Training

In last month's column we began talking about **communication** and **field etiquette** as it applies to revving an engine and taxiing out to take off. Once we are airborne, the need for communication and etiquette continues.

At this time, we will not discuss any issues about how to *use* the airspace, or where to fly what kind of planes, etc. other than to say it is important to use common sense and courtesy at all times when in the air. What we want to discuss this time is how to communicate about landing.

One key factor that differentiates landing from taking off, is that you can't easily look around to see what the other pilots and planes are doing when you are flying your plane. In some cases you might take a quick glance, but you may either not see another plane when you glance, or you can get yourself into trouble in the short time you look away from your plane. This is the reason that talking to (communicating with) the other pilots is so important. Under normal circumstances it is a good idea to alert the other pilots that you are planning to land shortly before you actually commence your approach. You can simply say "going to go around once and land", or "getting ready to land" or even just "landing". As with the other communications, this should be said _loudly_ so the other pilots are sure to hear it. The other pilots may then answer "OK" or they may object for some reason such as they are stopped on the field, or they have just encountered a "dead-stick" situation or some other unique situation has occurred. It is important for this response to also be loud and clear so as not to be missed. While it is helpful and desirable for the other pilots to answer, you can't really count on it as they may be concentrating, or may just not hear you. If you don't get an answer, and you know who is flying with you, you can call their name and say again that you are landing. This may get their attention and get you a positive response. At this point though, you can be pretty sure there are no objections and you are free to land.

Once you have landed, it is always helpful to let the other pilots know when you have actually cleared the runway and are out of the way on the taxiway. This way, if another pilot has to land quickly, at least he will know you are out of the way.

One last thing to know about landing; always shut off your engine and stop your plane before you get to the opening in the first fence line from the runway. Never taxi back into the pit area!

Another "fine point" to add to this discussion is that when you are getting ready to land, you may want to also _listen_ to see if any other pilots are starting their engines or actually starting to taxi out. Then if you have the option, you can delay your landing until they have taxied out and taken off. By doing this you may keep the other pilot from having to sit on the taxiway with his engine idling for an extended period of time while you land (or perhaps even have to go around for a second attempt). It may also take a little pressure off of your landing!

Now that we have "talked this topic to death".....

Remember to try something new each time you fly!

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