BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT BUGLE

News from our Airport at Biggin Hill - established 2005

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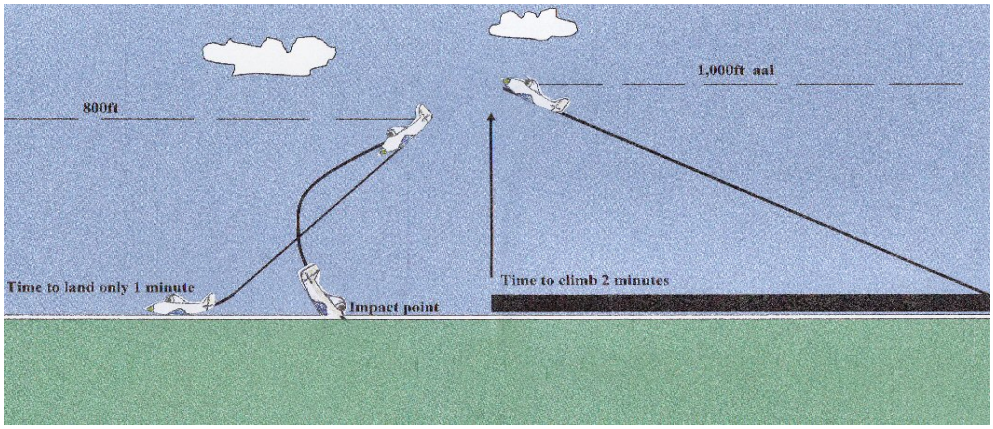


ENGINE FAILURES (EFATO)

Engine failure after take-off is a well published exercise, and is the most mis-handled for a number of reasons, panic, pride and ***belief in turning back,*** for the wrong reasons. (Bar talk is a classic example for total mis-information).

Every take-off is fraught with a malfunction at a critical moment during this phase of your flight.
Be prepared, expect it to happen on every flight and you will never experience a panic stage, you are going to land in the next couple of seconds or minutes, if your mind is fully prepared for such a situation, then you have more time to think and time will go slowly, adding vital minutes / seconds to an imminent forced landing.

Forget about saving the aeroplane, save your neck first, the insurance will hopefully provide another flying machine.

NEVER TURN BACK, land straight ahead only turning with minimum angles of bank to avoid obstacles, maintaining a good gliding speed from the point of failure. This will be your salvation.

Remember, when the engine fails during a climb, lower the nose smartly because speed is immediately lost and by the time you have recovered to a safe gliding speed you have probably lost 200ft already and probably less than a minute to a comfortable landing.

Turning back is not an option, it is fraught with running out of ideas and serious injury.

HANDLING TWIN FAILURES

Once again, expect the worst & it is imperative to have Blue Line Speed (Vmc) before you are out of the woods, so to speak.
Piston engine light twins do not have a sparkling single engine performance for a positive climb in a crisis moment.
The reason for this, is the fact that one engine is now trying to drag along an aircraft that weighs double that of the single engine aircraft that it is normally fitted to.
Furthermore it is fitted to one side of the centerline which produces an asymmetric effect, something else you don't need at this moment.

It now becomes imperative to maintain Vmc ***(above blue line speed)*** very important, fly, fly, fly the aeroplane first and foremost.

If you allow the situation to decay into the white knuckle stage, reduce power on the live engine and land straight ahead, it will be a firm landing with little ground roll.

Small business twin jet aircraft are probably much safer, as their single engine performance is superior to the piston engine variety and therefore more able to climb on one engine, maintaining a good airspeed and flying to the nearest airport ahead.
However, if a problem arises soon after getting airborne and some confusion arises as to what has gone wrong, it is better to maintain a positive climb, because altitude is going to be your best friend toward any final conclusions – it is far better to land straight ahead in a large field whilst maintaining

a positive and safe flying speed until a decision to land is imminent.

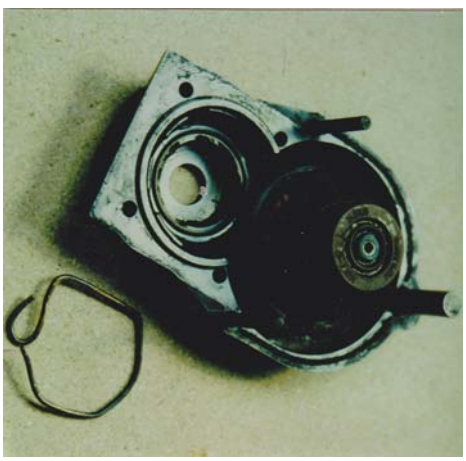
Turning back is not an option, particularly if you are at low altitude, your sink rate becomes alarming during turns and trying to stretch the glide is fatal.

