WHAT'S UP? REGIONAL CFI FOR 2004 SELECTED: HARRY LEICHER!

One of our own, Harry Leicher has recently been selected as, not only the LGB FSDO CFI of the year, but also the Western Pacific Region Certified Flight Instructor for the year 2004! He is an active flight instructor and has given 600 hours of flight instruction during 2003. He is a Master CFI appointed by NAFI, part time faculty at Long Beach City College and a Safety Counselor who has presented numerous Safety Seminars during 2003. Harry is wonderful to work with, adding to his list of accomplishments, “I’m a ‘recovering banker’ whose office window has a much better view than his former boss’s at the bank!” This is the second year in a row that Long Beach Flying Club has enjoyed the privilege of the presence of a Western region CFI of the Year: John Mahany was selected last year. Furthermore, this year, John, was appointed Safety Counselor for the Western region. What auspicious company we keep!!!

The NPRM meetings for the upcoming changes to Class B airspace were held last month with over 230 pilots attending the 4 meetings. The meetings went well and all of the comments were positive. The comment period closes February 29, 2004. For anyone interested in the details of the Class B redesign or the presentation that was given, the complete power point presentation is available at www.lawa.org/lax/htmlevn/lax_nmfframe.html, select “FAA Proposed Class B Airspace Modifications Presentation.”

AIRMANSHP: The Myths of Ditching:

Contrary to what you may have heard, the best emergency landing site may be the water

If you fly much over the water - even over wide bays and rivers - you've had to quell the uneasiness that arises when the engine goes into "auto rough" mode the instant you're beyond gliding range of shore. Not to worry; it's not just you. The prospect of going into the water in an airplane terrifies most pilots, chiefly because few prepare for it and, in general, instructors don't know enough about the relevant risks to make well-informed judgments about over water flying. As a result, certain myths and half-truths about ditching seem to persist, handed down from one pilot to the next. The truth is, overall, ditching is one of the most survivable emergency procedures any pilot can perform, according to a review of ditching accidents in 1985 through 1990 and 1994 and 1996. Although survival rates vary by time of year and water body type, the overall general aviation ditching survival rate is 90 percent and if you ignore blue water ferry operations, fatalities are actually quite rare. In reviewing the accident data, we ignored accidents which appeared to be "water crashes," high speed impacts, stall/spins or spirals, focusing only on intentional water landings in which the aircraft touches down under control. With this in mind, the NTSB's database revealed 179 bonafide ditchings during the eight years we examined. These records led to some interesting discoveries, which should take some of the horror out of over water flying. The 10 myths of ditchings, in no particular order:

Myth 1: Most Ditchings Aren't Survivable — If you believe this, you've been led seriously astray. Of the 179 ditchings reviewed, 22 (12 percent) involved fatalities. And in at least six of those ditchings, there were one or more survivors. By the way, we're defining "surviving" as egressing the airplane and being rescued or...
TREVOR SCHNOOVER
SOLO
C152
AL GIL

JOHN WATERS
SOLO
WARRIOR
RICHARD GARNETT

PAUL FOX
INSTRUMENT
C172
JOHN MAHANY

JIN YUP KIM
COMM SINGLE
C172RG
HEISHU

CHRIS MC BURNEY
COMM SINGLE
ARROW
C172RG

KEUN-YOUNG LEE
COMM MULTIC
SEMINOLE
JA ESGO OH

HYOUNG JUN KIM
COMM MULTIC
SEMINOLE
C172RG

MIN BAHING
COMM MULTIC
SEMINOLE
C172RG

DAN JENKINS
CFI
ARROW
PETER JACKSON

BILL ROSENBERRY
CFI
C172
RENE WAGNER

MALCOM DIXON
CPE
DPE ADAM BERG

Congratulations to club alumni BRIAN ADAMS on his promotion to Captain in the MD11 for World Airlines!!!

CLUB PILOTS WELCOME!

Bryan Kidd
Maninder Dhillon
Robert Grigson
Walter Saunders
Omnster Haynes
Philip Houston
Rok Kim
Greg Rexroad
Allan Bodah
John Francis
John Carey
Mike Seymour
Eric Johnson
John Donnenfield
William Sewell
TJ Barrng
Darrel Painter
Ron Hahn
Bruce Nettles

NOTAT: Club pilots wishing to write safety articles for our monthly newsletters would be greatly appreciated! Many thanks to Helen Cranz and John Mahany for the help with this newsletter! CONGRATULATIONS to the Jeff Muehle family on the recent birth of their daughter Madison!

CLUB REG UPDATED: FAR 61.3 has changed so our reg has changed from: Member agrees to submit copies of all licenses, ratings, logbook copy of BFR or (other FAA proficiency check), and valid U.S.medical for pilot file in office, and agrees to update copies when a new license, rating or medical is obtained.” To Member agrees to submit copies of all licenses, ratings, logbook copy of BFR or (other FAA proficiency check), and valid U.S.medical for pilot file in office, and agrees to update copies when a new license, rating or medical is obtained.

