

# The Flight Line

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## SUNRISE AT SMILEY CREEK

*Tobe Thorpe*



Sunrise at Smiley Creek. We can hear a plane circling the field. The CFI's flying in from Hailey. It's been years since doing any real mountain flying & a check ride seems in order. The temperature's in the 30's and at 7200 ft close to standard temp. This is a plus for lift but a cold engine & frost on the wings is not. The check ride starts with canyon turns. Canyons we have no shortage of along the west side of the Sawtooth Valley, most with high glacial lakes at the bottom end. This is spectacular country and is a pleasant distraction as we run patterns along the canyon walls trying to keep the wing "as close as you can to the wall, don't waste any room" This seems contrary to safe flying at first but the logic is sound & proves to be valuable many times in the days ahead. After building some proficiency in the canyons we head north to put it to use.



Sulpher Creek for breakfast is a great way to begin a day in the back-country & we're soon joined by other pilots, trading information & planning where to go next. There are 50 or 60 different airstrips in central Idaho so choices abound. We decide on Johnson Creek next, "jewel of the back-coun-

try" & the CFI was a big plus in sorting out where the pattern could be run in this canyon. The turf is beyond expectations here but as you round the bend & drop in you have to dodge the irrigation equipment down one side of the strip. This is a beautiful camp with sites right on the river, miles from anywhere with hot showers!

Next we head to my favorite, Big Creek. North over Yellow Pine & east up one canyon then north up another, climbing over the pass & drop down into a canyon with a high, narrow ridge separating the airstrip from the river(or creek-these creeks are big)The trick here is to fly over the upstream end first to check for game on the strip then drop to the other side of the ridge to "use all the room in the canyon" before dropping in between & over the big thick timber surrounding this canyon, landing upstream.

After trial runs into these choice locations, we toured several other strips from the air on the way back including Mile High, no more than a steep slope on top of a mountain with no trees. The options of places to fly into for fishing, hunting, whitewater rafting, hiking & just flying seem endless.

Early the next morning Jim & I set out to try the canyons on our own. Conditions always seem best before the winds pick up & in the mountains it can be critical. Wind speeds & turbulence are greater over the peaks. Most back-country fliers (especially novices) prefer to be on the ground before they build. Flying past Bruce Meadows, over Sulpher Ck & Landmark we dropped into Johnson Ck & hiked around checking out the facilities. Choice campsites run between the field & the river. There's a freezer where you can swap a jug of water for one already frozen & again, Hot Showers!

Next we headed for McCall on the west edge of the wilderness area for a little service to the plane. This is a true resort town lying on the south shore of Payette Lake. Some pilots like to home base here as fuel & service are readily available with deluxe accommodations nearby.



The service at DEW Aircraft was better than good & we were soon on our way home to Smiley Ck (just as the thermals were building-we should be on the ground)Climbing south along the valley toward Cascade there are paths to the east through the mountains that offer a smoother route than straight over the tops. After crossing back into the Sawtooth Valley the winds caught up with us & provided a fast run down valley and called for a downhill landing on our home field. Not a problem with well over a mile of turf.

Marginal weather the next day gave us the opportunity to tour the valley by car, beginning with Stanley-a good spot for provisioning for the back country-and on to Redfish lake-a full service resort for boating, riding & pack trips, organized activities for kids & all in a magnificent setting.



[Continued on page 4](#)



By *N. Patrick Hale M.D.,*  
Senior FAA Aviation Medical Examiner



I have recently had a heart attack and although I am getting better I am not flying yet. When will the FAA let me fly again?



Pilots with a history of heart disease or heart attack cannot be issued a medical certificate by the Aviation Medical Examiner (AME). However, those applicants may be granted limited medical certificates through the special issuance procedure of the FAA. A six month recovery period is required. You may have your AME do the flight physical and provide the necessary medical information and documentation needed to send on to the FAA. You should expect a delay in getting the certificate but if you are patient and persistent you can be successful.



What special tests are required of me to get the FAA to grant the special issuance of my medical certificate following the 6 month recovery period after my heart attack?



Before a special issuance is granted, you must have a cardiovascular workup and report to include current medical history, cardiac exam, general physical, lipid profile, plasma glucose level and a maximal ECG stress test. Your AME can help you to expedite the process by gathering all of the information together and forwarding it to the FAA at the time of your flight physical.



Since my last flight physical I have started taking medicine for high blood pressure. How will this affect my eligibility to receive an aviation medical certificate?



You should have your doctor provide a current report to include personal and family medical history, including an assessment of the risk for coronary heart disease, a clinical examination including at least three blood pressure readings, a resting ECG and a report of fasting plasma glucose, cholesterol, triglycerides, potassium and creatinine levels. The report should list the medications you take and mention that you are not having any adverse side effects from your current medications. Most of the common antihypertensive medications are acceptable to the FAA, but reserpine, guanadrel, methyldopa, clonidine and guanabenz are not.



I take medicine for high blood pressure and it was previously reported to the FAA. Do I need to provide any additional information the next time I have a flight physical?



Yes, if you have a diagnosis of hypertension, the FAA requires you to provide a current

status report listing the current medications, dosages, presence or absence of side effects, the adequacy of blood pressure control, the presence or absence of complications and the results of any appropriate tests or studies you may have had since your last flight physical. Hypertension follow-ups are required annually for first and second class medical certificate applicants and at the time of renewal for third-class certificate applicants.



I have a problem with the color vision test but I received a statement of demonstrated ability from the FAA and I have no problems with color signal controls or traffic lights. Will I have a problem the next time I take a flight physical?



