

PIREPS August 2015



Welcome to PIREPS!

PIREPS brings you the latest news and information from Premier Aircraft Sales and Premier Aircraft Service. Premier carries a large, constantly-refreshing inventory of new Diamond and Mooney aircraft and pre-owned Beechcraft, Cessna, Cirrus and Piper aircraft. We broker aircraft for sale, and are also an Authorized Service Center for Cessna, Diamond, Mooney, Centurion and Lycoming. For more information, visit us at www.flypas.com.

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[Piper Meridian: Is It Time To Upgrade?](#)

By Fred Ahles, President, Premier Aircraft Sales, Inc.

Since 2000, the biggest selling segment in general aviation has been high performance single-engine airplanes like the Mooney, Cirrus, Columbia/Cessna 350/400 series and Cessna 182s and 206s. All of these planes offer ease of flying and a relatively low cost of ownership. But sometimes owners come to me asking the question, "Where do I go from here?" To answer that question, you have to look at your mission both in terms of performance and comfort amenities. What do you *need*? What do you *want*? Pressurization? A better rate of climb? Live weather radar? Longer range? A bigger cabin? More seats? A table and cooler for snacks along the way?

You can get all of these things with a Piper Meridian.

At Premier, we have specialized in Meridians since our founding. I was a Piper dealer for 25 years. After starting Premier, I spent the majority of my time in the first five years growing the company to be the leading dealer for Mooney and Diamond in the world. In recent years, I have spent most of my time doing what I love the most—selling airplanes—and the main product I handle is the Meridian.

This summer, I had the privilege of using a beautiful 2007 model Meridian we just took in trade on a number of trips from Florida to the frigid north. I had a blast flying it! Even though my wife and I (along with our Jack Russell Terrier, Lily) normally fly the fastest piston airplane ever built—the Mooney Acclaim—a Meridian is quite a step up. The first thing you notice is the ease of starting – whether it's a hot day or cold day, it doesn't matter. All you need is a willing battery charged to at least 24 volts. Once started, the comfortable seating, extra room and a great air conditioner and heater make both Florida summer days and Michigan winter days a joy.

When compared to your typical piston plane, you can't say enough about 1500 fpm climb rate and pressurization. A typical Meridian flight will go from sea level to FL 260 in 18 minutes. Once you level off, you enjoy about 265 knots cruise speed! From there it is sit back and relax. The ability to get above all the weather is critical for both safety and comfort. Who wants to fly hours with oxygen cannulas up his nose, or an oxygen bubble on her head? Not me, says Lily.

This summer I had the typical afternoon thunderstorm conditions to deal with on several flights. The accompanying photos show a trip over Ohio at 26,000 ft. and what I saw on the radar, Nexrad and out the window. A Meridian offers live radar (in addition to Nexrad) which gives you peace of mind you don't get with a single engine piston that has only Nexrad.



The GTN 650 makes flight plan filing and changes, frequency changes, and all other routine flight operations easy.



View from 26,000 ft. of one of many thunderstorms on this day.



A thunderstorm at the 10:00 position was in the previous picture. Note: I deviated the aircraft to stay between the cells. Look how close I am to the cell in the Nexrad picture as opposed to the radar picture below.



Live radar view of a thunderstorm shown in Nexrad above.

For the last several years, we have sought out and recommended Avidyne equipped Meridians to our clients. There are a number of reasons for that:

1. At least \$250,000 lower initial cost than G1000 Meridians
2. Not much higher initial cost than early Meridians after adding gross weight increase, new autopilot and G500 upgrades
3. Later model airframes with all the latest Piper SBs and features
4. Garmin's introduction of GTN 650s. If you haven't flown with dual 650s you are in for a treat. They are in my opinion, Garmin's best product yet. When combined with Avidyne's huge colorful screen and ease of use, this combination is second to none.
5. GPS redundancy in the event of ADAHRS failure
6. Availability of low cost extended warranty on the Avidynes

We take trades, arrange financing, insurance and training. And today, for a limited time, we are offering loans at only **3.99%** interest.

To learn more about Meridians and get a free market appraisal on your current airplane, please call Fred Ahles at 954-771-0411.

The Proficient Pilot: It's Good To Be A "Picky Pilot."

Corbin Hallaran, Director of Safety, Premier Aircraft Sales, Inc.

There's an old saying amongst pilots that when you pass your FAA private check ride, you now have a license to go learn how to fly.

It's really true. Private pilots are proficient to pass the check ride, but what about continuance of proficiency? Just look at the requirements: A pilot who passes the private check ride is allowed a deviation from altitude and airspeed respectfully 100 feet and +10/-0 knots in minimum controllable airspeed maneuvers.



Now we all know that that's not the mark of a proficient pilot. Now, let's assume that the pilot transitions to a commercial rating. During that ride you are "allowed" to only deviate by 50 feet and +5/-0 knots.

