



THE *SPORT FLYER* September 2003



!!! NOTICE !!! September Meeting will be at West Houston Airport September 18th

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Pat's Patter

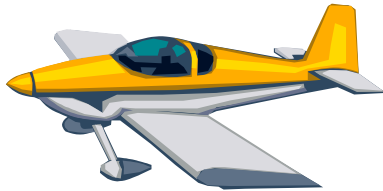
Our meeting for September 18th will be at West Houston Airport at 7:30pm. Our speaker will be Paul Downs from the FAA.

Our Chapter has voted to have our Annual Pancake Breakfast / Bald Eagles Day on October 11th at Sport Flyers at Leonard's hangar. It will start at 9:00am and run til whenever. Invite your relatives and friends. Pilots need to bring their planes to fly members, families and friends. This is always a special event so do try to be there.

Thank you Gary Parr for your program about the Vision and a tour of your hangar. The air conditioning was a real plus!

Sammy and I will be on vacation in Colorado for the meeting so take care and fly safely. See you soon, Pat.

Dragging Your Tail.... A Multi-part Series On All Aspects of Flying Tail-dragger Aircraft



Part One: The Three Point Pilot

BY BARRY SCHIFF (From [AOPA Pilot](#), March 2003.)

Retired airline captain Barry Schiff has logged more than 26,000 hours in 275 types of aircraft

When taildragger pilots gather at their local watering hole for post-flight imbibing, they occasionally engage in that ageless debate about whether the wheel landing is superior to the three-point, or vice versa.

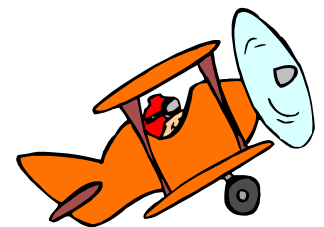
A wheel landing involves touching down on the main gear tires with the tail high and the airplane in an approximately level attitude. A three-point landing, of course, is made in a nose-high attitude with all three tires touching simultaneously.

Some refer to a three-point landing as a full-stall landing, but this is a misnomer. One cannot fully stall a lightplane. Much of the wing continues to develop lift throughout a conventional 1-G stall. In many tailwheel airplanes, an attempt to fully stall the airplane before touchdown often results in landing tailwheel first with the main wheels quickly following (usually with a thump).

This only approximates a three-point landing.

Proponents of the wheel landing like that it offers more control of the airplane during the landing process because touchdown occurs at a relatively high airspeed. This also makes it easier to go around in case of a botched landing. They also like that you can more easily touch down at any given point along the runway. Accurate landings are easier.

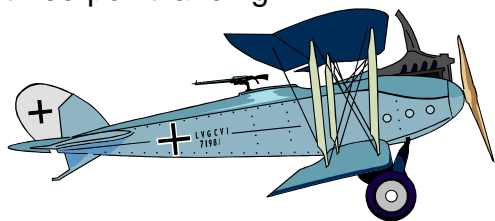
Those favoring the three-point landing argue that landing slower is kinder to the tires and the rest of the airframe unless, of course, the pilot misjudges and allows the airplane to plop ignominiously onto the ground (what used to be called a pancake landing). Advocates of this technique also like that a three-point landing results in a shorter landing roll because of the lower touchdown speed. It is the landing of choice when operating from unimproved surfaces because it keeps the propeller so much higher above the pebbles.



One cannot deny that wheel landings look racier and have more machismo. They remind us of World War II fighters returning to base. Rarely did they make three-point landings, which is why some believe that real pilots make wheel landings and wimps land with their tails dragging.

The notion that a taildragger can be landed with more control when making a wheel landing is somewhat fallacious. After all, there comes a point after touchdown when the tail must be lowered to the ground and the aircraft placed in a three-point attitude. It is during this transition at reduced airspeed that there is a reduction in the effectiveness of flight controls that is similar to that of a taildragger being flared for a three-point touchdown.

In fact, the tail can be held off the ground longer (at a lower airspeed) during a wheel landing than during a three-point landing. If this were not the case, it would not be possible to raise the tail during the takeoff roll so much before reaching liftoff speed. (Although prop wash during the takeoff roll is helpful in lifting the tail, holding the tail off the ground while below stall speed during a landing rollout proves that the tail can fly more slowly than the airplane, no matter the effect of the prop.) This means that a pilot lowering the tail following a wheel landing often has less rudder and elevator effectiveness than when making a three-point landing.



It is the reduced pitch and yaw effectiveness while lowering the tail following a wheel landing that leads some taildragger pilots to develop an unwarranted concern about making a three-point landing. They have an aversion to a three-pointer because of a false and misleading perception that they might lose too much controllability. In reality, the three-point landing assures better

overall control effectiveness than does the wheel landing (especially needed when gusty winds prevail). There is an exception: landing with strong crosswinds. This is when the wheel landing offers an advantage. The side load on the upwind tire (touchdown is made on only one wheel) combines with the lowered upwind wing to better prevent sideways drift while the tail is airborne. As airspeed wanes during rollout, the downwind wheel touches and contributes additional side load to further combat drift as the wings level.

