



# CIRRUS PILOT

The Official Magazine of the Cirrus Owners & Pilots Association



## INSIDE:

Formation Flight Training  
TBO – What it really means  
Touring Glacier National Park



## CIRRUS PILOT

is the official member publication of the



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# Our World Mission – the Final Legs

by AMIR and TAMRA HYSTER

*Editor's Note: This is the final edition of Amir and Tamra Hyster's journey, as they travel the world on their way back home to Australia after purchasing their third Cirrus in the U.S. In the last issue, they flew their new-to-them SR22 through the Middle East, where they experienced some of the finest of luxuries, to some of the most challenging and decrepit areas. The following is their final legs of the trip, and finally arriving home.*

## **29 September, 2014 – Chittagong, Bangladesh to Chiang Mai, Thailand**

After some very frustrating calls and flight planning, we discovered that our path to Chiang Mai was not direct, but a dog leg over Myanmar (Burma), all the way south to the Thailand coast, then back north to Chiang Mai. This changed the ball game significantly, as we had only fueled one 50-gallon drum in Chittagong at a cost of \$750 USD because we anticipated a flight of only two hours to Chiang Mai. We needed to fuel up with another drum. Even though we could only take on 20 gallons of the

50-gallon drum, we still had to pay the \$750 USD for the whole drum. We were constantly checking the weather to Chiang Mai and it looked okay, however, we were very concerned about reports of thunderstorms past there and hoping they didn't move.

The additional fueling delayed our departure by two hours, but we still left Chittagong ahead of the scheduled flight, and headed directly to Burma airspace. The flights were all pre-cleared by our agent in the UK. We were trying to contact Myanmar ATC who wasn't responding, so we asked a Qatari Airline flight to relay messages for us. When we finally connected with ATC, they were lacking the usual protocols and spoke very sporadic English, so the position calls were very basic. We were flying at FL110 with a headwind of five knots, and the weather was good.

We requested to climb higher as we could see many cloud formations ahead. ATC gave a negative response, but we started to climb anyway and demanded that they approve, which they did. For the rest of the flight, we were ducking and weaving away from unfriendly CBs all the way to the approach, where we dove through a clearing

*The best handlers encountered on the whole trip were at Chiang Mai.*



hole of clouds into Chiang Mai. When we were about to establish on the ILS for RWY 36 at 3,500 feet, there was a HUGE thunderstorm with extremely heavy rain directly over the localizer and in our direct path. We immediately turned left and aborted the approach, circling to wait for the storm to pass through. We went all the way around to the back of the storm, re-established ourselves on the ILS approach, and were cleared to land. All this was happening while ATC was demanding that we continue through the storm. Amir said to them, "Look out the window, can't you see the thunderstorm on the approach?" The GFDS was spot on, and a lifesaver assisting us on the position of the thunderstorms, which were by far the worst we had seen since Alaska.

We were flagged into our parking bay with the jumbos and met by the handler – a very nice and efficient lady named Jee. The fuel truck (Yes, truck! We felt as if we were back to civilization!) filled the airplane within minutes. We were very happy to see the lovely, friendly faces of the Thai people. We were hot, hungry and thirsty. Jee did all of our paperwork, and in less than 20 minutes, we were out of the airport.

Once you pass southern Europe and Greece, assistance is required to deal with bureaucracy; it was a staggering amount of paperwork signing, declaring crew status and no passengers. This was where the uniforms were needed and aircrew passes displayed or extra costs would apply. The madness of stamping form after form and going through department after department was draining.

Jee had us whisked away to the Shangri-La, where we were welcomed with a cold, lemon-scented towel and a cool drink; we were excited to be back in the world we remembered. I think we were a little traumatized by the experiences in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, being subjected to ridiculous bureaucracy, greed, occasional hatred, and the shocking site of people living in filth.

### **1 October, 2014 – Chiang Mai, Thailand to Pattaya/Rayong, Thailand**

The weather continued to be a great concern to us for the next few flights – all the way to the top of Australia. Keeping the monsoons in mind, we were getting accustomed to the weather patterns and cloud buildups. So far, it looked okay all the way to Pattaya/Rayong – there were plenty of clouds both above and below us with many groups of scattered and towering CBs, but that was normal for this area and Australia. The designated flight paths and waypoints were well thought out and planned, allowing aircraft to pass through countries in the valleys and between mountainous terrain safely and within the most direct routing, thus avoiding bad weather.

