



Skywriter...

Monthly Newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club

July 2001

From The Cockpit

by Brian Vasseur

It's summer vacation now, so we don't have any more meetings until September. That leaves a lot of flying weather to keep everyone busy all summer long.

Something I've been watching pretty closely is the new Sport Pilot category opening up in the US. Essentially it gives US pilots similar privileges as we now enjoy with the Canadian Ultralight regs. I think it's going to be safe to assume that there will be a lot of new aircraft being developed for this category, effectively opening up the fastest growing segment of aviation. It should prove to be really exciting.

More news in the ultralight community is the recent loss of TEAM aircraft to a Florida pilot who repeatedly sued Wayne Ison out of business. Depending on who's story you hear Wayne either got bad legal advice, maybe had a problem with the spar on one of the planes he sold, maybe the US legal system sucks, or all of the above. Effectively Wayne had to hand over ownership of the TEAM name and the Airbike design. He gets to keep the existing Minimax aircraft designs. He's still in business, he'll call himself something else, and hopefully Wayne Ison will get to rebuild the successful business that he once had.

Thinking about liability was something at the forefront for me recently when I sold my KR-2. I had several interested buyers and finally sold it to an experienced builder who came by with an AME to go over it thoroughly. I feel pretty comfortable selling it to him because I know that he knew exactly what he was getting, and anything that wasn't perfect was identified before the sale. I still got a fair price and everyone is happy. There were some other interested purchasers who may have paid more, but I would have wondered if they were really sure of the responsibility they

had acquired.

Flying is a lot of fun, and for many of us building is an equally satisfying venture. Carelessness though can't be part of either one of these activities. Our culture is changing, from one where people were expected to be responsible for themselves, to one where negligence of any degree is reason to demand compensation. Be careful, if you're taking passengers make sure they're legal, and follow the rules.

Have a good summer.



*BLOWN AWAY! A Cessna airplane sits upside-down at the Calgary airport after being blown over by winds that gusted to speeds as strong as 85 km/h. (Sometime in April)
Photo: Carlos Amat, Calgary Sun*

For Sale

1995 TEAM Himax - 314TT, 60hrs SMOH on Rotax 503DC, 2-blade ground adjustable prop, good panel, spinner, speed fairings, VHF antenna, large cockpit, always hangared. Great performance and handling. Only \$9500. Call Stu at (403) 255-6998 or e-mail simpson@cadvision.com for pics and info. (6/01)

Rans S-12 - 350 hrs TT, 150 on Rotax 582 full enclosure. E-mail edantoni@hotmail.com for photos. Ed D'Antoni 403 247-6621(5/01)

Avid STOL - 250 hrs as US Experimental N17AF. 5 hrs since total rebuild and new 582 E-Box. \$18,000 or \$11,000 without engine. A 503 would be more than adequate for this aircraft. Will take new or late model Rotax 912 in trade. Ed D'Antoni 403 247-6621(5/01)

Zodiac CH601 for rent - \$65.00 per hour with instructor, or \$50.00 per hour wet. Aircraft can be kept at Indus or Springbank. Please call 40-617-1831 for more details.(5/01)

1994 Tundra - ser. #26, 503 electric start, long range tanks, trim control, new paint/fabric.(Nov./2000) TT 90hr. engine 70hr. Flies hands off. Very gentle roll rate. \$14,500 Call Garrett at 874-6447 or e-mail kommair@telusplanet.net. (5/01)

1999 Chinook Plus 2 - Advanced Ultralight, always hangared, 34 hrs TTSN, Rotax 503, DCDI, electric start, oil injection, 3 blade prop, extended cabin, hydraulic brakes, tundra tires, new skis, excellent condition, \$23,000 OBO. Jim (403) 547-6714 or venturae@home.com. (4/01)

Rotax 503 - new, OTT, single carb, new muffler, \$3500 OBO. Chuck Duff 938-6157 (4/01)

Flying-Flea HM-293 - famous Mignet Aircraft redesigned by Grunberg as an ultralight. More than 100 flying. French plans and brochure with English translation, \$110.00, mailing included.

