

This is the scenario Mark sent me ahead of time to plan for the test

You have volunteered to fly a friend to Portland, ME (PWM) to visit his sick aunt. Using a Current VFR Paper Sectional, plan a cross country, one way, from BED to PWM. Be prepared to discuss your plan in detail.

- Calculate a W&B
- Calculate required takeoff and landing distance for departure and destination airports.
- Friend: 185 lbs.

Check ride started at 7:30 and we began downstairs at the computer with IACRA forms. Mark is a great guy and easy to talk to but as he will admit, not great with computers so the IACRA process took a bit of time to work through. I was asking him questions to build rapport before the test officially started which he happily answered lengthening the time to fill out the forms. Once done, we went up to the conference room where we continue to chat before he told me the potential outcomes of the test (delay due to unforeseen issue, fail, or pass and temp certificate). Verbal portion was pretty straight forward and relaxing. He asked some basic questions all that I can remember below.

Does a pilot cert ever expire? What are the requirements to stay current. Differences between current and proficiency? One question that I didn't 100% know the answer to was if you are current for the 3 full stop take offs and landings and didn't have time to fly during the day if the night currency applied to satisfy the day requirements. I said I would like to think so but I actually was not sure and would have to check. It did not concern him and he later told me after the ground portion that they do. How to you know is an airplane is airworthy? We also reviewed the maint. logs of the plane we were to fly. What do you need to legally fly? What are NOATMS, and what does it stand for? How long are they updated and how long valid? What is a TAF and how long is it valid and how often updated? What sources do you use for weather to plan the flight? If an FAA agent does a ramp check, what do you need to show them to prove you can fly? How long is airworthy and registration good for?

We then switched to some scenarios.

Q: If you are flying and the weather is clear and you lose some RPMs what would you do? A: assume carb ice and put on heat for 1 minute. He then asked what would you expect to happen if it was carb ice? A: engine run rough as ice works through. He then asked what if that didn't solve it, what else could it be? A: magneto. He asked how I could check and I said switch to left or right. And he said yes, that would for sure, but he wouldn't take the risk to check because once you know its left or right, you can't really do anything anyways, better to address on the ground. He then asked if this was a land as soon as possible or as soon as practical which I answered practical and he agreed. What if you were flying and weather was clear but you encountered some moderate turbulence, what would you worry about? I went down a changing weather path, but he said weather was fine and guided me back to its not the weather what else? He was looking for potential structural concerns with the plane. Had a scenario around if you flew away for the weekend and you noticed the annual was up, could you fly home. A: yes, but you need a ferry permit to legally fly. Also asked how I would know if I rented an airplane while on vacation was safe and airworthy. A: check logs, preflight, etc.

We then went over paper nav chart and route I planned. He asked some basic questions about the sectional; what is this C airspace? what do you need to enter? how would you find an approach freq?

what is this VOR compass rose? what different color airports meant, private airport, etc. He asked what is this diamond which I didn't know was a stadium but checked the legend he was happy to know I could work through how to identify something I didn't know. Why are the diamonds important to know about? A: frequent TFRs. Why did you plan this route and what did you consider for altitude selection? A ceiling levels, compass heading rules, airspace concerns, highest prominent feature, etc.

Pretty straight forward and atmosphere was very relaxed and conversational. Just make sure you know your basic stuff and you will be fine. I read the ground prep book and felt plenty prepared.

He was definitely not trying to trip you up and drill down on a subject if he felt you were weak like I have read about with others.

He then let me know I passed and then walked me through the flight scenario

Before the flight he gave the following detailed scenario

The friend who you are flying to see his sick aunt was recovering from a sinus infection. It was so bad he had to go the doctor to get antibiotics. He was on antibiotics for 3 days and feeling much better and the doctor cleared him for the low altitude flight. Before takeoff to Portland, you check an updated brief and there is a wild fire somewhere close to your route, but not too much of a concern for you to make the flight to Portland. Your GPS also wasn't working so you start flying your course to Portland with no GPS or phone. As you fly, the wild fire has spread and you are now in IFR conditions (foggles time) so you navigate out of the smoke and your friend's sinus are now acting up so you do an emergency decent to lose altitude and then select an alternate airport. GPS and phone is now working and can use Nearest function. Wants to know you can estimate how long to take you to get there, how far away it is and estimate fuel burn. You drop your friend off and he takes an uber home you now fly back to KBED and do the air maneuvers on the way. Steep turns stalls, etc.

After he told me the scenario we went to go execute. I preflight plane for which he let me do without any input.

He had me take off from KBED as a soft field landing and proceed to the heading identified in NAV plan. No GPS or phone was allowed on this portion. Once we hit my first way point KLWM we then would start our heading to Portland and ensure time and distance from first way point was within standard. He asked me to find a lake he pointed to on a sectional, and to identify something on the ground on the sectional. We did unusual attitudes and simulated emergency landing, steep turns and turns along a road. He was a bit chatty in the plane as we hit it off on the ground but I don't think this was a test to see if I would ask him to be quiet, I think he is just a nice guy, but don't let it distract you if you are getting behind the plane. As Lawrence was closed, we came back to KBED for performance T/O and landings and slips. The wind was swirling a lot me in the pattern and they ended up doing a runway changed on us from 29 to 11 which make me nervous and threw me a bit. I asked the tower for a heading to fly and got back in pattern on runway 11. We then did a short field landing and slip to land. He will tell you himself he is not going to take out a tape measure, so just make sure you are close enough and, on the centerline, and you will be fine. Also do not be afraid to go around if you are not stabilized or ballooning and not think you will make the landing close to standards. A go around will not count against you, but if you blow the landing, you will not get a second chance.