

March

2017 Edition

# RUNWAY 15

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# WEST HOUSTON AIRPORT

GOT AVIATION NEWS: Send to Stacy@westhoustonairport.com tips, comments, events, suggestions, articles, or letters to the editor.

## Traffic Patterns

The National Transportation Board (NTSB) release of the “Most Wanted” culprits of causes of General Aviation accidents has attracted the attention of a lot of people. The “Loss of Control” accidents seem to be in airport traffic patterns. The highest percentages of these are occurring during the “turn to final” portion of the patterns.

I don’t know just how much attention the FAA is giving the subject. The AOPA and the University of North Dakota are studying the difference in using the “Present Rectangular Traffic Patterns” vs. using a rounded-end instead of a squared-off base leg.

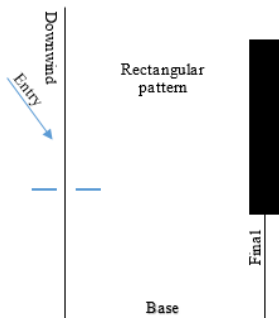


Figure 1

The goal seems to be for all landing approaches to be “stabilized”. Translated- the airspeed held “constant”, rate-of-descent “constant”, and rate-of-turns “constant”.

During the turn-to-final in the rectangular traffic pattern, pilots sometimes lose situational awareness and fail to begin the turn-to-final early enough for the turn to be completed in-line with the runway. When the pilot realizes that the airplane is over-shooting the path in-line with the runway, he/she often make a drastic increase

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## A single-engine Cessna is climbing just after takeoff when the engine skips a beat, then resumes normal operation. Attention-getting. But what happens next? By Dan Namowitz (AOPA)

Does the pilot shrug it off and continue on course to a nearby airport for touch-and-go practice? Or does the pilot go on alert, assess the situation, and re-evaluate the mission? Good for you if you opted for going on alert. How will you proceed?

In any unexpected flight scenario, the first thing to do, as every student pilot should be able to recite from memory, is “fly the airplane.” Maintain control, making the extra effort not

to let the strong urge to begin troubleshooting the problem immediately distract you from a more immediate priority. Can you say what that priority is?

Expediting the climb to an altitude from which you can make a safe return to the airport – if necessary – is the immediate priority. (Your engine is still developing power. Use it.)

It would be very helpful to maneuver close to the departure airport, either by remaining in the traffic pattern or by “spiraling up” to your cruise altitude in the immediate vicinity. At a towered airport, work out the details with air traffic control, giving ATC a heads-up that you are troubleshooting a

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# RUNWAY 15

## "As The Beacon Turns" CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### MARCH

12 - Day Light Savings, 17 - St. Patrick's

Quote: I realized how important it was to know something about aviation, and it was something I was interested in, so I followed my brother's footsteps and obtained my pilot's license. Ellen Ochoa [www.brainyquote.com](http://www.brainyquote.com)

Trivia: Steep turns properly done increase: \_\_\_ A) Airspeed B) Lift C) Fuel efficiency D) Stall Speed ANSWER D

#### PREFLIGHT Breakfast

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#### PRIVATE PILOT GROUND SCHOOL

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#### FAA SAFETY MEETING,

Fourth (4th) Tuesday 7:00pm-9:00pm March 28, flying for charitable organizations. Bo Hunter with Pilots for Patients; FAASTeam requesting volunteers contact Carol Brackely @ [carolav8@att.net](mailto:carolav8@att.net)

#### 99's MEETING

February meeting Saturday February 11, 2017 Contact Becky for more information Meetings International Organization of Women Pilots! Email Becky at [nick-ellb01@att.net](mailto:nick-ellb01@att.net), website [www.ninety-nines.org](http://www.ninety-nines.org).

#### COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE (CAF)

Museum open first and third Saturday of the month 10am-3pm. Meetings 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Month at 2:00 p.m., Hangar B-5. Call for tours and flights at 936-697-3237 or the hangar at 281-579-2131 email [info@houstonwing.org](mailto:info@houstonwing.org), April 22, 23 Open House

#### EAA CHAPTER 774 MEETING

Third (3rd) Thursday of the month 7:00 p.m. Terminal Building 2nd floor. For Meeting Information and Announcements Contact Rick Human 281-463-6769. Great Meetings! Join Today.



## Fuel Price Comparison for January 2017

JET A	High	Low	Avg
Southwest Region	7.01	2.29	3.92
West Houston Airport	3.91	2.89*	3.42
AVGAS (100LL)			
Southwest Region	8.33	3.05	4.41
West Houston Airport	4.96	4.46	4.71

\*With Volume discount

Published on AirNav.com

of bank, increasing the stall speed (due to increased load factor). Sometimes this results in the stall-spin accident. The chances of successful recovery are pretty slim at this low altitude.

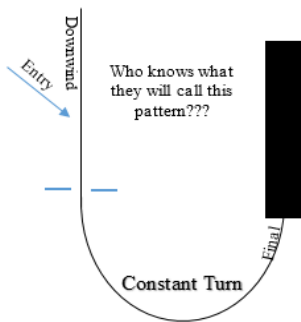


Figure 2

By making the round-ended pattern (fig. 2) during a “stable” approach, any changes will be gradual and less likely to catch the pilot by surprise and cause an over-reaction.

A case against the round-ended pattern would be the inability to see traffic on final or base leg that is farther from the runway than you are.

Pilots in the left seat will have extremely limited visibility out the right window, even in a high wing airplane. In a low wing, the wing will be an additional obstruction to the pilot’s view of possible traffic on final or base leg located farther from the runway than you are.

The University of North Dakota and the AOPA expect to have some results from their studies available in early 2017.

It will be interesting to see what, if anything, the FAA will have to say about any of this, they may or may not come up with some excuse to change the name of the traffic pattern parts.

problem but require no special handling so far.

Under control and level at a safe altitude, it’s time to scan the gauges, double-check the position of the fuel selector valve, check for carburetor ice, or perform a magneto check, as the scenario dictates. (You are “double checking” the fuel selector valve because most pilots might instinctively have given it a quick look during the climb while taking care not to violate the prime directive to fly the airplane. Same goes for checking the carb heat control, if equipped.)

Keeping your priorities straight while balancing the demands of flying a questionable aircraft through a critical phase of flight, then troubleshoot-

ing, demands clearest thinking.

When a pilot landing a Cessna 441 twin turboprop on a wet runway guessed – wrongly – that a problem with the propellers’ reverse-thrust function was the cause of the aircraft’s poor deceleration during rollout, the result of misguided corrective actions was a runway overrun.

“My initial troubleshooting of the reverse wasted valuable runway distance, and so could have been used more efficiently in slowing the aircraft,” the pilot noted in an Aviation Safety Reporting System account of the event.

<https://www.aopa.org/news-and-media/all-news/2017/february/24/training-tip-troubleshooting-or-shooting-for-trouble#>

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