



MILE HIGH VIEW

NEWSLETTER OF THE MILE HIGH WING,
COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE (CAF)

Keep 'Em Flying!

August 2007

Crash

By Col Stan Peterson

You may have remembered from last month's newsletter that we were learning to deal with a little adversity as one goes through life. Well, as luck would have it, this month we're learning to deal with disaster and loss.

While doing some single engine training in the vicinity of Parkland Airport, training turned to real life emergencies. After completing a shutdown and relight of the right engine, the left engine began running terribly tough, which required its shutdown and feathering of the propeller. After a brief period, the right engine began to lose power, and we were no longer able to maintain altitude. We restarted the left engine in an attempt to regain some positive thrust, but that only increased the drag. Our training started at approximately 1000' absolute, so this didn't leave us much time for trouble-shooting. Thinking that our problem could be contaminated fuel, I discontinued cross-feeding and selected both main tanks. We continued to lose power, and this engine was smoothly dying. Boost pumps, mags, all further trouble shooting failed, and it was time to seek a landing zone.

We couldn't reach Parkland because of our steep glide angle, and our only hope was to aim for a landing on Niwot road or an adjoining field, but the drag from the left engine, which failed to feather on its second shutdown, and the continued loss of thrust on the right engine caused our glide path to get ever steeper. With no alternative left, I selected a path through the tops of a stand of trees and between a couple of houses. We extended the gear just prior to landing, but visibility was impossible due to flying glass from our contact with the trees. Fortunately, we remained conscious and didn't get trapped in the wreckage, because a fire broke out, which would have made our rescue impossible.

Although the NTSB is continuing to determine the cause of the accident, evidence points toward oil starvation of both engines. As with a personal injury or illness much is learned after the occurrence. In this accident, as in almost all accidents, a chain of events occurred, a chain in which if any one of the links had broken, the accident would not have happened.

This time the aircraft was covered by insurance, just how much, how it will be distributed, or even if the insurance company will pay for damages at all is not known. The aircraft is owned by the CAF, of course, and a final decision as to distribution of funds or possible replacement aircraft is up to the General Staff. In the past, it has taken the Staff as long as two years or more to resolve these questions. So aircraft-wise, this leaves the Mile High Wing in a state of limbo short of adopting the Fly Baby as its mascot.

KEEP 'EM FLYING →



Col Stan Peterson over Fort Morgan, CO

(Photo by Jeff Francis on his 65th Birthday; June 23, 2007)

Calendar of Events

August 18, 2007 – Wing Meeting;
10:00 am at Platte Valley Airport

September 8, 2007 – Akron Radial
Engine Fly-in. Akron Airport.

September 15, 2007 – Wing Meeting;
10:00 am at Platte Valley Airport

September 29-30, 2007 –
Fina-CAF AirSho 2007

Mile High Wing, CAF
P.O. Box 471596
Aurora, CO 80047-1596

Directions to Platte Valley Airport

Platte Valley Airport is 3 miles
northwest of Hudson, Colorado:

- Take I-76 north to Hudson
and exit west on Highway 52.
- At CR 41, turn right (north).
- At CR 18, turn left (west).

At the Platte Valley Airpark sign, turn
left again.

Wing meetings are normally held on
the 3rd Saturday of the month at
10:00 a.m.

Printable color Mile High View can be found at:
<http://www.milehighcaf.org>

Newsletter articles needed; please send to:
rdelsloo@msn.com



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Aurora, CO 80047-1596