



THE FLYER

www.victoryaviation.org

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Current Roster	June, 2010
Current Rules	May, 2009



All meetings are held at 7:00 pm on the third Tuesday of each month. This month's meeting will be held at Richard's Pizza in Fairfield, located at 495 Nilles Rd., approximately two miles west of Rt. 4.

COME EARLY: SOCIAL HOUR FROM 6:00 to 7:00.

Next Club Mtg.	Aug. 17, 2010
Next Tour Group/Safety Mtg.	June. 15, 2010

MEETING NOTE: In case of poor driving conditions (heavy snow, ice, rain, etc.) typhoons, locust plagues, or the end of the world, call Herb Porter's answering machine at 777-8721 for meeting status.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE!!

DO NOT send personal information changes or updates of ANY KIND to the Editor. There is one exception and *one exception only*: if you have a change in your email address; this goes to the Secretary and you should also copy the Editor as well so the mailing list can be updated. Other than that, send nothing to the Editor! We do not maintain these records!

This applies to roster info, changes in status (resignation, inactive, etc.), BFR or medical certificate updates, etc., etc., etc. If you have *any other* new or updated information of any sort, here's where to send it and whom to contact:

All roster information changes and updates:

Secretary, [Curt Nichols](#).

Email address changes:

Secretary, [Curt Nichols](#); copy Newsletter Editor, [Jan Jansen](#).

Resignations/requests for Inactive status:

Treasurer, [Doug Ostholthoff](#) (Primary); President, [Brent Clark](#) (Secondary).

BFR and/or medical certification date changes (the info found on your bill):

Treasurer, [Doug Ostholthoff](#)

ICE (In Case of Emergency) contact info:

Safety Officer, [Jan Jansen](#).

WAKE TURBULENCE

IMPORTANT NOTICE!!!

Prop Strikes on Club Aircraft

ALL prop strikes MUST be reported immediately to the plane captain, to the Planning Officer, or to any other club officer ASAP.

The plane should be grounded *immediately* until an A&P mechanic clears the aircraft for flight.

This includes birds, the ground or TOW-BARS (this is the THIRD time we have managed to start a plane with the tow-bar still attached).

I have no idea how this happens, but not reporting it baffles me more (*simply writing it on the squawk sheet doesn't count*).

The next pilot (or pilots, since we generally have no idea of when it happened) shouldn't be the one finding and reporting it.

This is a *serious* safety hazard, especially for the next guy who is unaware and doesn't catch it in the pre-flight. In a worst-case scenario, it's possible for a section of the prop to break off, setting up a vibration severe enough to tear the engine out of its mounts...and what happens next isn't pleasant.

Be sure to read the article on prop strikes, which you'll find in this month's Safety Soapbox column.

~ Alan Koch, Planning Officer

MAINTENANCE & PLANNING

N355VA

- Oil change sometime this month

N351VA

- Stall warning vane repaired (loose wire)
- CDI#1 was recalibrated, but still seems to oscillate now while tracking
- Engine idles at 800 vs 650 – reads low at idle but OK at operating speeds
- Touch up exterior paint week of 6/14
- Oil change
- New door seals and lengthened shoulder harness (passenger) installed this month

N356VA

- Touch up exterior paint week of 6/21

N9515Q

- New tow bar due to unreported prop strike.
- Prop repaired

~ Alan Koch, Planning Officer

SAFETY SOAPBOX

Prop Strike!

~by John D. Ruley

John D. Ruley is an instrument-rated private pilot, and a contributing editor to Plane & Pilot, Pilot Journal, and Piper and Cessna Owner magazines.

This article originally appeared in Cessna Owner magazine.

My wife, Kate, has been taking flying lessons on-and-off for a few years now. She's been taking every opportunity to practice, so was up and out at the airport bright and early one Sunday while yours truly slept in.

When the phone rang, I wasn't really very awake. "Hello," I said, more than half asleep.

"I just did major damage to the plane," a small voice said.

My first concern was to make sure that she was OK and nobody else was hurt. And nobody was. What happened to Kate is one of the most common minor ground problems private pilots encounter: She forgot

to take the tow bar off, and when she tried to start the engine, it interrupted the prop. (See Kate's story in the sidebar below.)

I'm sure most readers have heard about hitting the tow bar. Stories abound of them being flung over hangars, and of airplanes being successfully started and taxied with one attached – only to hit with a bang when the airplane lands. It's apparently so common that the Civil Air Patrol launched a major program to minimize such incidents. And, of course, the tow bar isn't the only thing the prop may strike: rocks, birds, and the runway (during gear-up landings) all come to mind.

