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Vectors to Final

Banyan
Expansion

A New MU-2 in
the Caribbean

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Twin & Turbine (ISSN 1092-6402), USPS 24432 is published monthly by Village Press, Inc. with advertising offices located at 2779 Aero Park Drive, Traverse City, Michigan 49686. Telephone (231) 946-3712. Printed in the United States of America. All rights reserved. Copyright 2016, Village Press, Inc. Periodical Postage Paid at Traverse City, MI.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: *Twin & Turbine* is distributed at no charge to all registered owners of cabin-class aircraft. The mailing list is updated monthly. All others may subscribe by writing to: *Twin & Turbine*, P.O. Box 968, Traverse City, MI 49685, or by calling 1-800-447-7367. Rates for the United States and its possessions follow: one year \$15.00; two years \$29.00. Canadian subscriptions are one year \$24.00; two years \$46.00, including GST tax. Overseas subscriptions are one year \$52.00; two years \$99.00, U.S. funds. Single copies \$6.50.

ADVERTISING: Advertising in *Twin & Turbine* does not necessarily imply endorsement. Queries, questions, and requests for media kits should be directed to the Advertising Director, *Twin & Turbine*, P.O. Box 968, Traverse City, Michigan 49685, Telephone 1-800-773-7798. Website: www.twinandturbine.com.

MANUSCRIPTS: *Twin & Turbine* assumes no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts, photographs, or artwork. While unsolicited submissions are welcome, it is best to query first and ask for our Writer's Guidelines. All unassigned submissions must be accompanied by return postage. Address queries and requests for Writer's guidelines to the editor.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes and inquiries to *Twin & Turbine*, Village Press, Inc., P.O. Box 968, Traverse City, MI 49685.

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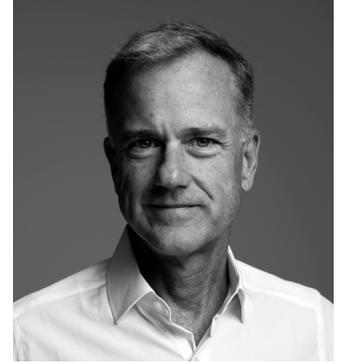
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COVER PHOTO:

Ron Staley's L-39 and T-34 in formation flight. Photo courtesy of Mark Kolanowski

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Changes in Latitudes

As temperatures warm and green leaves appear anew, at least here in Texas, I start thinking about the blue waters around Florida and the Caribbean. Our mild winters in the Great Republic (yep, Texas) don't spark a strong urge in me to head southeast; it's the springtime evocations of sailing, surfing, and flying to the Bahamas that summon an undeniable magnet-pull of laid-back coastal living. The need to feel sand between my toes and absorb the salty air on my face renews as the boys of summer start to train. It brings Jimmy Buffett to mind, the feel of a board under arm, and getting the plane ready for a trip somewhere tropical. It happens every year around this time.

To satiate these desires, we bring stories of adventures across the Sunshine State and Caribbean territories. First, we have an update from friends in the oldest city in America, St. Augustine, Florida. Banyan Air Service is expanding its services to customers in the southeast, and if you fly a Beech turboprop twin, you'll be excited to hear about Banyan's newest capabilities.

Next up, T & T writer Ed Verville explains the intricacies of approaches sans vectors, many in the tropics. Those readers who most often fly Boeings and Airbuses sometimes need a reminder of the full approaches out there that can bring us down safely in areas not always served by radar.

Author Peter Fraser offers an account of his search and acquisition, training, and first experiences in a new-to-him Mitsubishi turboprop. His experiences include extensive tropical arrivals and departures in the middle latitudes. I know for myself, there sometimes exists hesitation to visit unfamiliar foreign destinations just because of the unknown — unknown procedures, unfamiliar customs, and perceived language barriers. Peter disqualifies some of those (mis) perceptions and shows a way to enjoy the yet-unexplored locales in our neighboring watery ports of call.

Aviator extraordinaire Rich Pickett shows us how we can navigate the Islands above (and below) the waters of the Caribbean, not via the latest and greatest panel-mount avionics, but with Garmin's new D2 Mach 2 wrist computer. I still use Garmin's D2C aviation watch, which is getting a little long in the tooth but is still amazing. The D2C's younger and evidently faster brother brings newer, better sensors, AMOLED visibility, and myriad applications to aid us in every imaginable activity.

I hope you enjoy this month's excursion to the islands. Maybe you'll be able dip a toe in the warm, blue waters soon. 

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My beachy excursion last March



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Banyan Air Service Launches King Air Maintenance Support in St. Augustine

by Lance Phillips



In early February, Banyan Air Service announced the continued expansion of its maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) footprint in Florida at its satellite facility at Northeast Florida Regional Airport in St. Augustine (KSGJ). In addition to supporting HondaJet and Pilatus PC-12 aircraft, the SGJ facility is now open for maintenance and service on King Air 90 and 200 aircraft. Banyan has supported Beechcraft airframes for many years, and this expansion to KSGJ opens up Banyan's world-class level of care to a whole new audience in the Southeast U.S.

Banyan's satellite location in St. Augustine is fully capable of supporting King Air 90 and 200 models, PC-12, and HondaJet operators with line maintenance, scheduled inspections, and heavy maintenance services, including PT6A overhauls and hot section inspections through Banyan's partner StandardAero. These services comple-

ment Banyan's flagship Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport (KFXE) MRO operation.

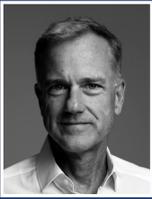
This expansion is a direct response to increased demand for Banyan's turboprop and light jet maintenance services and reflects the company's commitment to providing convenient, high-quality support across the state of Florida. The KSGJ facility enhances Banyan's ability to offer faster response times, increased maintenance capacity, and improved geographic coverage for owners and operators.

"We're excited to continue growing our maintenance capabilities in St. Augustine and to welcome King Air aircraft into the facility while continuing our support of the HondaJet and PC-12 platform," said Charlie Amento, VP/Director of MRO Services. "This location allows us to better support operators in North Florida and beyond

while maintaining the same standards of quality and expertise Banyan is known for.”

Staffed by experienced technicians, the SGJ facility delivers Banyan's trusted level of service with a focus on efficiency, safety, and customer satisfaction. The site supports inspections, modifications, avionics support, AOG assistance, and heavy maintenance services for King Air, PC-12, and HondaJet aircraft.

King Air operators interested in scheduling maintenance at SGJ should contact Curtis Florio, SGJ Facility Manager, at cflorio@banyanair.com or 904-506-6902 to schedule aircraft availability. For pricing and facility quotes, please contact Eric Smith with Banyan Technical Sales at esmith@banyanair.com. 



Lance Phillips is the Executive Director for the Pinnacle Air Network, a coalition of FBOs, MROs, and aircraft sales and charter organizations. He holds an FAA commercial license with instrument and multi-engine ratings and type ratings in the G100 and Beechjet aircraft. Lance has worked in management and executive leadership roles for pilot training and aircraft manufacturing organizations during his career. In addition to Twin & Turbine, Lance manages Phillips Aero Services and his creative outlet, Air & Asphalt. You can reach him at lance@twinandturbine.com.



