



Airfreddy's Flying Stories

Stories That *All Pilots* Can Learn From

Story #11: I Can Do Aileron Rolls Can You?

I CAN DO AILERON ROLLS CANYOU?: Now I will introduce you to the first story about a husband and wife that did their flight training together. I will not give their real names so I will just use Barbie and Ken. That is the first thing that came to my mind so I will go with it. They had this competition going on and it was really good for them.

I am going to make a statement about women student pilots here and ladies, I don't want you to get ticked at me. In general I have found that you ladies are a little timid when it comes to flying an airplane. This is not always the case as I have had female students that out did the guys. I am saying that out of all the women pilots I have taught the ones who were timid out -weighed the ones that weren't. That is all in most cases the lady pilots didn't have the TIM TAYLOR attitude toward airplanes. Yes Patty Wagstaff would kick my butt in an airplane (maybe not in teaching but in aerobatics- she would hurt me) so I have found that I needed to do a little extra work to build confidence in Female pilots.

A perfect place for this was my aerobatic lesson. At the time I required all of my students to do, if we did not go over the gross weight of the airplane. Barbie was flying fine but she was just not taking control of the lesson as I wanted her to do. She knew what to do but she was just a little unsure of herself.

There were two purposes to this lesson; First to learn spin recoveries and unusual attitude recoveries, second is the most important part that maybe a lot of people don't think about, doing aerobatics shows the student you can really get on the plane. Not only does it show you, the student, that you can get on the plane but to

actually get on the plane when you need to. I have another little saying” you fly the plane don’t let the plane fly you”

So it was aerobatic flight day and Barbie was a little bit nervous as most students are at first. We got the parachutes on and went over the emergency exit procedures and up we went into the east practice area and climbed to 6500 feet. “I don’t know if I want to do this “she said. I just sat there and probably made a little comment like “RELAX GIRL “. We cleared the area and it was time for the first maneuver, a nice gentle loop. I explained the maneuver that she read about the night before in her homework. She gave me the look “you do the first one ““nope you are paying for the plane you are going to fly it”. Anyhow I got her set up and we started the first loop. Up we went and the horizon came thru the windshield; we were pointed at the ground and finally finished the maneuver. “That wasn’t that bad”!! “I kind of laughed “lets do it again”. So we did “again”

After we did about four or five loops this girl was having a blast and on top of that she was finally taking control of the plane, so we went to Aileron Rolls. The first couple were a little rough but Barbie was getting that light bulb that told her she could make the plane go exactly where she wanted. We practiced a bunch of rolls, then she wanted to do loops again. We did combos of a loop right into a roll. This girl was having a blast, but we needed to go back since I planned fuel for about 1.2 hours. Most students can’t take more than that.

Now this girl impressed me. I just said “take me back to the airport” and then shut up. From the practice area back to the airport she nailed everything. She didn’t miss an altitude, a radio call nothing on top of which she finally did a perfect landing also. My Controller buddy was on the radio. Barbie had met him about a week before (the next story). We were about 2 miles out when my buddy cleared us to land. All of a sudden over the radio Barbie called him back on the radio “hey_____ I can do an aileron roll can you”?? A puzzled “no” came back over the radio. “I can do an aileron roll, I can do an aileron roll” and then my buddy came back over the radio” sounds like you had a good flight”. Barbie came back “yup”.

Another quick point here, The controllers are human also, if you get stumped or stressed out about something, just talk to them EG " hey dude I am having a

problem" or "have a great day". Once that light bulb comes on you will be a lot more relaxed over the radios.

We landed and got back to the hanger. Barbie walked thru the hanger and just kept repeating to everyone, "I can do an aileron roll". A one hour flight totally changed this girl's attitude about flying. Not only was she now having fun, but she was in total control of the airplane for the first time and she knew it.

So, yes, this is something that every student pilot should do. Over the years I have never got anyone sick either. So go and do it. You will be amazed at your confidence once you get done with that flight.



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