Is That Bad?

So, if the prop strikes something, just how bad is it?

Pretty bad. McCauley Service Bulletin 176D defines a "Blade Strike" as "any impact or suspected impact of the rotating propeller upon such items as, but not limited to, the ground, tow bars, landing lights, carts, snow banks, hedges, etc.," and goes on to say that deciding whether or not you've actually had a blade strike is up to you as the aircraft operator.

If you've had one, though, SB 176D doesn't provide much leeway: "Any McCauley propeller experiencing a Blade Strike must be removed from the aircraft and completely overhauled by an FAA approved propeller repair station ..." (emphasis mine).

Why? In part – as SB 176D notes – because you can have internal damage to a prop (particularly a constant-speed prop) even if there's no visible damage. And it's not a simple matter of dressing or replacing the affected blade(s): SB 176 D goes on to say that the propeller hub itself must be scrapped if any single blade is damaged beyond repair limits.

Senesnich – which manufactures only fixed-pitch props – is a little more lenient; its Service Bulletin R-17 says, "Do not fly your aircraft under any circumstance before a thorough inspection by qualified personnel if the propeller has been subjected to impact." It's up to the inspector to decide if the prop must be removed and overhauled.

Do We HAVE To Open The Engine?

Well, that takes care of the propeller – what about the engine? Up through the mid-1960s, it was common practice not to open the crankcase after a simple blade strike. Instead, a dial-indicator test was performed on the crankshaft end (basically, to see if the shaft was bent). This is now considered inadequate. Expensive as pulling the engine and opening the crankcase may be, consider that the alternative could be a catastrophic failure in flight (or during takeoff, when the engine is generating maximum power) at some point down the line...

For exactly that reason, the engine manufacturers are unanimous: Any damage that requires repairing the

prop also requires pulling the engine for inspection and overhaul.

Lycoming's Mandatory Service Bulletin 533A defines a prop strike as "Any incident, whether or not the engine is operating, that requires repair to the propeller other than minor dressing of the blades ... [or] in which the propeller impacts a solid object which causes a drop in RPM and also requires structural repair of the propeller (incidents requiring only paint touch up are not included) ... [or] A sudden RPM drop while impacting water, tall grass, or similar non-solid medium, where propeller structural damage is not normally incurred ..." It goes on to say that in any of these cases "the safest procedure is to remove and disassemble the engine and completely inspect the reciprocating and rotating parts, including crankshaft gear and dowel parts. Any decision to operate an engine which was involved in a [prop strike] without such inspection must be the responsibility of the agency returning the aircraft to service."

Similarly, TCM's Service Bulletin SB96-11 defines "propeller strike incidents" in much the same way as Lycoming, and says that "Following any propeller strike a complete engine disassembly and inspection is mandatory and must be accomplished prior to further operation ..." It does include one small out: "For instances where the propeller is damaged by a small foreign object during operation, such as a small stone, inspection and repair must be accomplished in accordance with the propeller manufacturer's published instructions. Any time foreign object damage requires propeller removal for repairs other than minor dressing of the blades, the incident is considered a propeller strike and [requires a complete engine disassembly and inspection]."

I talked to Terry Horton, TCM's supervisor of customer service, about this. "What can happen is that you get a crack, which can lead to a crankshaft failure," he said. "You can also load the front main journal in the case to a condition that leads to a crack because of the load there; and you can get accessory gear damage. We got more strict because we found a series of situations where a guy has a strike, and checks it out according to the old rules and it looks OK; but we found some people were having problems down the line. We also had people trying to interpret – what constitutes a prop strike? In essence, unless you have something that only requires a minor dressing of a prop, then you have to tear the engine down and overhaul it...period. We made it a more comprehensive inspection than in the past, which catches more problems and makes it safer. If it requires you to remove and repair (or replace) a prop or blade, then you need to tear down the engine. It may seem like overkill, but it's not. We see it as a very serious safety issue for our users. We've had instances where the old-style tests were done, and looked fine –

and then, a couple of hundred hours down the line you'd have a crankshaft failure. If our history didn't show this, we'd never have changed our inspection criteria."

