

Elton Hove – Donaldson Scholarship 2019

The summer of 2019 has been a summer like no other. I never imagined I would have the opportunity to kick start my journey in achieving my dreams this early - as much as I have always enjoyed being a passenger observing the world of aviation through a window, I knew nothing would compare to sitting in the left seat, as I have been able to do these past few months.



From a young age, my interest in aircraft and toy airplanes always seemed to overshadow my interests in ships or trucks. But it was only after meeting a pair of pilots visiting my high school that I was convinced the aviation industry is where I belonged. And so, a few years later, when I discovered Air Pilots after a meeting with my college careers department, I was presented with a more definite idea of how my career

in aviation could begin. At the time, the application period was over which meant waiting another year before applying. However, soon enough it was 2019 and the applications forms were made available once again. I knew it was finally chance to apply myself, but writing this application was a new and intimidating experience in which I



was put outside my comfort zone. Like the many others before me, a process of drafting numerous applications began, but time was ticking, and I knew I would only have a chance after submitting. I submitted my final revision to begin a waiting game where I had to put my faith in a document, I had spent weeks perfecting. My heart was racing, reading the email confirming I was selected for an interview. I had a taste of success and I started to prepare for the next step of this journey.

Taking the train down to London, suited up like many of my fellow passengers on their commute to work was another unprecedented experience for me, but it was definitely a confidence booster as I became a part of the surroundings of the busy day. Even though my breakfast was spent nervously waiting for what lay ahead, I knew that I was there with a purpose. It was calming to see and talk to the other candidates as the morning went on and I soon felt at ease. On the journey back, I considered the positives and negatives of the

interview: what I could have done better but more importantly what I could take away for future reference. Without a doubt, it was rewarding to have the opportunity to be interviewed by members of the industry and spend the afternoon exposing myself to the community. I immediately dropped everything and stopped when I saw an email from Air Pilots a few days after the interview, attempting to lower my heart rate and prepare myself for the worst I opened the email. Never had I felt so calm yet excited after reading the word "Congratulations".

I wasted no time in finalising my choice of ATO having known them for well over a year. June 1st rolled by and I jumped on the first opportunity to start my PPL. As I didn't have college that day, I made my way to the airport to experience the first of many hours I would complete over the summer. It was very refreshing to get back in the sky after 6 months and I felt revived in my determination of my dream. I was soon made aware of the poor man's



autopilot, the trim wheel, and more during my first week and I couldn't help but grin after making my first assisted landing and take-off. The ball was rolling, and it wasn't long before I found that some lessons had more to them than others, but I remained motivated to work through any challenges I came across. Throughout the experience, it was reassuring to know things would become more natural as time progressed and I up built more hours as explained by my instructors.

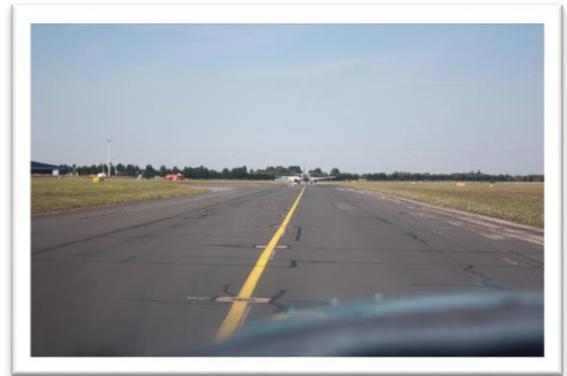
To this day, I still remember my first major milestone. Just like the cross country, it was a right of passage I couldn't wait to experience. As nervous as I was, I couldn't help but savour the moment as I looked right and saw the seat beside me empty. All my attention was focused on operating the aircraft safely back down to the ground and It was a proud moment as I heard



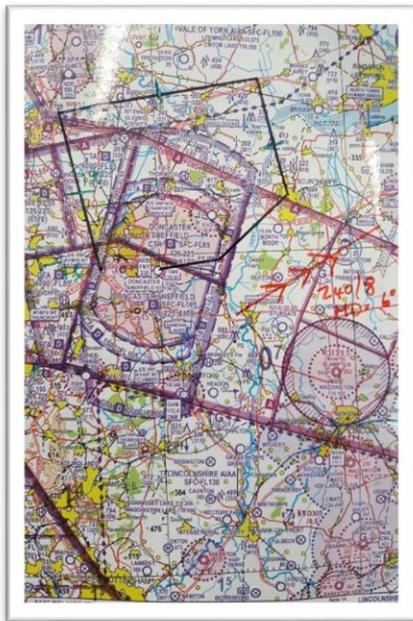
the tires screech upon contact with the runway. I had completed my first solo. Days passed by and I took every opportunity I could to fly, often flying twice a day. I was truly living and breathing aviation and my training was coming along quite well. I knew it was important to pour as much effort into ground school as I did into flying, in order to

keep on top of the exams. Diving into the material for each exam was always interesting and

it was nice to get a look at the subjects I would be studying for my ATPL ground exams. Navigation was the most challenging subject I studied given the new concepts I was introduced to and the use of new equipment for planning. It was a relief to pass the exam the first-time around. What followed was what I consider by far as the most enjoyable part of my PPL. I wasn't just flying anymore, I was navigating. My adventures took me north, west, east and south and I



