



SAFETYGRAM

February 2016

Last month the unthinkable happened: an Aero Club CFI and instrument trainee were doing some airwork when the engine stopped suddenly...and wouldn't restart. No matter how many times I've practiced forced landings, I've always dreaded the possibility of doing it for real. It's one of those unpleasant possibilities I would much rather pretend just isn't possible.

Pretending it can't happen isn't realistic, so instead I choose to practice forced landings. Turns out practice make perfect (instead of disaster). The pilots I mentioned earlier can attest to that. When the engine quit, they set up for best glide speed, accomplished the immediate actions, and picked a place to put it down. The result was they both walked away without a scratch and the airplane was undamaged. Turns out the cause of the engine failure was completely beyond their control and there was absolutely no way they could have gotten it restarted...so a power off landing off airport was the only survivable option. And they did it perfectly!

The key to surviving just about any emergency is thinking about it long before it ever surprises you in flight. That way you can remain calm and fly the airplane. I'm attaching an FAA document on "Best Glide Speed and Distance" for your review, study and practice. I hope it will aid practice and mental preparation for what you would do when you find yourself in the same situation. I haven't really addressed specific actions or techniques aside from the most obvious. Think about the specific circumstances you face most often when you fly an Aero Club aircraft and work out the details on your own...make the solution your own so you can execute it if you ever need to. Addressing every possibility of an emergency occurrence may not be practical, but thinking about your next flight or your most common flights certainly is.

Blue skies and fair winds (and smooth running engines)!

FAA Best Glide Speed and Distance

http://www.faa.gov/news/safety_briefing/2016/media/se_topic_16-01.pdf

The Impossible Turn:

<http://www.aopa.org/News-and-Video/All-News/2011/April/1/Technique-Unconventional-Wisdom>

<http://www.aopa.org/News-and-Video/All-News/2011/May/19/Impossible-turn-Practice-makes-possible>

<http://blog.aopa.org/blog/?cat=123&paged=3>

FLY SAFELY!

