



Airfreddy's Flying Stories

Stories That *All Pilots* Can Learn From

Story #2 Student /Instructor Happy Hours and More

Ok, you go to the flight school and meet your instructor and schedule your intro flight. You leave the flight school and have that little fuzzy feeling; time for another story.

Years ago it happened to me. Anyhow, I received a call from a woman and scheduled a meeting to discuss her flight training. She showed up and Tingle, Tingle, she had the most beautiful big brown eyes I had ever seen (up until that point in my life) she paid for her entire Private Pilot Certificate up front, scheduled her first flight and then left.

Initially I knew my job was to be her flight instructor and to give her the best training possible. That I did. She also paid for all her flight training and she stated she wanted to fly as much as possible. I just thought no problem she paid for it all, she wants to get it done fast so let's just knock the rating out and go from there.

We flew about three times a week. Somehow her last flight of the week ended up being on Fridays at 4.00. That then turned to "well lets go to happy hour and have a beer ". I was always pretty good at fighting this and never dated any students till they were done. This one was different though. She soloed and the happy hours became a weekly thing. The slight flirting was there and I kept saying to her "you are almost done, lets just knock this out and we can have you licensed within two weeks"

She was just about ready to do her solo cross counties. We did the second dual cross country on Friday afternoon to Sedona Arizona. After that, yup off to happy hour we went. The flirting continued and I kept saying "lets just finish your rating, we can be done by next week" Finally it dawned on her why I wanted to finish her training. Those big beautiful brown eyes grew to about the size of quarters "Freddy you do like me" then she laid one on me. The line had been crossed.

The next flight was lost procedures. This is the lesson where I purposely get students off track and hopefully in a little bit of a pickle. I didn't do anything different with her than I do with all of my other students. So yes she got lost -and I was a jerk?

We worked it out and she got her pilot certificate within about 2 weeks. Phew...After she got her private pilot certificate she wanted to get her tail- wheel endorsement. The first few flights went by with no problem. One morning we were out doing touch and go's. She got herself into a little trouble and started heading off the runway. One thing I try not to do is grab the plane from the student until I absolutely have to so I kept saying " keep it straight, keep it straight, go around, go around " The runway we were using is nice and safe. The dirt is nice and smooth up to the blacktop and there is plenty of room without ditches or anything else. Finally I ended up punching the power and started a go around, but we were heading at one of the runway lights with the nose pointed off the runway. So I got very quickly on my feet and around the light we went; not a big deal. We got on downwind and I noticed a nice cloud of dust down there. My buddy was in the control tower, so I keyed the mike and just said "sorry about that" He came back on and said " what" I said " take a look" , "Ohhhhh that" he replied, Then came one of his laughs and comments. Suddenly the volume in my headsets went up about 50DB. "Freddy you are such a jerk..... you are supposed to keep the plane straight for me!!" So we landed and ended that.

Once again I didn't do anything different with her than I did with any other student. The way you, the student, will learn is from your mistakes. You are not going to become a safe tail wheel pilot if I keep the plane nice and straight on the centerline every landing. The plane was built for dirt so it wasn't going to hurt

anyone or anything. My attitude in situations like this, (I think I have had 3 or 4) if I am not fearing for my life and can make it home or to happy hour safely(and you are not about to total my airplane) is you got yourself into this, you are going to get yourself out of this. That is how you learn. Yes after that I started taking tail wheel students over to an airport where the runway was 200 feet wide so I could avoid this happening again. But once that relationship line is crossed things can get pretty tense. She didn't see that I was trying to help her. She just thought I was a jerk and did it on purpose.

Now I know plenty of people who met their spouses this way. It happens all the time. This is probably a 50 -50 split on the opinions of people. I will never do that again; it is just too tense and I will stick to that.

So my advice is if you meet your instructor and have the fuzzy's, do one of two things. First choice is to make sure the line is not crossed. Don't do anything alone together. If you are with a group happy hour, that is fine. Make sure you stay away from each other until you are finished with your flight training. On the day you pass your flight test, go celebrate and go from there.

Second choice is if you have no self control – Just get a different instructor quickly. It is in your best interest. I have had to break apart students and instructors for this reason. I would be going thru student accounts and notice someone has way too much flight time, spent far too much money and doesn't have a certificate. Come to find out they are just joyriding.. The student is not at the upset stage yet but will when they notice how much they have spent.

So we had a wonderful two years together after that. **DON'T DO IT!!!!!!!!!!**
WAIT UNTIL YOU ARE FINISHED WITH YOUR TRAINING!!!



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