



PIETERMARITZBURG  
AERO CLUB established in 1938

JUL | AUG | SEP 2020

# TELSTAR NEWSLETTER





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## Pub Talk – The goats, the runway and the Piper Archer

Ramblings of an Aviation “Sportsman” in Africa



It was a dusty, hot day in Palapye, a small village on the Gaborone - Francistown Road, in the southern reaches of Botswana. My Piper Archer patiently awaited my return at the 900m Palapye Airfield, oblivious of the danger that lay just an hour and a half ahead.

I was supplying electrical equipment and technical support to a Dutch company, who were carrying out an electrification project. It so happened that some of the equipment supplied were the wrong parts. Exporting these parts back to South Africa would draw more customs duties and other fees, making their return economically unviable. This created somewhat of a dilemma.



Being well rested, having spent a very pleasant evening in their organized camp, complete with individual Container airconditioned bedrooms, a large swimming pool, and did I mention the well-stocked Pub? I was inclined to solve this troublesome problem in a somewhat unorthodox manner.

I generally consider most rules as only a guide for wise men, and consider myself reasonably wise.... I was fairly confident I could load these 150 items that I estimated weighed around 2kgs each, into my Piper Archer and “sneak” them back into SA, saving a whole lot of admin and money.

I duly asked my hosts to transport the incorrect goods and myself to my trusty, unsuspecting Archer, patiently parked at the Palapye Airfield.

The loading of these goods proved a bit more difficult than I had imagined, and I had to get into the cockpit with my hosts loading the last of the equipment on to the right passenger seat once I was in. Piper Archers have only one door, and it is on the front passenger side. My hosts closed the door firmly. The little Piper was now full... and I started to seriously consider the possible actual weight of my cargo, fuel and the effect of things like density altitude.

Most airfields in Botswana are in reasonable condition, and Palapye was no exception. The Airport Manager, who diligently collects the landing fees, had the Airfield doubling as a Goat station. Whether



this was to keep the grass runway in trim, or was simply a pastime, or some other reason, I never thought to enquire. It was jolly hot and the airport manager had already rounded up his goats in anticipation of my departure, so now, I thought to myself, was probably not really a good time to delay and think about all this stuff.

The 900m Palapye Airfield stretches over a small hill with the center of the runway running over the hill. It is effectively a blind rise for every take-off. At the top of the hill, the Airport Terminal consists of the Airport Manager's hut and an aircraft parking area where the goats spend their nights.

I started up and taxied off to the end of the runway which was down the hill on one side and now I was becoming quite concerned of whether my judgement of all the factors was sound. Buying time to reconsider my decision, I did my checks and run ups again... and checked again, just to be sure... so after about 10 mins of procrastination I plucked up my courage, opened the throttle, and set off up the hill hoping to get air borne.

As I reached the top of the hill, I came head to head with some very surprised goats who, due to me taking so much time to get going, appeared to have thought they may as well continue with their job of keeping the runway mowed.... I was going too fast to stop at this stage and just managed to take another notch of flap and "hop" over the goats. The goats kept their heads down... evidently unperturbed, and now I was definitely unable to stop, so continued on down the remaining dregs of runway, staggered into the air just clearing the boundary fence and descended into a small dry river bed, a convenient escape route, which was about 50 ft below the runway elevation.



My trusty Piper struggled to claw itself back into the air and with the stall Light firmly lit, (the Piper Archer has a light and not a horn), and we managed a slow climb to Gaborone.

The Piper was to save me from myself on many occasions.

## PMB NOTAM

A quick update on all things at FAPM.

