

Clive Davidson

I can think of no finer profession than flying for a living. I much prefer flying, discovering the qualities, performance and character of an aircraft, heightened and contrasted by occasional challenges, rather than to meekly sit straight and level, passively watching the world pass by, travelling from A to B. Solo flight has its own particular satisfactions in allowing skills to be honed, but....flying and sharing a tandem cockpit with a like minded person who desires to improve his, or her skills, is a constant. And flying with friends cannot be beaten.

Give me a high dark blue sky and a multiple turn spin, give me a gusting crosswind, give me a high reaching, energy converting barrel roll in a 'plane with inertia, laughter in the cockpit over some silly tale, a well flown display, a recovered situation, the rush to get home as the weather goes bad, with a close friend in formation, blue eyes and blue skies, a steaming side slip, House Martins, Swallows and Swifts, the word 'aerodrome', a clean canopy, trying to fly with too low a power setting and getting lift from a motorway, recognising a voice on the RT, pulling wing tip vortices, a good intercom, turning with a bird of prey, accuracy, control and precision, the promise of the new, Irvin jacket and leggings on a cold day, gummy bears rewarded for good landings, a long, slow, slow roll, a cup of tea with hands too cold to hold the mug, knowing it is going to be alright, occasionally bare headed in an open cockpit, trying to stand still or fly backwards in a strong wind, pushing hard right rudder on take off with a V12 upfront, sunshine above the clouds, a neatly written logbook entry, a well judged curving approach, height, energy, speed, whistling wires, a reflection in polished cowling, going from the known to the new, being bounced but still winning, trying to, and overcoming problems, thistle down landings into wind on a grass field in a lightly loaded biplane, a sky lark singing above as the engine shuts done.

I still delight in flying the worlds best basic primary trainer, the Tiger Moth. When I first flew with Bill Ison I didn't realise how good and challenging it was and how it still remains. It responds to a delicate touch and brings out the best in an understanding pilot. It is my default aircraft and keeps me ready for any other.

Long live the Tiger Moth! Perhaps the best pilot trainer in the world!

Lets have some fun together....

Clive

The numbers:

instructing since 1980,(Civilian Clubs and Air Line Colleges + Military B1)11,600 SEP including 3,500 tail wheel and 1,175 on Tiger Moths. 200+ types, 11 FLWOP, DIsplay Authorisation for 24years (Groups A,B &C, formation and aerobatics to 200 feet) LAA TP. Aviation writer. CFI with Tiger Moth Training at Henstridge, EGHS.

