

Synopsis of Flight from Hartford Brainard Airport (KHFD) To Katama Airpark (1B2), and Attempted Departure From 1B2 on Tuesday, 8/19/2025 – Daniel McMenamin

Introduction:

The intent of this one-day round-trip flight from Hartford Brainard Airport in Hartford, CT (KHFD) to Katama Airpark in Edgartown, MA (1B2) was for pleasure. I planned to take my daughter, Claire, to downtown Edgartown, MA (Martha's Vineyard) for breakfast and lunch, and to do some sightseeing and clothing shopping along the way.

Long-term planning for this flight took the form of the following:

- 1) Referencing the Cessna 182 Pilot Operating Handbook for the considerations necessary to accomplish both a soft field landing and a soft field takeoff for the weather conditions and field conditions at 1B2 that day,
- 2) Gathering first-hand experience from trusted pilots I know who have successfully completed a soft field landing to, and a soft field takeoff from 1B2,
- 3) Observing 1B2 field operations during a visit there in October, 2024,
- 4) Researching 1B2 using available online resources (ForeFlight, AirNav, etc.), and
- 5) Calling the 1B2 Airport Manager on Thursday August 14, 2025 to inquire about the field conditions

Synopsis:

Before leaving for KHFD, I obtained a weather briefing from 1800wxbrief.com. The weather between KHFD and 1B2 that day was predicted to remain about the same with no major shifts in wind direction or magnitude, no clouds at my desired flight altitudes, no precipitation, and largely governed by high atmospheric pressure throughout the southern New England states.

Claire and I arrived at KHFD at approximately 8:00am local time to find N691DM, the 1975 Cessna Skylane owned by the 43rd Aviation Flying Club, parked in its usual parking spot. I removed the aircraft cover, cowl plugs, and airspeed pitot tube cover. I checked the fuel levels in both fuel tanks and elected to have the fuel topped off.

In the meantime, I performed all the walk-around checks noted in the spiral-bound checklist that is resident with the aircraft. Among those checks, I noted the engine oil level to be one quart low, and we added one (1) quart of oil resulting in nine (9) quarts of oil on board.

Thirty-Three (33) gallons of fuel were added between both fuel tanks resulting in 75 usable gallons of fuel for this approximate two-hour round-trip flight. This aircraft consistently and reliably consumes fuel at a rate of 13.5 gallons per hour under normal flight conditions.

Both fuel tanks were physically verified for this expected fuel quantity by dipping each fuel tank. Lastly, I sumped both fuel tanks to ensure the aircraft was serviced with 100 low lead fuel (i.e. – with blue dye), and that no water was present in the fuel. I also purged the lowest part of the fuel system by pulling the handle near the oil dipstick. Both Hobbs and TAC values were noted on my kneeboard.

Claire climbed aboard the aircraft, and I helped her with the proper position of the right seat before shutting the right door. I then climbed aboard the aircraft, shut the left door, donned my seat belt, made sure Claire donned hers, and then made sure Claire's door was locked, and that my door was locked. I then performed all the pre-start checklist items from the spiral-bound checklist.

When all pre-start checklist items were complete, I moved onto the Engine Start checklist. I energized the electrical master switch and engaged the starter. The engine started successfully, and without incident. I then energized the radio electrical bus and set the on-board fuel amount into the Garmin GTN750 GPS. I also entered the direct-to destination for that day's flight, 1B2, into the Garmin GTN750. After obtaining the ATIS weather information at KHFD, I moved the aircraft enough to check the brakes. Both brakes worked equally and as expected.

I taxied to and stopped at a place at midfield where the KHFD control tower could visually see the aircraft. I called KHFD Ground, indicated that I had obtained ATIS November:

- Wind 030 degrees at 6 knots
- Temperature / dewpoint were 17 / 12 degrees Celsius
- Atmospheric Pressure 30.27 in Hg
- Sky Clear with very high cirrus clouds

and that I wanted flight following direct to 1B2 at 3,500 feet. KHFD Ground cleared me to taxi via the appropriate taxiways to Runway 2 for departure. During the taxi, KHFD Ground radioed me with the flight following transponder code, and with the KBDL departure frequency.

I proceeded to the engine run-up area just short of Runway 2, and I performed all the pre-flight engine checks from the spiral bound checklist with no anomalies noted. After all checks were complete, I taxied to the entrance of Runway 2, changed to KHFD Tower frequency, called KHFD Tower, and indicated that I was ready for departure on Runway 2. KHFD cleared me for takeoff on Runway 2 with an approved right turn to the southeast on course direct to 1B2. The flight to 1B2 was expected to take approximately one (1) hour.

The takeoff occurred with no anomalies noted at approximately 9:00am local time. I made a right turn to my course heading, was advised to switch to Bradley Airport's (KBDL) departure frequency and then climbed to a cruising altitude of 3,500 feet.

The remainder of the flight while on flight following took place with no anomalies noted. All aircraft systems operated as expected.

At approximately ten (10) nautical miles northwest of KMVY, Boston air traffic control released me from flight following, advised me to squawk VFR on the transponder, and to contact KMVY on the radio. I did not note the Boston Air Traffic Control frequency, and this detail will be discussed later during the departure.