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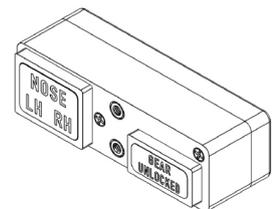
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Approaches without Vectors to Final

by Ed Verville



Approach into Grand Cayman with wind and rain



Beautiful weather for departure at Grand Cayman

Airline Pilots, as opposed to General Aviation pilots, fly to relatively few airports, and most of these airports provide radar services with vectors to the final approach. With the advent of GPS Approaches, more full approach options became available, and even the new “T” approach became an option. But it still seemed that Air Traffic Control (ATC) never offered these new options to me. Likely because I was still flying to large airports across the country and around the world. Now, as a charter pilot, flying to potentially thousands of airports, ATC is assigning many more full approaches or approaches with a transition rather than providing vectoring to the final approach segment.

Here are some transitions we have received from ATC while flying recent approaches.

Flying the Bridgeport 1 Arrival (DNY Transition) into Oxford, Connecticut. ATC assigned the MOONI (IAF) Transition from Pawling (PWL) for the RNAV (GPS) Rwy 18 Approach into Oxford, Conn (KOXC).

On the way into Nassau, Bahamas (MYNN), Nassau Approach sent us directly to JOBID Intermediate Fix (IF) for the RNAV (GPS) Rwy 10 Approach. We usually receive the RNAV (GNSS) Rwy 14 Approach with transitions to RELVE (IAF) when flying from Florida, and the HEKOP (IAF) when flying from the New York area, both of which are “T” transitions to the approach. This was



Las Vegas strip and Sphere



MOBIX IF transition to Grand Cayman

followed by a similar situation at Grand Cayman, Island (MWCR), where ATC cleared us directly to the MOBIX (IF) for a ninety-degree turn to line up on final for the RNAV (GNSS) to Rwy 08.

You could tell things were heating up on the day we flew from the Bahamas toward the Northeast over the Florida Coast. A Delta Airlines flight called ATC with a request. Jacksonville Center's response was a curt "short sentences only." We had to be rerouted over land to avoid convective activity and restricted airspace, just ahead of a tropical storm.

After seeing only visual approaches for a day in the Northeast, we headed back to Florida with an overnight on Hilton Head Island. At Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, we were cleared direct to the FUMMA (IF/IAF) for the straight-in approach. The next morning, we had a short hop to Titusville, FL, Space Coast Regional Airport. There we flew the BITHO 7 Arrival and were cleared direct to the CUTON (IF) for the RNAV (GPS) Z Rwy 18 Approach.

The FAA discriminates between approaches when two or more straight-in approaches with the same type of guidance for a runway by adding a letter suffix to the approach, such as RNAV (GPS) Z, RNAV (GPS) Y, RNAV (GPS) X. The logic works backwards from the letter Z. We cannot start at the front of the alphabet as those letters

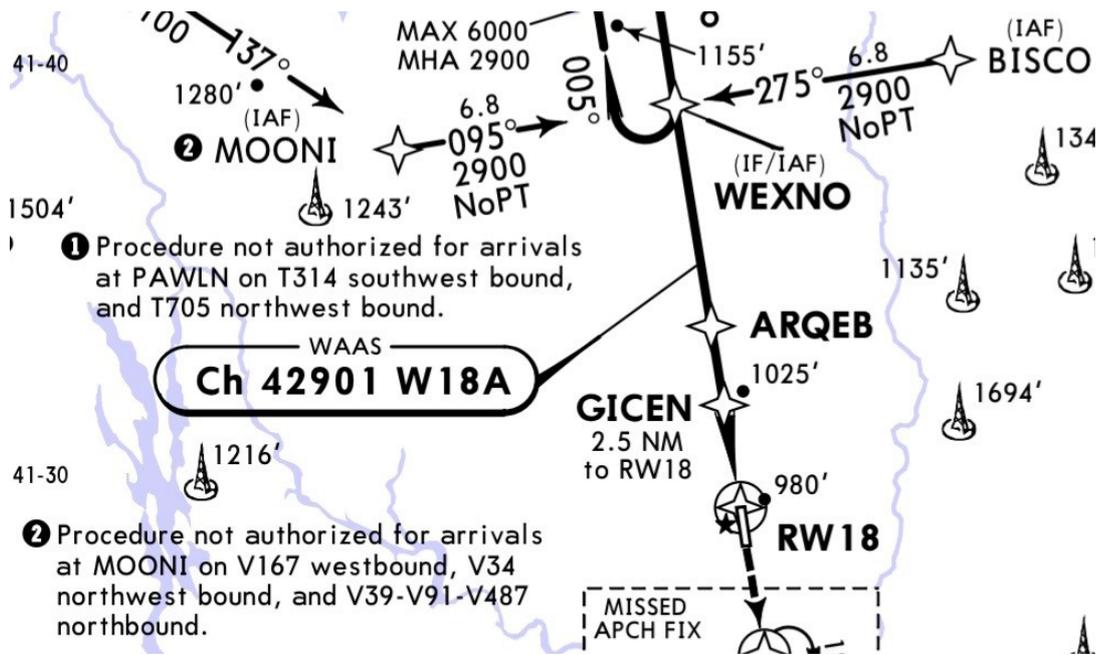


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We headed out West the next day. Our weather greatly improved except for some thunderstorms in Colorado and smoke from fires in Oregon. But it was an intense 42 degrees C or 108 degrees F in Las Vegas. We received Visual Approach Procedures at Las Vegas, NV, Eugene, OR, Dallas Love, TX, and even Aspen, CO, where we usually receive the LOC DME-E or the RNAV (GPS)-F.

MOONI IAF transition to Oxford, CT

are already used to identify circling approaches. The approaches may have different minimums, different transitions, different missed approach procedures, or even require special aircrew authorization, such as with RNP-AR Approaches.

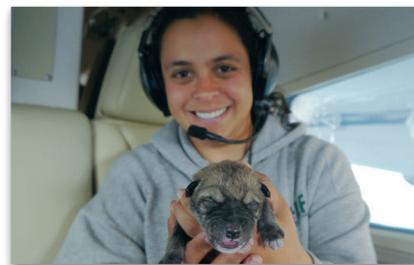
Segment is to align the airplane with the intermediate or final approach segment. When ATC is vectoring you onto the final approach segment (which occurs most of the time where ATC has radar and approach control capability) they must vector you onto the final approach course with no

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Left: Chris Crisman/TNC/LightHawk; Right: Lincoln Athas/WCC/LightHawk



RELVE and HEKOP IAF transitions to Nassau

more than a 30-degree or 20-degree intercept, depending on the distance from the approach gate (an ATC imaginary point two miles from the Final Approach Fix) (FAF). ATC may clear you to an Intermediate Fix (IF) with up to a 90-degree intercept for a straight-in approach. ATC may also clear you to an Initial Approach Fix (IAF) from any direction. However, this may involve a course reversal to turn you around and align with the intermediate or final approach course.

