Incipient spins are firmly back on the AMPA PSP agenda. Here's a view from US master Mooney instructor Don Kaye on the subject

In the light of reported Mooney stall/spin accidents, I decided that it would be a good idea to have students do a couple during recurrency training (one of my better ideas – sure). Naturally, they should be practised to the left to make it more difficult (you know, torque, p-factor, slipstream effect). What I'm about to describe involved M20Ks, but is applicable to other models, too.

OK, so we climbed up to 6,000 feet. I had the student configure for the landing configuration: full flaps and gear down. I demonstrated it and then let the students do a couple . . . gradually increase a skid with increasing left rudder and simultaneously feed in more and more right aileron and back elevator until the stall.

The first four students didn't particularly enjoy them, but they worked out ok. Everyone was so nervous that the instant the airplane started to stall, the yoke was released and power was simultaneously added, coordinated rudder and aileron completing the recovery (your basic power, pitch, bank recovery for nose-up stall).

However, student number five decided that he wanted to really see the "break". He held back pressure, I kid you not, just one second too long. My new experience now tells me that Mooneys don't snap like Cessnas in a cross-controlled stall – the wing just casually rolls vertical along with the nose going vertical and you quickly "accelerate" into, you guessed it, a spin.

Not only did the spin rate rapidly increase, but the aircraft began to porpoise in the spin. I said, "I've got the airplane," and the student quickly lifted his hands off the yoke and said, "Be my guest." Since getting my ATP, I've always stressed "smoothness" in flying an airplane. I "smoothly" pushed the nose down, pulled the power, and applied full right rudder. The rotation continued . . . and continued . . . and continued.

Just as my heart rate was really starting to increase and the sweat was beginning to break out on the right side of my face (of course you know that flight instructors never sweat on their left side) and plan B needed to be thought up, the rotation started to slow and stop and I gradually pulled up. The altitude was 5,000 so we were test pilots for only one turn (like we did a two-turn spin). There were a couple of seconds there when . . .

Soon afterwards I spoke to Joel, one of the Mooney test pilots back in the '90s, about the slow rate of recovery, and he gave me an earful! It seems he'd had plenty of spin recovery practice during certification.

Here's some of the "other" things he said to me which I really took note of:

1. Forget smoothness when it comes to spin recovery! Abrupt full elevator forward right now!

2. Flaps up to prevent stress on the flaps and more importantly to get the air flowing over the rudder more effectively.

3. If recovery isn't effected using the above technique, then use full rudder into the spin followed by full rudder opposite the spin.

4. If that doesn't work, then increase then decrease power a couple of times.

5. If that doesn't work – well, he's never had it go that far.

He said Mooneys are slow to come out of spins, so as the POHs say, "Don't get into them."

I've decided not to give cross-controlled stall practice routinely any more. If you're not really current, I recommend not practising these by yourself, and even if you are don't do them without first taking a good Mooney-specific flight instructor along with you for some additional "comfort". MOST IMPORTANTLY – watch out for the situations where this vicious type of stall can occur.