

Two pilots, one day, 104 airports...and more than \$10,000 for charity

Wisconsin pilots attempt record while raising money for children's hospital

By JANICE WOOD
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It's one of those feats that many a pilot dreams of tackling: Land at all public-use airports in their state in one day.

For Wisconsin pilots Matthew McDaniel and Bruce Kaufman, their record-setting journey had an added element: Their flight raised more than \$10,000 for Children's Hospital of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

The flight, which took months to plan, took off at 4:15 a.m. June 20 from Lawrence J. Timmerman Airport (MWC) in Milwaukee, with final engine shutdown at 9:15 p.m. During the day, the pair traveled 2,119 nautical miles (2,437 statute miles), landing at 104 airports — every paved public used airport in the state, as well as one private airport, Lake Geneva Aire Estates, and a military airport, Volk Field Air National Guard Base.

The pair were attempting to set a record for "Fastest Time To Visit (Land At) All Paved, Public-Use Airports in Wisconsin." More important, they raised \$10,950 for the hospital, a bit above their goal of \$10,000. But they're not finished — pilots and other aviation enthusiasts can still donate to the cause by going online at FirstGiving.com/Romp.

Pairing the flight with a good cause was the only way the two pilots wanted to tackle such a feat, says McDaniel. "We didn't want to do it just for the sake of doing it," he says.

And it made sense to make the hospital the recipient of any donated funds. Kaufman is a pediatric neurosurgeon there.

"Matt and I decided to tap into our love of flying, and combine it with our devotion to children, to create a different kind of fundraiser," he says.

Kaufman, an instrument-rated pilot, owns the Cirrus SR-22 used for the record-setting attempt. McDaniel, a first officer for Midwest Airlines, also is a Master CFI and owner of Progressive Aviation Services Inc., which specializes in a variety of services for Cirrus owners.

The pair had hoped to coordinate the charity flight with the hospital's annual fundraiser in May, but, as with so many aviation-related endeavors, the weather just didn't cooperate. The first opportunity to launch was June 20. It was a great weather day, as well as the second longest day of the year, "which helped," McDaniel says.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Planning the flight was "tremendously more workload intensive than we thought it would be," he says. "Neither of us was content to just throw down a map and draw a line."

The pair started with flight planning



READY TO GO: Dr. Bruce Kaufman (left) and Matthew McDaniel before their record attempt in Kaufman's Cirrus SR-22, named *Blue Kids One* in honor of the logo at the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin.

software, but found that when they told it to go to every airport in the state, it did — including every grass strip and every private airport. So they had to go in and eliminate those one by one. Then they had to factor in which airports had lights so they were sure to land at those without lights during the day. Next came the fuel stops. They planned three, but had to make sure that the airports had fuel or the FBOs were going to be open when they arrived. Alternate fuel stops also were essential in case of fog. But all that planning paid off.

"The only change we made to the flight plan was that we had to manipulate one of the fuel stops because the original stop was fogged in," McDaniel notes.

They told their support team to go ahead to the alternate airport, but when Kaufman and McDaniel flew over the original airport, they found that the fog had lifted, so the pair went ahead and landed.

The support team, made up of Doug Woods and Wynn "Casey" Jones, was critical to the success of the mission, according to McDaniel. "We were so

pressed for time that we wanted to make sure our fuel stops were like Indy pit stops," he says.

The support team, also flying Cirrus aircraft, arrived at each of the fuel stops about 30 minutes ahead of Kaufman and McDaniel to alert FBO personnel they were coming in, so when the pair landed they could shut down the airplane, jump out and take care of some necessary business while the plane was being refueled and prepared for the next takeoff. "We were multitasking," McDaniel admits. "Dr. Kaufman was on the phone to the hospital, while I was opening and closing flight plans. We had a lot to do — we only gave ourselves 15 minutes for each stop."

While the pair paid for their own fuel for the charity flight, managers of two of the FBOs, at Stevens Point Municipal Airport and John F. Kennedy Memorial Airport in Ashland, offered them the Angel Flight discount on fuel.

HIGHLIGHTS

"There were way too many to mention, really," McDaniel reports. "One of

the top five would have to be doing our landing and low fly-bys at Volk Field Air National Guard Base and the fantastic cooperation from the military controllers there. It's always fun to hear the controller say, 'Low passes approved, down to 100 feet, speed your discretion.' We tried not to disappoint them. The sunset over Green Bay (the bay, not the city) and Northern Wisconsin we witnessed while flying down the Door County Peninsula was beautiful."

A few days after the flight, McDaniel says that he would do it again, "given the right reason."

"Given a cause I believe in, I probably would," he says. "But would I do it tomorrow? No."

THE RECORD

The National Aeronautic Association is in the process of analyzing the data from the flight to determine if Kaufman and McDaniel set a record. For the purpose of the record, there are 102 airports, McDaniel notes. "The fact that we actually landed at 104 (including the private fly-in community and the military base) are essentially ignored for the purpose of the record," he says. "The record's time will go from official wheels up at the departure airport (MWC) to official wheels down back at the same airport. Therefore, the clock was running during all fuel stops and during the two airports that are not officially part of the record."

NAA officials will begin analyzing all the data as soon as they receive the "Certificates of Landing" from all the control towers to verify the team's landing at their airports.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

It's not too late to donate to the efforts. Go to FirstGiving.com/Romp and you can donate online. Donations will be accepted throughout summer. The pair also hope to have Kaufman's Cirrus on display at AirVenture.

For more information: FirstGiving.com/Romp



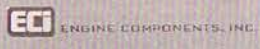

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