Twenty minutes before landing, we were overflying Bangkok's BKK VOR at 9,000 feet; it was awesome,



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*Some of the aircraft wreckage that was beside the runway at Jakarta.*

Bangkok CBD was huge and the visibility good. We continued on and landed at Pattaya, where we were met by our friend, Fernando, from the African Fly Safari trip. We planned to stay for a couple of days before our next flight to Singapore.

### **3 October, 2014 – Pattaya/Rayong, Thailand to Singapore, Singapore**

The TAF (Terminal Area Forecast) weather report for Singapore was good, however, there was some interesting weather en route. Our path took us straight south over water, with Thailand to our right and Cambodia to our left, over Malaysia and on to Singapore. We could see huge lightning activity (120 nm in diameter) on our GFDS directly ahead in our path. We started to maneuver around the huge CB cells, and eventually diverted 60 nm to the right where we could hear other aircraft – Singapore Airlines, Bangkok Airways and Thai Airways – do the same. Although we were diverting significantly closer to the coastline, it still wasn't visible at 75 nm.

The scope of intensive cells to our left started to become very evident as we passed through; they were massive and spanned over 120 nm. We couldn't see where the top of the cloud ended, but if the calls from the jets at high altitude were any indication, they were above 40,000 feet. We were in monsoon alley!

### **7 October, 2014 – Singapore, Singapore to Denpasar Bali, Indonesia via Jakarta, Indonesia**

We spent the long weekend at the InterContinental Singapore in the presidential suite, which took up half of the 16th floor. We had Amir's birthday breakfast in the

boardroom, entertained some old and new friends, and relaxed. We were very spoiled!

A few minutes after takeoff, we passed the Equator and the navigation system showed 0.00 N. Our three-hour flight to Jakarta for a fuel stop took us over Malaysia to avoid conflict with Changi airspace and later before landing via the VOR approach to RWY 06 Jakarta. It was a little strange as we were first maneuvered left out to sea, then back onto land where we overflew the runway and the Jakarta CBD (which gives a great view of the densely populated area at 2,500 feet), then turning right to the VOR on final. As we landed, there were several old and broken airplanes on one side of the airport, looking like a runway graveyard – a reminder that flying can go very wrong. The rest of the airport was abuzz with general aviation and it was enjoyable to watch the activity.

As soon as we parked, we were surrounded by the ground staff, all ready to fuel, file the flight plan to Bali, and pass customs and immigration. Although we didn't need to leave the aircraft, with the heat over 37°C and hotter on the tarmac, we were dehydrating by the minute. Dozens of people, including ground staff, pilots and flying school students came over to look at the plane, talking, posing for pictures and just waiting with us while the fuel was pumped by the drum. We were sitting amongst a lot of old Cessna planes from the local flying school, some commercial jets and many private Lear jets. It was just like anywhere in the world that we had landed – the Cirrus always draws lots of attention and everyone loves it.

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One of the volcanoes peeking out of the clouds on our leg to Bali from Jakarta.

In an hour, we were back in the very hot and extremely bumpy air until we passed 7,000 feet on our way to 13,000 feet. The density altitude was 15,100 feet, so we were both on oxygen. We settled in for the next three-hour leg of the flight. Normally we wouldn't fly so many legs in a day,

but we preferred the pleasure of Bali over spending the night in Jakarta. Our track took us to waypoint ANY, but we requested to veer right to follow the line of volcanoes below. It was cloudy, but the volcanoes were poking their tops out of the clouds; we circled one and had a magnificent view of the crater and the lake inside. That one was not active; however, in the distance there were some that clearly had plumes of white smoke or steam clouds. South of Surabaya, we saw another magnificent view of the mountainous volcanoes panning down to flat farmlands and rice/fish/prawn farms to the coastline.