Reminder – if you need to decipher some of the acronyms, look in the AIPs GEN 2, here's the link:

<http://www.caa.co.za/Aeronautical%20Information%20Publication/General.PDF>

### Aerodrome: FAPM (PIETERMARITZBURG)

B)2009141245	C)2011131400 EST	(C2785/20)
E)MET EQPT UNREL.		
B)2008310500	C)2009301700 EST	(C2607/20)
E)RFFS HR OF SER CHG TO:		
CAT 4, MON-SAT: 0500-1600		
SUN: 0600-1700		
CAT 6, DLY: 0700-0900 AND 1400-1600.		
B)2008300712	C)2009300800 EST	(C2602/20)
E)NEW CRACKS NORTH OF THR RWY 16.		
B)2008300709	C)2009300800 EST	(C2601/20)
E)CTN CRACKS ON THE TWY AND MARKED SINKHOLE ON THE MAIN APN.		
B)2008300707	C)2009300800 EST	(C2600/20)
E)RWY 16/34 SFC IS NOT FLUSH WITH THE EDGE OF THE ADJ SFC DUE TO SOIL EROSION.		
B)2008280934	C)2011241100 EST	(C2584/20)
E)AWOS U/S.		
B)2009071002	C)2010311000 EST	(C2711/20)
E)COVID19:		
TWR 122.0 MHZ OPS HRS CHANGED TO:		
MON: 0530-1030, 1230-1600,		
TUES-FRI: 0530-1030, 1130-1600,		
SAT: 0700-1100,		
SUN: 1300-1600.		

END OF DOCUMENT

If you are not sure how to read a NOTAM, here's an article that will help:

<https://www.flight-training-made-simple.com/post/deciphering-notams>

## Coffee at the Club

If you have been to the Club recently, you may have noticed the new urn. You may also have noticed some take-away cups. As a Club Member, coffee is free for you, and you are welcome to include your guests in this service. For the more discerning coffee drinker, the Club now offers Cappuccinos, but alas, these are not free. A Cappuccino will set you back a full R10. Pay Kelly or Fikile.

An honesty box will be set up in due course.



## Upcoming Events

### Safety Meeting

#### **COMPULSORY FOR STUDENT PILOTS**

When: Fri 16 October  
Where: At the Club  
Topic: Fun Safety Quizz  
Presented by: Kevin Donnellan  
Time: 6pm



Why not treat yourself at the Safety Meeting.



No frills, no nonsense, good food, enjoy a hearty burger and chips from the Pmb Club Kitchen and wash it down with an ice-cold beer, all for a measly R50.



PMB BBC COMBO  
BURGER, BEER & CHIPS  
R50

### AGM

The AGM is usually held in May. The Covid-19 lockdown put a stop to this, so it has been decided that instead of trying to squeeze in an AGM now and elect a Committee for 6 months, the present Committee will continue in place and the next AGM will be held in May 2021.



## Recent Events

FIRST SOLO!

# Congratulations!



Brandon Baker flew SOLO in ZU-SAA  
on 4 Sept 2020



Mouez Abokdiar flew SOLO in ZU-SAA  
on 14 Aug 2020

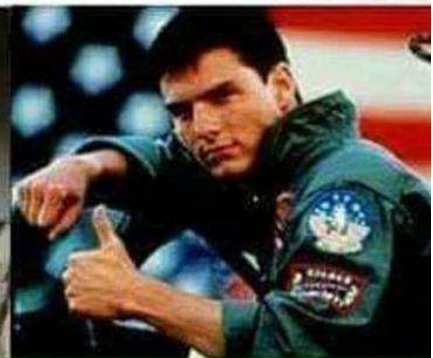
## How you feel on your first solo

@Planehub.tv

**Before**

**During**

**After**



Of course, there had to be a party to CELEBRATE...

## SOLO Party!



... which was held on 18 Sept to celebrate the following students  
FIRST SOLO FLIGHT...

Kelly du Preez, solo in ZU-SAA on 09 Sept 2019

Eurico Stork, solo in ZU-SAA on 02 Feb 2020

Carl Fisher, solo in ZU-WES on 25 Mar 2020

... and you already know the other two...

But first there was an impromptu practice party held for Brandon  
by the Friday Braai Club as he SOLO'd on a Friday just before the  
Club Meeting (btw, Friday Braai Club is open to all), and BAM!

Brandon ended up in the pool !

It will definitely not be as long before the NEXT SOLO PARTY !