John Standiford, a mechanic with Ultimate Engine, agrees: "Anything that requires sending the prop to a prop shop – finishing, filing, etc. – is considered a prop strike. I've even seen a situation where someone hit a spinner with a hangar door, and the insurance company wrote it off as a prop strike. If it's up to me, and there's any question about it, I'd do an overhaul. Say you have a minor strike and it passes all the usual tests – dial indicator, magnaflux, what have you. 300-400 hours later, it could fail after flexing in operation. It's just safer to do the overhaul and be done with it."

Not So Bad This Time

For me, the one small ray of hope in all this was the unanimous opinion of everyone I talked to – starting with my own local mechanic – that what happened to us didn't really constitute a true prop strike: There was no visible damage to the prop, which indicated that the engine never actually started: The prop was being swung only by the starter motor. But contrast that with the experience of a friend (and Mooney M20K-231 owner) who prefers to remain nameless:

"I made what looked like a normal landing; but something didn't feel right. I was a little long – and I had some people on board who'd never been in a small plane before – so I went around, landed, shut down, and went to close my flight plan. When I came out, one of my passengers said, 'Did you see the prop?' I looked – and both blades were bent back at the tips. I didn't even realize it was damaged.

"I couldn't believe I'd actually flown it with a damaged prop. Suppose I'd had a vibration problem? I could have lost the engine!"

This happened during the return from a group flight to Mexico on a medical mission. I remember how pale the pilot quoted here looked when we caught up with him (my plane's a bit slower than his). Even his story, though, turned out to have a silver lining:

"I called my insurance company, USAIG. They asked who I wanted to do the repair. I really didn't know, but asked a mechanic at my home airport to do it. He got a ferry permit, dialed the crankshaft, installed a spare propeller, picked up the airplane, and brought it home. Then he pulled the engine and did a major overhaul, and replaced the prop. I traded up to a three-blade and had to pay the difference between that and a new two-blade out of pocket. Everything else was covered by my insurance, and my rates didn't go up. The airplane was in the shop for about one month total."

Now that's got to be the single best reason to carry hull insurance I can think of.

As for my own story – we got lucky because the engine hadn't actually started when the prop contacted the tow bar; only the starter motor was operating, and it expended most of its energy pushing the nose wheel to the side. Our mechanic looked it over, and his verdict was two words: "Fly it."

My brother, an aeronautical engineer for the U.S. Air Force, suggested that we get an oil analysis done soon (I do one at every oil change) to see if any metal might turn up in the oil; but as I write this, it looks like we got off lightly.

SIDEBAR: Kate's Prop-Strike Story

My usual preflight routine was interrupted by a friend who stopped by our hangar to chat. When I continued with my checklist, I forgot to remove the tow bar. I finished the checklist, climbed in, called "clear prop" and turned the ignition switch to Start. At first, it sounded normal; then there was a tremendous bang, and the left rudder pedal slammed to the firewall – followed by dead silence (despite the fact that I hadn't yet let go of the key). I sat in stunned silence for a moment as it dawned on me what had happened. Visions of an unscheduled major overhaul and prop replacement went through my head.

When I got out to look, though – much to my relief – things weren't nearly as bad as I feared. The only visible damage to the prop was a paint mark from the tow bar. The nose wheel also appeared intact – only the tow bar showed damage (the right prong was bent up). I took the tow bar off and tried starting the engine – but again, was met by dead silence. I then put the plane back into the hangar, and slunk into the local FBO to call my husband and break the news that we wouldn't be able to take my niece for a ride (planned for later the same day) – and I'd probably done some expensive damage.

Fortunately, the next day, our mechanic was able to start the engine without any further trouble, but to this day, when I reach for the key and start to call "clear prop," I hesitate for a minute, just checking mentally to confirm that the tow bar is off.

~ Kathryn J. Bolton, M.D.

Plan every flight as if your life depends on it. It Does!

~ Jan Jansen, Safety Officer

PILOTS' LOUNGE

FAA: Replace Mufflers at 1,000 Hours

The FAA has issued a nonbinding special airworthiness information bulletin (SAIB) urging aircraft operators to

replace mufflers at 1,000 hours. It's not a noise abatement move, but rather a safety of flight issue. According to a Wichita State University study, a high percentage of aging mufflers are involved in carbon-monoxide-related incidents. In 92 percent of cases in which a CO leak was traced to a defective muffler, the muffler in question had more than 1,000 hours of service. So the SAIB suggests replacing mufflers at 1,000 hours.