The IFR sky highway to Bali was very interesting – you fly along the coast of Java with a great view of the volcanoes and countryside, while avoiding any treacherous terrain. There was one volcano in the path of the entry to the Island of Bali on the VOR approach to RWY 09, which ATC vectored us around. It was a very clever entry and very busy – we had six jumbo jets hammering behind us; we were cruising fast at 200 knots, which was the approach speed for jets, allowing us to remain number one for landing. The ATC calls were coming fast and we could hear the jets descending quickly, following our previous altitudes. If we didn't expedite quickly, we would

be bumped out of our position. The final approach was all over water and very smooth, however as soon we broached the piano key of the threshold of the runway, the hot air started to take its effect and Amir needed to fight with the aircraft to get a smooth sink rate. We taxied through to Execujet and were given a bay to park that would fit 50 Cirrus airplanes.

When the drums of fuel arrived, we checked the fueler's pump and found rust and insect nests inside, so for the next hour we cleaned the pump and fueling hoses. We had our driver take us to the newly built Sofitel, where we were welcomed and upgraded to a lovely suite – it pays to show your aircrew identification and ask for an airline crew discount!

**11 October, 2014 – Kuta, Bali, Indonesia to Kupang, Timor, Indonesia to Darwin, Australia**

After four wonderful nights in Bali, we departed Kuta at 8:20 a.m. We were given immediate takeoff clearance ahead of many jets lined up on the apron; it pays to be small and nimble! We had a great view of volcanoes on our left, the tops were just clearing the clouds; they were very obscured until you really looked – it is easy to see how these hidden mountains can be treacherous terrain for an aircraft. ▶



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*The Cirrus parked next to the largest cargo aircraft in the world, the Antonov AN-124, at Darwin.*

Our route saw us skirting along the Islands of Indonesia to the western point of Timor, where we would fuel, fumigate and head off direct to Darwin. We spent just over an hour on the ground refueling after cutting the fueller's hose down from eight meters to two, as it was filthy and full of insects and mud. We were not going to risk getting contaminated fuel with a dirty hose.

Our climb to altitude in the hot, unstable air required clearing the mountains; the turbulence and sink effect was strong, and it was a fight to keep the aircraft climbing. We were over water very quickly with a 13-knot headwind and sporadic radio communications. Eventually we received a message from Brunei that Brisbane relayed for us to keep contact with them until we are able to get Brisbane Center. We packed up all our food goods on board and sprayed the insecticide we had been given in Bali. At the top of descent, we sprayed again, as a part of Australian quarantine rules.

One-and-a-half hours out from Darwin, we heard from Brisbane Center; the familiar accent was like music to our ears! Our bumpy glide into Darwin was at 200 knots with a nine-knot tailwind, and direct visual approach to RWY 36. We were told to park next to the AN-124-100 Antonov – the world's highest gross weight production cargo airplane; we were like a speck next to that one. AQUIS (Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service) greeted us with the handler; they were very nice and just wanted to see the spray cans we used to fumigate the airplane. We cleared customs and immigration without any delay, and were tired and dehydrated. Looking at the weather, we saw a huge storm going through the eastern States of Australia, and thought we needed to sit out the bad weather before we could get into Sydney.

## **12 October, 2014 – Darwin, Australia to Mount Isa, Australia**

When we drove up to the airplane and the fuel truck was there waiting for us, we thought we were in a dream as it was the first time it had happened in the entire world! We took off on our course around the active military area and the familiar landscape of the top end of Australia started to appear – long meandering rivers snaking through green and brown landscapes, the beautiful sight of Kakadu National Park with its escarpments that go for miles and the red hue that extends over the entire land. The top end of Australia has some of the most beautiful landscapes of the world, the mix of dry, rugged, natural bush and the abundance of water holes, rivers and canyons even in the dry season.

Soon we were in the vast Outback of rich mining land, and 15 minutes before landing at Mount Isa, it was reported that the temperature was 38°C. As we descended, the thermals started and we encountered moderate to extreme turbulence – we were in for an very bumpy ride all the way.

