

From: "[REDACTED]"
To: "jeevacation@gmail.com" <jeevacation@gmail.com>
Subject: Fw: 172
Date: Fri, 01 Oct 2010 01:59:26 +0000

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: "[REDACTED]" <[REDACTED]>
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thu, September 30, 2010 7:53:44 PM
Subject: Re: 172

OH MY GOD!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
,I land in PBI at 11pm, I'll call you for a full story tomorrow!
Welcome, you are a pilot now!
(Its 99% boredom, and 1% shear terror!)

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Date: Thu, 30 Sep 2010 16:26:04 -0700 (PDT)
To: <[REDACTED]>
Subject: 172

Hi, Captain!

How was Europe? J said you were coming back home today. Did you hear about my crazy flight last night? One of the cross country guys I flew with at [REDACTED] had to deliver a C172 from [REDACTED] to Miami to someone who just bought it and he offered me to fly it from the right seat and log a lot of free flight time in a day. So I went to [REDACTED] yesterday morning to pick it up. The plane was old and even though it just came out of maintenance that day, the alternator malfunctioned and failed on our last leg in the middle of the night somewhere over the Everglades.

After a few uneventful legs during the day, we took off with full tanks at Tallahassee yesterday evening. We planned to top off again in Gainesville so we make it to KOPF with a nice reserve. But GNV weather deteriorated quickly after we took off and went to 400ceilings. The other guy was flying this leg and wanted to shoot an approach and try landing. We went to minimums, didn't break out of the clouds, went missed and decided to leave and continue on our way south. He wanted to just keep going all the way to Opa Locka. There was a good chance we would have had enough fuel but the reserve would have been questionable. I was getting uncomfortable, little tired, weather was ifr, I was in the right seat of strange old single engine plane in the middle of the night thinking about our trip starting to sound like a beginning of one of my crash book stories, so I told him I wanted to stop somewhere anyway and refuel first. He let me get the controls and take it into Lakeland to top off again and I am glad we did. Thinking back, we probably should have stopped there for the night..

Maybe an hour after leaving KLAL, in level flight, without warning, the whole plane just went dark. I was flying, we were on ifr flight plan when we lost all coms, lights, transponder, everything electrical.. the circuit breaker was tripped so we reset it once, had enough time to tell center what was going on and they told us to keep going to KOPF, descend at our discretion if we lost everything again, do an ILS to 30 and then call them to cancel ifr. We lost it again. He brought his Garmin 696 so we used that to navigate. What a lifesaver, I think

now I really need to get one. I was trying to decide whether to keep the controls for the approach or give to the other guy. I thought he knew how to work his 696 better and could set me up but he wasn't doing so well with the stress so I kept flying from my seat and had him shine a light on my instruments and work the gps. Weather was not too bad but still ifr with 700ceilings in Opa Locka. We were able to get the power back a few times before landing but always just for a moment. I had to shoot an ils with a garmin flying from the right seat, in the dark. The unexpected part was not being able to turn on the runway lights with the radios dead. Tower was closed, the flaps are also electric, we descended through clouds and couldn't find the rwy till it was too late to make a safe landing. I went around, got very very pale and trying not to get back into the clouds, came in again. Once I landed and cleared the runway, I could barely taxi it back my legs were shaking so hard. Then I put the newspaper down, stopped doing my nails ;-) and went straight to MIA to take a flight home. I am still in disbelief.