Four of our approaches this week were of the RNAV Terminal Arrival Area (TAA) type. The FAA describes the TAA as a "T" design (also called "Basic T"), which contains two base leg IAFs typically assigned in a straight line perpendicular to the intermediate course. Although the FAA attempts to use a "T" configuration, some resemble an "L" or a "Y" shape more than a "T". The "T" approach or base leg usually allows the pilot to skip the procedure turn as noted by the "NoPT" symbol. It also simplifies the workload and radar equipment requirements for ATC.

My crew and I had a great time flying some famous and not-so-famous passengers across the country and to some islands. We also enjoyed having the opportunity to put into practice some of the FAA's "T" Approaches while flying into some beautiful locations. **T&T**



Ed Verville is an experienced FAA instructor and examiner for business jet pilots and aircrew programs. He has 15,000 flight hours in more than 100 different makes and models and holds type ratings in the Bombardier CL-65, CL-30, CL-604, and Boeing 747. Ed has been instructing RNP-AR Approaches for the past three years.



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A new MU-2 in the Caribbean

by Peter Fraser



The front office

Owni ng aircraft has been a large part of my life. I have previously owned either fully or in partnership: Beechcraft Travel Air, Beechcraft E55, Beechcraft Staggerwing, Beechcraft King Air 200, and Commander 690A. Also, two Mig 21s, but that's another story.

Ownership gives the freedom to travel when and where you like with no strings attached; of course, it also comes with the costs and sometimes headaches. After being planeless for almost two years, I was ready to jump into ownership again.

The first decision is, of course, how much can I afford? Not always as simple as it may appear. Should I finance? Should I buy outright? Are there tax incentives to offset costs? Well, these and many more will go into that first question.

The second decision is what do I need, versus what do I want. At this stage, it is best to take a step back and really consider how the aircraft will be used. How many people will normally travel, and how many is the most you will take? How far do you need to go on a normal basis? What

sort of airports will you be using, and how long a runway will you need? What about hourly and annual costs? Will you fly yourself, or will you hire a crew? If so, full-time or contract? Where will you base the aircraft, and what sort of maintenance support will there be for different aircraft types?

Yes, lots of questions to answer. For myself, it was fairly simple. I will fly the aircraft myself, or my wife will. So, no crew needed. Type of aircraft: twin-engine for peace of mind on long overwater routes, high mountainous areas, remote areas, or



Night photo of aircraft returning from training

through difficult weather. Turboprop for reliability, cost, and availability of fuel, especially overseas. Range: Well, the longer the better, but initial cost constraints mandated about a 1,000 nm range with reserves. So, a twin turbine with good speed, pressurization, preferably short field, and off-pavement ability. It came down to a Commander 690 or a Mitsubishi MU-2. I had already owned a Commander 690, which was easy and pleasant to fly. It had excellent performance and met all my requirements. However, the cost of maintenance and worry about the costs of possible upcoming ADs, along with windshield issues, made me look elsewhere. I had flown MU-2s all over the world, delivering them to and from Europe and also across the Pacific. I was impressed by the build quality and strength, but not that enraptured with the flying qualities. Otherwise, it met all my needs and desires. An old friend (Mike Laver at Air 1st) had one for sale, so we flew down to Aiken, South Carolina, to look it over and go for a test flight. It was a highly upgraded 1973 K model with -10 engines and MT 5-bladed props. A dual Garmin G600 and G750 setup, along with great paint and interior, and many other significant upgrades, enhanced the plane significantly. After the test flight, I was hooked, and the deal was done in just a few days.

Then a small issue arose. Before finding the aircraft, we had arranged

a five-week trip to Mongolia; the delivery would have to wait. But Mike kindly agreed to keep the airplane safely stored in one of his hangars.

So, after what turned into a three-month wait, we again landed in Aiken to pick up our new baby. Ah, but wait, the MU-2 has an FAA-mandated initial training program that both I, even with many hours of MU-2 experience, and my wife, with none, had to accomplish. With numerous type ratings obtained and countless recurrent checks under my belt, I was familiar with the drill. My wife, however, had the usual experience of feeling like drowning in a pool of cascading information during ground school. Slowly, that faded, and she ended up enjoying the experience but was very glad when it was over.

By the way, if you ever go to Aiken, SC, be sure to stay at the Wilcox hotel, a fabulous hotel, full of old-world charm and new-world amenities.

Now we had our airplane, and we were checked out in it. Let's go flying!!

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FAA Form 7233-4 (7/15)

Flight plan KFXE to MWCR

First stop: Banyan Air Service at Ft Lauderdale Executive Airport (KFYE). A perfect stop when heading to the Caribbean. A CAA-affiliated FBO, so fuel prices are the best around, and many of the other fees are waived or reduced. It also has the world's biggest pilot shop. Lots of useful things for heading offshore to the islands. There is also a nice restaurant next door (Jet Runway Café), perfect for breakfast before heading south and east.

We were off to the Caymans. File US EAPIS online, with US Customs and Border Protection. Easy and quick on their website. An email comes back

very quickly, providing the authority to leave. On this routing, you will need Cuba overflight clearance (I use Skyplan of Canada - \$190, including the Cuban nav fees). They require your route, schedule, and times in and out of the Cuban FIR (info at the end of the article).

EAPIS for the Caymans is done through CARICOM (info at the end of the article).

We filed IFR at FL 250, first with Miami center, then over to Havana (good English, control hardly different from Miami), then lastly over to Grand Cayman approach. We arrived mid-afternoon, and it was not busy.

No radar, but cleared direct to the IAF. We were asked to slow down for traffic ahead, a Boeing 737. Yes, I love the MU-2's speed. I used Air Agencies as the ground handler at Grand Cayman airport (MWCR). They are very nice, efficient, and not overly expensive.

Blue waters of the Caribbean, green of the islands, blue skies with puffy clouds dotting the sky; they all make for an exhilarating and glorious flight out into the wild.

Grand Cayman is a nice first stop as it is still modern and efficient, unlike some of the outer islands that are much more laid back and casual.

Our next destination was the island of Dominica. This is one of the few islands in the Caribbean that we have never visited. The route takes us over Jamaica (no overflight permit required), jagged green mountains line up along the horizon, then the city of Kingston, with its large airport sitting out in the bay. We avoid Haiti, as they do require prior permission, and it's only a few extra miles to avoid.

We had to first stop in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, for fuel. This, of course, required another US EAPIS clearance and also a telephone call to the local customs office for formal entry approval. We also needed an outbound EAPIS for the continuing flight to Dominica. Even though this was only a technical fuel stop, we had to go through the entire US customs entry procedure. US customs can be the worst if you are unlucky with a particular officer, as we were. Unload everything, even though we are in transit? Yes! Is this a sandwich? Yes, but we will eat on the next leg. NO!! It is confiscated, and you will have to pay a disposal fee (\$192.60). Yes, as I said, US customs can be the world's worst. But more often than not, they are courteous, efficient, and friendly. Just not this time. We used Western Aviation services in Aguadilla; they have cheap fuel and few fees, along with being very nice people.

A little over an hour on the ground and off to Douglas Charles International Airport, Dominica



IFR chart covering the flight to the Caymans



Enroute over the islands



Cabrits resort



Dominica airport

(Not to be confused with the Dominican Republic).

