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*Welcoming the Wing's New
182 Has NorCal Pilots Bidding
Fond Adieux*

**GEARED UP:
Hearts of Glass**

*By 1st. Lt. Steve Taylor,
Group 5 PAO*

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Hearts of Glass

Welcoming the Wing's New 182 Has NorCal Pilots Bidding Fond Adieux

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NORTH HIGHLANDS—Nostalgic sentiment met welling excitement as pilots of NorCal Group 5 bid farewell to their faithful old plane and received the new Cessna 182T with the Garmin “glass cockpit.”

Group 5 had been on notice for nearly a year that one of its units might be the next to take possession of one of those high-tech airplanes with all the bells and whistles. So when the first aircraft assignment fell to another group, we were disappointed to say the least. Thankfully, we were not left empty-handed and indeed happy to carry on with our trustworthy bird of many years, a 1981 Cessna 182R.

We love flying that bird. For many of us, it was our introduction to the 182. If you happened to be transitioning from a Cessna 172, the 182 felt like a wild horse you'd been tasked to break. But after a short time it felt as tame as a kitten, requiring as little care and feeding as fresh oil, a light buff of the leading edge, and an annual checkup.

Like a favorite old car or truck, this plane had given us flawless performance for many



PAINT THE SKY: Awaiting a mission at Sacramento Composite Squadron 15.

years. Oh, sure, the push-to-talk switch would play games now and then. The radio toggled between left and right seats—and alternated between functioning and not. Sometimes the CAP radio worked. Sometimes, we just did our best without it.

The aircraft itself always performed exceptionally well. This was due in no small part to the exceptional aircraft managers we've had over the years. Our guys take ownership of a plane and baby it as if it was their own. (By the way, have you thanked *your* aircraft manager lately?)

That being said, we really like the new aircraft. Who wouldn't? This baby is loaded! In 2004 Cessna debuted the G-1000 in their Skylanes. It replaces many tradition cockpit instruments with twin 10.4-inch high-definition liquid crystal displays (thus the nickname “glass cockpit”). The displays of this integrated avionics system function interchangeably as primary or multi-function.

Redundancy is built-in with automatic fault monitoring and reversionary mode (meaning flight-critical data can be seamlessly transferred to a single display).

The engine gauge cluster provides all the standard gauges, and includes engine trend data, lean assist, and more. A centrally located digital audio panel includes automatic squelch control and audio recording /playback for capturing ATC clearances. There's also a Mode-S transponder with Traffic Information Service (TIS), weather display, and satellite phone for those missions requiring digital imaging.

The new plane is SAR mission-ready. Brand new CAP radios and Becker direction-finding equipment are built-in. And we even like the colors: A beautiful factory CAP-insignia paint job. Then there's that “new plane” smell.

Piloting one of these will require a lot of training. It's still essentially a 182, but working the electronics and getting used

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Hearts of Glass

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to the new display scan does take a little time. Instrument checkout is even more complex.

Fortunately, our leadership foresaw the need to get started early, so in January about 50 members of NorCal units attended half-day of ground training taught by a local flight school. This gave us a detailed introduction to the inner workings of the unit, tips, tricks, and good hands-on experience. The instructor also made available the flight school's G1000 simulator so that CAP members get in practice over the next few months.

NorCal sent two of its very best check pilots to 5 ½ days of intense training at Cessna headquarters in Wichita, Kansas. Capt. Bill Slavensky, Sacramento Composite Squadron 15, and 1st Lt. Patrick Scanlon, Marin Air Rescue Squadron 23, Novato, report receiving very professional training focused on the basic concepts, the line-replaceable unit, and the heading and altitude reference set. They were also familiarized with the new terminology, with an emphasis on using the checklist. They were



GARMIN GLAMOR: An inside look at NorCal's new 182T.

encouraged to take a “hands-off” (did I mention the 3-axis autopilot—affectionately referred to as George—and the built-in Jeppesen approach charts?). With all this on display, as well as moving map GPS, if you get lost or empty your tanks, well, you’ve got some ‘splainin’ to do!

The flight home gave Capt. Slavensky and Lt. Scanlon a chance to test some of the new features. Due to bad weather over the Rockies and the Sierras, the team traveled only from Independence, Kan., to Albuquerque, N.M., the first day, then touched down in Apple Valley and made it

home to Sacramento the next. The crew flew 134 knots ground speed most of the way.

Many of us came out to welcome the crew home from their long flight—and to get our first peek at our new bird. But as we welcome our 182T and look forward to many years of performing missions together, we bid a fond farewell to our dependable 182R. Though other squadrons might envy our new plane, we have just a touch of our own for the folks that will be flying our old friend. We hope it brings them as much enjoyment as it did us.