Paul Pontois, 1890 Rang des Chutes, Ste-Ursule, Quebec J0K 3M0 819-228-3159 (4/01)

Super Koala - Rotax 503, DCDI, Culver wood prop. Airspeed, Altimeter, Tach, CHT, EGT, Hour meter, Fuel gauge. Heated cockpit. Less than 200 TT on new engine and airframe. This is an attractive, predictable and easy to fly taildragger. Open to any serious offers. Dale (403)293-3826. (4/01)

Renegade Spirit - TT 260, 65hp Rotax 532 70 hrs since rebuild, excellent condition, always hangared, see pictures and details at www.skywalker.ca, REDUCED, \$23,500 OBO. Bob Kirkby 403-569-9541 (2/01)

1984 Chinook WT-2 - 6 hrs on Rotax 377, 10 gal tank, ICOM A4 radio, wheels, skis, floats, & more, \$5000. Don Leonzio 250-427-2046. (2/01)

Rotax 503 - DCSI, "A" box, 228 TTSN by Reg's Engine. 30 STO. Currently on a Beaver RX 550. Well maintained, strong engine. \$2500. Call Ron at (403) 345-3013 (2/01)

Parting out - Rans S12 Airail parts and pieces with AULA registration. Call Russ at 250-353-2495 or leave msg at 2492. (11/00)

Rotax 503 - single carb, new single ignition, requires A drive, \$2750.00. Call Glen Munro 403-335-3764 or Paddy Munro 403-638-5067. (10/00)

Beaver RX550 - excellent condition, 400 hrs on air frame, 7 hrs on new Rotax 503, dual carb, single ignition, A drive, always hangared, \$8500.00. Call Wayne Winters 403-936-5767. (10/00)

Forward ads to Bob Kirkby 569-9541.

Ads reprinted from the St. Albert Flying Club Newsletter

ICOM A21 Transceiver - comes with car cigarette lighter adaptor, ptt, protective cover, \$425. Chris Barre 780-963-1598.

Magal Cuby I - 1984, 300TTSN,

3TTSNE, Rotax 503 SCDI, NDH, wings recovered Oct. 2000, heel brakes, ASI, ALT, compass, tach, CHT, dual EGT, \$14,000 OBO. 780-459-0813.

Floats - with lockers, spray rails, water rudders and rigging. Suitable for ultralight or home built, weight 130lbs, \$3000 OBO. Reg Lukasik 780-459-0813.

Hirth F-23 - used 6 hrs, 40 Hp, \$2,800.00 Dan (780) 452-2491

Skywriter

Skywriter is the official newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club and is published 12 times per year. Forward your articles and letters to:

Editor: Bob Kirkby 569-9541
e-mail: kirkby@skywalker.ca

Assistant-editor: Bernie Kespe (see below)

Calgary Ultralight Flying Club

Meetings of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club are held on the second Thursday of every month, except July and August, at 7:00 pm, at the Northeast Armoury, 1227 - 38 Avenue NE.

President: Brian Vasseur 226-5281
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Visit the CUFC web site:
www.cadvision.com/cufc/

A student pilot flying practice touch and go landings in a C150, hits a bird on the downwind leg. The bird damages the windshield and restricts his vision. The student declares an emergency and sets up for landing. The tower asks if he requires emergency services. The student pilot calmly replies "No it's OK I think the bird is dead".

My Merlin Project

by Andy Gustafsson

After a long search on the kit plane market and many test flights I took the big step and ordered a new airplane kit. I have the space; the patience but most of all my wife's approval even if she lost her parking spot in the garage. A project of this magnitude can strain anyone's patience. A lot of time and effort is involved and it can seem like an eternity before the rollout and first flight. I have at least some experience of building, from my first aircraft. It takes longer than anticipated; depending on how nice you want it to look once completed. The building space in our garage is adequate to get started building, but it might become a little cramped as the project progresses. I can however spread out further if I park one of our cars outside.

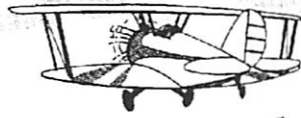


The Merlin factory demo similar to the one Andy is building.

Back to the aircraft. For my next project I decided on the well known high wing Merlin EZ tail dragger. It is designed by John Burch and manufactured by Blue Yonder Aviation here in Calgary. It has a good reputation because of its ruggedness, easy handling and very roomy cockpit. The rigid wing-

handling aircraft with minimum tendency for ground looping. The building time is said to be around the 400-hr mark. It varies of course, but from what I have heard, it seems about right. I have been building ribs and riveting them together for a couple of weeks and 14 of them are finished. The ribs are built up from 2024-

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T3 and 6061-T6 aluminum, depending on the location in the wing. The rib cap strips are pre-formed to fit snug over the high-density foam core. The aluminum strips that held the cap strips to the top and bottom of the foam core on earlier Merlin models, have been replaced by solid cover plates. These are light but sturdy ribs. Wayne let me have the use of his factory jigs, which made the process quick and accurate. The manufacturing of gussets, for fastening the ribs to the D-cells, are done by the builder and is made easy by following the full-sized templates. There are a lot of gussets and this takes a little time.