Another wonderfully relaxing flight – blue skies, blue seas, green islands close at hand, and just a few puffy white clouds to break up the sky. Flying in the Caribbean is seldom stressful – islands dot the horizon almost everywhere you look. The weather is benign, and the controllers are easy to understand and helpful.

You start with Grand Cayman, then across to Kingston Control (Jamaica), then over to Piarco, then Martinique approach, and finally Douglas Charles tower.

All of the ATC chatter is very similar to US ATC. Just use proper

verbiage, and you will be fine. All altimeter settings except in Puerto Rico will be in Hectopascals (although many facilities will also give inches of mercury). Just print a conversion chart from the internet. On many updated avionics systems, it is easy to switch from inches to Hectopascals on the altimeter setting. ATC will use the abbreviated code QNH instead of altimeter. But QNH is equivalent of US altimeter setting only in HPs.

The runway at Dominica is for most purposes one way – land coming from the sea, toward the mountains, take off toward the sea. So, normally a bit of a tailwind on landing. The runway is about 6,000 feet long, but with a ten-plus knot tailwind and a wet runway,

things could get interesting in the larger aircraft.

You don't need a handler here. It is a small and friendly airport. You will probably have to reposition after clearing customs and fueling. We moved the aircraft once, but then needed to get it closer to the edge of the ramp; several airport fellows happily pushed us into the desired spot. It was easy and they were very friendly.

Even though no passenger flights were arriving at the time, we had no trouble getting a cab for the hour ride to the Cabrits resort. One of the few on the island. The drive is spectacular, hundreds of curves, on narrow roads that twist their way through luxuriant jungle. Over hills and along the coast,



the roads are potholed and narrow, with most bridges being single-lane. This is one of the least visited islands, so it still holds the local laid-back charm, easy-going and friendly.

Cabrits resort is on a beautiful bay, with luxuriant landscaping, beautiful swimming pools, and open-air dining rooms. The hotel rooms are gorgeous. There is no golden sand beach, but otherwise, it's a wonderful, relaxing and luxurious retreat.

We lazed for two days. An island made for diving, hiking to beautiful remote lakes, waterfalls, and up the mountains for spectacular views across the island and out to Martinique.

This time it's back to Puerto Rico to visit my wife's family. So, another US EAPIS with the mandatory call to the local customs office for landing approval.

Another bumpy but scenic hour back to the airport. Up to the tower to file the flight plan and pay the fees (about \$100 all told, landing and parking for three days).

An easy 1.4-hour flight landing at San Juan International (TJSJ). Handling was handled by Airport Aviation Services, a fine FBO with customs and immigration on site. I used World Fuel to obtain a slightly better fuel price. Overall, it's a great FBO with very reasonable pricing.

The alternative airport in San Juan is Isla Grande (TJIG). This is a smaller, less busy airport with a wonderful location alongside San Juan and its

great bay. However, as the only FBO on the field, they charge very high fees for everything. Although it is a bit less convenient to use the main airport, the savings are worth it. But if it's your first time, it is probably worth the higher fees, just to experience the beautiful arrival and departure sights.

Puerto Rico and especially Old San Juan are really worth a visit. Lots to see and do. Lots of lodging choices and, of course, no passport required.

We left San Juan international and did a quick VFR flight to Aguadilla airport (TJBQ) on the very western edge of the island. Two reasons: very strong headwinds to Florida, so less distance, and also much cheaper fuel (\$2 per gallon cheaper), so an easy decision. It was a seamless flight back to Florida without the need for EAPIS, customs, or immigration. We landed at Miami Executive Airport (KTMB) and used Reliance Aviation as the FBO, another CAA affiliate, so we got great fuel pricing and many fees waived. The flight took us over the ever-changing blue waters, from the cobalt of the deep to almost white in the shallows. The islands with white sandy beaches and waving palms dotted the blue. This is the most relaxing of overwater flying.

The next leg was across the Gulf of Mexico by the Q routes to New Orleans. This is a pretty direct and easy route to NOLA. Getting back into all US airspace reinforces how easy and seamless flying here is, a true pleasure. Lakefront Airport's main

runway sticks its neck way out into Lake Pontchartrain. So, a very scenic arrival puts you close to downtown, the French Quarter, and all the fun and excitement the city is famous for. Here we used Flightline First FBO, yet another CAA operator. Friendly and efficient.

A few days, beignets and Hurricanes later, we are winging our way west, stopping at Odessa airport (KODO) in west Texas. The city runs the FBO, and like almost all my stops, CAA. It's a very nice, quiet, friendly airport, great for a quick fuel stop.

Then on to Camarillo, CA (KCMA) to visit old friends. Camarillo is a great airport if you are visiting the L.A. area, about halfway between L.A. and Santa Barbara. This airport has probably the best airport restaurant in the US – the “Waypoint Café” right on the airport with inside and outside seating, directly alongside transient parking, and great views of arriving aircraft. The breakfast and lunch are something to write home about.

We use Channel Island Aviation situated near the Waypoint. It's not CAA, but they match fuel pricing. There are several other FBO's, but the location and pricing of Channel Islands can't be beat.

Another few days and it's off north to the airplane's new home – Prineville, Oregon (S39).

What a great way to start life with a new aircraft, consolidating the training and giving good operational experience.

Information for this type of flight:

EAPIS filing is required in and out of the USA. Inbound, you are also required to contact the local customs office directly by phone. Your inbound clearance is not approved until you get the OK from the local CBP office.

You will need to set up an account at: www.eapis.cbp.dhs.gov. Once this is done, it is easy to submit requests online. You usually receive a reply within a few hours. You will also need to get custom decals for your aircraft. Do this done at www.dtops.cbp.dhs.gov.

Most Caribbean islands are part of CARICOM. You can go to their website to check which countries are members, then you file EAPIS with them. You will need to set up an account at www.caricomeapis.org. Once done, you can do all EAPIS filing online.

A good resource for flight requirements is AK-U-KWIK's managers' edition – available online. Otherwise, if you are using a handling agent, they can take care of everything for you, at a price. Also, a lot of information is available online. You can just Google the country's Civil Aviation Authority website or the actual airport website.

Most Caribbean islands only need a flight plan on file (at least two hours prior). A few require landing approvals, check in the AK-U-KWIK book or with a handler. It is always best to give your destination airport a heads up of your arrival and how long you intend to stay. This is usually best done through your chosen ground handling agent. If it's your first time venturing out of the USA, a ground handling agent is good insurance and will make your trip much easier and less stressful. On return visits, you can often, especially at the smaller airports, do everything yourself.

The weather for the entire trip, with the exception of the arrival in Oregon, was VFR. Occasionally, on top of stratus layers, but more generally clear with a few puffy CU's sticking their heads up into the high teens. We filed IFR for all legs except San Juan to Aguadilla, both in Puerto Rico, and only about 80 miles apart. Flying between FL240 and 250. Landing at

our new home base was under a rainy, cloudy sky with a cold wind blowing. Ah, well, it's now a quick trip to warmer climes when the urge hits.