IMPROMPTU SOLO PARTY



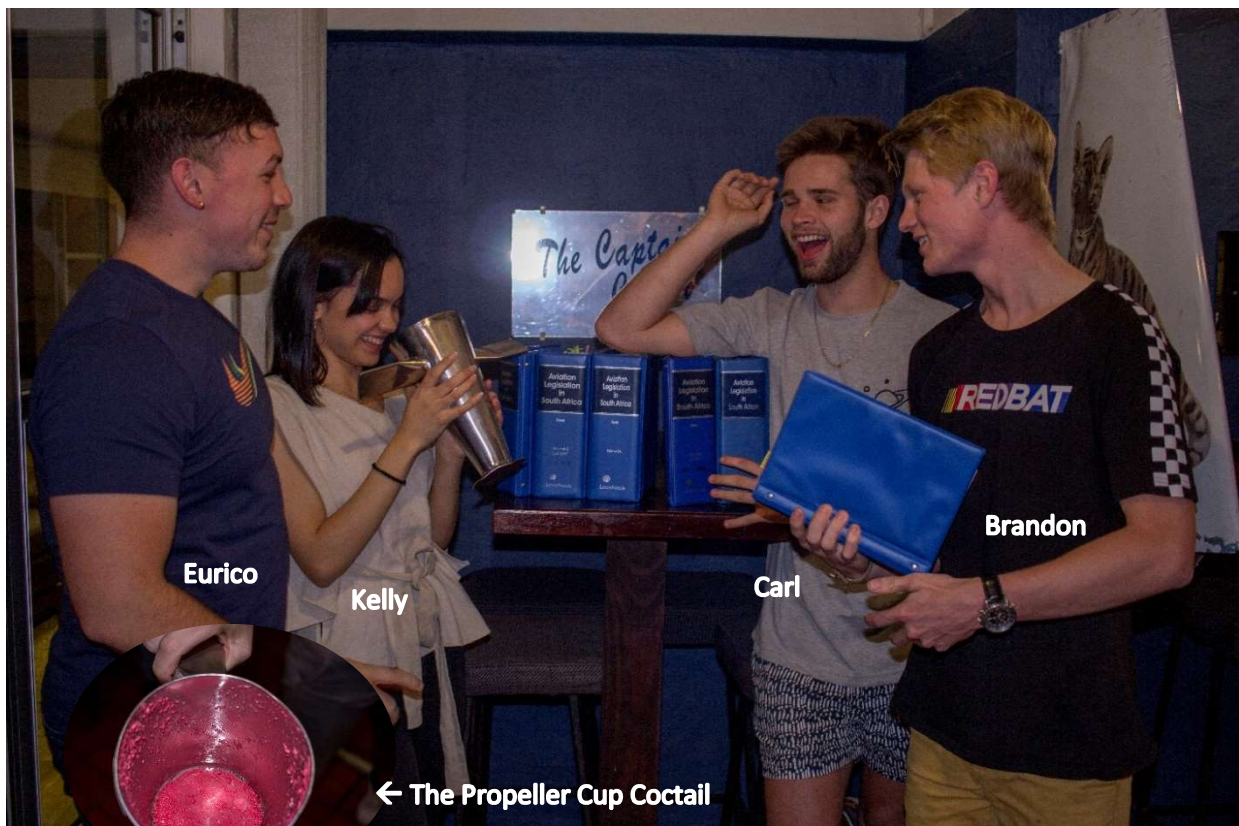


## THE OFFICIAL SOLO PARTY

You only ever do a FIRST solo ONCE.

This is why it is such an important occasion, and worthy of celebration. It is a HUGE achievement and is usually both scary and exciting.

The SOLO students take the OATH that, if followed, should pretty much guarantee survival in a light aircraft.... They are asked to swear on the CARs and CATS. If they get the OATH wrong, is down-downs of a delightfully inventive mystery cocktail from the PROPELLER CUP....







PLAQUES were erected to commemorate this event after our Chairman presented SOLO Certificates, single stripe STUDENT PILOT epaulettes and the plaque with name, aircraft and date of first solo...



