Sony GPS Report

Mike Flowers (IN) - I have a Sony GPS installed in my Vari-Eze. I like it but have had problems with it not updating automatically for short periods of time. As long as you hold the unit in your lap the display is easy to read. If, however, you try to mount it in a panel the reflections make it difficult to read.

Davenport Shimmy Damper Update

Bob Davenport (FL) - I'd like to report on a letter which was received from Mark Buxbaum of Richland, WA. It seems, after making a series of "not so good landings" last summer, he experienced catastrophic shimmy on landing at Dubois, WY. This occurred with the Super Shimmy Damper installed !! After replacing the nose gear assembly with another complete assembly, including a Super Shimmy Damper, Mark continued on his way to OSH with no further problems.

On returning home and checking over the falled nose gear assembly Mark discovered he had bent the wheel disc on one of those "not so good landings". Run-out was found to be .020", which he believes drove the nose wheel in oscillation beyond the capacity of the shimmy damper.

If that is correct, then we should all check our nose wheels for run-out regardless of the type of shimmy damper installed.

Mark did not indicate which type of wheel was installed but my guess is his unit was of the single center disc type with the overhung wheel bearings. This wheel is very prone to bending under a side load and could possibly provide a little excitement in your life similar to Mark's experience.

For a better way to go, see Norm Howell's article Vol. 19, July "90", page 19 of the Central States Newsletter.

I occasionally receive requests for the Super Shimmy Damper from people who are near first flight. I feel I need to clarify the supply situation.

I do not have a machine shop and, therefore, subcontract all parts to a high quality shop. I keep no inventory of parts or complete assemblies. I hold all orders until a total of 25 accumulate. That quantity is required to keep the delivered sale price to $71.48. All checks are kept until two weeks prior to shipping.

Save yourself a disappointment by ordering the unit when you can afford a waiting period that won't disrupt your schedule.

Ellison Safety Consideration

Harry Bawcom (AZ) - Having replaced my carbureted O-235 with an O-320 with Ellison throttle body I have a safety observation to make. My throttle body has an Electronics International temperature probe located in the throttle body flange that mounts to the engine. The probe is open to induction air.

The safety concern is that, at idle with a cold engine, the probe reads 35 degrees F below ambient temperature.

While taxiing out for takeoff with an outside air temperature of 41 degrees F and a dewpoint of 40 degrees F and with cold engine oil, ice can accumulate in the induction system setting the stage for an abnormally low power takeoff. In my case, even at an altitude of 6,600 feet, the takeoff was successful due to the excess power of the O-320 and the 8,000 feet of runway.

The temperature drop no longer existed at full throttle and soon the increasing oil temperature warmed up the induction manifold thus melting the ice and all was well.

Closed throttle operation, during descent, doesn't result in such a drastic temperature drop. I assume this is due to the hot oil warming the induction manifold.

A throttle body injector mounted on a Continental or any engine with cold air induction could be a real safety concern unless fitted with an effective carb heat source.

I deal with the problem by monitoring induction air temperature while at reduced throttle operation. During taxi and run up I use carb heat, when necessary, to keep induction air temperature no lower than 38 - 40 degrees F.

My incident was the first high altitude takeoff with a new prop and engine. With a 1,400 pound gross weight I didn't know what to expect. Due to the low power, I bounced the nose wheel on the runway at rotation. I unwisely persisted in the takeoff, achieving a weak but positive rate of climb. Manipulating the mixture control made things worse, not better. It never occurred to me to use carb heat on climbout. Moisture on the wings was probably a contributing factor to the poor climb performance, also.

Perhaps this information could keep a Lycoming or Continental pilot from having to depend on luck and good fortune, as I did.

The greatest risk for induction icing, with the Ellison, appears to be during descent in high humidity and cool temperature conditions on a Continental or any engine using an unheated air induction manifold.

Don't fly a throttle body without carb heat! (some people do) Consider using carb heat before takeoff. A better solution would be to use a carb air temperature gage.

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