

Spring Cleaning

Now that, hopefully, the worst of the winter weather is behind us, it's time to do some Spring Cleaning. Basically, we should consider two types of cleaning to pursue:

1. Cleaning the cobwebs off the flying machine.
 - a. Give the plane a very thorough pre-flight. Take off cowlings and access covers to make sure your pride-and-joy has not become a hibernation hotel for various varmints. Also, check you gas supply and low-point drains. Water in your fuel system could put the fire out at an inappropriate time. Corrosion also needs to be addressed and treated if found. Grease can ooze away or dry up, so check lubricated fittings. Hydraulic seals that have not been used can dry out and leak, so check any you may have (brakes come to mind) on your particular aircraft. Speaking of brakes, calipers can get sticky from corrosion and disks can get rusty, leading to some interesting ground handling characteristics.
2. Cleaning the cobwebs out of the processor between the headsets.
 - a. Time to "think flying" and to remember about your density altitude. The 65 hp of fury that has catapulted you into the air on cold, dry days may seem (and be) on the anemic side when it gets hot and humid. Reacquaint yourself with your plane's performance charts and make sure you are within the safe operating zone.
 - b. You might consider a "brush up" flight with an instructor. There are a few here and all will go up with you to give you a chance to do those things many people don't like doing alone – like stalls and unusual attitudes.
 - c. One last thing to consider is currency. Are you day and night current to carry passengers? Are you current to fly actual instrumentals?

Clean it up, wash it out, check it out and get back safely into the skies!