

THE HOLD SHORT

A

23AUG - 29AUG

SQUAWKS: THE STORIES YOUR AIRPLANE TELLS

Before you grab the keys and hop in the plane, take a minute to read the squawks. A squawk is simply a log of any discrepancies, maintenance issues, or “quirks” noted by other pilots or instructors. They can be as minor as a sticky latch or as serious as a system that’s down for repair.

Why does it matter? **Because good pilots don’t just fly airplanes, they manage risk.**

Knowing what’s been reported helps you decide whether the aircraft is safe, whether you need to make adjustments in your preflight, or whether the flight should wait until maintenance clears the issue. Skipping this step can leave you surprised in the air by something that was already documented on the ground.

Understanding and interpreting the data is what makes a great pilot. Being a pilot is much more than just manipulating the controls safely. It’s about knowing the whole picture, aircraft status, weather, ATC, fuel, and yes, those little notes left by the pilot before you. That information tells a story. Read it, think about it, and make smart decisions based on it.

If you’re not sure where to find the squawks, ask your instructor. It’s a normal part of training, and they’ll walk you through the process until it becomes second nature. So next time you check out an aircraft, slow down, read the squawks, and use that information to set yourself up for a safe and professional flight. It’s one of the habits that separates a good pilot from a great one, and it shows respect for your training, your passengers, and the fleet.

REMINDERS FOR THE UPCOMING WEEK

- Need some study buddies? Don’t forget about Private Pilot Study Groups on the 1st and 3rd Monday, 6pm–8pm. Instrument Ground School help, those will be the 2nd and 4th Mondays, 6pm–8pm.
- Check the parking map!! Make sure you know where to park your plane when you return.
- Get ready to elevate your aviation skills with our upcoming in-house, lecture-based Instrument Ground School classes, led by the phenomenal CFI/CFII, Bob Bennett! Here are the details: Dates: October 14 – November 20 (6 weeks), Every Tuesday and Thursday night, 6pm–9pm. Cost: \$500 (includes books). Location: Atlantic Aviation. Requirements: Basic Foreflight subscription for electronic charts Space is limited, so don’t delay! Reach out ASAP to the GBA office (775-856-3655, goflying@greatbasinaviation.com) to secure your spot as enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis.

B**23AUG - 29AUG**

GBA STUDENTS TAKING FLIGHT



**SOPHIA SANCHEZ –
SOLO**

Ka-Chow! Happy Birthday & First Solo to Sophia Sanchez! Most people celebrate their birthday with cake and candles... but Sophia decided to trade in the party hat for a headset. Today, she soloed in N752DW at KRNO on runway 17L, making her birthday one she'll never forget. If you know Sophia, you know she's the sweetest, most positive flyer around, always smiling, always lifting up those around her. But don't let that kind heart fool you, Sophia is a go-getter through and through. Whatever she sets her mind to, she does. And today, she proved it in the sky.

Her favorite movie has always been Cars, but after this milestone, we're pretty sure Planes might take the lead. Just like Lightning McQueen, Sophia's got that "I am speed" energy. She drove her training hard all summer and crossed the finish line today with style. With her eyes on the airlines, she's showing everyone that the dream is real, and she's well on her way. And just like every racer needs a pit crew, every pilot needs a mentor. Huge congratulations to her CFI, Cory Kleidosty, for guiding her through the track, lap after lap, until she was ready to take flight on her own. Sophia, happy birthday, happy solo, and congrats on taking the green flag in your aviation journey!

Commercial Pilot Alert Congratulations, Alex Florez! From that very first takeoff at GBA, Alex has been climbing steadily toward his goals, and today, he reached a brand-new cruising altitude, Commercial Pilot! He can now officially exercise those commercial privileges he's worked so hard for. Is he taxiing straight over to United? Not just yet, but this milestone has him one giant step closer to the big leagues. Alex's flight path has been fueled by focus, determination, and an attitude that never wavered, even when Nevada's summer heat made the cockpit feel like a slow bake. Most people would have called it a no-go, but Alex pushed through, proving that he's got both the endurance and the skill to make it happen.

As a past RARA scholarship winner, Alex has already shown his commitment to aviation excellence, and now he's ready for the next leg of his journey, CFI training! With his work ethic and positivity, there's no doubt he'll inspire the next generation of pilots just as much as he's inspired us. Big congratulations as well to his CFI, Eric Harned, for helping Alex stay on course and stick the landing on this incredible milestone.

Alex, you've logged the hours, fought through the turbulence, and proved that with persistence and passion, the sky isn't the limit, it's just the beginning.



**ALEX FLOREZ –
COMMERCIAL**



**DE ANGELO GUERRA –
SOLO**

First Solo Spotlight: De Angelo Guerra! Today was a milestone moment at KCXP, Runway 27, in N670CS as De Angelo Guerra officially joined the ranks of solo aviators! What we love most about De Angelo (besides his unwavering loyalty to the Raiders) is his ability to get back in the cockpit no matter what life throws at him. Resilience doesn't even begin to describe him; this guy is proof that turbulence may rock you, but it doesn't have to ground you. He's been knocked down plenty of times, but he always finds his lift again. And let's be honest, his excitement for flying is just plain contagious. He comes into every lesson with the kind of enthusiasm that could file its own flight plan. Whether it's preflight or postflight, his smile alone could pass a checkride. Today, all that persistence paid off. De Angelo rotated, climbed out, and proved he's got what it takes to fly left-seat, PIC style. Talk about a student who's truly cleared for takeoff in life. Of course, this big moment wouldn't have been possible without the steady guidance of his CFI, Cody Klein, who's been the perfect wingman on this journey. Congratulations, De Angelo! You've just logged the most memorable PIC time of your career. Keep that heading steady, you're well on your way to cruising altitude as a private pilot.