Next comes the job of attaching the ribs to the 2 aluminum wrapped "D-cells", which includes the main wing spar. The "D-cells" are factory built. They come complete with built in wing strut and fuselage pick-ups.

My plan is to get the wings ready for covering before I start work on the fuselage.

I sure look forward to getting into this project. So far the factory support has been very good. It is nice to have them so close and to be able to drive out for a look and to pick up more airplane parts as the building process continues.

I will keep you informed of my progress. →

Ferrying the New Ride Home - Part 2

by Bob Kirkby

This is a continuation from, the July issue, of my trip across Canada/US from Nova Scotia to Calgary in my newly acquired Starduster Too. At the end of Part 1 I had just landed in Sault Ste. Marie, US side, on Monday afternoon and it started raining, and raining, and raining...

Tuesday morning didn't start off looking good. Locally it had stopped raining but the ceiling was down around 1500ft. 50 miles west was in IFR conditions. I checked out of the motel and went back to the airport expecting to have to bail out the Starduster. It wasn't so bad, only a little rain got in around the canopy and didn't cause any problems. I hung around the FBO office listening to Karl and a couple of others shoot the breeze all morning then checked weather again around noon. Although things were improving locally, to the west my next destination was still too much in the slime for my liking so I decided to resign myself to another night in beautiful downtown Sault Ste. Marie, USA. I rented an old car from Karl for \$27 and headed in search of a cheaper motel. I found one that was better and cheaper than the night before so checked in, pulled out my notebook computer and started writing this story. Tomorrow would no doubt present a different challenge.

Wednesday dawned with clouds hanging overhead at 900 ft. I was not impressed. After checking the weather on the Internet I was feeling a little happier as ceilings were forecast to lift to 2500 ft around noon. So I did some work in my room then headed for the airport about 10am. By the time I prepared for the next leg and got the Starduster ready the ceiling had not only lifted but the sun was shining. I filed for a route along the south shore of lake Superior, overflying a closed air force base by the name of Sawyer and landing for fuel at a small town in northern Wisconsin called



South shore of Lake Superior under a heavy sky.

Ironwood (240nm).

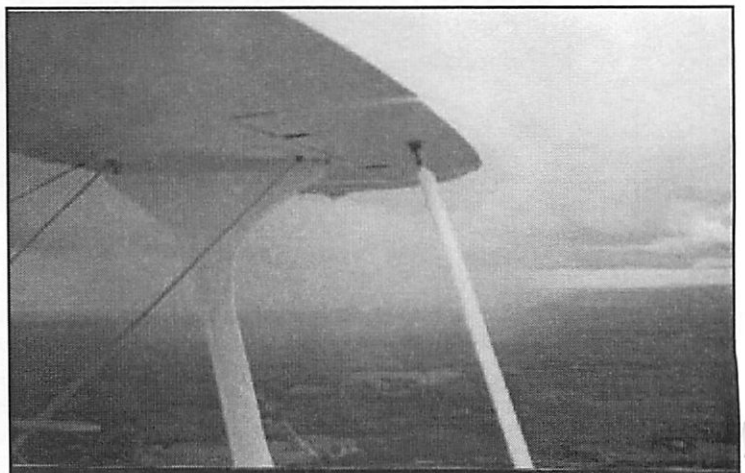
The first leg was good with light turbulence, a light tail wind and sunshine. By the time I got to Sawyer, however, I had a broken ceiling at 2000 ft and rain cells were starting to appear. In between the cells I was encountering drizzle. As before I was flying along the northern side of a low so the further I went the stronger the tail wind became. This was giving me an extra 15 to 20 knot ground speed but was making it pretty bouncy. Flying a biplane in rough air is a full time job so before leaving the Sault I came up with a way of pre-folding maps to minimize the amount of re-folding required in the cockpit. It worked well. As I approached Ironwood the GPS was telling me it was straight ahead 3 miles but I was looking at a rain cell dumping water by the bucket load. I flew around the heavy rain cell to find the airport in the clear on the other side. I landed unceremoniously and as I was taxiing in the cell caught up with me. I sat in the cockpit on the ramp for 10 minutes waiting for the deluge to pass by.