International flight planning:

Here is an example of a flight from KFXE to MWCR (Ft. Lauderdale to Grand Cayman). The airspace overseas is broken into FIR's (Flight Information Regions), basically like centers in the US. You will need to add the FIR designator and ETE (Estimated time enroute) to the flight plan in Item 18. Also, in this section, put in your Cuba overflight clearance number. Otherwise, pretty standard plan, similar to what you would file in the US.

The FIR boundaries and names are shown on the attached IFR chart by the alternating check marks.

Fuel: Overseas, I usually use World Fuel. You need to set up an account. Then request a fuel release for each location. After fueling, you just sign and go – World Fuel will bill you later, often you can have them include ancillary fees such as handling, landing, etc.

The ground handler will be able to file the flight plan for you and also obtain weather and NOTAMS. Make sure you get these – very embarrassing to arrive and find the runway is closed. Otherwise, you can file yourself in the operations office or often up in the control tower.

We had a great time learning the intricacies of the airplane, the avionics, and the autopilot. Cruising along at 290+ knots at about 70gph in pressurized comfort is such a great way to explore the globe.

The Caribbean is easy and generally inexpensive. A perfect first run at overseas flying. 

Peter Fraser was born in the heart of Africa and spent 40 years test flying and delivering aircraft worldwide. He is a skydiver, sailor, paraglider, lover of the great outdoors, and inveterate traveler. You can order Peter's book "World Beneath My Wings" on Amazon today.

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JETS - 22,379

CHIEF PILOTS & OWNERS

COUNT	AIRCRAFT
8	ASTRA 1125
41	ASTRA 1125SP
59	ASTRA 1125FPX
21	BEECHJET 400
266	BEECHJET 400A
250	BOEING BBJ
513	CHALLENGER 300
317	CHALLENGER 350
29	CHALLENGER 3500
29	CHALLENGER 600
25	CHALLENGER 601-1A
108	CHALLENGER 601-3A
52	CHALLENGER 601-3R
351	CHALLENGER 604
283	CHALLENGER 605
78	CHALLENGER 650
3	CHALLENGER 800
53	CHALLENGER 850
5	CHALLENGER 870
504	CIRRUS VISION SF50
130	CITATION 500
375	CITATION 525
345	CITATION BRAVO
207	CITATION CJ1
107	CITATION CJ1+
255	CITATION CJ2
245	CITATION CJ2+
489	CITATION CJ3
267	CITATION CJ3+
464	CITATION CJ4
192	CITATION ENCORE
85	CITATION ENCORE+
405	CITATION EXCEL
13	CITATION I
277	CITATION I/SP
436	CITATION II
50	CITATION II/SP
164	CITATION III
173	CITATION LATITUDE
58	CITATION LONGITUDE
376	CITATION M2
510	CITATION MUSTANG
142	CITATION S/II
366	CITATION SOVEREIGN
118	CITATION SOVEREIGN+
315	CITATION ULTRA
289	CITATION V
27	CITATION VI
135	CITATION VII
324	CITATION X
39	CITATION X+
314	CITATION XLS
358	CITATION XLS+
17	DORNIER ENVOY 3
33	ECLIPSE 550
317	ECLIPSE EA500
20	EMBRAER LEGACY 450
83	EMBRAER LEGACY 500
113	EMBRAER LEGACY 600
72	EMBRAER LEGACY 650
16	EMBRAER LINEAGE
379	EMBRAER PHENOM 100
580	EMBRAER PHENOM 300
113	EMBRAER PRAETOR
57	FALCON 10
21	FALCON 100
15	FALCON 200
272	FALCON 2000
5	FALCON 2000DX
23	FALCON 2000EX
162	FALCON 2000LX
148	FALCON 2000LXS
25	FALCON 20C
15	FALCON 20C-5
17	FALCON 20D
1	FALCON 20D-5
1	FALCON 20E
48	FALCON 20F

75	FALCON 20F-5
182	FALCON 50
5	FALCON 50-4
8	FALCON 50-40
115	FALCON 50EX
282	FALCON 7X
70	FALCON 8X
173	FALCON 900
28	FALCON 900C
21	FALCON 900DX
351	FALCON 900EX
99	FALCON 900LX
22	GULFSTREAM G100
130	GULFSTREAM G150
238	GULFSTREAM G200
305	GULFSTREAM G280
13	GULFSTREAM G300
11	GULFSTREAM G350
324	GULFSTREAM G450
131	GULFSTREAM G500
641	GULFSTREAM G550
465	GULFSTREAM G650
16	GULFSTREAM G-I
15	GULFSTREAM G-II
12	GULFSTREAM G-IIB
87	GULFSTREAM G-III
175	GULFSTREAM G-IV
319	GULFSTREAM G-IVSP
202	GULFSTREAM G-V
113	GULFSTREAMG 600
32	HAWKER 1000A
5	HAWKER 1000B
7	HAWKER 125-1A
2	HAWKER 125-1AS
1	HAWKER 125-600A
55	HAWKER 125-700B
66	HAWKER 4000
216	HAWKER 400XP
53	HAWKER 750
142	HAWKER 800A
16	HAWKER 800B
408	HAWKER 800XP
44	HAWKER 800XPI
100	HAWKER 850XP
176	HAWKER 900XP
213	HONDA JET
4	LEARJET 23
44	LEARJET 24
64	LEARJET 25
3	LEARJET 28
614	LEARJET 31
22	LEARJET 35
56	LEARJET 36
140	LEARJET 40
470	LEARJET 45
102	LEARJET 55
418	LEARJET 60
17	LEARJET 70
158	LEARJET 75
294	PREMIER I
6	SABRELINER 40A
2	SABRELINER 40EL
2	SABRELINER 40R
5	SABRELINER 60
9	SABRELINER 60ELXM
48	SABRELINER 65
11	SABRELINER 80
1	SABRELINER 80SC
1	SUKHOI SBJ
3	SYBER JET SJ30
52	WESTWIND 1
14	WESTWIND 1124
47	WESTWIND 2

