

Lake Hood, ready
for action

*Photo courtesy Pierce
Rosadiuk*



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[Seaplane Safety Seminar is April 28th!](#)

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- * Editor's Letter: Spring Training - Pilot Style!
- * Online tips for pilot refreshers
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Spring training - Pilot Style!

By Harry Kieling, Chairman

If you are a baseball fan, spring likely brings a special kind of excitement. Whether grapefruit or cactus league, spring training is a chance to connect with people who share of a love of the sport, get outdoors, and rekindle our hopes of a fun-filled, successful season. Spring training for baseball players should be much the same as for pilots — a chance to break out gear that hasn't been used all winter and test skills that might have gotten a little rusty. All this in an effort to achieve a successful and safe season.

Just as baseball players don't shake off the winter's rust by themselves, pilots should look forward to a team approach for their 'spring training' procedures. The first person to bring onto your team is the flight instructor. Whether you call your trusted favorite CFI or get a recommendation from a friend for another CFI's expert opinion, they can lend advice, help you hone some skills, or build confidence in your flying. When you go fly with a CFI, be sure to try something new, or refresh an old skill. If you don't have any ideas, ask your CFI to suggest some areas where you could use some refresher training. Adding to your team can be as easy as enlisting a friend to act as safety pilot while you check out the new ADS-B equipment, iPad, or tracking device with all the gee-whiz features you received for Christmas. Have a friend scan for traffic and make sure you keep the oily side down while you get comfortable

with any new devices and reacquaint yourself with the airplane.

The main purpose of spring training is to train! Schedule time on your calendar to fly often. If the weather is beyond your personal minimums or otherwise not cooperative, spend the time reviewing aircraft documents, updating your emergency equipment and safety gear, go to the Medallion Foundation and fly a simulator, or clean the airplane. The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association has some great training online, and it is free! (Get info on several online offerings elsewhere in this newsletter.) You can do a lot to stay proficient without being in the airplane, and remember training includes mental preparation as well as physical.

This concludes my advice on avoiding Deadly Sin #2: Lack of Proficiency and Stale Training. We hope you include the 33rd Annual Seaplane Safety Seminar in your spring training plans, it is a great opportunity to reconnect with people who share a love of aviation and hopefully learn something new about seaplane flying. Staying proficient is a choice, and we hope you will make a conscious decision to take your spring training seriously.

Have a great summer and don't forget to keep training!

***Fly safe,
Harry***

Emergency Egress and Restraint System

Cutting Devices

The recent helicopter crash in New York City and the tragic loss of five lives is a somber reminder of the importance of preparing and planning for emergency egress. Many pilots don't give much thought to emergency aircraft egress, other than a quick mention during preflight briefings to passengers about opening doors before impact. However, in an accident or emergency sequence such as a ditching, water impact, or fire, quick egress from the aircraft may be vital for survival. A restraint system that cannot be released is a potential hazard with egression from the aircraft during an accident or emergency. Restraint systems may fail to release due to an internal failure of the release mechanism, or due to operator error, which may occur if the individual attempting to operate the release mechanism is disoriented or injured.

Aircraft restraint systems include several different types of lap and shoulder restraint

attachments and release mechanisms. An approved shoulder harness restraint system should be installed as soon as possible if your aircraft is not already equipped. Pilots should regularly inspect their aircraft's restraint system for wear and tear and any torn or frayed sections should be replaced. Many different restraint system styles and colors are approved and available; a combination lap belt and shoulder harness with an inertia reel and four attach points can make a safe, functional, and comfortable restraint system. You'll want to be sure all components of the system release quickly and easily. Many of the older style restraint systems use loops to attach the shoulder harness to the lap belt, as shown in the photo below. These restraint systems should be replaced as they will not provide a safe means of egress if pilots or passengers become entangled.

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A simple and cost-effective solution to help ensure quick egress is to carry a restraint system cutting device (commonly known as a seat belt cutter) on your person while conducting flight operations. This device can easily be kept in a small holder affixed to your belt. If attempting egress and the restraint system assembly will not release for the reasons mentioned above, or if a person becomes entangled, the cutting device can be removed from its holder and the restraint system can be removed with a cut across the material (or several cuts depending on how many points the restraint system has).

Additionally, pilots might want to consider issuing restraint system cutting devices to passengers onboard the aircraft, in the event the pilot is physically incapacitated and cannot utilize their own device to assist others. Several different types of restraint system cutting devices are seen in the photo below and are easily available locally and online.

All aviators hope they never have to ditch an aircraft or have an unplanned water impact, but if it does happen, you'll want to be prepared for a quick and efficient egress from the aircraft.