Not all FBO's are created equal. When the rain stopped I climbed out and poked around a huge WWII

vintage hangar looking for some sign of life. Finally I saw movement through a window in a dingy office well hidden in the back corner. A gentleman looked up as I walked in but said nothing. I said hello and asked if I could use a phone to close my flight plan and then purchase some fuel. Without a word he pointed to a

telephone and went back to doing what appeared to be nothing, although I don't profess to be an expert on the subject. When I hung up the phone he sprang into action and lead the way out to the fuel pump. I commented that it wasn't very busy today probably due to the weather, and he finally spoke, "Never busy around here." We were making progress. We fueled the Starduster in silence - I climb the ladder, he handed me the hose and I filled the tank. (I prefer to fill the tank myself, which always suits the line guys.) Back in the office we made more social progress as he showed me how to use their on-line weather computer. My next leg would take me around Duluth then northwest to Grand Rapids, Minnesota. It looked like I would be dodging rain cells for about another 50 miles then things would improve past Duluth so I got out the maps and started preparing.

(continued on page 5)



One of many rain cells across Michigan and Wisconsin.

Ferrying - continued from page 4

Back in the air again I dodged and ducked until past Duluth then the ceiling started to break up a bit and the rain showers stopped. There's no question of why Minnesota is called the land of lakes. It was lakes and trees with the occasional field. Fortunately there are lots of small roads crisscrossing the landscape so a forced landing could possibly be accomplished without tearing the wings off or going swimming. I made Grand Rapids in good time and found an FBO operation there that was the antithesis of Ironwood. The lineboy came out to help with fuel on the double and inside I found a friendly EAA'r who couldn't have been more helpful. He even offered to find me hangar space if I was staying the night. Since there was still lots of light I opted to go an extra 65 nm to the next town, Bemidji, which is supposed to be the home of the mythical Paul Bunyon. I only know this because I drove through there 40 years ago and remember seeing a huge statute of Paul along the highway.

The Bemidji airport happened to be under a light rain shower when I arrived so I landed in the rain and got wet again. The Starduster certainly got washed a lot on this trip. This time I found a very busy high-end FBO with a number of Kingair's in the hangar. They didn't offer me hangar space but they also didn't charge anything for their tiedown space either. So I fueled up and got a ride to a Comfort Inn a couple of miles away. After battling the elements all day I was starving so I headed for the nearest restaurant, feasted on a steak dinner and relaxed.

My first leg the next day, Thursday, was



On the ramp at Bemidji, MN.

from Bemidji to Devil's Lake, North Dakota. Checking the weather first thing showed Grant Forks, ND to be IFR with 800 foot ceilings, lifting to 1500 feet by 11:00am. This was par for the course. I went out to the airport about 9:00 and hung around the FBO office, checking the weather every hour, until 11:30. By then the ceiling at Grand Forks was up to 1800 feet so I departed. It wasn't so bad; by the time I got there the ceiling was broken at 2000 feet and it got better as I flew west. Grand Forks was right on my route but there is an Air Force base a few miles west of the city so I diverted far enough south to be sure I was outside the base airspace. I was about 700 feet below the broken cloud base and as I came abeam the airport a KC135 tanker descended below the clouds on final for runway 34. It crossed my path about 300 feet higher and ½ mile ahead of me. It would have made a great picture except I was too busy scanning for other traffic to think of the camera. A few miles further on I noticed a strobe light a few hundred feet below my flight path. At first I thought it was another aeroplane, but as I got closer I realized it was the top of a tower. A check of the map indicated I was flying over a 766

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Devil's Lake was a quick stop for fuel, a cross-border flight plan and a call to Canada Customs to advise of my arrival at Estevan, SK in two hours. A very cheerful lady on the phone rattled off a number then said, "Ops, I wasn't supposed to give you that number until after you land." "What number," I replied, "I'll give you a call from Estevan." The ceiling thickened up as I crossed central North Dakota, but as I neared the border I could see clear skies ahead. I was making good time since I still had a 10 knot tailwind and Estevan came into view sooner than expected. Once again this was a short stop for fuel, another call to customs and a new flight plan.

