

LEARN & PRACTICE PRECISION FLYING IN YOUR MOONEY

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I am going to jump into this flaming inferno and tell you that I think a Mooney is the perfect aircraft for advanced instruction, for both commercial and instrument ratings.

I agree that the Mooney is a fairly demanding aircraft, but it is also a fair and honest broker. You just have to understand what it does and why it does what it does, and deal with it accordingly. (We have 80 year old pilots out there flying Mooney's -- that have never dinged one in 20 years - I met one at the MAPA Convention this past week).

I regularly teach advanced flying techniques, and I just can't find a better general aviation aircraft available to learn commercial or instrument ratings in. In a departure from the FAA, I think you should get your commercial before your instrument rating, as in gaining the commercial ticket you learn to "fly the airplane." If you can really fly the airplane, flying instruments is fairly simple.

While gaining your commercial rating you learn where the "edge" is on the aircraft, and you learn where YOUR "edge" is. (Those may not be in the same airspace). The Mooney may be the winner here, as it is totally predictable, and we humans are not. Some pilots cannot "feel" the edge and they cannot routinely perform an event in a consistent manner. (Actually, most of us can't, due to the various stresses in life.)

In the commercial maneuvers you must "feel" edge. You must learn to believe in the aircraft and believe in yourself. That is one thing that makes the Mooney so great for advanced instruction, it is totally predictable, and totally controllable (as long as you don't spin it) (YOU control IT, and don't let IT go there).

When flying instruments you need standard procedures, power settings, airspeeds, pitch attitudes, etc. Use them and the Mooney gives you what you want every time. Of course, the Mooney requires situational awareness, technique and skill to fly. It is not a Cessna 150 or a Piper Cherokee. It is a fast, complex, high performance airplane! (Isn't that why we buy them?) However, in return, the Mooney gives you whatever you have asked it to do in a totally predictable manner.

I have taught many commercial and instrument ratings in the M20C, M20E/F/G, 2011 252/ 231 and the TLS/Bravo, Ovation, etc., and I can't think of a finer aircraft for advanced instruction than a Mooney. And for the commercial rating, nothing does better chandelles and lazy eights, as the

Mooney, control harmony is unequaled in general aviation aircraft. Today I gave a refresher instrument training in a TLS and then admired a student's performance in soloing his M20E for the first time in his life. Both pilots did great and so did their airplanes.

The Mooney isn't too fast for beginning instrument students; you just have to slow it down to the speed at which the Pilot can think as he performs various events. The pilot has to know that he can do that. Standard power settings give the pilot options/speeds that are constant and predictable so that he can depend on them to not be greater than his thought process.

Landing the Mooney is a matter of understanding the dynamics of what is occurring, and controlling them in a smooth and harmonious process - porpoising and bouncing is totally unnecessary. And, if they occur, you lower the nose to 6-7 degrees of pitch up attitude, add power, and fly out of it (i.e. go around). The fellow that did his first solo in his M20E today didn't even "squeak" his tires on two of his landings; he just rolled them on. What fun to watch!!

The Mooney is a great airplane for those who want to learn and practice precision flying - you just need to fly "by the numbers". Flying by the numbers gives you predictable outcomes, yields desired results, satisfies the pilots expectations, and makes the passengers feel like the whole flight was a piece of cake.

Fly Safely,

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