TURBOPROPS - 16,319

CHIEF PILOTS & OWNERS

COUNT	AIRCRAFT
210	AVANTI
1	AVRO RJ70
483	CARAVAN 208
2275	CARAVAN 208B

37	CHEYENNE 400
140	CHEYENNE I
21	CHEYENNE IA
218	CHEYENNE II
49	CHEYENNE III
39	CHEYENNE IIIA
58	CHEYENNE IIXL
238	CONQUEST I
292	CONQUEST II
77	DAHER TBM-700A
96	DAHER TBM-700B
113	DAHER TBM-700C
383	DAHER TBM-850
134	DAHER TBM-900
70	DAHER TBM-910
102	DAHER TBM-930
138	DAHER TBM-940
66	DAHER TBM-960
165	DE HAVILLAND DHC
49	EPIC E1000
1	FOKKER 70
37	JETSTREAM 31
70	JETSTREAM 32
64	JETSTREAM 41
32	KING AIR 100
474	KING AIR 200
21	KING AIR 200C
8	KING AIR 200T
261	KING AIR 250
46	KING AIR 260
190	KING AIR 300
10	KING AIR 300LW
695	KING AIR 350
91	KING AIR 350C
35	KING AIR 350ER
397	KING AIR 350I
6	KING AIR 350IER
73	KING AIR 360
7	KING AIR 90
7	KING AIR A/B90
65	KING AIR A100
155	KING AIR A200
32	KING AIR A90
89	KING AIR A90-1
93	KING AIR B100
1154	KING AIR B200
118	KING AIR B200C
121	KING AIR B200GT
6	KING AIR B200SE
8	KING AIR B200T
46	KING AIR B90
306	KING AIR C90
40	KING AIR C90-1
193	KING AIR C90A
402	KING AIR C90B
78	KING AIR C90GT
112	KING AIR C90GTI
165	KING AIR C90GTX
18	KING AIR C90SE
257	KING AIR E90
172	KING AIR F90
29	KING AIR F90-1
5	MERLIN 300
14	MERLIN IIB
5	MERLIN III
27	MERLIN IIIA
45	MERLIN IIIB
14	MERLIN IIIC
4	MERLIN IV
11	MERLIN IV-A
34	MERLIN IV-C
91	MITSUBISHI MARQUISE
16	MITSUBISHI MU-2F
1	MITSUBISHI MU-2G
11	MITSUBISHI MU-2J
28	MITSUBISHI MU-2K
10	MITSUBISHI MU-2L
18	MITSUBISHI MU-2M
23	MITSUBISHI MU-2N
25	MITSUBISHI MU-2P
46	MITSUBISHI SOLITAIRE
70	NEXTANT 400XT
1	NEXTANT G90XT

1081	PILATUS PC-12 NG
836	PILATUS PC-12/45
216	PILATUS PC-12/47
300	PIPER JETPROP
91	PIPER M500
263	PIPER M600
601	PIPER MERIDIAN
292	QUEST KODIAK 100
3	QUEST KODIAK 900
15	ROCKWELL COMMANDER
6	STARSHIP 2000A
54	TURBO COMMANDER 1000
21	TURBO COMMANDER 690
134	TURBO COMMANDER 690A
136	TURBO COMMANDER 690B
80	TURBO COMMANDER 840
27	TURBO COMMANDER 900
26	TURBO COMMANDER 980

TWIN PISTON - 7,649

OWNERS

COUNT	AIRCRAFT
37	BARON 56TC
1677	BARON 58
428	BARON 58P
119	BARON 58TC
3	BARON A56TC
355	BARON G58
108	CESSNA 310
167	CESSNA 340
552	CESSNA 340A
50	CESSNA 402B
124	CESSNA 402C
27	CESSNA 404
317	CESSNA 414
452	CESSNA 414A
42	CESSNA 421
28	CESSNA 421A
309	CESSNA 421B
707	CESSNA 421C
59	CESSNA T303
112	DIAMOND D42
20	DIAMOND IA
186	DUKE B60
80	PIPER 600 AEROSTAR
3	PIPER 600A AEROSTAR
45	PIPER 601 AEROSTAR
4	PIPER 601B AEROSTAR
201	PIPER 601P AEROSTAR
24	PIPER 602P AEROSTAR
589	PIPER CHIEFTAIN
26	PIPER MOJAVE
301	PIPER NAVAJO
255	PIPER SENECA
74	ROCKWELL COMMANDER
168	ROCKWELL SHRIKE

HIGH PERFORMANCE MOVE-UP SINGLES - 10,002

OWNERS

COUNT	AIRCRAFT
393	BEECH BONANZA
441	CESSNA 182
55	CESSNA 206
428	CESSNA P210N
22	CESSNA P210R
58	CESSNA T182
1220	CIRRUS SR20
3733	CIRRUS SR22
2048	CIRRUS SR22T
121	MOONEY ACCLAIM
37	MOONEY ACCLAIM ULTRA
407	MOONEY OVATION
12	MOONEY OVATION ULTRA
263	PIPER MALIBU
199	PIPER MATRIX
565	PIPER MIRAGE

Garmin D2 Mach 2

Flight Computer on your Wrist

by Rich Pickett



D2 Mach 2 HSI with Course



D2 Mach 2 Map overlay

Calling Garmin's latest wearable device, the D2 Mach 2, a smartwatch is like describing a tourbillon as a wristwatch. The Garmin D2 Mach 2 is much more advanced than any smartwatch and probably deserves a new category for this wearable computing device. Garmin has integrated several aviation features that go far beyond simply using a smartwatch version of a mobile app. These features are in addition to the inclusion of Garmin's well-known health, fitness, connectivity, diving, and mobile app integration on the watch.

We decided to test this advanced watch on land, mountain biking, in the air, flying over the Caribbean, leading an Air Journey adventure, under the water, and then around the US and Mexico. Our testing program for the 51 mm version of this instrument was extensive and a lot of fun.

The 51 mm size is rather large; however, at only 4.8 oz (titanium band) in comparison with my 44 mm Apple Ultra at 4.3 oz, it wasn't a significant difference. A 47 mm version is also available for those who desire a smaller device, and I expect most pilots to opt for that size.

The watch arrives in a premium presentation box with titanium and silicone bands, a charging cable, and an adjustment screwdriver.

This is not the watch you simply unwrap, install the wrist band, and instantly use all its features. I spent considerable time reading the manual and watching Garmin's YouTube videos on the watch, which helped but didn't answer all of my questions. It was as if I were studying systems for a new aircraft.

The D2 Mach 2 is a computer with 32 GB of storage, featuring advanced accelerometers, a magnetometer, a multi-band GPS receiver, barometric sensors (above and below the water), WiFi and Bluetooth transceivers. The display is amazingly bright due to its AMOLED (Active-Matrix Organic Light-Emitting Diode) technology. All of this is contained within a polymer case with a titanium bezel, protected by a durable sapphire crystal.

Power for Days

With all this capability, it is surprising that the battery will power the watch 41 days in low power mode and 56

hours when the aviation activity is selected. If you just use it as a beautiful watch, with occasional app use, it should last at least 2 weeks on a charge. If you are checking out all the features or using some of the more intensive apps as I do, the battery still lasts an amazing 4 to 7 days. This is surprisingly longer than the 2 to 3 days I usually get on my Apple Ultra watch.

Connectivity

The D2 Mach 2 uses both WiFi and Bluetooth transceivers to communicate and share data between the watch and multiple devices, including a plethora of external sensors for health and fitness. Through Bluetooth, it communicates with your phone (Android or iPhone) and utilizes WiFi for some specific data downloads, such as map layers, directly to the watch.

Software Connections

The D2 Mach 2 is dependent upon seven smartphone applications, including Garmin Pilot, if you want to use all the features. At a minimum, you need the free Garmin Connect, which supports several watch-management services, while upgrading to the subscription-based Connect+ provides additional map layers and services.

Activity-specific apps for golf, diving, messaging, and exploration are also available, including an app to determine the optimal elevation and windage for long-range shooting. If you can think of an activity, there is probably an app that can be activated on the D2 Mach 2.

Bluetooth connections for mobile devices are through the Phone setting, and only one connection can be active, i.e., if you want to switch between an app on your phone or your iPad, you will need to manually change that connection.



