

Prior to my exam date, I prepared a one-way cross country plan to Bakersfield Meadows Airport (requested by the examiner). The flight plan started at KCMA with the first checkpoint at Saticoy Bridge and the second the Fillmore VOR. I would be flying N918VT, a Cessna 172P equipped with a Garmin 430 GPS.

The Oral exam was surprisingly not too terribly painful. There were a few instances where I needed to pull out the book to reference some information I should have known. Before leaving for the flight line, the examiner gave a brief overview of what we would be doing. We would start as if beginning my flight to Bakersfield. We would then divert somewhere and probably demonstrate landings. He would then likely ask me to demonstrate maneuvers and emergency procedures.

Following the conclusion of the Oral portion, I proceeded out to the flight line to begin my pre-flight inspection. Unexpectedly, the examiner seemed to pay little attention to me as I performed my inspection and asked almost no questions about the aircraft or what I was checking for. Once I informed the examiner I was finished, he climbed in the plane as I gave it one more walk around. I climbed into the airplane and began the engine start procedure.

I asked the examiner which takeoff procedure he would like me to demonstrate and he responded with a Soft Field Takeoff. After receiving clearance to take off and make a right crosswind departure, I taxied onto the runway and performed a short field takeoff. My flight plan called for me to climb to 7,500ft, but the examiner instructed me to level off at a much lower altitude (3500ft I think). He then asked me to confirm that my second checkpoint was the Fillmore VOR. When I did, he instructed me to go direct to the Fillmore VOR. I dialed in the VOR and turned direct to it. I told the examiner that I intended to pick up flight following as soon as we were clear of Camarillo's airspace. He then told me not to wait, and reminded me that I can request a frequency change while still in Camarillo's airspace. I acknowledged, made the request, and then switched over to Flight following with Pt. Mugu Approach. I made what I thought to be the standard call "Pt. Mugu Approach, Cessna 918VT VFR Request" Pt. Mugu returned with a squawk and asked for my request. I told them I was out of Camarillo, heading east at X altitude and requested VFR traffic advisories for local maneuvers.

The examiner then told me he remembered another VOR as a checkpoint on my flight plan and he asked me which one it was. I informed him that the Gorman VOR was a checkpoint on my route. He then proceeded to ask me how far away it was, which heading to get there, and how long it would take to get there. I began by telling him that a direct flight to that VOR would not be advisable because of the mountain range between us and the VOR. He said that he didn't care, just tell him what

he asked. As I began to pull out my chart to reference range and heading, the Examiner looked over at me and told me to Put the Chart Away. I sat there for a moment with a clueless look on my face before he jabbed his finger at the Garmin 430. "Oh!" I responded, fiddling with the knobs, turning to the nearest VOR page that displayed all of the information he had requested.

The examiner then instructed me to follow an outbound radial that led us directly overtop of the Camarillo airport. Next, the examiner instructed me to divert to Oxnard Airport. I called Mugu Approach to cancel flight following and then contacted the Oxnard Tower (I did not get ATIS, nor did I tell tower I did not have it). The Oxnard tower gave instructions to remain above CMA's airspace and enter left downwind for runway 07. Once I entered the OXR traffic pattern, I asked the tower for a wind check. The tower responded with "Actually, the wind just shifted, cross over the field and enter left downwind for Runway 25". Once I did this, I again asked for a wind check, since the nice lady in the tower did not answer the first time I asked. The examiner instructed me to make a Soft Field Landing. My Downwind, Base and final legs were a little tight, and it took some correction to line back up with the runway on Final approach. Despite my anxiety, I managed to make a pretty descent Soft Field Landing! I let the airplane coast down the runway as I retracted Flaps, removed carb heat, and reset the trim. As I was doing this, the Examiner exclaimed "Just Go!"

We remained in the pattern at Oxnard and the examiner requested I make a no Flap Landing. I performed the next series of events very poorly. I became distracted and let the airplane speed up well over V_y , and the examiner fussed at me to "Pick the nose up and Climb!" The rest of my pattern was too tight and when I turned on final I was too high. Even with a slip, there was no way I was going to make a descent landing, I decided to go around.

The second time around, I made my pattern a little bit wider. My approach was much better this time. I was still a little high so I began to slip. The examiner noted that it wasn't much of a slip as he stomped on the rudder to increase the slip "See!" he said. I acknowledged as I managed to land No Flaps, just past the number, but slightly to the right of Centerline. On the go, I requested a right crosswind departure.

Nervous after my not so good performance at Oxnard, I contacted Mugu again, forgetting the initial request, and going straight into "Pt. Mugu Approach, Cessna 918VT climbing north out of Oxnard at <stated altitude> request traffic advisories for local maneuvers." Mugu came back with confirmation and a squawk code.

I cannot quite recall the exact events that followed. The examiner requested I level off at some altitude. I think we did steep turns first. I asked the examiner if we would be doing one steep turn, then

leveling off, or if we would go right into the next. He said we would just do the turn to the left. When I was setup, I began my steep turn to the left. It was a so-so steep turn (within limits, but not too smooth). After we had turned approximately 90 degrees, the examiner exclaimed "Now Right!" So I did as instructed, quickly rolling into the right steep turn. This maneuver wasn't anything too difficult, but the timing and process was not what I was used to.

