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ing the bright pilot I am, I immediately push my aileron stick full left to level the wings. This causes the right aileron to go down, adding drag to a wing that is not having a good day. Since the wing was already in a stall before I added additional drag with aileron, I will go out on a limb here and tell you that my "fix" with the aileron stick will add to the cause of re-kitting the ship.

Well, I have two sets of recommendations here, one on how to avoid the situation in the first place, and the second on how to recover from the yank and bank take-off

Avoiding the stall in the first place:

I took the opportunity to ask a few past club presidents at the snow fly (including myself) if they ever made a club rule prohibiting a pilot to use most, if not all, of the runway for takeoff. According to my scientific research, each one of us never had any objections to a pilot actually taxiing to the end of the runway, and turn into the wind with the full (or near full) length of the runway ahead of them. Imagine actually having time to decide if all looks good and, heaven forbid, you reach safe flying speed by midfield. Perhaps then you could then just let the ship lift off the ground without any elevator input (those of you who are beginners in the club, trust me on this, your plane will actually lift off the ground without elevator input if you let it get a good take-off roll).

If any of you have had the unfortunate experience of having me as your instructor, you may recall that I insist on you taxiing to the far end of the runway and then pointing the bird into the wind. Additionally, I have my students pick a spot on the field, before beginning take-off roll that is final decision point. When the plane reaches this point and is not airborne, the take-off is aborted. Since I have them taxi to the opposite end of the runway, the decision point is often directly in front of us, rather than way down the runway

near the weeds.

So, instead of walking your ship to the flight station and pointing her into the wind for a take off, I would ask you to strongly consider taxing to the near end of the runway, point her into the wind and then begin your roll. Let the ship gather speed and keep her on the ground a little longer than you think is necessary and use as little elevator as possible to get airborne.

Once you get airborne, resist the temptation to heave in lots of up elevator (resist that one on the ground as well!), but allow the nose to remain level (or just a wee bit pointed up). You want to gain airspeed here, which will help you climb safely. Keep the wings level using minimal aileron input (or even better yet, use your rudder!) and she will climb out cleanly.

Getting out of the stall or near stall on take-off.

Well now, you ignored my advise, only used the last 150 feet of the runway, and are now standing with your lips puckered as your ship waffles about 50 feet in the air in a near stall. What shall you do?

1) Release all of that up elevator and use some down elevator to get the nose down to a level or near level position. For the students and beginners in the club, down elevator is a new concept for most of you!

You must do this immediately or the next steps are equivalent to rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.

2) Level the wings with RUDDER. This will be the hardest for you to believe and actually do. Resist the siren song of the aileron stick; she will turn your ship into little pieces (or big ones depending on how you crash). Use opposite RUDDER to level the wings (I.E. if she banks right, use left rudder, and vise-versa)

3) If your ship is heading in the wrong direction or on a collision course, make your corrections out of there without causing another stall - I.E. don't yank on the elevator in hopes of climbing the ship 500 feet in .2 seconds

4) You will almost certainly be at full throttle (either from take-off or from initial panic), but if not, adjust your throttle to get the climb and airspeed you want.

5) Begin your normal flying and ignore all the comments from the peanut gallery which will come about the time you resume normal breathing

If you will strive to not waste the runway behind you, I promise you will have less stress and damage on your take-offs. If not, that's what keeps the kit and ARF vendors in business!

Good luck and see you in the pits

~Joe Finkelstine



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