

Training

Last month we reviewed a story of how **NOT** to learn to fly or make a first flight. This month we will review how the training function **should** work if everything is done the way we would intend for it to be done.

Ideally a potential new pilot or person with an interest in learning RC flight (lets call him “Rodney”) will visit the field and be met by one or more of our friendly and helpful CVA members. The members will cheerfully answer any questions Rodney has, show him their equipment, and actually heighten his interest in RC flying. They will advise him of the need for proper training and will share advice as to which of the planes Rodney is considering would be best as a first-plane trainer. Our helpful members will introduce Rodney to a member of the training staff or the club Training Coordinator. The training staff will discuss with him the requirements for AMA and CVA Membership and finally will arrange a time for Rodney to start his training. They will determine which of the club’s training equipment will be needed to interface with Rodney’s equipment. They will also give Rodney advice as to things to do, and things to check on his plane prior to coming to the field to begin training.

On the selected day, one of our primary trainers will carefully look over Rodney’s plane and radio gear and help him make any remaining changes deemed necessary prior to flight. They will also hook up the buddy box equipment appropriate for the radio and completely ground-check it all until they are absolutely sure it is working properly. They will brief Rodney as to how the buddy-box system works, hopefully relieve his fears, and answer any remaining questions.

The exact flow of the training event will vary depending on Rodney’s aptitude, previous experience, the status of his equipment, the weather, and numerous other factors. But, the goal is to let Rodney progress at his own rate and in-so-far-as-possible, keep his plane and all personnel in the area safe from harm. We also want Rodney to ENJOY his training experience at our club. It is really nice at this stage to hear a little encouragement!

After several sessions at the field using the buddy box, and, when Rodney has progressed well, the primary trainer may suggest that he continue his training with one of our follow-up training people. With that person he will get more stick time but still have the benefit of an experienced pilot as a safety net if he should make a mistake or need help. He will also start taking off and landing by himself still using the “buddy-box”.

And then, on a day he is sure to remember, Rodney will take-off, fly and land all by himself. He will have “soloed” and will soon receive his certificate. He will be cleared to fly by himself from that time forward.

Please note the contrast between the safe training of Rodney and the dangerous first flight described in last month’s “Training Corner”. The “right way” is much safer and cheaper, and just makes better sense.

Of course, we all know this is certainly not the end of Rodney's training. There is so much to learn that a pilot should never get bored. So, as we always say.....

Remember to try something new each time you fly!

Steve Klute
Training Coordinator