There is never anything to eat at these small airports so at each stop I would down a granola or fruit bar, but my stash was getting mighty low by this time. I had only two left so I ate one and saved the other for later. My next stop was Swift Current and I would decide when I got there if I would stay the night or push on for home.

Once again I had a good tailwind which is highly unusual. Trust me, flying west across Saskatchewan is almost never accompanied by a tail wind. I climbed up to 6500 feet but my ground speed decreased so I resigned myself to mechanical turbulence for the rest of the

(continued on page 6)

Ferrying - continued from page 5

trip and went back down to 4500 feet where I was now getting a 10-15 knot boost. I arrived in Swift Current at 6:00pm local time and found the FBO closed. The last leg from Swift Current to home would be a little over 2 hours so I figured if I called for fuel and could get airborne again by 7:00pm I would be home well before dark. Twenty minutes later a very cheerful lady showed up, apologized for not being available, dispensed the bug juice, and I was out of there by 6:45.

My last leg turned out to be highly eventful. The sky was clear and the winds were favourable until about 80 miles from Calgary. By then the sun was getting low so the winds were diminishing but ahead I could see a lot of black clouds rising very high indeed. I studied this intently and by the time I was 40 miles back I saw black clouds reaching from south of Calgary to Airdrie on the north and from the ground to about 10000 feet. Most interesting of all were the spectacular lightning bolts emanating from this hulk. This decision was a no-brainer. No way was I going any closer to that thing. I tuned into the Calgary Terminal frequency and discovered the storm was moving east at about 6 knots and had just cleared the Calgary airport, which put it directly over my home base, Chestermere-Kirkby Field. I turned south and headed for Vulcan, which was well clear of the storm.

As I taxied to the ramp at Vulcan a pickup truck came up the driveway. I was greeted at the pilots lounge by a gentleman who said he saw me in the circuit and came out to see if I needed fuel. What service! I took Jack Deans up on his fuel offer and we spent the next hour talking airplanes as I waited for the storm to move on. Meanwhile I called



Southern edge of Calgary storm. Home is hidden on right.

Flight Services to extend my flight plan time and get an update on the storm. About 9:45 I figured the storm was far enough east for me to get in and there would be just enough daylight left for the 30 minute trip home. I said good bye to Jack and was off on my last, unplanned leg. The storm had moved far enough east



At the Waterville airport Bob and John Haayer (front seat) taxi out for circuits one last time before the Starduster Too heads west.



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Bishell Fly-in Successful

Glen Bishell's 3rd annual fly-in breakfast/lunch was another success. Glen reports 13 aircraft were flown in. A total of about 48 turned up to feast on smokies and beans. The weather was great.



Flying Events

July 7-8 - Wetaskiwin salute to aviation at the Reynolds-Alberta Museum. For info call 1-800-661-4726.

July 14 - Annual Kirkby fly-in breakfast at Chestermere-Kirkby Field. 8:30am to 12:00noon. For info call 569-9541.

July 15 - Vulcan annual fly-in breakfast 8:00am to 11:30am. For info call 403-485-2633.

July 11-15 - Northwest EAA fly-in, Arlington, Wa. For info call 360-435-5857.

July 21 - Nanton Lancaster Air Museum 2nd annual invitational fly-in at AJ Ranch.

July 24-31 - Airventure Oshkosh. For info call 920-426-4800, web site www.airventure.org.

July 29 - CUFC annual fly-in/drive-in BBQ. Starts at 1:00pm at Dave Boulton's strip. Call Bernie for info 255-7419.

August 4-5 - Red Deer Airshow with the Snowbirds.

August 8 - Cranbrook Airshow with the Snowbirds. - CANCELLED due to lack of funding.

August 12 - Pincher Creek, AB, COPA Flight 77 annual fly-in breakfast. For info call Tony 403-627-3006.

August 18-19 - Lethbridge Airshow with the Snowbirds.

September 15 - Rocky Mountain House annual fly-in breakfast, 8:00am to 11:30am. Info call Charlie 403-722-3205.

September 9 - Fred Herzog Memorial fly-in breakfast, St. Albert, AB

Don't forget Kirkby's fly-in Breakfast on July 14th and the CUFC fly-in breakfast on July 29th at Dave Boulton's.

Fly-in's are always fun even if you don't fly in.

