



Introduction

Shay Popper visited Norway in 2000 and since then dreamed of flying there in a light aircraft. He began the detailed planning in February of this year.

This report describes how dreams can sometimes come true.

Preliminaries

It turns out that in Norway there are no independent flight schools where planes can be hired easily, as in Israel. All the flight training on light aircraft is performed through established flying clubs for club members only. However contact was made through Mr. Efrat, the chairman of the Israeli Association of General Aviation, via Mr. Teigland, the chairman of the Norwegian A.O.P.A, to Mr. Leidulf of the Stavanger Flight Club who agreed to help. He managed to change the constitution of the Stavanger Club to allow other pilots to charter some planes and also contacted Mr. Hijohansen of the Bergen Flying Club who agreed to hire us his Cessna 172.

Mr. Leidulf told us of the existence of the Norwegian AIP on the internet:

http://80.203.214.34/norway_aip/060706/AD_eng.html and that our Israeli pilots' licenses would be valid in Norway after a check flight with a local instructor. To be on the safe side we obtained from Mr. Teigland, the telephone number of Mr. Harrald of the Norwegian Flight Administration who told us that our pilots' licenses were acceptable under VFR day conditions if Israel was acting in accordance with the ICAO regulations. We then obtained a letter from the Israeli air crew licensing board confirming the validity of our licenses: this satisfied our Norwegian counterparts.

Aircraft

Eight people took part in the fly-in, four of them pilots. We used the following aircraft:

- LN-NAS, a Piper Cherokee Warrior II, PA 28-161 own by Mr. Sorensen from Stavanger
- LN-NFF, a Cessna 177RG Cardinal, own by Mr. Leidulf from Stavanger
- LN-BGG, a Cessna 172P Skyhawk, own by Mr. Hijohansen from Bergen.

27/28th July

Mr. Leidulf met us on our arrival at Stavanger airport and took us first to the local flying club to acquaint us with its impressive facilities.

The next day was devoted to familiarizing with the aircraft and with check out flights. As part of the Cessna 177 check out it carried two extra pilots to Bergen where they subsequently flew the Cessna 172 Skyhawk to Stavanger to join the rest of the group.

29th July

We set off from Stavanger in a loose formation to the Lysefjord and passed close to the Preikstolen, that rises to 2000 ft. From there we turned northwards and flew along some valleys and fjords to Sand, Sauda and Odda, passing the Folgefonna glacier on our left. From there we continued along the narrow Sorfjord and thence via Granvin, Voss and Gudvangen to the Songelfjord to finish our first leg with a landing at Sognal, ENSG.

We were told that the airfield was to close shortly, it being Saturday afternoon, so after a brief picnic lunch we took off after a Dash 6, to fly westwards along the Songelfjord almost until the coast before turning north to land at Floro, ENFL. At Floro we learned that the operation staff of AVINOR, after hearing of our intentions from Sognal tower, had waited specially for us to land before closing the airport.

30th July

On the Sunday morning the weather forecast promised the approach of a cold front to the western coast, with its concomitant wind and rain. However, with the good VFR conditions that then prevailed we planned to continue our planned route checking out the meteorological charts at each stop.

After take off from Floro we turned north and entered the Nordfjord and flew eastwards until landing at Sandane, ENSD. The final approach to runway 27 was offset by more than 10 degrees to the runway, close to the nearly vertical fjord wall. After landing we saw some glider activity using a Cessna 172 tug. The next planned leg included flying over the Jostedalbre, the largest ice sheet in continental Europe. However by then the cloud base was much lower than the 8000 ft required so we had to bypass this. (We managed to visit this area, around Briksdal, on our subsequent ground tour).

From Sandane we flew north east to near the end of the Hormindalsvatnet Lake and then turned north west, through a valley at about 4000 ft, with clouds lowering and spots of light rain until we reached the Voldefjord, where the weather improved and we could descend to about 2000 ft for the approach to Orsta Volda, ENOV. The airfield is situated between two hills, 600 ft to the north and 1900 ft to the south. It came into sight only after passing Volda and turning right, around the slope of the northern edge of the 1900 ft promontory.

The met forecast at Volda was better than expected so we decided to carry on with our original plan except for landing at Alesund instead of flying further north to Molde.

