



GATTS Commercial Pilot Training

By Joseph L Palazzi

After nearly three thousand hours, of which 2500 are in Bonanzas, I decided I would like to add a new rating. Having obtained my Private, Instrument, and Multi the next logical step was a Commercial certificate.

My first hurdle was the written. But with the help of the Gleim online commercial course, I was able to ace the written in a few months. Now the clock was ticking to get the practical done.

My second hurdle was to find someone willing to give instruction with my throw-over yoke. After contacting Tom Turner at ABS I realized there were no BPPP instructors immediately near

my home field in southwest Florida. I did find a CFII based on my home field who was willing to work with me. After a test flight to get comfortable, we worked on and off for a few months, but because of schedule conflicts we were not able to put together a solid block of instruction. When I returned to my home in Connecticut for the summer I endeavored to find an instructor to continue flight training.

Again, no one other than BPPP instructors seemed willing to instruct in a single-control plane, and unfortunately none were based in Connecticut. Two flight schools not only said "no" outright but added they didn't think my Bonanza was a suitable platform, and they preferred training in their aircraft.

Now one might say: Why didn't you go ahead and bite the bullet and either buy or rent a dual yoke since the FAA requires it for any examiner doing a checkride? I'd arranged to borrow a friend's Bonanza with dual yoke for my checkride, so I thought it was an unnecessary additional cost.

I was about to think my quest for a commercial pilot rating was in vain when I read about GATTS Advanced Training Center's three-day Commercial Pilot Certification Course, done in your plane or theirs. I contacted Jason Wolcott at GATTS in Manhattan, Kansas, and explained my yoke dilemma. He said not a problem, GATTS would arrange for a dual yoke for both the training and checkride, including installation at its maintenance facility.

When I arrived at KMHK I was met by Evan Post, who would be my instructor for both ground school and air work. GATTS provided a car and accommodations for the entire period. GATTS conducted one of the most professional programs I have attended in nearly 30 years of flying, including 14 BPPP weekend programs. It was great to explore the envelope of my Bonanza while learning and performing the various maneuvers required for a Commercial Pilot certificate.

Unfortunately the weather gods didn't look favorably on providing visual conditions for my checkride. After three days of Kansas IFR I needed to return home for Thanksgiving. Again GATTS stepped up to the plate. Jason said, "No problem," they would give me a credit for the examiner's fee, and I could return the dual yoke after taking my checkride in Florida. As soon as I returned home to Florida I contacted a local examiner and arranged for my checkride the next day. The checkride went almost identical to what Evan and I had practiced. Thanks to the team at GATTS, I have a new Commercial Pilot certificate.



Contact GATTS at:
888-778-6676 or www.gatts.org