On final, the crosswind was strong and gusting; we appeared to be too high and the plane was grabbed by a dust devil. The heat was sucking the plane down, so power was increased to stay airborne and the strong crosswind sent the plane into a side-step crab crawl. The dust devil hit, and the tail was pushed to the right and the left wing, sucked by the devil, then dropped; it took all of Amir's skill to level-up and force the airplane down to the runway. What a difficult landing! I thought Amir was contemplating a go around; he told me he considered it, however, the dust devil would have made it very dangerous and most likely we would have crashed. We left the airplane near the

fueller and caught a cab to town. After we checked in to a hotel, we received a phone call from the fueller – the plane had moved in the wind and needed to be tied down as there was a freak afternoon storm coming through town.

### 13 October, 2014 – Mount Isa, Queensland via Roma to Archerfield, Brisbane, Queensland

When checking our route the night before, it would be our longest leg of the journey, and there was a large front which we anticipated would move as we approached Roma, our midway point. We rose before the sun to beat the heat and the wind at Mount Isa, and when we arrived, the airport was already active. Mount Isa is a CTAF-controlled aerodrome and the first on our trip since EV Ranch in Canada, some 30,000 km away. We made the necessary calls to “all aircraft in the Mount Isa CTAF,” reporting that we were entering the runway and about to depart; we also advised Brisbane Centre, the controlling ATC over the whole top end of Australia. Every pilot there understands that early rises are the key to smoother flights and beating the weather. Our ultra-modern ADS-B transponder enabled ATC to track and see our levels every step of the way. Previously, when we flew these remote outback areas in our other Cirrus, ATC was not able to monitor and the communication was minimal. We were one of very few planes that had this equipment in Australia and even most commercial flights were not equipped with this smart capable device. It aided our peace of mind, as the beautiful landscape was vast and deserted.

We were avoiding the thunderstorms, however as we came closer to Roma the air was full of the leftover aggressive air. We had a beautiful 30-plus-knot tailwind and riding it with glee at times up to 211 knots ground speed; but with that comes a very bumpy ride – we were being thrown around like rag dolls – not unpleasant, but far from comfortable. We were constantly checking the weather and wind conditions on our GFDS looking for a smoother ride.

By the time we passed Roma and had veered well left of our track to clear the thunderstorms, we enjoyed a smooth ride the rest of the way to Brisbane. The landscape out of Mount Isa was desolate outback, scattered mining sites and massive cattle ranches, each one spanning hundreds of square miles; then past Roma, the crop farms started. This vast farm area was spectacular to see, as the farms were perfect shapes of huge rectangular fields in colors ranging from the dark brown of the fields just plowed; a golden wheat color of the fields with last season’s crop stubs remaining; and the deep, dark and light greens of newly growing crops. I wonder if the farmers realized how artistic they were painting the beautiful landscape over their fertile rich lands.

Amberley Military vectored us into Archerfield Airport; it’s like our second home airbase. We landed on the dirt/

grass strip of RWY 4R and taxied to park. We were greeted by our friend Steve Maltby, who had been our rock and mentor throughout the entire trip – giving us weather reports and guidance about the most remote parts of the world, advice when purchasing the aircraft, answering the phone and many text messages at all hours of the night, sending weather reports on the hour and calming our nerves when we encountered a fluid leak or a strange rattle on the plane.

It was quite fitting that we went to Archerfield, as it was where we picked up our first two Cirrus aircraft. Many hours of training, flying and maintenance had been done there, and Steve had been a part of it with us over the years.

There was a series of very large non-penetrable thunderstorms going through the entire eastern part of Australia, stretching from Northern Territory through to Melbourne – a solid 2,000-mile long and 80-mile wide thick line. We couldn’t believe how we slipped through the line to get into Brisbane and passed them when they were still in the baby stages. We then understood why it was so bumpy in the air with the energy building. We had just one flight left until arriving home and we were grounded in Brisbane to wait for clear weather.

\*\*\*\*\*

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The airborne view of Sydney Harbour during the flyover before landing.