All the above incidents took less than five minutes to the crash site.

DOUBLE ENGINE DISASTER

It was 12th July 1981 a lovely day with a blue sky. The editor was going for a test flight in a Rearwin Cloudster trainer which had a radial engine and a very wide cockpit with tandem seats mounted in the middle making it difficult to see out whilst taxying.

Soon after take-off the engine died, then picked up again, the pilot continued climbing straight ahead to 2,000ft and decided it was now safe to return toward the airfield, still gaining height.
The engine stopped, spluttered into life again with reduced power.
A safe landing was made at the airfield. Whilst taxying back to dispersal the engine failed completely.



Pictured *(column one)* is a picture of the first magneto in which a cir-clip came loose, when the second magneto shaft sheered, the errant cir-clip managed to get jammed and rejuvenate the first magneto back to life again. A safe landing was made without fuss.
How about that for luck…!

Shortly afterwards another flight was arranged in a Valtium Viima bi-plane a Finnish Trainer also fitted with a radial engine, it was a really nice aircraft to fly.

The flight lasted about 15 minutes where upon there was a loud bang. The aircraft felt as if it twisted from end to end, then continued running smoothly again with hardly any power loss..!!**??
Positioned north of the Thames above many football pitches at a height of 2,000ft. A landing below was considered, but then the aircraft began climb so the pilot headed back toward the airfield with further good landing options ahead, maintaining a steady climb to the point where a full glide was possible for a landing, should the engine fail completely.

The cause of this partial failure was a broken connecting rod (No 2) which cut its way through the base of three cylinders knocking a hole in the crankcase in the process *(not a very good picture)* but a lot to be said for a radial engine. After a safe landing flying was now finished for the day, with the damaged aircraft safely hangared. Everyone retired to the airfield café.

A classic film by a camera man who kept his cool throughout:

This pilot had a perfectly sound engine, became mesmarised with the solution of a too high approach to the detriment of everything else..!!

http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=Hs5ChcYbaNU&vq=large

(The above youtube is a classic)

Approach to a landing is a positive procedure: particularly at high altitude airfields surrounded by higher ground, certain facts must be considered in planning your approach / descent.

Airfield elevation, relative altitude to the airfield, estimated height at projected final turn, then at ¾ distance, ½ distance and ¼ distance, the rest is easy.

The best safety device in any aircraft is a well trained pilot.

MINI BIGGIN HILL REUNION

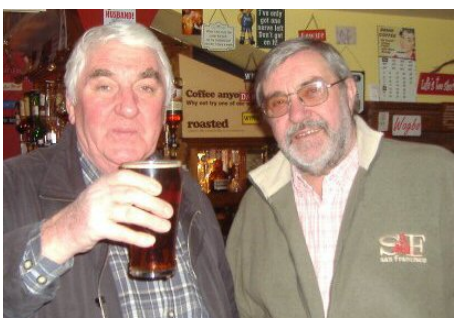
A successful almost impromptu reunion was held at the Crown public house on the 11th March, saw a collection of some oldies from the very early days of Biggin Hill and of course several young'ns, who actually arranged this event.
Since the demise of the last bar standing at Biggin Hill airfield there has not been a stable meeting point for the pilots and friends who

have become attached to Biggin Hill over the last fifty three years. This of course takes in the new pilots who have taken up an aviation career and their friends, who have also become attached to the world of flying.

It is good to see the 'Yung'ns' trying to hold up the long tradition of the 'Old Bigginhill ites' who have stuck together for so many years. Hopefully they will remember our words of wisdom as our individual images disappear to a dot at infinity.

Lisa and Katie, the instigators of this successful mini reunion.

Some real oldies, Peter, John, Ralph and Neil. Their accumulative years total some 296 years.



Two more oldies, Tony and John

Rear row: Nicky, Joanna, Melissa, Lisa, Katie, & Katie. Front row: Matt, Jon, Dan, & Matt. Half, of this small group are pilots in disguise.

Jo, Joanna, Maxine enjoying the evening at the Crown.

Young at heart - Julia, Lisa, Jenny

Jill, Tony and Carole who came early, and stayed quite late.

It is believed one unfortunate fell into this sink hole, leaving a singular glove as evidence, as to where he / she, may be lying un-noticed on this path leading to the Crown…!

Resourceful pool players of the Kenyan bush – brilliant effort..!