Distractions

Think About It!

by Bob Kirkby

The "Take Five for safety" reprinted at right points out how distractions in the cockpit can lead to incidents, accidents and fatalities. After reading it I tried to remember some of the errors I have made while flying over the past 20 years. Of those I can remember most were a result of being distracted for some reason. When flying conventional aircraft one of the biggest distractions is passengers. However, since most ultralight pilots don't fly with passengers, except other pilots occasionally, what distractions are there to be wary of?

I can think of a big one right off the bat. I may be off base on this but judging from what I hear I would say for the average ultralight pilot the radio is a big distraction. This sounds odd since the radio is there to enhance safety when properly used. Unfortunately I do not believe many, if any, ultralight pilots receive radio training. Most, in fact, purchase a radio many months or even years after receiving their permit and set about learning to communicate on their own.

Communicating effectively and with confidence on the radio takes practice, like anything else. During the learning curve becoming fixated on making and interpreting radio calls can seriously distract one from flying the aircraft. In straight and level cruise this may not be too bad, but in a busy circuit with a crosswind is not the time to teach yourself radio procedures.

Other aircraft often create distractions. Although seeing and avoiding is all part of flying the airplane, another aircraft in the vicinity doing something unexpected can become a major distraction. The secret is to not become fixated. Keep a close eye on the distracting aircraft but don't forget to keep up your scan of the rest of the sky and your instrument panel. How many times have you paid too much attention to another aircraft and suddenly found your attitude wandering or a wing dropping?



DISTRACTION = DANGER

By Bernard Maugis, System Safety Specialist, Quebec Region

Already in ancient times, Homer described the devastating effects of distraction in the *Odyssey*. To prevent his mariners from being distracted by the song of the Sirens and putting their boat in danger, Odysseus blocked their ears with wax. Nowadays, bus drivers use other strategies to avoid distraction. As a safety measure, and to avoid distracting them, passengers are asked not to speak to bus drivers.

Most of the time, bush and helicopter pilots are alone to carry out all the tasks related to flying the aircraft while, at the same time, they are not isolated from their passengers. Team spirit often leads pilots to interact with passengers. By talking or by bringing their activities on board the aircraft, passengers can become a dangerous source of distraction. As much as possible, pilots must isolate themselves and concentrate on their work by remaining distant. If pilots get involved in their passengers' conversations or activities, their attention is greatly diverted from flying the aircraft. A distracted pilot is no longer able to control the situation, and his/her vigilance, which is essential during an emergency, is compromised. Conversations in flight should be limited to those that are required by the mission at hand—it's a matter of safety. Professional pilots explain this and enforce it from the cockpit. They can take the time to socialize and exchange opinions once they are on the ground.

Here's a classic example of distraction: Imagine the passenger in your helicopter is a geologist. You observe him from the corner of your eye between two "scans" of the instrument panel. You have been flying over a rocky countryside for a good half-hour. Suddenly, he changes colour and yells in the interphone to conduct a half-turn toward a heap of pebbles. You carry out the manoeuvre as an excited voice, raving about the mineral beauty of these rocks, resonates through your headset. The enthusiasm overcomes you as well; your wide eyes fixate on these stones and search to find the beauty in them, but you don't see it—you are not a geologist! Suddenly, you regain your composure and you notice, with a sinking stomach and a strident cuss, that you are at 100 ft AGL with a tailwind and no airspeed. You have put yourself and your passengers in a dangerous situation. You alone are responsible. You let yourself become distracted! You are very lucky if this story has a happy ending. Unfortunately, many fatal accidents (for example, collisions with power lines) have pilot distraction as a causal factor.

Other dangerous forms of pilot distraction include spilled coffee in the cockpit, problems with an instrument, or a passenger who is not feeling well. The pilot diverts his/her attention to the problem while the flight continues with no real control. The longer the flight continues at a low altitude, the more likely it is that this distraction could have disastrous results because the room to manoeuvre is reduced. Pilots, beware of the song of the Sirens!



Canada

Reprinted from Aviation Safety Letter Issue 2/2001

Reading maps or other flight information is another source of distraction. When studying your map in the cockpit don't keep your eyes on the map for more than 10 seconds. Make it part of your scan so you don't lose track of your airspeed, attitude or other traffic while you're trying to figure out where you are.

Many ultralight aircraft do not have much room to carry a map, CFS, handheld radio, GPS, water bottle, lunch, camera, pen, paper, etc. Give serious thought to how these things can be stowed in flight for easy retrieval without causing a major distraction. I wear clothing with lots of pockets!

Have a good flight. →