Why so picky to point out deviations? Reason – the pilot needs to demonstrate the proficiency to hold the aircraft within the tighter minimum standards.

Of course, this level of proficiency needs to extend throughout all phases of a flight. It's in the pilot's preflight actions, through the takeoff and holding centerline, climbing out and searching for traffic, en-route operations to keep a cruise check list satisfied, descent and plan better for more efficiency or landing with good airspeed discipline.

Are you proficient at all phases of flight? One simple way to get there is to set manageable goals for each part of your next flight. For example:

The touchdown zone

- a. Main wheel touchdown in the first 1,000 feet.
- b. Nose wheel aligned with center line (no drift)
- c. Airspeed Vref (consider gust factor)
- d. Braking action, aerodynamic

It's probably something best worked on through some simple touch-and-goes. Think about it: Do you typically do the routine tasks the same way each time (using a check list to verify) or do you find yourself rushing to complete the tasks?

One example of task performance in seemingly very simple: Early on in their transitions, pilots flying complex airplanes learn the G-U-M-P acronym: GAS, Undercarriage, Mixture and Prop. But, this task can be interrupted at the busiest phase of flight transition from approach to landing phase. That interruption can lead to serious consequences.

I see many situations where pilots are consumed with ATC instructions and looking for traffic while performing the GUMP check and they forget to verify the result of the task initial action. For example they put the landing gear lever in the "down" location, and then in the next second systematically move into the mixture and props. All this BEFORE they have verified that they have three in the green.

If you find yourself rushing through the steps, then you need to practice incorporating better task management skills into your pre-landing routine. This critical phase of flight is no time to get rushed and confused.

Picky pilots are not satisfied with any results outside the goals they set. Additional training and practice will aid the pilot to close the gap on the dislike. Stay proficient. Stay safe.

Maintenance: Returning Your Aircraft to Service

Tom Turner, Master CFI

Reprinted with permission. For more resources like this, get Pilot's Tip of the Week at <http://PilotWorkshop.com>.

Editor's note: budgeting time after a maintenance visit for a "return to service flight" is extremely important; this first person account of what can happen when you don't is definitely worth your time to read.

I was scheduled to fly an engineer from my employer's staff from our home base in eastern Tennessee to a meeting in Nashville. The Beechcraft Baron our company operated had had an issue with its attitude indicator, so I had flown it VFR to the avionics and instrument shop at an FBO about an hour's flight—four hours' drive—from our home base several days before.

The shop called me early on the morning of the engineer's planned trip and told me the airplane was ready to go. I jumped in a car and headed down the highway to retrieve the airplane, fly it home, and be there just in time to pick up the engineer and get him to Nashville.

It's a common error to schedule picking an airplane up from the shop after inspection, maintenance or repair without budgeting time to make a local VFR test hop, land and review any discrepancies with the shop supervisor.

You can see where this is going. I arrived at the avionics shop, picked up the logs and paid the bill, filed a flight plan and fired up the Baron to take off for home base. After engine start, however, what had been a slightly vibrating attitude indicator before the repair was now a wildly wobbling AI. The short version of a very long story was that the shop supervisor signed off the repair on the word of one of his technicians, who later we learned had skipped starting up the airplane and checking his work because he had completed the job at the end of his shift the day before, and wanted to get home.

Another time, another shop and another Baron (still the same company): My boss had a second Baron that was his personal airplane. He had taken the aircraft to a paint and interior shop for refurbishment. When he got word the airplane was ready, I flew him to the paint shop in the company Baron to pick it up.

The newly painted airplane was beautiful. My boss told me I could go on back, but something told me I should stick around until he took off. Our first clue was that the left aileron was misaligned (it's a fairly common mistake to thread the aileron hinge wrong on piston Beechcraft). On closer inspection we found the technicians had failed to install screws on the bottom of the right aileron.

After long discussion and the shop's hurried correction of its oversights, my boss fired up and took off, I watched him go before I climbed into the company airplane to depart. As soon as I started the engines and turned on my avionics, I heard my boss report he was returning to land with a gear problem.

On investigation we found that after painting the shop had reversed the outer main landing gear doors, the ones that attach to the gear struts. The mismatched doors looked right, but the door design is just different enough that the doors did not clear the gear wells during the retraction cycle. As the gear retracted the doors bound up and put enough resistance on the system that the electric gear motor's circuit breaker popped. It was very obvious where we needed to look after my boss landed his airplane—because the outer gear doors were severely bent.

Not every shop experience is going to be like this. But mechanics and installers are subject to human factors that can lead to errors, just like us pilots. This means that the first flight after a scheduled inspection (like an annual or 100-hour), maintenance of any sort, modification, or repair, **is really a test flight**.

You have to budget time to properly inspect and test-fly the airplane when you accept it from the shop. Absolutely, the test flight needs to be conducted in day time, visual conditions, preferably with light winds. And unless you're taking the mechanic along on the test flight (which is a good idea) or you need someone to record data while you fly, make this post-maintenance test flight alone.