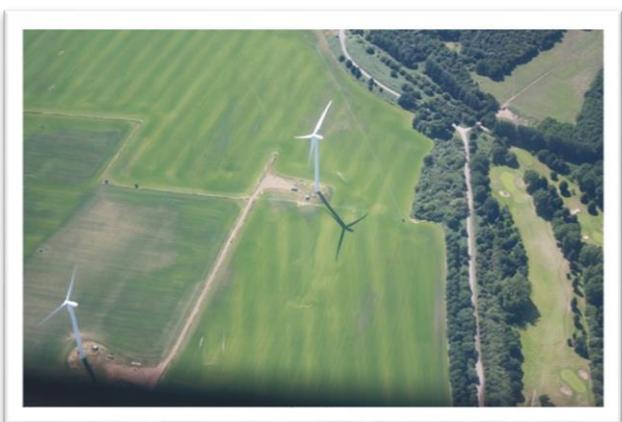
really got to experience the freedom flying gives you.



After completing my QXC flight, venturing off to Peterborough Conington and up to Humberside, I was now close to finishing. I began to prepare for my skills test by practising manoeuvres, and fine tuning what I could with the aid of my instructors. I watched videos and spoke to people who had already done their skills test to gain as much insight as possible. Though my confidence grew, I still turned up with a stomach full of butterflies on the day. With nice weather and a moderate breeze from the south, I sat in the aircraft ready to prove I was competent and deserving of the license. It was like a rehearsal as I went through my checklists whilst feeling a sense of sureness as I communicated my actions to my examiner. I let out a sigh of relief as I turned onto final for Runway 20, I was now

back in familiar territory and it was time to make my final landing that day. Once sitting back on the apron, I was comforted upon hearing I had passed my skills test, as I could now send my paperwork to the CAA and close this chapter of my story.

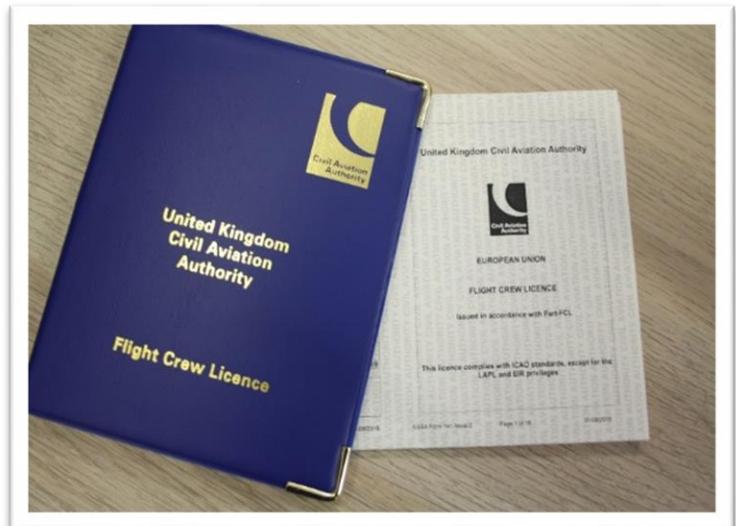
I wouldn't have been able to write this report detailing the quickest yet best summer of my life if it wasn't for the generosity of the Honourable Company of Air Pilots and its benefactors. It has been a privilege to be able to look back and re-live



the memories of gaining my PPL and I'm sincerely grateful to Mr Donaldson for making this a reality. I'd also like to extend a thank you to the interview panel; to Ollie and Steve for taking the time to sit with me - a lot was learnt that day and I'm better equipped for my future because of it. I cannot forget Angie for the countless hours she continues to spend to make this all possible. Your continued support from the very beginning, up until the end has been

invaluable. I can't thank you enough for guiding me, helping me make the most out of this opportunity. To everyone at Air Pilots that has been involved along the way, thank you for your contributions. I'm now one step closer to achieving my dreams.

A huge thank you to my instructors at Yorkshire Aero Club for showing me the ropes. Your lessons were filled with humour and knowledge and your methods and approach to flying have formed the foundation of my success. You enriched my life through your experiences and expertise, always inspiring me to spread my wings. Although I have come to the end of my training, you have forged a relationship that will last forever. Lastly, I thank Jayne for going above and beyond her duties. Your desire to see me succeed is a testament to the passion you share with students like me. Together we made this possible and I'm grateful for always having you in my corner.



This is just the beginning!