I think we followed the steep turns with slow flight. The examiner instructed me to fly the plane at 50kts. While doing this, he asked me to make turns, climb, and descend. I think the next maneuver was power off stalls, since we were already in the landing configuration. It was a normal power off stall, holding heading (It's a little foggy, but I'm pretty sure I remember taking the plane to a full stall). Following the Power off stall, I think I did the power on stall. Before the power on stall, the examiner had me enter a climbing right turn. Again, my memory is a little foggy, but I'm pretty sure I took the plane to a full stall, and recovered satisfactorily. I told the examiner that was only the second time I had done a power on stall while not in level flight. He responded with surprise, informing me that a full power climbing turn after takeoff is the most likely scenario where you will have a power on stall.

By this point, we were flying over north Ventura. The examiner said there was an emergency and I had lost my engine, and he pulled it to idle. I immediately pulled up to gain altitude and pitch for 65kts. I performed my mental checklist to pseudo restart the engine. I assessed that we would not make any of the near by airports, and I picked a farm field near by. The main highway was busy, and I pointed out that it is supposed to be them (people on the ground) before us. I told him that I would tell Pt. Mugu since I was already talking to them. He asked me what else we could do. I responded with Transponder to 7700, and 121.5 on the radio if I was not talking to Mugu. I began flying to and circling my field. Just before the examiner said something, I commented "Now, since we have some time..." and then I pulled out the checklist, and clumsily thumbed through the book to find the Engine Out Procedure.

After we had descended to about 1500ft, he said "Good. Now recover, and continue descending to 1000ft." He then asked if I saw the Flag pole at the end of the Ventura Pier. I said yes, and he told me to setup for a turn around a point, the flag pole. I used ATIS reported winds from the start of our flight from CMA as a reference for entering the maneuver. I think I made two turns around the flag pole.

After completing the maneuver, I began climbing. At this point, the examiner took control of the airplane while I put on my Foggles. Once I was situated, the examiner informed me we were going

to do recovery from unusual attitudes. I don't recall whether we did 3 or 4 scenarios. Some were nose up, some nose down, some turning. There was nothing too drastic, and I managed to recover without any problems or trouble.

After the unusual attitudes, the examiner issued instructions for me to turn to different headings, climb, and descend. He then instructed me to fly direct to KCMA. I can't remember if I used the GPS or the VOR. I think I already had the VOR frequency programmed into the number 2 radio, but I also selected CMA on the nearest airport page of the Garmin 430. I think next he said we were heading back to CMA. I remember making the appropriate radio calls to Mugu and to Camarillo. When I called Camarillo Tower, I used the range and bearing given by the GPS to report our position. I remember not catching all of the radio calls because I was focused on not violating Oxnard's airspace that we were just barely flying over. When we were within a couple of miles of Camarillo, the examiner said I could take the Foggles off, so I gladly did. Luckily, I was right on course, pointing right at the airport.

Upon entering the pattern at Camarillo, the examiner asked me to make a short field landing. I entered right downwind, too close, and had to swing wide to get lined up with the runway after turning on Final Approach. My final approach speed was a little fast and the examiner was quick to point that out. My target for the short field was the top of the numbers. Because I was carrying too much speed, I overshoot (but it must have still been within tolerance). After touchdown, I retracted the flaps, and then the examiner asked what else I may be forgetting. I responded with "Simulate Max Braking". Despite my overshoot, I easily made the Bravo Taxiway.

After cleaning up the airplane, I began taxiing back to CIA. While taxiing, the examiner began going over the issues he noted during the Practical Exam.

1. Parking Break: The check list says to set the parking break during engine start, and I did not do that.
2. My Cross Country plan looked good
3. Mugu Approach: Give Details! Mugu may be familiar with CIA and its airplanes, but other places are not. Always get in the habit of giving details when contacting ATC (position, destination, altitude, etc).
4. Use my Rudder and get on Centerline. Most of my landings were slightly off centerline. Don't be afraid to use my rudder to put the airplane where I want it.

5. I need to square my pattern. Make square turns, and roll wings level on each leg of the pattern.
6. Checklist & Emergency Procedures. When time permits, don't forget to double check the printed checklist after you run through all of your mental checks.

I pulled into my parking spot and shut down the engine and Master. The examiner got out of the airplane and turned back in and asked me If I had any questions. After his run down of the problems I had, I didn't really know what to think. He asked me what I thought about it all. I responded with something like "Just practice, practice, practice" The examiner came back with something like "Yes, and you'll have plenty of time for that..... Congratulations"

When all was said and done, the entire elapsed time for the exam was about 4.5 hours. We had started shortly after 8:00am with the paperwork, and finished the oral at about 10:00. I walked back through the doors of CIA at 12:30pm. There were many things I thought I could have done much better, both in the oral and practical exam, but in the end, I could not complain. Instrument Rating, Here I come!