From Volda we returned eastwards along the Voldefjord for a few miles and then north east along the Vartdalsfjord, continuing south east along the Hjørndfjord, thence eastwards following the road towards Hellesylt. From Hellesylt we entered the Geirangerfjord and flew to its end at Geiranger, turned around back to enter the Sunnysfjord, passing Strander and Sjøholt and then northwest entering the CTR of Alesund-Vigra, ENAL, via the VFR reporting point of Gryton and landing at Alesund for the night.

July 31st

After overnight rain there were few clouds around in the morning so we made an early start in order to reach Stavanger before the weather might break. The planned first leg was to end at Forde, ENBL, situated inland at an altitude of 1040 ft in a valley between peaks of about 2700 ft. Because of the uncertainty of the weather stability we decided to first fly south to the area around Floro and then eastwards along the Fordefjord and Fikefjord to Forde. In addition the relatively fast Cessna 177RG Cardinal flew ahead to report on the on route weather conditions. Our luck held and we managed to enjoy some of the most beautiful scenery of lakes, sea inlets, fjords and hills with the play of light and shadows from the clouds above us.

At Forde we encountered a security check for the first time on this trip, having to pass through metal detectors before being allowed to return to our planes from the cafeteria.

From Forde we flew south west until the inlet to the Osterfjord and then flew along it in a south westerly direction until we reached the coast and turned south to Bergen, ENBR. There was enough traffic at Bergen to force each of our formation to circle for several long minutes before getting permission to land.

At Bergen we taxied to the eastern parking area to return the Cessna 172 to its owner Mr. Hjøhansen. For the last leg to Stavanger the Skyhawk's two pilots traveled in the Cherokee Warrior. However Stavanger Sola airport was also busy on our arrival at about 16:30 so we had almost 10 minutes of circling before landing.

August 1st

To add to our aeronautical experiences in Norway we had arranged for some flight instruction in a Cessna 172 float plane, SE-KHN. The water airport, Sea Sola, was the Hafsfjord immediately north of the beginning of Sola's runway 11. The take off and landing lanes were marked on the map similar to land runways.

The instructor, Mr. Arne, gave each of the pilots and passengers a half hour individual lesson in handling a float plane including three "independent" take offs and landings. For all of us "landsmen" this was a most memorable experience, as there are not, as yet, any floatplanes or facilities for them in Israel. While waiting for our turn in the float plane we visited the adjacent Aeronautical Museum.

August 2nd – 5th

During the following four days we drove from Bergen to Oslo, covering many of the places and fjords that we had seen from the air.

August 6th

To round off our Norwegian flight adventures we visited the Draman gliding club at Hokksund, ENHS, the majority of our party being gliding enthusiasts in Israel. Each of us enjoyed about one hour's gliding in a K-13 aircraft with the chief instructor Mr. Pedersen. Towards the end of the day we saw a 70 year old DH Moth perform touch and gos and also an ultra light based on an inflatable Zodiac type dingy with wheels.

Summary

We were told that we had brought good weather with us from Israel, ground temperatures at noon ranged between 21°C and 24°C, mostly sunny with a few hours here and there of clouds with a cloud base between 2500 ft to 3500 ft and a few minutes of light rain. Conditions which were above VFR minima, although we had to make one or two changes in our planned routes in order to maintain this. In Norway it is not compulsory to file flight plans for VFR, apart from flights above 3000 ft in Class C and D air spaces.

One has to pay attention to high tension power lines slung across some fjords. These are marked on the aeronautical charts.

All of the airports and airfields that we visited had asphalt runways and one or more radio navigation aids such as NDB's and/or VOR's, some with DME.

The avgas supplier at each airfield was one of two separate companies. This required us to carry two sets of company credit cards and special keys. The keys were used in places where the fuel was dispensed by self service pumps.

Some of the most lasting impressions of Norway were made by the people we met.

- By the members of the Stavanger Flying Club, especially by Mr. Leidulf, and the owners of the aircraft that they chartered to us.
- The help and consideration that we received from the AVINOR people in the airfield towers and especially the crew at Floro who delayed closing the airfield on a Saturday evening to allow us to land.
- The policeman at Alesund-Vigra who used his mobile phone to order us a taxi from the airport on a Sunday evening.
- The gliding club at Hokksund for the cordial welcome they gave us.