

# Bob Dawson Scholarship Report

Anne Soltow

I can't believe that I am a powered pilot now! This has been, hands down, the best summer I have ever had. And what an adventure it has been! From holding for Spitfires at Goodwood, admiring the stunning views of the Isle of Wight and the south of England from above, and flying overhead major airports. I enjoyed every single flight so much, it would be impossible for me to choose a favourite. Completing a PPL within 2 months in a pandemic and while dealing with the temperamental British weather was also challenging. But that also made it more fun. Thankfully, I had my gliding experience and my recently obtained Aeronautical Engineering degree to assist me with my training and theory exams. Flying and studying every day while ticking off one milestone after another along the way, there was always something new to look forward to. Major milestones were my first solo which I achieved within a week of my first flight, and my solo qualifying cross



First solo done!

country. The latter took me from Fairoaks to Lydd, along the beautiful English coastline to Goodwood, and finally back home. Along the way, I learned to love the little Cessna 152s. They have their charm, and it's always a bit of a surprise what would work and what would happen next. No flight was like another. At times, the training progressed faster than I wanted it to, and after 2200 pages of reading, 9 theory exams, my qualifying cross country, and multiple mock tests, amounting to 45h of flying, I was ready for my skills test on 23<sup>rd</sup> August. Once I got my nerves under control, I had so much fun, it didn't even feel much like a skills test anymore and we even flew a Gatwick zone transit via the overhead! I am a bit sad that this incredible summer has now come to an end, but I am also looking forward to the journey ahead.

With a PPL in my pocket, I have a big list of plans on how to use it, including introducing others to the world of aviation, exploring countries, going on maintenance flights, helping at gliding clubs, and progressing my flying while building hours along the way. What's more, getting a CPL now seems within reach which has not been possible before.

I will be forever grateful to the Fairoaks Flight Centre team for their amazing support, pushing me just the right amount throughout the scholarship, to the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for awarding me this amazing scholarship, and the BALPA Benevolent Fund for sponsoring this scholarship.



Selfie time during my qualifying cross country



Skills test pass! Some of the many Fairoaks instructors who supported me greatly along the way (from left to right): Harry, Oli, (me,) Brandon