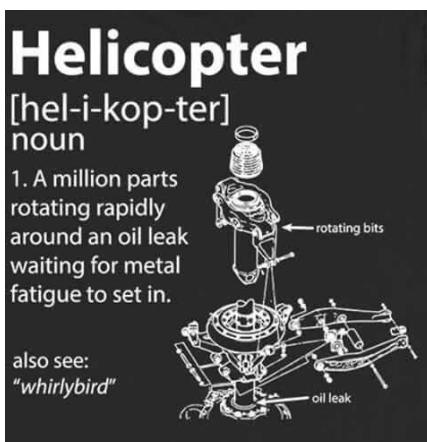


## PPL Completed Successfully

# Congratulations!

Richard Bam passed his PPL Flight Test in ZS-KNI on 18 July 2020

Pierre Bekker completed his initial fixed wing PPL in his RV10, ZU-OLG on 4 August 2020.



Pierre also holds a helicopter PPL.. We welcome him to the safer world of fixed wing flying!

The WINGS PARADE, to officially congratulate and recognise our new Private Pilots will be held at the Pmb Aero Club YEAR END FUNCTION.

## Safety Meeting

Due to Covid-19 constraints, we held our first ZOOM safety meeting on Thursday 13 August at 7pm. Load shedding started at 7pm as well, creating havoc for many struggling to join the meeting. The topic was Spirals and Spins and the Links to this are on the Club website [www.pmbaeroclub.co.za](http://www.pmbaeroclub.co.za)

Thanks to Brett Muton and Jason Everard who organised and presented the meeting.



## Breakfast Fly-In

It was touch-and-go whether or not Ntando Sangweni and his flight instructor would enjoy breakfast at Baynesfield on Sunday 6 September as the clouds brooded over the hills of Pietermaritzburg, but by 9am they set off to complete the “away airfield” exercise moving one step closer to Ntando’s first solo flight.



Although the sullen clouds spoiled the fun for aviators from Howick, Eva’s Field and Ladysmith, it was courteous enough to allow two aircraft from Pietermaritzburg and a gyrocopter from Empangeni to fly in for a delicious brekkie and coffee. Everyone else drove in.

There are certainly worse jobs around than being a Flight Instructor!

## New Club Members

A warm welcome to our new Members, Phumla Nkonyeni, Kevin Wood, Luke Payne, Juan Miller, Grant Buchanan, Lloyd Krause, Penny Jenkins, and Stephan Oosthuizen.

## New Flight Instructor



A big welcome to Kevin Donnellan, a GII Flight Instructor who has joined us.

Kevin is available to fly on weekends and other days by arrangement, and will be running a PPL Ground School on arranged weekends. Please look out on the Student Group or contact him if you need ground school assistance.

Kevin has a Military Aviation background, and presently flies helicopters for the police. He will be running our next safety meeting.

## Our Aircraft News

### **ZS-KNI – C172 ...Cessna 172...**

KNI went in to MPI on 18 Sept, and is still there in early Oct. The flaps have occasionally been getting stuck and the starboard flap linkage, which is supposed to rotate, has been a bit stiffer than usual. This has been seen to. We're now waiting for Magnetos, alternator and seatbelts for KNI. The seatbelts get changed every 10 years. The shoulder strap clip on the front passenger/instructor side will also be fixed. We w=expect to have KNI back in service in the second week in Oct.

### **ZU-WES – X333 ...Sling 2...**

WES has had new rudder cables put in along with the most recent MPI because of an airworthiness directive. The rudders were sticky before this change, and, although fairly stiff now, are no longer sticky. A big improvement. WES went into MPI on 31 Aug and was ready for flight on 25 Sept.

### **ZU-SAA – TC06 ...Sling 2...**

SAA, with the new generation gearbox, which arrived in July, just seems smoother. SAA will be in MPI as soon as the weather clears long enough for 1.5 hrs of flight.

## Furniture for the Club

Thank you to our Chairman for loaning us his white couch for the Pub.

The Club has now acquired two new pieces of furniture which really round things off nicely! A Terracotta red





couch for the Pub, which matches the colours in the pub very well, taking the place of the loaned couch, and a gorgeous leather two-seater now opposite the fireplace.

These pieces were acquired through auction and at a bargain price, so not only do they look good, but the price was right too! Thank you to our Chairman for arranging this. There have also been comments from members and visitors that the Pmb Aero Club is looking good and well kept.