Dive mode Virgin Gorda

Aviation Features – Connected Cockpit

The aviation features are independent of connection to a mobile device, which enables full control of the watch itself. In fact, that is how I used the watch most of the time while flying. At first, I thought it would be difficult to use these capabilities on a small watch face since it does require considerable data entry. The watch keyboard was actually very effective in entering ICAO airport codes. The smaller 47 mm version of the D2 Mach 2 might make entering data more challenging; however, the more compact size may be more useful for most people.

The integral GPS sensors are very accurate and work well while flying the Cessna T206 or the Cessna Citations. When flying in the Cirrus Vision Jet through the Caribbean, the metallic reflective layer in the SF50 windows interfered with the GPS acquisition. In these situations, the only solution would be to connect the watch to the iPad and utilize Garmin Pilot and its connection to your Garmin panel. Garmin has aptly named their avionics and mobile device connectivity as a Connected Cockpit, and the D2 simply is an extension of that concept when using Garmin Pilot.

The watch has an amazingly accurate compass, which I used frequently while flying and exploring on land. This compass, coupled with an HSI feature complete with a course needle, was perhaps one of my favorite features.

As pilots, even in pressurized aircraft, it is useful to know your SpO2 (blood oxygen level), and this watch has not only a current level, but also a bar graph, which is very useful to measure over a specific time period.



Active Call Tigre



Nearest Airport Punta Cana



SpO2 trends can be monitored

The weather features, both METARs and TAFs, and current and forecast local weather were easily accessed. Coupled with various map overlays, including aviation, it provides effective situational awareness for aviation and other activities.

At Sea Level and Below

Outside of using the aviation features while on land, the D2 Mach 2 has more activity apps than even an Ironman Triathlete would use. The health and fitness tracking capabilities are comprehensive, including heart rate monitoring, blood oxygen saturation, stress tracking, and sleep analysis. For outdoor enthusiasts, the watch offers dedicated modes for mountain biking, trail running, skiing, and dozens of other activities.

The diving features are particularly impressive, with dive computer functionality that tracks depth, time, water temperature, and decompression limits. The barometric sensors accurately measure both altitude for aviation and depth underwater. I didn't get a chance to dive during my trips, but snorkeling and free diving in the Caribbean was a brief test, during which the watch performed flawlessly without the Apple Watch requirement to actively place it in dive mode, and provided clear visibility even in challenging underwater conditions. Underwater, some functions would work, and I would prefer if the water temperature were more easily accessible.

Lifestyle Computer

The Garmin D2 Mach 2 represents a significant leap forward in aviation wearables. While it requires a learning investment comparable to mastering a new aircraft

system, the payoff is substantial. The independent aviation features, exceptional battery life, and comprehensive activity tracking make it a versatile tool for pilots who live active lifestyles beyond the cockpit.

The watch shines brightest when used independently in the cockpit, where the on-watch keyboard and intuitive interface allow for quick airport lookups and navigation without reaching for your iPad. The Connected Cockpit integration with Garmin Pilot is valuable when needed, but many pilots will find the standalone capabilities more than sufficient for most flights.

For the pilot seeking a true aviation computer on their wrist rather than just another smartwatch, the D2 Mach 2 delivers. Its premium price point is justified by the depth of features, build quality, and the seamless integration of aviation-specific capabilities with comprehensive health and fitness tracking. After extensive testing across multiple environments and exploring its capabilities, the D2 Mach 2 would more appropriately be defined as a Lifestyle Computer that simply resides on your wrist. 



With 14,000+ hours of piloting more than 100 aircraft models, **Rich Pickett** is still passionate about flying. Rich holds an ATP, CFII SME, SES, glider license, and type ratings in the following aircraft: L29, L39, Citation 500/510/525, Eclipse 500S, Beechcraft Premier and Dassault Falcon 10. He runs his company, Personal Wings, with his son Tigre. Personal Wings provides training, mentoring and aircraft services. You may contact Rich at rich@personalwings.com.

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Ron and Linda Staley in front of the L-39

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARK KOLANOWSKI
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“

I don't know if anybody has a typical journey, but I didn't start flying until my kids went off to college.

Owner's Corner

Ron Staley

by **Grant Boyd**

For decades, Ron Staley was professionally focused on restoring historic buildings. As a construction manager, he has worked on well-known structures from the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C., a handful of state capitols, and Ernest Hemingway's house in Havana, Cuba. Aviation has served both as a way to get to many of these unique job sites, as well as a fun weekend activity shared with like-minded individuals.

“I don't know if anybody has a typical journey, but I didn't start flying until my kids went off to college. I had always worked on street rods and motorcycles in my free time, and kind of figured after doing so many of those that you have done it all. So, I was looking for something new,” he said.



Ron Staley with the L-39



Ron Staley's T-34/L-39 in formation

“One of the mason contractors I worked with was a pilot, and we would actually fly in his T-6 Texan to see some project sites. He said I should become a pilot, and after a while, I agreed. I mean, I loved the history of the planes, and flying was a lot of fun!”

Renting a Cessna 172 quickly turned into owning a Cessna 182 and

getting an instrument rating. And with an eye towards detail and distinct, handmade treasures, it's no wonder that Staley's interest in preserving the past has worked its way into his aviation hobby as well.

“One day, my friend [who got me into aviation] called, and at this time he was flying an L-39, and probably had

six different airplanes in his hangar. He said, ‘I inadvertently bought a second L-29 on eBay.’ Now, how many people do that?” Staley questioned, noting there was much more to the story.

“Anyhow, he didn't get in trouble with his wife for buying the second L-29 because he told her that he bought it so that I could learn how to fly a jet. That's how I got into flying jet warbirds, and it was a great introduction. The L-29 is a very simple airplane to fly.”

After a few years, the Czechoslovakian-built military jet left the hangar, and Staley was itching to conquer his next aviation challenge. At this time, he had his own T-6 and decided to purchase an L-39 Albatros, which, after a lot of hard work, won an award for being the best of its kind at EAA AirVenture in 2011.

“This jet was definitely my favorite, and I kept it for fifteen years. With over 550 hours in type, leading formation flights at airshows and into AirVenture was the ultimate challenge. Just last year, I thought I did everything that I wanted with it and, with retirement pending, didn't really want to be spending \$2,000 for fuel every time I went out to have a good time. I made the decision to let it go. My aviation journey changed over time, and this was just another step as I had already let the T-6 go for a T-34 Mentor a few years earlier.”

He still owns the T-34, as well as a share of a TT-1 Super Pinto. Warbirds are fun for formation flying with others, but Staley knew that the empty spot in his hangar would be best served if filled by a more practical aircraft.

“Probably about ten years ago, I bought a Cessna 414A. All our family lived in Michigan at the time, so it was a great airplane to take them skiing or on summer trips around the state. But then my daughter's family moved to California, which is a bit of a long haul for that airplane,” he said.

“That's when we bought into the turboprop world with the 2005 Piper Meridian that I own now. It's so smooth to fly and has very nice systems. I absolutely love it. The climbing power and reliability of the turbine were a big positive to my wife, Linda.

“What I've learned in aviation is to never say never. A friend has started pushing me to get typed in his C550 Citation. Why not? Let the aviation journey continue!”





