Training

In this month's column we will talk about **communication** and **field etiquette**! You might ask: "what does *that* have to do with learning to fly a plane?" Well, actually, quite a lot! It has to do with *avoiding damage* to both your plane and someone else's. It has to do with *getting along* with your fellow club members, and it has to do with *safety*!

The CVA Training Staff does a really great job of teaching student pilots to learn to fly. And they teach most of the same things we are about to discuss here. The thing is though, repetition is a great learning tool, and seeing things in writing often reinforces what has been heard. With those thoughts in mind lets study a little etiquette as it relates to just a few common flying field situations!

When we start our engines, we are generally at or near the metal fence in a row with our friends, fellow club members, and perhaps guests. As we set the mixture of an engine, we often rev it up to high RPM. There is nothing wrong with that except that if someone else is close to our wide-open engine, and if they are in or near the plain of the prop, they can be seriously hurt if the prop comes apart. And yes, that does happen…not too often… but it does happen. So, good field etiquette dictates that we **avoid revving the engine if someone is too close.** Note too, that it is also good etiquette for others nearby who are not working on a plane to move out of the way if they see you want to adjust/rev your engine. It works both ways!

And now lets talk about ***communication*** as we taxi out toward the runway. We can't just assume that the field is ours "for the taking" nor that everyone else knows what we are going to do. Someone already flying may be getting ready to land, or his plane may be stopped on the runway, or someone may actually **be on the runway** himself. Or, someone may have just lost power and needs to make a "dead-stick" landing. And so, the heads-up pilot will do two things as he taxies out. **First** he will ***stop on the taxiway***, look around on the ground and in the air. He will look at each of the other pilots to see what is happening. If something is amiss, he can then wait until the problem is cleared up, or he can even shut down his engine. If, on the other hand, everything looks normal, he should do the **second** thing. He should ***call out to the other pilots*** to let them know he is planning to come onto the runway. There are several good ways to do this such as calling out "taking the field" or "coming out" or something similar. This call-out should be quite loud so the other pilots are sure to hear it. It is then desirable for the other pilots to respond if they wish for you to not taxi out on the runway or take-off. Ideally it would be best to get a "yeah" or "ney" from each pilot, but often that doesn't happen. If a pilot is doing something difficult or is in a near-crash situation, he may not give you any feedback. But each pilot *should* try to respond. We should all make the attempt to do this.

Well, we've only covered two of several situations in which communication is important and we've used almost a full page, so we'll leave the rest until next month. Until then…

Remember to try something new each time you fly!

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