## Fleet Hours & Hire Rates

Fleet hours 2020 are:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
KNI	15.0	7.6	1.2	0.0	0.0	36.7	22.1	25.9	18.0
WES	10.2	20.2	31.7	0.0	0.0	51.5	57.4	30.8	3.5
SAA	22.8	30.7	31.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.5	48.2	36.6
	48.0	58.5	64.5	0.0	0.0	88.2	85.0	104.9	58.1

AIRCRAFT HIRE RATES effective 1 Feb 2020:

All prices are VAT inclusive.

C172 → R2100

SLING 2 → R1541

INSTRUCTOR HIRE per hour → R402.50 (flying and briefing)



## Fuel Price

### Fuel Prices per litre

incl VAT	Jan 2020 Rate	Feb 2020 Rate	Mar 2020 Rate	May 2020 Rate	Jun 2020 Rate	Jul 2020 Rate	Aug 2020 Rate	Sep 2020 Rate
AVGAS	R20.70	R21.30	R17.30	R17.30	17.30	18.30	18.30	18.00
JET A1	R14.50	R14.50	R14.30	R14.30	14.30	14.30	16.30	14.60





## Instructor's Corner

### Overcoming Learned Helplessness

by Kevin Donnellan

The dogs were put into a small enclosure and electrically shocked. Yes shocked. Deliberately. For you animal lovers it was but a mild shock. A few of the dogs, as expected, immediately leaped over a small divide and escaped the discomfort. However, many did not. They simply lay there whimpering and whining. Why would intelligent dogs do this? It baffled the researchers. People also do something akin to this. Pilots also sometimes “salute and stay mute” in a cockpit or safety meeting. Why do people just give up, or worse despair and moan, in a workplace, and what can we do about this? In Crew Resource Management we refer to this as the hazardous attitude of resignation. It turns out we have learnt a lot from those dogs. We can overcome the consequences of resignation. Both as individuals and as organisations.

Martin Seligman is sometimes referred to as the father of positive psychology. Interestingly he started with studies of learned helplessness, investigating psychological anomalies such as the above case in dogs. While his work was ultimately aimed at an individual's well-being, it can also I believe, be meaningful applied to an organisations well-being. Is our organisation suffering from this? Do you know many people in the workplace who simply sit there, or even worse, simply sit there - and whine? Before we examine healthy behaviour, let us consider the pathology of workplace despair, or a “there is nothing we can do attitude”.

Seligman indicated that despair in an individual is characterised by a person who views problems as personal, pervasive and permanent. The dreaded three Ps of damaging self-talk that leads to despair. Let's run through it briefly with an example of how a despairing person may respond to failing a test, let's just make it a math test. The despairing person views the failure as personal: I'm all to blame. I'm not good at maths. They view the problem as pervasive (as applying to all areas of their life). I'm not good at any subject. Thirdly they view the problem as permanent. I've never been good at this and I'm never going to be good at maths, regardless of how I try. Despair leads to resignation and resignation to inaction. This plays out badly in the workplace and especially in the cockpit.

Organisations or departments can despair in much the same way as people too. You may hear at work in your department,

- Its personal. “We can’t do anything to improve and have no money for training”, or:
- Its pervasive. “The whole organisation is in collapse and no one has money for training anywhere”, perhaps even:
- Its permanent. “It’s been like this for ever and it’s never going to come right. We are never going to have money for training again”.

This leads to despair - and inaction. And within inaction lie the greatest risks.

So, how do we deal with this? We need to directly address both the attitude issue and the consequence of inaction. Let’s deal with our attitude and that of colleagues first. Martin Seligman encouraged his despairing patients to always and immediately dispute negative thoughts with facts disputing issues as being personal, pervasive or permanent. Let’s look at that math test example again.

You could respond with disputing self-talk by saying “The teacher was not inspiring and gave poor guidance on the areas to study for the exam. The textbook was not particularly good or relevant, and I was really tired from other work commitments which I had to attend to. In other words, it’s not completely all me. The cause is not all personal.