33rd Annual Seaplane Safety Seminar

Saturday,
April 28, 2018

UAA Aviation Technology Center
2811 Merrill Field Drive
Anchorage, Alaska

0800-0830
Sign In

0830-0840
Master Pilot Award to John Brown

0845-0935
Brice Banning (NTSB)
Float Plane Accident(s) Lessons Learned

0945-1035
Brian Horner (Learn to Return)
Survival Strategies for Float Plane Pilots

1045-1135
Craig Ketchum (Ketchum Air Service)
Float Plane Operations

1135-1245
Lunch provided by
Alpha Eta Rho Aviation Fraternity (Fund Raiser)

1245-1330
Steve McCaughey (Exec Dir Seaplane Pilots Assoc)
Seaplane Flying: Past, Present, Future

1340-1430
Harry Shannon (Seaplane Pilots Assoc Corrosion Expert)
Corrosion Prevention

1440-1530
Dave Swartz (FAA Aeronautical Engineer)
Aging Aircraft Issues & Initiatives



Some tips for online pilot refreshers

by John Mahany

Spring is finally here! The flying season has arrived! Are you ready??

Before you go jump in your floatplane after being away from it for the winter months and takeoff, take some time to make sure both you and the airplane are ready. There is no doubt some ‘rust’ to knock off; some years more than others!

If the airplane has been sitting outside in the elements, it will take a careful inspection as well as preflight preparation (as appropriate) to get it ready to fly. And, if you have not flown in a few months, or longer, you will want to take some time to properly prepare yourself before going flying. Are you current? More importantly, are you proficient? There is a difference. Hire a good, competent CFI who knows the airplane you fly and can work with you.

Fortunately, there are many resources available now to help you get your head back in-the-game’ for the flying season before getting together with a CFI. They will save you time and money! In case you are not aware, there are numerous aviation newsletters full of safety tips that you can subscribe to, for FREE, as one way to keep up with things aeronautical. Here are some examples...

Check out Thomas Turner’s Mastery Flight Training Free Weekly Newsletter packed full of safety tips; <http://mastery-flight-training.us1.list-manage.com/subscribe>. Turner is a 3-time Master CFI based in Wichita, Kansas, and has been a Lead Instructor for the Beechcraft Pilot Proficiency Program for many years.

In addition, websites such as www.boldmethod.com distribute to subscribers each week via email, fun quizzes where you can see how much you know about a given topic (aerodynamics, charts, engines, airspace, runway lighting, etc.), and what you might need to brush up on. We all have areas where we could use a refresher, depending on the kind of flying that we do.

Gleim Aviation, in Gainesville, Florida, has an online Seaplane Refresher Course, for \$24.95. According

to the website, Gleim will let you try 1 Study Unit free, first. This is described as “Practical knowledge to stay a safe, proficient, seaplane rated pilot”. Go to <https://www.gleimaviation.com/shop/src/> for more information.

Also, AOPA, through its Air Safety Institute, offers a wide variety of free online courses at <https://www.aopa.org/training-and-safety>. In fact, AOPA offers training for rusty or lapsed pilots, recognizing that there are many inactive pilots out there who would like to become active again.

Even Sporty’s Pilot Shop has something for Seaplane Pilots — an app to check out, for \$40. Go to <http://www.sportys.com/pilotshop/sporty-s-so-you-want-to-fly-seaplanes-iphone-ipad-aviation-app.html>

I would be remiss if I did not mention that the FAA has included seaplane operations on its safety website, www.faa.gov. Do you participate in the FAA’s Wings Program? If not, consider registering, as there is no cost or obligation. Its another resource and you don’t have to log-in or have an account set up to view the activities.

On the left side of the home page, under Activities, go to Keywords and type in ‘seaplane’, then check ‘flight activities’; under Program check ‘wings’, and for Levels, I just checked the ‘Basic’ box. This produced a list of 6 activities. There are activities listed for Recreational Pilot, Sport Pilot, adding a Seaplane Rating, and two Seaplane Transition Courses. The first four activities listed are free, and the last two say ‘cost’, (there is a fee for those). All qualify as Wings Credit.

With all of the training resources that are now available, most of which are free or very affordable, there are really no more excuses for not keeping current on the required knowledge areas even when you are not flying!

Fly safely!

John

The Importance of Egress Training for Alaskan Pilots

A version of this article appeared in Alaska Dispatch, in September 2016

By Colleen Mondor

On July 10, 2012, a Cessna 206 on floats crashed while landing on Beluga Lake, in Homer. The pilot and four passengers departed Anchorage earlier that day on a private flight to Homer for a planned fishing trip the next day. Three of the passengers and the pilot, Joe Griffith, sustained minor injuries in the accident. Passenger and former state legislator Cheryll Heinze was killed.

