



**PIPER MEMORIAL AIRPORT
353 PROCTOR STREET
LOCK HAVEN PA 17745**

For Immediate Release:

Pittsburgh Mechanic Flies What He Fixes

**For more information, contact Prof. H. Paul Shuch, Chief Flight Instructor
Office (570) 748-3725, Cell (570) 419-1229, email fly@AvSport.org**

Lock Haven, PA, 18 March 2012 – Three decades after serving in the US Air Force, and eight months into his flight instruction, David Braxton has marked a significant milestone in his quest to become a Sport Pilot, completing his first solo flight at AvSport of Lock Haven on the Piper Memorial Airport. The Pittsburgh native, who was trained as an airframe and powerplant mechanic and now works on heavy diesel equipment, has been commuting to Lock Haven one or two weekends a month since last July, to study the fine art of sport flying with Prof. H. Paul Shuch, who founded the local flight school two years ago.

The Sport Pilot license is the newest portal of entry into the world of aviation, allowing prospective pilots to become licensed in half the time, and at half the cost, of the traditional Private Pilot license. Sport pilots fly for fun, and are restricted to flying simple, low performance aircraft that comply with the Light Sport rule. They are allowed to fly in uncongested airspace, during daylight hours, and only in good weather conditions. “Of course,” Shuch emphasizes, “the training curriculum at AvSport was designed with pilot advancement in mind. Our Sport Pilot students can continue on for the Private and Commercial licenses, should they desire, with all Sport Pilot training counting toward those higher ratings.”

Upon completion of the solo flight, Shuch cut off fabric from Braxton’s shirt, and autographed it to mark the occasion. This ritual dates back to the Golden Age of aviation, when barnstormers frequently had to patch rips in their fabric-covered aircraft with pieces of their own garments.

After reviewing basic flight maneuvers with his instructor, Braxton will next embark on cross-country flight training, leading up to his venturing farther afield on his own. His training will culminate in preparations for his Federal Aviation Administration practical test, consisting of both oral exams and a checkride with an FAA designated pilot examiner, prior to receipt of his pilot’s license.

Piper Memorial Airport is the ancestral home to the legendary Piper Cub, arguably the world’s first sport plane. Modern Light Sport aircraft allow pilots to recapture the bygone fly-for-fun Cub era, with increased reliability and improved safety.

Downloadable Photo: http://AvSport.org/photos/solo/David_solo.jpg

Caption: David Braxton’s enthusiasm is evident as he completes his first solo flight at Piper Memorial Airport.

Downloadable Photo: http://AvSport.org/photos/solo/David_shirt.jpg

Caption: Prof. Shuch perpetuates an ancient tradition, by trimming fabric from David Braxton’s shirt following his successful first solo flight.