“I haven’t worked at my maths and was unable to prepare for this exam because of important work. I was only able to do 5 hours of preparation. If I did more I could definitely have done better. I am also very good at English and did really well at the English exam. There are lots of other things I do well”. The poor outcome does not pertain to all areas of my life.

“I have done well in tests before and I can do well in maths in future, especially if I give myself time to prepare and am well rested”. This failure is not permanent.

**Whining starts as an infection but, uncontested, it ends as a disease.**

We need to dispute negative talk both in ourselves and, for our organisation’s good, in our colleagues. And when it come the treatment we get from our colleagues; we don’t generally get what we want - we get what we tolerate. Whining starts as an infection but, uncontested, it ends as a disease.

To fight big problems, start with small actions. Yes, small actions. Small actions require overcoming minimal inertia and get the ball of action rolling. Jim Collins refers to this as *“the flywheel for success”*. It’s not what we want to do, that we should ask, but what can we do. Actually, it’s what small thing can we do first to get the ball of action rolling, that is really useful.

One small thing which adds huge value to safety, is to brief. NASA and its test pilots will tell you that the less you fly, the more you should brief. And they landed on the moon successfully, without ever having done it before. So how should one brief. Here one can learn from the best, interestingly it’s not pilots – it’s probably special force operations teams. They brief actions for all eventualities, and that maybe the real reason they are so good. A good briefing has a primary plan, which we pilots might call normal procedures and could involve departure and approach briefings. A great briefing however always has contingency plans. We pilots fulfil this by conducting missed approach procedure and emergency procedure briefings.

The essence of a contingency briefing is “if this - then that”. The more applicable “if this” situations, you can identify for each mission, and provide a good response to, the better your briefing. Think “If the engine, if the fuel, if the weather, if the warning light, if the runway changes. etc.”

Something worth doing is generally worth doing often. One could brief on so many different things, especially when we are unable to fly or train as often as we would like. Given the time available, do we brief as well and often as we could?

The dogs which just lay down and whimpered, turned out to be animals that through a mistake in an earlier experiment, had been unable to escape the shock. Now they no longer tried, even though escape was not just possible, it was easy. They gave up in despair. They didn’t believe they could do anything. They then failed to take any action. Even a small action, which could have helped them so much.

If you feel discomfort with safety at work don’t whimper. Check your attitude, dispute despair with facts and take small actions that require minimal energy, wherever you can, to get proactivity going. Look at what we all can do and then take action. Small actions. Often. Consider an “if this, then that”, contingency briefing on organisational despair: *“If I hear negative talk, I dispute it, immediately. If I can’t train enough, I brief more”*.



Why do this? Do this because proactivity always precedes and predicts productivity. Do this because positive organisational talk and meaningful action, even if small, often repeated, will improve both the organisational attitude and outcome - and avoid shocking results.

## Aircraft Accident



Thursday, 24 September, a student pilot at a flight school in Bethlehem was doing her last solo consolidation session in a C172. On her 4<sup>th</sup> landing, she decided to do a full stop. Then she taxied back to threshold 29, where she lined up, took 10 deg flap, and take-off power. The aircraft accelerated. She says on the takeoff roll her main wheels became “unstuck” and she felt

uncomfortable with the speed. She applied forward pressure on the control column. The aircraft started to porpoise. She was caught off guard, and decided to close the throttle to abort the take-off. She applied brakes, and the aircraft continued to porpoise, and the runway was quickly coming to an end. She overshot the opposite threshold, went through a fence, over a road, through another fence into the veld beyond. The nose gear broke off and the aircraft tumbled over onto its back. She was physically unhurt.

Picture yourself in this situation. What would you do? Can you see the value of a pre-take-off briefing?

## Member's Submission

Please feel free to contribute if you find something interesting, an article, a joke, a recommended book, or, even better, a personal experience.

Please also feel free to contribute flying related content on the Members Only Facebook Group: Pietermaritzburg Aero Club (PAC).