The NTSB determined the cause of the Beluga Lake accident was "The pilot's improper evaluation of the weather conditions and his subsequent downwind water landing in gusting wind conditions, which resulted in a nose-over." For many floatplane pilots, the cause of the accident was all too familiar, echoing similar crashes going back through decades of landings on Alaska's lakes and rivers.

Safety issues concerning floatplanes and overwater operations are a special consideration in Alaska, but the aviation community is not always willing to acknowledge such issues.

"I have stood before groups and told them, 'you can't learn to escape a wreck from a PowerPoint presentation,'" stresses Learn to Return's Brian Horner. But while pilots likely understand that, convincing them to commit the time and money to learn how to get out of the water alive has not been easy for the survival training school.

The difficulty of post-crash water survival is evident from past accident investigations. In 2010, the Federal Aviation Administration issued [a report](#) of the years 2004-2009 entitled "Fatal and Serious Injury Accidents in Alaska" that gave particular focus to post-crash survival. It found that "adequate survival training, properly implemented, could have affected the outcome in 10 accidents with an opportunity to save 19 lives." The report specifically cited so-called "dunker" training and also the importance of rescue air bottles.

A classic example of the type of accident the FAA referred to can be found in the 2000 crash of a

Cessna 185 in Longmare Lake near Soldotna. The pilot and three passengers all survived the impact with minor injuries but the pilot, although lucid, was unable to release his seatbelt. In the 40 degree water, his passengers were unable to save him despite their best efforts. Later analysis of the wreckage found the seatbelt was undamaged suggesting that training might have better prepared him to operate its mechanism in stressful circumstances.

By contrast, a 2010 crash involving a de Havilland Beaver on Figure Eight Lake north of Anchorage saw all three occupants, members of the Civil Air Patrol, survive uninjured. The CAP chief of flight safety told the NTSB the occupants had all attended underwater egress training, "...which benefited them during their escape from the submerged cabin".

Era Helicopters Alaska sends all of their pilots who are scheduled for offshore operations to helicopter underwater egress training every three years at an out-of-state facility. The company, which bases a dozen twin-engine helicopters in the state, also enrolls pilots in training for Emergency Breathing Systems through LTR. Era sees a valuable safety investment in all of this training, even though it is not required by the FAA.

LifeMed Alaska has 50 flight nurses and paramedics who have gone through HUET training at Learn to Return. The air ambulance company's relationship with LTR dates back to 2008 and underwater safety is an important component of its safety program.

"Crash survival is a topic that no one enjoys to discuss, let alone imagine; but it is a very real danger that cannot be ignored," stated Brian Heaslet, LifeMed Alaska's Director of Health, Safety, Environmental and Training in an email. "While an event requiring these skills is highly unlikely, it carries with it very drastic and harsh conditions. The immediate impact of the confusion and disorientation will lead to an individual's first reaction to be panic. When a person begins to panic their training must take over. It is this basis that makes HUET so important to everyone at LifeMed Alaska."

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In the Beluga Lake crash, there was difficulty exiting the aircraft, but that wasn't where the problems began. A pilot witness told the NTSB investigator that there were "strong and gusty wind conditions, out of the northeast at 20 to 25 knots" and he "observed the accident airplane on final approach for a southwest, downwind landing. The aircraft touched down about mid-lake. The nose of the left float dug into the water, the left wing struck the water, and the airplane rapidly nosed over."

According to the accident report, one of the passengers was able to force the right passenger door open but there was a struggle for everyone to exit the wreckage. None of them were able to save Heinze, who was injured and seated in the rear left seat. Rescuers eventually freed her but she did not regain consciousness. Heinze was 65 years old.

"Most, if not all, of the survivors of water crashes in the medevac industry have cited HUET as the one thing that made it possible for them to make it out of the submerged aircraft and become rescued during that frightening period of time," said Heaslet.

"LifeMed Alaska has brought guest speakers up from the Lower 48 in past conferences that can personally attest to the advantages of such training and its necessity in operations such as ours."

The appeal of Alaska's lakes and rivers for floatplane pilots is easy to appreciate, but operating in these environments makes certain demands upon pilots, both before and after touchdown. It looks easy in the videos on YouTube, but pilots should never forget how quickly a surprise can occur and how little room for error there is when water comes rushing in.

A few notes of gratitude from AASF

Thanks and good luck to Mike Hodges, NTSB Investigator, as he moves south from Alaska. We hope to see you back in the Alaska office on TDY. Safe travels and all the best wishes for continued success!

A big thanks to "Magic Mike" Bennett at the State of Alaska DOT & PF Graphics Department, for his design with the flyer for this year's seaplane seminar. We appreciate the State's partnership in aviation safety and look forward to working with them in the future!

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