CFII Success, Congratulations Justin Olmstead!

Huge congratulations to Justin Olmstead for nailing his CFII checkride today! While he might be known for leaving his belongings scattered in the cockpit and his flight bag laying in the hallway, when it comes to flying, he's all about staying on the proper course. Today, Justin proved to the examiner that he's more than qualified to "teach in the soup" and keep students on the glidepath to success.

This guy doesn't exactly sit idle, between golf swings, marathon running, hiking trails, and even pickleball (really, Justin?), he somehow finds time to keep his personal heading bug set firmly on aviation. His determination and focus would pass any holding-pattern endurance test. His long-term goal? American Airlines, cruising high in the left seat. But knowing Justin, he's not done adding approaches, endorsements, and ratings to his logbook just yet. Next up: maybe some seaplane flying, having some fun with his certificates, and then helping the next generation of aviators keep the shiny side up and the needles centered.

And of course, congratulations as well to his CFII, Shane Smith, for keeping Justin trimmed out, stable, and on course toward this milestone. Way to go, Justin! You've got unlimited ceilings and a clearance path to success!



**JUSTIN OLMSTEAD –
CFII**

D**23AUG - 29AUG**

GBA STUDENTS TAKING FLIGHT



DALTON DRUM – SOLO

Congratulations to Dalton Drum, who took to the skies solo today in N670CS at KRTS, Runway 26! Dalton handled this milestone flight in his signature style, cool, calm, and collected from engine start to shutdown. No drama, no stress, just steady hands, smooth flying, and a quiet confidence that makes him a natural in the cockpit.

Dalton is one of those people who you can't help but admire. He's kind, humble, and always approaches his lessons with patience and focus. Nothing rattles him. That calm demeanor carried him through every takeoff and landing today as he wrote his name into the logbook of solo aviators.

And, of course, we can't skip over the fact that Dalton is a proud lefty. While most pilots fly "by the right," Dalton proved today that being a southpaw is an advantage in the skies. He's not only left-handed, he's also left the ground, left the pattern on his own, and definitely left a mark on all of us here at GBA. It's safe to say Dalton has the "left seat" covered.

A big congratulations as well to his CFI, James Morgan, for the guidance, patience, and expertise that helped Dalton reach this milestone moment. Way to go, Dalton, your first solo is now officially logged, signed, and stamped in aviation history.

Big shoutout to Ryan Kwan, who just earned his Instrument Rating! That means he's now certified to fly through the clouds, keep his cool when visibility drops, and let the gauges do the talking. It takes discipline, focus, and plenty of patience to master IFR flying, and Ryan nailed it.

Now, Ryan has been known to say, "when I grow up, I just want to be a hermit in the mountains." Nice dream, Ryan, but let's be real, you don't spend hours perfecting holds, nailing approaches, and briefing procedures just to go live in a cabin with goats. Maybe save the Jeremiah Johnson hermit thing for retirement, because aviation clearly has your name written all over it. You belong in the sky, not hiding in the woods.

Of course, this milestone didn't come without help, major props to his CFII, Greg Anthenien, who had the joy (and maybe occasional headache) of riding shotgun while Ryan turned "I think I see the runway" into "established on the localizer." Together, they tackled the clouds, the checklists, and the challenges, and came out with a shiny new rating to prove it.

So congratulations, Ryan! You've gone from mountain man daydreams to cloud conqueror reality. The only thing in holding now is your retirement plan, aviation is where you belong.



RYAN KWAN – INSTRUMENT



**JURGEN HIRT –
CFI**

Huge congratulations to Jürgen Hirt, who officially earned his CFI certificate today! Becoming a CFI isn't for the faint of heart, it takes hours of studying, flying, and being grilled in a checkride, but Jürgen came out on top, cool and collected, and is now cleared to teach the next generation of pilots. Jürgen isn't just another new instructor, he's a guy of many talents. He's an exceptional bassoon player (because why settle for guitar or piano when you can master the coolest, most complicated instrument in the orchestra?). He's a world traveler who's probably got more stamps in his passport than most of us have landings in our logbooks. And let's not forget, this guy knows how to pick a quality German beer like it's a fine landing on Runway 17L. Priorities, right?

A big shoutout as well to his CFIs, Eric Harned and Bob Bennett, for their mentorship and guidance.

Congrats, Jürgen! From bassoon reeds to checkride leads, from traveling the world to teaching in the pattern, you've officially added "CFI" to your resume. Now it's your turn to pass that knowledge on and help shape the next wave of aviators. Prost to you, Jürgen, aviation is lucky to have you! Über den Wolken ist die Freiheit grenzenlos.