**President:**

**Anthony Grant**  
PPL



**Chairman:**

CPL  
**Steve Svendsen**



**Vice Chairman:**

PPL  
**Brian Hawkesworth**



**Treasurer:**

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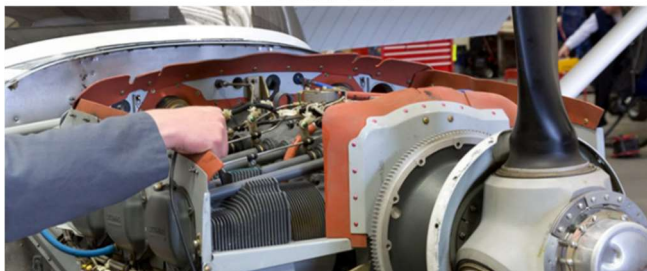
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## Gryphon Flight Academy

In February 2006 Anton Rousseau established Gryphon Flight Academy. Anton, an experienced pilot (20 years experience), and flight instructor was a senior training captain with SA Airlink, as well as being the chief pilot for ExecuJet SA, Anton is also a designated flight examiner for the SACAA.

Gryphon prides itself to advance professional training, and is committed to providing a better training experience!

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For more info or to book, call Anton Rousseau on 082 562 5060 - or email: anton@gryphonflight.co.za

## SABRE AIRCRAFT



In terms of LSA training aircraft, we represent the Czech manufactured ALTO TG and Polish JK-05 and Topaz LSA variants. Although not actively marketed given the high cost of advertising in a very depressed market, we remain confident that even with our worsening exchange rates they all still represent excellent value in terms of performance and cost against anything produced here in SA.

The JK-05 and Topaz have also both been type approved by our CAA.

The ALTO is both available 'ready to fly' or with matched hole technology in either 50, 75 or 100% complete 'kit form'

The ALTO can also be optioned to tow gliders - for which the factory will facilitate the required equipment should there be a need to offer this service.

To learn more our website is at [www.aircraftafrica.co.za](http://www.aircraftafrica.co.za) and the manufacturers [www.directfly.cz](http://www.directfly.cz) or [www.ekolot.pl](http://www.ekolot.pl).

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## Aero Club Shop



**Soft, comfortable** 100% Cotton Polo shirts, peak caps, softshell jackets, pilot shirts, epaulettes,  
Club ties, and more!



**Branded Clothes:**

Softshell Jackets -rain resistant (Men)	R 750	In stock
Softshell Jackets -rain resistant (Women)	R 750	In stock
Pmb Aero Club Golf Shirts (Men)	R 360	In stock
Pmb Aero Club Golf Shirts (Women)	R 360	In stock
Pmb Aero Club Peak Caps	R 100	In stock
Pmb Aero Club ties	R 35	In stock
Pmb Aero Club Jersey	R 260	In stock
PAC Pilot Shirts (white)	R 250	In stock

Pilot Logbook (large)	R 315	In stock
Fuel Tester	R 215	In stock
Pmb Aero Club Wings	R 300	In stock
Epaulettes	R 50	In stock
Headsets	R2,736	Out of stock
Headset bag	R 364	Out of stock
Durban Maps – unlaminated: 1:500 000 & 1:1 000 000	R 75	In stock

**Books:**

PPL – by Jim Davis	R 130	In stock
The Air Pilot's Manual – by	R 700	In stock

**Avex Study Notes for PPL:**

Principles of Flight	R 230	In stock
Navigation	R 235	In stock
Meteorology	R 270	In stock
Human Performance	R 225	In stock
Flight Performance	R 230	In stock

Aircraft General	R 280	In stock
Airlaw	R 170	In stock
Radio Handbook – Dietlind Lemp	R 230	In stock
Aero Club PPL Bag	R 340	Stock arriving soon

**Nav Tools:**

Square Protractor	R 215	Stock arriving soon
Ruler	R 200	Stock arriving soon
E6B Whizz Wheel	R 310	Stock arriving soon
CX2 Pathfinder	R1,400	In stock
Aircraft Checklist	R 35	In stock
Kneeboard	R 380	In stock
First Lesson Brief	R 35	In stock
Bumper Stickers	R 10	In stock

Until next time, happy flying!



Telani Lithgow

Editor of the Telstar

Chief Flight Instructor

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