Stiff crosswinds notwithstanding, I prefer three-point landings in my Citabria and all other tailwheel airplanes I have flown. I recall being cautioned against three-point landings in a Douglas DC-3. But after becoming proficient with wheel landings in the Gooney Bird, I decided to give three-pointers a try anyway. No problem. Most recently I checked out in a 1927 Sikorsky S-38, a remarkable twin-engine amphibian. Then, too, it was suggested that I stick to wheel landings. But three-point landings, I discovered, were delightful.

It's not that I consider myself a great pilot. It's just that three-point landings, I believe, are easier. You simply flare for almost as long as possible while inches above the runway. The airplane reconnects with the Earth when it is ready. Be careful, however, about allowing touchdown with a significant sink rate while the tail is still in the air. With the center of gravity aft of the main gear, momentum forces the tail down. This forces an increase in the wing's angle of attack and causes a bounce. When making wheel landings, you need to know exactly where the bottoms of the tires are. The idea is to roll them onto the turf with virtually no sink rate. This, I think, requires more familiarity with a given airplane than does a three-point landing.

Keeping your feet active after any taildragger landing is essential. A ground loop makes this discussion moot.

My friend La Verne,

La Verne and I have been best friends for over 30 years. She was one of the most thoughtful, compassionate and caring persons i have been most fortunate to know. We shared so many good times & sad times it would be hard to recall all the memories, tears, and laughs. I definitely will miss my very good friend.

Back sometime in the 70's, Sammy and I went out to the La Porte airport to see some homebuilts as we were getting ready to build a project. There we found LaVerne and Leonard in a hangar proudly showing off their Jr. Ace. We were so excited we went home and ordered our plans for the Sonerai II. Thank god for LaVerne and Leonard to give advise as we knew nothing about building a project.

The next time we saw them they had a trailer at Sport Flyers and were starting on their hangar. Then we found out, along with some other EAA members they were starting the 774 chapter. I think we were number 11 & 12 to join the chapter. It was a great beginning for us and after that we were worrying the Milhollands every chance we got for information and building a long-lasting friendship.

We have seen the pride of La Verne and Leonard in all their airplane building, the knowledge they have provided hundreds of visitors and the hospitality for all. It has been great to go sit out on their ramp and watch the planes come and go, the night stars and moon, have ice cream, play dominos, and just talk airplanes.

We have made trips to Oshkosh, Kerrville and all sorts of events over the years, eaten together, and enjoyed just being together. When the Young Eagle's program began, La Verne was always planning the events with me, and Leonard and Sammy too. We spent a lot of time planning things for the chapter, and making sure that everyone was having a good time.

There are so many things you can say about La Verne. She loved Leonard, the things they did together, her family and her friends.

If I know La Verne she is smiling down on us and wishing everyone to get projects finished and go flying. She is still telling Leonard to keep the hangar clean and keep the chapter running.

Till we meet again, love ya'

Pat

Calendar of Interesting TX Area Flying Events for 2003

2003	SEPTEMBER	COMMENTS
Sep 13	8 th Annual Fall Fly-In and Airshow, Sulphur Springs, TX	NOTE: Airport will be closed from Noon – 2:00pm for the airshow. FFI: www.eaa1094.org
Sep 19-21	100 Years of Powered Flight, 2003 Parade of Planes, Fly-In and Golf Tournament. Dallas Executive (Redbird)	9/19: Golf Tournament tee off, Oak Cliff Country Club, 7:30am. Agenda: Vintage military aircraft. FFI: Inez Clark. 214-942-7372 or Nat Clark 254-562-2878 natandinezclark@prodigy.net
Sep 19 – 21	Big Country Airfest, Abilene	Hosted by Chapter 471 and Texas State Technical College. Fly-bys by the B-1, C-17, C130, T-38 and various other warbirds. www.bigcountryairfest.org
Sep 20	Free Lunch Fly-In Tyler, Texas	NOTE: free hot dogs, hamburger chips and drinks. TIME: 10:00 a.m. til 3:00 p.m. FFI: 903/597-1334 www.tylerjet.com
Sep 20	Hilltop Lakes 6th Annual Fly-In Hilltop Lakes, Texas	TIME: 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. NOTE: token Prizes awarded at 12 NOON FFI: 936/855-1736
Sep 22	Frontiers of Flight Museum Dallas Love Field Dallas, Texas	Celebrating North Texas' contribution to aviation & aerospace on the 100th Anniversary of powered flight by the Wright brothers throughout 2003: North American Aviation (in Grand Prairie) Presenter: Charles W. Powers (Grand Prairie Historical Organization) Time: 7 p.m. RESERVATIONS: 214/350-3600 Frontiers of Flight Museum at Dallas Love Field
Sep 27-28	Fina-CAF AIRSHO 2003, Midland International Airport MAF	Contact Information: Tina Corbett 915-563-1000 pr_info@cafhq.org www.airsho.org
2003	OCTOBER	COMMENTS
Oct 4-5	Amigo Airshow El Paso, Texas	AGENDA: Thunderbirds FFI: 915/545-2864
Oct 18-19	Wings Over Houston Lone Star Flight Museum Houston, Texas	AGENDA: Steve Coan Sailplane Aerobatics & Commemorative Air Force FFI: www.wingsoverhouston.com
Oct 24-26	REKLAW Flying M Ranch Fly-In (7TA7)	