Ron Staley's Meridian





The panel of the Meridian

PHOTOS COURTESY OF RON STALEY

For me, the ease of operation, never having to worry about cylinder head temperatures in a climb or shock cooling in a descent, is a dream compared to the Cessna twin.”

While taking the whole family along happens occasionally, more frequently it’s just Staley and his wife on the plane. He really wanted a faster single-engine turboprop, but after some thought decided that the slightly smaller, Vero Beach-made turboprop would be the best fit for his mission.

“I really would have liked to have a TBM, not that I necessarily needed it from a mission profile standpoint. Most of the TBM owners I talked to started in Meridians and noted that you are going to spend twice as much as you would in a Meridian. Your operating costs, maintenance costs, and overall investment are twice as much,” he recalled, advising that he also considered both Piper Cheyenne II and Cessna Conquest II’s but didn’t find any good options at the time,” he said.

“You can always have more speed, more capacity, and a bigger airplane, but the Meridian fits the bill really well. I can get three and a half hour legs out of it, which is plenty long enough and covers some distance. What I really like about the airplane is that I easily push

260 to 270 knots up at 27,000 or 28,000 feet, with me and a passenger on board, with full fuel. I am going a little higher than the 414, and this gets us over a lot of inclement weather, and the systems allow you to do it very safely.”

A little over a year into Meridian ownership, Staley thinks about fuel management a little differently than many other general aviation pilots. Having become accustomed to burning 160 gallons an hour in the L-39, the 40 gallons an hour he budgets in the Meridian is comparatively light. The cabin-class turboprop does cruise about 70 knots slower and can’t go upside down or pull six G’s, though. The upside-down and g-limitations are much appreciated by his wife and other passengers who appreciate a straight and level flight.

Meeting with fellow aviation enthusiasts at Oshkosh remained beneficial when Staley began transitioning to Meridian ownership. He also mentioned that the Piper M-Class Owners & Pilots Association (PMOPA) is an invaluable resource for those considering moving into any of the PA-46 models. The group hosts several events throughout the year and curates safety, ownership, and extensive training resources that are readily available to its members.

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Initial transition and recurrent training were provided by Live Pilot Training, located near Des Moines, Iowa, which came to Michigan. They conducted training from Staley's hangar at Livingston County Airport (KOZW).

"The Pratt & Whitney turboprop operation was a transition from the Cessna piston twin engines and even considerably different from the 1970's L-39 turbine engine. The four-day initial training dove deep into powerplant and airframe systems. Then several days were spent in the air, building muscle memory with operational, environmental, and emergency exercises. The autopilot operation is a key part of the PA-46-500TP, and the initial training emphasized its capability," he noted.

"I am a big believer in recurrent training and recently went out to Des Moines to remember what was forgotten from initial, reinforce good operations, and continue to build comfort in the aircraft."

Staley has been pleased with his Meridian so far overall. The 20-year-old electronics may be a target for a future upgrade, though, as they have taken the plane out of service a couple of times.

"My Meridian has the original Avidyne panels in it, driven now by Garmin 650s instead of the 430s," he said. "There is a Honeywell computer that networks information up to the Avidyne that was partially fried. That took a while to figure out. Then the MFD went out. In a perfect world, it would be nice to just switch it all over to a fully Garmin panel, as I had in my 414. There are a lot of benefits to it, but I just haven't decided if I want to put another hundred thousand dollars towards the plane and have it down for four months. Flying is a lot more fun than watching the plane sit in a shop!"

The Meridian had a busy winter, taking Staley and his wife to see family in Arizona, California, and Texas. Summer calls for a trip to Maine to go

whale watching. And when asked about what may come further in the future, Staley has decided that he's keeping his options open.

"What I've learned in aviation is to never say never. A friend has started pushing me to get typed in his C550 Citation. Why not? Let the aviation journey continue!" 



Grant Boyd is a private pilot with eight years of experience in aviation business, including marketing, writing, customer service, and sales. Boyd holds a Bachelor's and a Master's of Business Administration degree, both from Wichita State University, and a Doctor of Education degree from Oklahoma State University. He was chosen as a NBAA Business Aviation "Top 40 Under 40" award recipient in 2020.

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Is it Really Worth the Risk?

Two high-profile accidents last year got me thinking about how pilots handle the risks of flying. Both involved 1980's vintage Citations. Both were flown essentially single-pilot and in weather. And while it's sometimes unfair to "Monday morning quarterback," it's easy to question the decision-making processes that killed a total of thirteen people in these accidents. The investigations are just beginning, and my comments are certainly subject to change, but here's what we think we know.

The first accident occurred on May 22nd. The owner-pilot and five passengers departed Teterboro, New Jersey (KTEB) around 11 pm after attending a rock concert. Up front in the right seat, a passenger posted a picture of the departure. The PIC flew non-stop to James Jabara (KAAO) near Wichita, KS, landing at 2:36 am CDT and did a quick turn. Then on to Montgomery-Gibbs airport (KMYF) near San Diego.

He began his approach to his home airport around 5:45 am CDT after working his day job and flying for 6.5 hours across the entire country. We call this a single-pilot "all-nighter."

The weather in San Diego was awful, with very low ceilings and visibility at ½ mile. The airport was unattended with no current weather reporting. NOTAMS in effect advised that the Runway Alignment Indicator Lights (RAI) were out of service and had been so since March of 2022. The aircraft hit electrical power lines 1.8 miles short of the runway.



Greg Biffle crash site

All six aboard perished, and eight people on the ground received minor injuries. Substantial damage to houses and cars at the crash site was visible.

The second accident involved NASCAR legend Greg Biffle and his family.

They departed Statesville, NC (KSVH) on December 18th in deteriorating weather and reportedly without an IFR clearance.

METAR KSVH 181535Z AUTO 0000KT 1 3/4SM +RA SCT004 OVC010 06/04 A3019 RMK AO2 P0001 T00550035

METAR KSVH 181515Z AUTO 0000KT 5SM +DZ BKN012 BKN022 OVC050 07/01 A3019 RMK AO2 T00720010

Shortly after takeoff, the pilot discussed problems with his flight instruments. Scud-running, they initiated a return for landing, never making contact with departure control. Just short of the runway, in heavy mist, they hit trees and approach lights.

All seven aboard perished, including Biffle's two very young children.

My takeaway: We need to stop killing innocent people in airplanes.

When our passengers get in a car with us, they have a pretty good understanding of the risk involved. They probably have driven the car. But many of the passengers in these two accidents were likely just along for the ride.

They had no idea.

No idea of the pilot's qualifications, his fitness for flight, or his knowledge of the airplane. Both of these Citations, while "state of the art" in the 80's, were filled with decades-old avionics. At best, they are a handful to fly competently.

When we "burn the candle at both ends" and fly all night or blast off into bad weather without a sound plan, we are asking our passengers to incur the risks.

Is that fair?

Fly safe. 

David Miller has owned and flown a variety of aircraft from light twins to midsize jets for more than 50 years. With 6,000 plus hours in his logbook, speaks nationally and writes on a variety of aviation safety topics. You can contact David at davidmiller1@sbcglobal.net.



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