An advertisement for Paul Bowen Photography. The background is a large photograph of a blue Cirrus aircraft flying over a landscape at sunset. The aircraft's registration number, N636RA, is visible on the fuselage. In the top-left corner, there is a logo for Paul Bowen Photography featuring a stylized sun and a propeller. The main title "AIR TO AIR" is written in large, serif capital letters across the top. To the right of the title is a signature "Paul Bowen" in cursive. Below the signature, the phone number "316-263-5537" and the website "www.airtoair.net" are listed. In the bottom-left corner, the text "Stock Photography for Advertising &amp; Marketing" and "Fine Art Prints" is displayed. Two smaller inset photographs of the aircraft are shown in the bottom-right corner.

## 17 October, 2014 – Brisbane, Queensland to Bankstown Sydney, Australia

Watching the radar showed a virtual cyclone swirl going around and around, bringing Sydney spectacular lightning and thunderstorms. It was impossible to fly and big airlines were also unable to get into Sydney airport; at one point causing it to close. Finally, the weather cleared and we decided to depart; when the engine started, Amir thought it sounded a little different. We taxied to run-up bay and performed the usual checks; when Amir completed the magneto check, the engine coughed, sputtered and nearly shut down – the left side magneto was dead. We taxied straight back to the parking spot, as we were not going anywhere. After a check by Cirrus maintenance engineers at the airport, they confirmed it sounded like the left side magneto. We didn't have a clue how long it would take to get a qualified engineer to work on an N-registered aircraft, so we set off for the commercial airport to get on a flight to Sydney. With passes in our hand and five minutes to board, we looked at each other and said, "How can we leave our team member behind?" We asked the Qantas help desk to take our luggage off the flight!

With several phone calls made around Australia and to Cirrus in the United States, a mechanic from the Gold Coast could arrive the next day, and the repair would be covered under warranty. As promised, the engineer arrived, confirmed the diagnosis and took the magneto out for an overhaul at a local shop in Archerfield, Brisbane. How lucky we were to have this happen there and not some country in the dark side of the world! By 1:30 p.m., the aircraft was fixed and we were on our way to Sydney!

At 16,000 feet with a headwind of 30 knots, we veered around some weather near Port Macquarie then cruised all the way to Sydney, where we requested from Sydney Centre permission to fly over the Sydney Harbour. Looking at our odometer reading, a quick calculation of the total trip and we still couldn't believe this was our last leg. We feel special to have been able to conduct this kind of dangerous adventure, it requires professionalism, precision planning, an amazing plane like the Cirrus SR22T and a little luck; it is addictive and immensely enjoyable.

We received clearance to Harbour Bridge and expedited down to 5,000 feet and tracked the coast. We only broke clouds below 3,000 feet – what a great view of the Hawkesbury River and surrounding Pittwater. We flew what is called a "Harbour Scenery," which is up the coast towards the Harbour turning right at Longreach and keeping north of the Sydney Opera House – a great sight for our homecoming flight. One rotation over the Sydney CBD, Harbour Bridge and Opera, then it was straight on to Bankstown to land in a 20-knot crosswind! We taxied

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After flying 20,716 nm, the Hysters celebrated being home safely with their new Cirrus, after their world adventure.

to our hangar; our team was home – the pilot, his crazy wife and our new baby. We made it! We gave each other a high-five and said it was hard to believe that we had traveled 20,716 nm. ☺

### In summation:

- Over 150 flying hours, 40,000 km (inclusive of Africa Air safari in May) – the same distance as it takes to circumnavigate the equator
- Passing from 153W to 153E through the Equator line (Great Circle), Prime Meridian Line, Tropic of Capricorn, Tropic of Cancer and the Arctic Circle
- Traveled through five continents – North America, Africa, Asia, Europe and Australia
- Over, in and through more than 40 countries
- THE ADVENTURE of our lives
- Games of solitaire – countless!

*Amir and Tamra Hyster are semi-retired “SKlers” (Spending the Kids Inheritance) who live in Sydney, Australia; they have three grown children. Amir has a PPL with IFR ratings on single engine; he learned to fly 14 years ago with his daughter, Jessica, which started as a hobby and grew into a passion. He currently owns and flies an SR22T and has a position for the Cirrus Jet. The Hysters have flown around Australia several times, and in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Caribbean, Canada and United States.*