NOTAT: Save our powerpacks in our retractable gear aircraft! Please circle the gear a maximum of 4 or 5 times per hour. Plan your lessons to vary pattern work with other maneuverers to let the hydraulic pumps and motors cool off.

Helen’s Corner continued from page 1: swimming to shore. If the occupants got out but then drowned or succumbed to exposure, that goes into the “fatal” column. Sometimes survivors escape unscathed, sometimes they get away with minor or serious injuries. In four of the ditchings that involved fatalities, all of the occupants got out of the airplane alive but some may have succumbed to drowning or exposure later. This becomes less a ditching issue than a survival equipment consideration. Where and when you ditch matters. Two-thirds of the 22 occurred during the winter in cold or temperate climates. One thing we can say we call “blue water” ditchings in the open Atlantic or Pacific, done by ferry pilots on extraordinary missions in light singles or twin or fish spotters operating far from shore. Since ferry missions are really beyond the ken of everyday general aviation operations, throwing these operations out of the equation pushes the survival rate to an encouraging 90 percent.

Myth 2: Ditching is Safer in a Low Wing Than a High Wing Aircraft — You won’t convince us of that. Of the 179 ditchings, 87 involved high wing airplanes (49 percent), 73 were low wingers (41 percent) and the rest were helicopters. Yet in the subgroup that involved fatalities, high wing airplanes were noticeably untouched. High wing airplanes involved in 49 percent of all the ditchings, they represent only 27 percent of the fatalities. On the other hand, low wing airplanes represent 41 percent of the total ditchings but accounted for 68 percent of the fatalities. We don’t make a great deal of this finding, other than to note that it doesn’t all support the widely held notion that high wing airplanes sink to their struts and trap the occupants.

Myth 3: During Ditchings, Many Airplanes Nose Under and Sink Like a Submarine With All Hands --- Pure poppycock. That’s not to say this doesn’t happen or that it hasn’t. But it appears to occur only in extreme circumstances. For example, in one blue water accident, a Centurion disappeared without a trace, taking pilot and copilot with it. Similarly, a couple of other ferry flights vanished off the horizon far from shore. We found four fatalities in this group of 22, for a survival rate of 82 percent, not too much worse than it is for inshore ditchings. Admittedly, it’s quite possible that an aircraft going down in such circumstances, there’s simply no evidence that the airplane will head straight for the bottom during a ditching that’s pulled off reasonably well. The accident report shows that the touchdown point may be violent, but not in a way that’s likely to result in a dramatic accident. Make no mistake: it went missing with no reports filed. It happens. We simply don’t know how often it happens. Even if we missed a dozen such accidents, the key point remains unchanged: The Coast Guard, Navy and merchant vessels routinely fish pilots from the ocean. No doubt blue water ditchings are higher risk, but they certainly don’t pose a grim survival outlook, either.

Myth 4: An Open Ocean Ditching is Unlikely to be Survivable — Not really. During the eight years we studied, we found 22 blue water ditchings. These are long-range ferry flights over the Atlantic or Pacific or fish spotters operating far from shore. We found four fatalities in this group of 22, for a survival rate of 82 percent, not too much worse than it is for inshore ditchings. Admittedly, it’s quite possible that an aircraft went down under moment. But we simply don’t have enough reliable information to judge this. Make your own assessment and configure the airplane accordingly. More critical than configuration, in our view, is touching down parallel to the swells or, if that isn’t an issue in calmer water, flying upwind to yield the lowest possible touchdown speed. Worth noting is that 9 of the 22 fatal ditchings involved retractorials. As with the high wing versus low wing controversy, these numbers are too small to draw any meaningful conclusions.

Myth 6: The Airplane Won’t Float Long Enough for Everyone To Get Out — Another thing pilots worry about but shouldn’t. While you won’t want to dally around collecting your personal belongings, there’s usually plenty of time to egress a sinking airplane. In some cases, there’s time enough to exit and reach back in to retrieve survival gear or other items. Again, the record doesn’t show us how long the typical airplane floats after a ditching. Indeed, there appears to be too many variables to even hazard a guess at what “typical” is, if there is such a thing. Some airplanes float for only a minute or two, others are still adrift two days later. The important thing to remember is not to hang around to observe buoyancy potential, they evacuate - and with a great deal of success. One fear that’s largely unfounded is that of going down with high wave conditions in the open sea.

Myth 8:  The Airplane Won’t Float Long Enough for Everyone To Get Out — Another thing pilots worry about but shouldn’t. While you won’t want to dally around collecting your personal belongings, there’s usually plenty of time to egress a sinking airplane. In some cases, there’s time enough to exit and reach back in to retrieve survival gear or other items. Again, the record doesn’t show us how long the typical airplane floats after a ditching. Indeed, there appears to be too many variables to even hazard a guess at what “typical” is, if there is such a thing. Some airplanes float for only a minute or two, others are still adrift two days later. The important thing to remember is not to hang around to observe buoyancy potential, they evacuate - and with a great deal of success. One fear that’s largely unfounded is that of going down with high wave conditions in the open sea.