Concorde May Fly Again

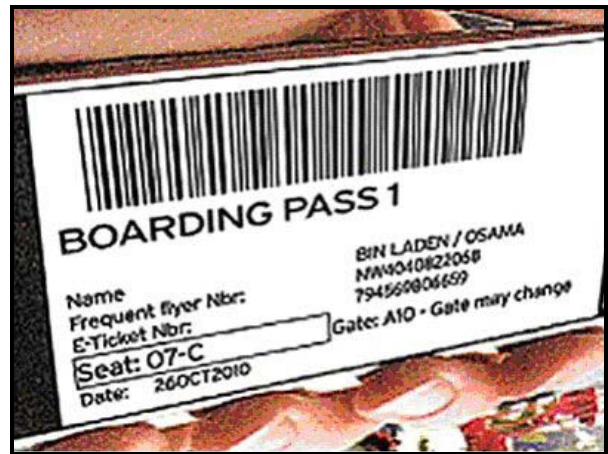
An Air France Concorde was to have undergone borescope tests Saturday to determine if its four engines can be safely started in advance of a possible return to flight. The aircraft is at a French museum at Le Bourget Airport, where it was mothballed seven years ago when Air France and British Airways ended supersonic service after decades of financial losses and the spectacular crash of a Concorde in Paris in 2000 that killed 113 people. There was no word at our deadline on the outcome of the tests but it's hoped the aircraft can soon be fueled and readied for taxi tests before returning to the air for heritage flights. It's hoped the aircraft can be airworthy in time for a flight over the opening ceremonies of the 2012 Summer Olympics in London.

The effort is expected to cost more than \$20 million and is being spearheaded by a French group, Olympus593. A British organization, Save Concorde Group, has also been trying to get authorities on that side of the channel to fire up one of the Concorde there but hasn't had as much luck as its French counterparts. Meanwhile, the trial of French and American people charged in the crash that effectively ended the commercial use of the airliner ended on Friday in Paris. A verdict won't be handed down until Dec. 6.

British Airways Blunder

Wed Jun 2, 2:12 pm ET It just seems like a bad time for any firm with the word "British" in its title. We know all too well the various setbacks experienced by the oil giant once known as British Petroleum; now British Airways has drawn much unwelcome attention to itself with a photo touting its new mobile-boarding pass system as it appears to expedite the air travel of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, the world's most wanted man.

What's more, the image features a frequent-flier number for passenger bin Laden — so much for all those airport terrorist watch lists — and has him flying first class on Oct. 26, 2010. As the travel site Gadling.com mused, "sadly, knowing the brilliant minds behind the anti-terror organizations, the terror level will be raised to 'red hot' on October 26, 2010, while airport police all over the world try to figure out which airport the most wanted terrorist in the world will be flying to."



The photo appeared in the LHR News, the company's internal staff magazine covering London's Heathrow Airport. The image accompanied an article spelling out the benefits of the mobile-boarding setup, which permits users of mobile digital devices to print out their boarding passes on the fly. The boarding pass reads "Bin Laden/Osama" and appears in the graphic panel of a user's iPhone. (AT&T reception in remote Pakistani caves is apparently better than anyone might have guessed.)

So how did this happen? The short answer is that no one knows — or at least, no one's telling if they do. A British Airways spokeswoman told ABC News reporter Scott Mayerowitz that "a mistake has been made in this internal publication and we are working to find out how this occurred." And in response to a follow-up call from Yahoo! News, another spokeswoman for the airline remained firmly on message, saying, "We're still working to find out how this occurred at this time."

The gaffe could be the result of a tasteless prank that got out of hand — but current speculation is running toward the theory that it's the handiwork of a disgruntled employee. British Airways is currently locked in a labor dispute with the union representing its cabin-crew workers, and the strike has grounded flights for thousands of travelers in one of the busiest travel times of the year. At issue in the labor fight is a proposed cut in the base salaries for new flight attendants. The company estimates that it has lost more than \$150 million in revenue during the dispute.

Between the union woes and the Osama PR setback, British Airways executives must be fondly reminiscing about last summer, when the major controversy was the airline's plan to sell ad space on its online boarding passes.

HANGAR RASH

Pilot Thoughts...

The most plausible scientific theory is that the rings of Saturn are composed entirely of lost airline baggage.

If helicopters are so safe, how come there are no vintage/classic helicopter fly-ins?

About Rules:

The rules are a good place to hide if you don't have a better idea and the talent to execute it.

If you deviate from a rule, it must be a flawless performance (e.g., if you plan to fly under a bridge, don't fly into the bridge!).



Lightning Inside a Funnel Cloud

