

RVAC AEROBATIC NEWS 1999

In the August issue of RVAC's Planetalk the CFI said something about going "a long way to find a better aerobatic instructor".

One of my recent basic aerobatic students, Ian MacLaine, resides in the USA and he wrote recently to say that he has just gained his American PPL and taken Bill Cox's advice - he's undergoing advanced aerobatic instruction in a 300hp Extra 300 with former American aerobatic champion Mike Goulian. Ian went on to say that he'd be back in Australia soon for some more advanced aerobatics.

You may recall Nicole Cuce's revelations of my sadism during her slow roll training - I'm pleased to report that Nicole is now a flick roll addict, having recently completed her aerobatic endorsement. Another new aerobatic pilot is Andrew Stopp who now has his eye on the Jet Provost.

Following the basic aerobatic endorsement the next step is to extend your repertoire to some more complex manoeuvres such as the Cuban eight, flick roll, clover leaf and avalanche loop. It won't be long before you are able to fly simple sequences of four or five manoeuvres. All of these are described in VACs copy of "The Basic Aerobatic Manual" by William Kershner, former Cessna test pilot. Browse through it next time you are at Moorabbin.

If you have an interest in aerobatic contests you must practice some more. Sportsman level is a good entry point - well within the capabilities of the Cessna Aerobat. A low level approval is necessary for contests and it has other advantages - for a start you are close enough to the judges that they can really see your manoeuvres (is that an advantage?). Secondly, you spend less time on the ground waiting for the cloud base to lift way above 3000 ft.

When I was in the USA (1995-96) I officially became an ACE by going through the Aerobatic Competency Evaluation programme run by the International Council of Air Shows as my job included airshow demonstrations of the new model Pitts and Husky. I've included appropriate elements of this in my own low level aerobatic programme. The ground course includes features and limitations of advanced aerobatic aircraft, energy management, advanced spinning and flying competitions. The flying training includes competition manoeuvres, flying sequences and emergency actions. This will take you up to the test for a low level aerobatic approval - down to 1500 ft AGL.



If you have an interest in competition then you'll find a wide choice around the country - from State Contests to the Nationals. The Royal Federation of Aero Clubs has a Sportsman level contest as part of the annual Australian Light Aircraft Championships. You may want to move on to more capable aircraft such as the Super Decathlon. On the other hand you may be after nothing more than the confidence of being able to recover safely from a spin, spiral dive or any other unusual attitude.

But, be warned - it is addictive!