

THE HOLD SHORT

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21FEB - 27FEB

WHY WE TRAIN ABOVE THE STANDARD

In flight training, it's easy to focus on the checkride. It becomes the benchmark, the finish line, the moment everything is building toward. Students count down to it. Instructors plan around it. Schedules revolve around it. But it's important to remember what a checkride actually represents.

It is not mastery. It is not excellence. It is not peak performance. It is the minimum acceptable standard.

The Airman Certification Standards define the tolerances that demonstrate safe, competent performance on a single day, in a specific aircraft, under a specific set of conditions. Meeting those tolerances means you are qualified. It does not mean you are finished growing.

At Great Basin Aviation, we intentionally train above those tolerances.

We work to hold altitude tighter than required.

We aim for stabilized approaches earlier than necessary.

We expect complete checklists, disciplined radio work, and consistent procedures, even when no one is evaluating you.

Why? Because aviation does not reward "close enough."

High-density altitude does not care that you were within 100 feet. Gusty crosswinds do not respect almost-stable approaches. Mechanical systems do not compensate for rushed checklists. Real-world flying introduces variables that go well beyond the clean, structured environment of a practical test.

Training above the standard builds margin.

That margin becomes confidence in challenging conditions. It becomes smoother decision-making. It becomes the instinct to go around early rather than salvage a landing. It becomes a habit to verify rather than assume.

Most importantly, it builds trust.

One day, you will not be flying with an instructor beside you. You may be flying family members, colleagues, a hiring board, or a cabin full of passengers. The people in those seats will not be evaluating whether you are barely within ACS tolerances. They will assume professionalism. They will assume discipline. They will assume you are precise.

Those expectations are built now, in the repetitions that feel routine, in the corrections that seem small, in the insistence on doing things correctly every time.

The checkride is a milestone. It marks eligibility, not expertise. It is awesome, we celebrate, it is a huge accomplishment, but learning has just begun.

Excellence is developed in the daily commitment to higher standards than required.

That is why we train the way we do. Because the minimum is never the mission.

REMINDERS FOR THE UPCOMING WEEK

- In the event of cancellation, call the office or email us asap. Messages and emails are monitored even after hours.
- Please check for wing covers before you start your pre-flight. Do not lower flaps with covers on. Flaps can bind and crack under the fabric, and any damage will be passed on.
- Come to the Monday night study groups! Private Pilot is the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month, 6pm-8pm. Advanced rating/certificate study groups will be the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month, same time.

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GBA STUDENTS TAKING FLIGHT

Huge congrats to Storm Gieringer on his first solo on Runway 8 at Stead! If you've spent any time around the ramp, you already know this one was coming. Storm is the definition of steady dedication, showing up, putting in the work, and earning every bit of progress along the way. Just last month he was our Pilot of the Month, and now he's adding "solo pilot" to the résumé. Momentum looks good on you, Storm.

Trained by the one and only Andy Glenn, this duo has put in the hours and it showed the second those wheels left the pavement. Calm, focused, and ready.

When he's not flying, you'll find him working at Scheels, repping the Pittsburgh Steelers, and being backed by a big, proud family who clearly support hard, we see you in the follows 🐶

Storm, this is just the beginning. Runway 8 will always be your runway. Keep chasing it. We'll be here cheering you on every takeoff.



**Storm Gieringer -
Solo**

Big congratulations to Brendan Gomez on passing his Commercial Pilot checkride.

Brendan has been flying straight through his ratings and has quietly put in a ton of work to get here. He's someone who shows up, puts his head down, and keeps moving forward. He takes the process seriously and has built real consistency as a pilot, even if he's usually arriving a few minutes late and almost always wearing sunglasses. At this point, it's just part of the routine.

Outside of flying, Brendan is all about small adventures, good music, and enjoying the outdoors. A former ski racer with over 100 ski days in a year, he somehow still dislikes the cold, which feels very on brand. His long term goal has always been to become a pilot, and earning his Commercial is a big step toward that.

A big thank you to his instructor, Eric Harned, for the guidance and support throughout this stage of training. Brendan, this is a huge milestone and one you earned through steady effort and commitment. Congrats on the Commercial and we're excited to see where you take it next.



**Brendan Gomez -
Commercial**

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GBA STUDENTS TAKING FLIGHT

This month we're celebrating Jaxton Morales: Air National Guard member, recent solo pilot, social media MVP, and now GBA's February Pilot of the Month.

Jaxton recently crushed his first solo (calm, confident, and absolutely ready), and we couldn't be more proud. When he's not flying, Jaxton can be found playing guitar, cracking jokes, or volunteering to be in just about any Great Basin social media video we throw at him. Truly elite team spirit.

His partnership with his instructor Derrick has been something special to watch. They have become an absolute dream team. The communication? Dialed. The progress? Steady. The mustaches? Historic.

Jaxton shows up ready to learn, ready to laugh, and ready to say yes to whatever challenge is next, whether that's a short-field landing or a last-minute Instagram reel. Jaxton brings consistency, humility, and a great sense of humor to every lesson. We're lucky to have him in our GBA family and can't wait to watch what he accomplishes next- in the cockpit and beyond.

We're proud to call him our Pilot of the Month and excited to watch him continue climbing.



**Jaxton Morales -
Solo**