.3, the frequency our flight was using for the day.

Don was still jumping around the

formation from spot to spot. Sometimes he would be off Todd's right wing for a few minutes, and the next thing I knew Todd was saying the Chinook was at my six o'clock low, where I couldn't see him. I sincerely hoped Don was enjoying the view of my behind.

Before long, we were crossing the Trans-Canada highway and I again called Springbank to tell them our position. After I switched to our frequency, I noticed our ground speed had seriously declined. As we approached a large gas plant, Todd noticed steam from the plant showing the wind as north-west at about 15kts. We had kind of expected this, since the wind normally picks up in this region as it blows down the Bow Valley from the Rockies.

We continued on, with our destination only a few minutes away.

In about 5 more minutes, the Ghost dam and reservoir came into view and I began to mentally plot how we would land on the ice. We could soon see numerous ice boats zooming across the lake and we agreed that a low pass over the ice would definitely be in order. That way, we could get a better idea of the icelanding conditions, and equally important, let everyone down there know we were here. I did not relish the thought of becoming an iceboat-kabob.

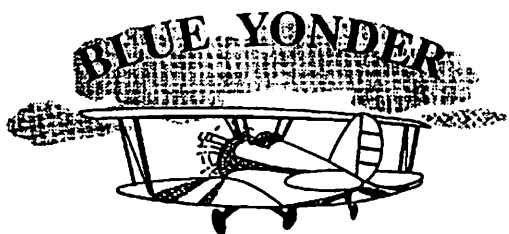
I volunteered to make the first low pass. As I approached the dam, I could feel the wind picking up to about 20kts at about 200 ft. off the surface. But it was still steady with only a few light gusts. The ice also looked good, with the snow drift only inches deep. I decided to try a landing.

I made a right hand circuit and settled on to the ice with the greatest of ease. The only problem came in dodging a few large pieces of driftwood frozen into the surface. Hitting one of those would have meant changing the day's rating to thumbs-down.

Todd and Don landed safely and soon we had a small crowd huddled around our planes asking questions about aircraft they had never seen before.

We spent an enjoyable 45 minutes on the ground chatting with friends and looking at ice boats. Ice boats look like a lot of fun - the kind of fun that doesn't cost you mega-bucks. In that respect, ice boating is much like ultralight flying.

(Continued on page 6)



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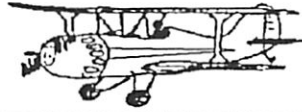
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One Pilot's Opinion

by Bob Kirkby



The latest COPA Newsletter quotes the January, 1992 DOT statistics on the number of pilot licenses in Canada. Here are the numbers:

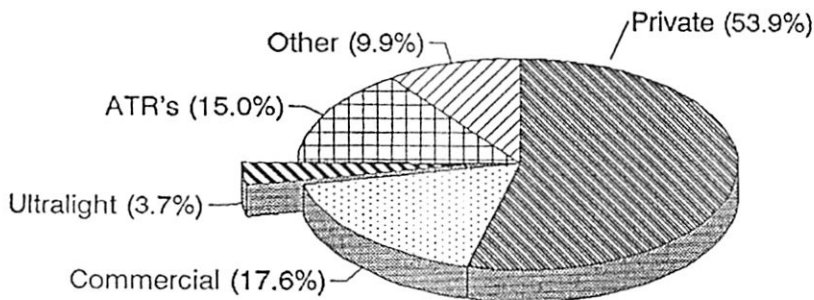
Private	31,626
Commercial	9,712
Sr. Commercial	628
Private U/L	1,461
Commercial U/L	704
ATR's	8,786
Other	5,792
Total	58,709

They don't say what the "Other" is, but presumably it is made up of Rotory-wing pilots, Balloon pilots, etc. At the risk of being labelled "Sexist", there are a total 3,091 women pilots in Canada. Another interesting figure is, of the 31,626 Private pilots, only 460 hold instrument ratings (7 times less than in the US). Perhaps this speaks for the weather in Canada.

This means that Ultralight pilots represent 3.7% of the total pilots in Canada, but 6.8% of the total of Private pilots and Ultralight pilots.

The latest stats I can find on registered aircraft in Canada are from March 1990. At that time there were 3224 ultralight aircraft registered. It's probably gone up 10% since then. If we are to believe these number, every Ultralight pilot in Canada has 1.6 ultralights! How nice. Something tells me there are a lot of underused ultralight airplanes around.

Of course, we all know there are lots of wrecks sitting in barns all over the country that will never fly again, I hope. Perhaps DOT should send out a mandatory questionnaire to all these registered aircraft and find out how many should be deregistered. Otherwise the statistics will continue to be inflated and will get worse as time goes on.



Canadian Pilot Licenses

As of January 1992

(Ghost - continued from page 5)

It soon came time to go so we headed back to our planes. We watched the crowd form again as they waited anxiously to see us take-off. I had a little trouble starting my engine, but I soon had it running smoothly.

Todd blasted off first, showing an impressive climb rate into the wind. Don was next, again with an impressive climb, and I followed last, making one final high fly-by before I headed home.

The headwind we'd bucked for the last few miles into the Ghost, was now at our backs and giving us a nice little boost as we headed southeast. I again called Springbank to let them know about us and we were cleared enroute.

I must say the weather was consistent for us, because we lost our tailwind at exactly the same point we had picked up the headwind earlier. Another example of how the Calgary weather can be so quirky.

The flight back to Black Diamond was smooth and uneventful. Even Don seemed content to hold a steady right echelon slot in the flight. As we flew on together I couldn't help thinking of how lucky we were to be there, buzzing along a few hundred feet over creation, enjoying a gift so few have experienced. We knew that soon we would have to land our planes, put them in hangars and leave the airfield. But right then, for a few brief moments, we were at the best place in heaven or earth. We were flying.

But daydreaming can't last forever so as we got closer to the Glider Strip, I called Todd on the radio. I told him that I was going to divert south to go straight to my strip. He and Don were going to land at the Glider Strip and use the facilities before flying back to Indus. I thanked Todd and Don for making the trip in my direction and peeled off to head home.

Todd and Don ended up landing downwind at the Glider Strip (there's no wind sock there in the winter), but managed a proper takeoff to head back to Indus. They made it home a short time later, having logged 3.6 hours. I had logged 2.5 hours for the day.

As I stood outside my hanger, my airplane tucked away until our next flight, I watched my buddies lift off and turn eastward. I reflected on the day and decided it had been a nice little adventure. I also decided that I could hardly wait for the next one.