No, once you have the statement of demonstrated ability (SODA) you are not required to be tested again for color vision. You should bring your certificate with you and show it to the AME at the time of your flight physical.



If you have questions you would like answered in future issues of the newsletter please send them on to me at [phale175@aol.com](mailto:phale175@aol.com).

*Good luck, good health  
and fly safely!*

*N. Patrick Hale, M.D.*

## Smiley Creek continued

With the weekend arriving Jim had to return home & Bob Thousand came out for some time in the back woods, both connecting through Boise.

Last minute changes caused Jim to have to leave late that night. Next morning's trip into Boise was a beautiful flight climbing to 11000 & descending over the peaks & foothills down to the Snake River Basin. Connections at the airport could not have been easier with shuttle service to the main terminal provided by the FBO.

After meeting up with Bob & heading back to the plane after lunch we had a tailwind heading toward the foothills over the reservoirs & river basins northeast of Boise.

We climbed over the mining town of Atlanta & picked our way through the peaks to descend into the pattern for what was an unexpected sight-over 100 planes at our once quiet airstrip. This was Fathers Day at



brought in for the season. Food & accommodations are great by back country standards but breakfast is still the house specialty. At the table the next morning information was shared & plans were made-on to Johnson Ck! Departure here is downhill, just keep that nose up & out of the gravel. Back through the canyons & over to a slow-flight approach for beautiful turf. We were early enough to rent an aged vehicle for a short run into Yellow Pine, a logging town a few miles down-river. This is no tourist town but



Smiley Ck. Lucky to have a place to stay this night we decided to part with the congenial crowd the next morning, heading out for Sulpher Ck- this time for more than just breakfast. The up-canyon approach has a bend in the last half mile or so but otherwise an easy glide to the gravel path that serves as the airstrip. This is a true "wilderness lodge" surrounded by primitive area with no roads or vehicle traffic in the area. You pack in or fly. Early June the rivers & streams are too fast & silted for good fishing but the Cuthroat are big & many in the ponds below the lodge. The only interruption to the peaceful afternoon was the herd of pack horses being

is a lot of fun. The proprietor of the local tavern hosts impromptu seminars & philosophical advice is free-whether you want it or not. It's tough to get lost in this town & no problem finding your way back to the camp. There is a hot spring back in the woods half way up a rock slide & worth the climb. Pay closer attention to the directions than we did & you'll get there after a short hike. Camping here is a treat by any standards but there are many places to see in this country & next day we were on our way to Big Ck. Climbing out over Yellow Pine the road to Big Ck is visible in the canyons until it gets lost in the timber & snow. Mid June is early season here & it

will be July 4th before people can count on the road being clear. The lodge opened a few days earlier than our arrival & proved to be good luck for us as the weather was changing. We had time to hike & fish before the evening rains drove us to staying in "the bunkhouse". Dinner was quite good fare & hot showers are available to guests of the lodge & we being the only people there qualified as guests. Now the bunkhouse was not officially open for the season but we needed a roof & management complied, insisting that it was "not ready". "What's a little dust & cobwebs? We don't care." It really was OK as long as your bunk wasn't under the packrat nest as they shoved their winter build-up of rat-waste through the ceiling all night. Anyhow, it was a roof & it was raining.

Breakfast was another very good meal & word was out as another planeload of guests showed up bright & early. This was more luck for us as they had news of a weather front moving in -information not available in this location. No telephone, no radio, no news other than the mail plane or guests. With weather coming & needing fuel & supplies it was time to head for McCall. Departure is downhill, until you get to the big dip in the runway but hopefully you're in the air by then. On the way west the turn is up a canyon - always a challenge as the terrain rises & the plane must gain altitude accordingly. This is a great opportunity to practice those canyon turns as we climb.



On the flight to McCall we descended briefly over Loon Lake, site of a B-26 forced landing almost 60 years ago. It was winter time in total IFR & the frozen lake was the only option available. There were no casualties as the plane slid off the ice into the "brush" according to the news article. We were hoping to see the fuselage & historic marker but that brush has grown into timber & can only be seen from the ground....some other day on foot.

Approach into McCall from the north is over the lake & offers a great prelude to what the area has to offer. The north end of town is a row of marinas with boardwalk shops & restaurants along the shore. The airport is on the south side of town with 2 FBOs providing full services. In between are hilly streets with all the trappings of a resort town. This is a fine place to get organized, easy to see why many pilots home base here.

Our weather front stalled just west of town but allowed an early exit the next morning & we headed down valley, angling southeast over rising terrain toward Bruce Meadows. This is a remote strip once used for military training, now for recreation & Forest Service. It's good turf with reasonable approaches but looked a little "soggy" in the fly-by as the rains caught up with us. On over the Sawtooths we rode a good tailwind ahead of the storm to settle for ground-based activities for the rest of the day.

Outfitters at Redfish Lake provided all we needed to get us up to timberline early that afternoon-just in time for the hailstorms & rain. The City Slickers endured & wound up having another fine, memorable day in the Idaho back-country.

Foul weather persisted the following day but gave us an opportunity to ship all the "extra" gear off before the return flight to SGJ. Bob was flying out through Boise & Earl Douglass was flying in to make the return trip.



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# FLIGHT FLICKS

this month featuring Tobe Thorpe



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send in your best flight flicks to:  
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# MEETINGS

See you there!

**AUGUST  
9  
2003**

Our meetings are always on the  
**Second (2nd) Saturday of each month @ 9:00a.m.**  
at the SAAPA Clubhouse.  
*Join us for our next meeting.*



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## Pilots Association

c/o Robert Fleming/Allen Arnold, Newsletter Editors  
147 San Marco Ave • St. Augustine FL 32084

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