



**PIPER MEMORIAL AIRPORT
353 PROCTOR STREET
LOCK HAVEN PA 17745**

For Immediate Release:

Flight School Graduates First Post-Pandemic Pilot

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Lock Haven, PA, 16 July 2021 – This has been a rough year for the flight training industry. Between flight schools shuttering their doors, airports on lockdown, supply chain problems grounding aircraft, and the impossibility of social distancing in small trainer airplanes, many aspiring aviators have had to put their dreams of flight on hold. But AvSport LLC, a small flight school on the Piper Memorial Airport in Lock Haven PA, has managed to graduate its first licensed pilot in over a year. Brad Barton, a retired corrections officer originally from Lock Haven, completed his Sport Pilot practical exam on 15 July 2021, following thirteen months of training delays and interruptions.

“Brad would have finished up months ago,” says AvSport founder and Chief Flight Instructor Prof. H. Paul Shuch, “had it not been for pandemic-imposed delays. But, he soldiered on, finally fulfilling a lifelong dream of becoming a licensed pilot.”

“Life has taken on an entirely new dimension,” states Barton. “Literally. Breaking away from gravity has been an incredibly positive distraction from these difficult times. You can feel truly free in the clouds, punching holes in the sky.”

Barton’s ultimate goal is to upgrade from the entry-level Sport Pilot license, gaining additional skills and privileges. “But I’m just going to embrace this accomplishment for now,” he says, “before later moving on up to the Private Pilot license.”

The Sport Pilot license, in which AvSport specializes, is the newest portal of entry into the world of aviation, allowing prospective pilots to become licensed in half the time, and at half the cost, of the traditional Private Pilot license. Sport Pilots fly solely for pleasure, in fair weather, during daylight hours, in simple, low-performance Light Sport aircraft. Piper Memorial Airport is the ancestral home to the legendary Piper Cub, arguably the world’s first sport plane. Modern Light Sport aircraft allow pilots to recapture the bygone fly-for-fun Cub era, with increased reliability and improved safety. Anyone interested in learning more about sport flying is invited to browse the school’s extensive website at <http://AvSport.org>, where a wealth of free training materials awaits.

DOWNLOADABLE PHOTO: <http://www.avsport.org/photos/graduates/brad.jpg>

CAPTION: Following over a year of intermittent training, culminating in a successful checkride, Brad Barton receives his Sport Pilot certificate from AvSport founder and FAA Pilot Examiner H. Paul Shuch.