Unfortunately, the record reveals the common error of many mechanically related airplane crashes that happen when a pilot departs into poor conditions or night skies on the first flight after the plane comes out of the shop. This is especially foolhardy if work had been done to the avionics or instruments.

Returning an aircraft to service as it comes out of the shop is a team effort—your mechanic, the installers, and you. Part of that effort is to conduct a post-maintenance test flight under optimal conditions.

About the Author

Master CFI **Tom Turner** holds an ATP certificate with instructor, CFII and MEI ratings with a Master's Degree in Aviation Safety. He was the 2010 National FAA Safety Team Representative of the Year and the 2008 FAA Central Region CFI of the Year and has logged over 2,500 hours instructing. In 2015 Tom was inducted into the NAFI Instructor's Hall of Fame. Tom was a Captain in the United States Air Force and has been Lead Instructor for the Bonanza pilot training program at the Beechcraft factory. He now directs the education and safety arm of a 9000-member pilots' organization.

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Last Updated on Friday, 28 August 2015 12:26

- **[Diesel-upgrade program launched for Cessna 172](#)**

From [AOPA February 24, 2014](#) | By [Dan Namowitz](#) Efficiency, safety, and value all will benefit from a newly announced Cessna 172 upgrade program to add a diesel engine, a three-blade constant-speed propeller, and advanced avionics to the aircraft, said [Premier Aircraft Sales](#) of Fort Lauderdale,....

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Can A Personal Plane Offer Big Business Benefits?



(Photo - Piper Aircraft Inc.)

By Dale Smith, Editor Premier Aircraft Sales.

You bet, particularly when you're talking about Piper Aircraft's top-of-the-line Meridian.

I think that far too many people who could benefit from private aircraft travel underestimate the value of a modern propeller airplane. They suffer from "if it's not a jet, it's not for business" type of thinking. How wrong they are. Take the Piper Meridian. It's a single-engine turboprop so despite the propeller, it is truly jet-powered and that really means business. Admittedly, I'm a Piper fan from way back.

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I the lead copywriter on the Piper account when the Meridian's older brother, the piston-powered Piper Malibu was introduced. It was love at first flight. With its pressurized cabin and ability to fly high over most weather, the Malibu defined a new class of cabin single-engine airplane.

While the Malibu was a good, airplane it was elevated to "great" when Piper mated the Malibu fuselage and wing to a Pratt & Whitney PT6A turboprop engine. The result, called the Meridian, is truly amazing, especially if you're lucky enough to pilot one.

Jet-Powered Piper Meridian Scores Big On Performance

I've had the pleasure of flying a lot of airplanes, and the Meridian is one of my all-time favorites. With 500 shaft horsepower, it is solid and responsive at its 260 kt (300 mph) high cruise speed as well as slow 75 kt (86 mph) landing speeds, and that responsiveness is a very nice complement to the Meridian's short 2500 foot runway capability. It can easily takeoff and land at small community airports many of which have runways that are too short for even the smallest jets.

That kind of performance makes the Meridian a natural step up for any owner/pilot who is currently flying a high-performance, single-engine piston aircraft. That alone will make most insurance carriers happy, and while type-specific training is always a good idea, there's no FAA requirement to get a type rating to fly the Meridian.

One of the coolest things about flying a Meridian is taxing. With that big propeller and the ability to use reverse-thrust, you not only have a lot of control without wearing out the brakes, you get the added bonus of announcing your arrival with what can best be described as a growl as the prop cycles into the reverse range.

Cockpit Capabilities And Cabin Comfort.

The current version is equipped with the Garmin G1000 avionics suite – the same package that's in the popular entry-level Cessna Mustang – so suffice it to say that the Meridian is at no loss for capabilities and situational awareness enhancements. It even includes an onboard four-color weather radar. That's one piece of equipment that I think is essential for hard-core business travel. Satellite weather is good, but it's no match for live radar – especially if you fly in the southeastern U.S.

Now that I've compared the Meridian's cockpit to a entry-level jet, let's talk overall performance. The Meridian delivers an honest 260 kts (300 mph) and a range of just over 1,000 nm (1150 miles – New York to Memphis). So on a typical business trip, your Meridian will cost you a few minutes in travel time, but save you hundreds of dollars in fuel compared to a small jet. And with a \$2.176 million sticker price, the Meridian is about a \$1 million less than one of the top selling entry level jets so that will cover a great deal more fuel cost, as well.

While the Meridian may be everything a pilot could want, the folks fortunate to be traveling the cabin will be equally content. The cabin, with club seating for four, is spacious and the seats are Lexus-like in their comfort. In addition, with the Pratt & Whitney engine far up front, the Meridian's cabin is quieter than many small jets that I've traveled in.

So the next time you're dreaming about flying privately, don't limit yourself to jets. Try the impressive Piper Meridian. Chances are this single-engine turboprop may dramatically change your view of business and pleasure travel in a very big way.

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