I then switched radio frequencies to KMVY tower and explained that I wanted to transit their airspace from northwest to southeast to my destination at 1B2. KMVY Tower advised that I should overfly the middle of the airfield at 1,500 feet and then proceed directly to 1B2. The KMVY Tower controller noted that she saw no one flying near 1B2 at that time which would simplify my approach. Once I was clear of KMVY's airfield, I switched radio frequencies and called my approach to 1B2 on 122.8 MHz, their Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF).

The 1B2 CTAF also delivers automated weather reports if the pilot keys the microphone button four times. I keyed the microphone four times once and received no weather report. I tried twice again and received the 1B2 automated weather report on the last try. This detail will also be discussed later during the departure. The winds were at 060 degrees at 8 knots (favoring Runway 6), with atmospheric pressure of 30.27 in Hg. The on-field windsock direction and shape reflected both the wind direction and wind magnitude.

I entered the 45-degree entrance to the left downwind approach for Runway 6 and then entered the left downwind approach for Runway 6, and each were announced with the requisite radio calls. Abeam the approach end of Runway 6, I turned on carburetor heat and noted that the airspeed was within the range of flap operation. I deployed 10 degrees of flaps and started my descent to Runway 6 at 500 feet / minute. I turned left base for Runway 6, made the requisite radio call for the base leg, deployed 20 degrees of flaps, and continued my descent to Runway 6 at 500 feet / minute. Airspeed was approximately 90 MPH at the end of the base leg. I turned left for final approach to Runway 6, made the requisite radio call for the final leg, deployed 40 degrees of flaps, and continued my descent to Runway 6 at 500 feet / minute. My approach was stable, and airspeed was noted at 80 MPH during my final approach to land on Runway 6.

The initial landing on Runway 6 was on the numbers and was rather soft and uneventful. During the landing roll-out, however, I noticed the surface of Runway 6 to be very irregular. The aircraft pitched and bounced up and down considerably on all three of the landing gear

wheels as the landing speed decreased. The pitching and bouncing would stop and then reappear. The pitching and bouncing cycle would intermittently repeat at least until we taxied past the intersecting Runway, 17-35. Runway 6 was noted to be more dirt than good turf as expected.

I taxied the aircraft to the end of Runway 6 and then turned left onto a taxiway toward the 1B2 Fixed Base Operator (FBO). I found an empty parking spot and then completed the engine shutdown checklist. Once the magnetos and electrical master switch were deenergized, Claire and I departed the aircraft and tied it at both wings and tail. Claire and I entered the 1B2 Airport Manager's Office, introduced ourselves, and explained that N691DM was tied down, and that we would be back around 2:00pm local time that day to begin the processes leading to the flight back to KHFD. Claire and I then proceeded to downtown Edgartown, MA via local transportation. The local time was approximately 10:00am.

Claire and I returned to 1B2 at 2:00pm local time after eating breakfast, sightseeing around Main Street Edgartown, MA area, and eating lunch. I felt well nourished, well hydrated and fit for flight. We again went in to speak to the 1B2 Airport Manager, and to use the restroom. I inquired about any tie-down fees we would have incurred, and the Airport Manager confirmed there were none.

At this time, I started to think about my departure from 1B2, and the initial data I would need to depart. Chief among them were the 1B2 weather report, and the correct KBOS Air Traffic Control departure frequency to initiate flight following. The Garmin GTN750 only remembers the last two radio frequencies used, in this case those would be KMOV Tower, and 1B2 CTAF. I knew I should research the KBOS Air Traffic Control Departure frequency.

I asked the 1B2 Airport Manager if he knew the KBOS Air Traffic Control Departure frequency, and he said he wasn't sure. He thought the KBOS Air Traffic Control Departure frequency could be 119.7 MHz, and he then recanted and said that it was 119.7 MHz. This frequency didn't sound correct to me. I noted the 1B2 Airport Manager's hesitation for this information and decided I should reference this frequency on my own from ForeFlight on my iPad in the aircraft. I confirmed that the KBOS Air Traffic Control Departure frequency was 133.00 MHz. I noted this frequency on my kneeboard.

Claire and I walked to the aircraft, and I performed all the walk-around checks noted in the spiral-bound checklist. Oil level was noted at nine (9) quarts, and fuel was noted to be approximately 60 gallons which was adequate for our one (1) hour return flight to KHFD. I sumped both fuel tanks to ensure the aircraft was serviced with 100 low lead fuel (i.e. – with blue dye), and that no water was present in the fuel.

Claire climbed aboard the aircraft, and I helped her with the proper position of the right seat before shutting the right door. I then climbed aboard the aircraft, shut the door, donned my seat belt, made sure Claire donned hers, and then made sure Claire's door was locked, and that my door was locked. I referenced the weather between 1B2 and KHFD, and as expected, I found no adverse weather conditions for the flight. The winds at KHFD still were from the north, so I anticipated at right base approach to Runway 2 at KHFD upon return. I then performed all the pre-start checklist items from the spiral-bound checklist.

When all pre-start checklist items were complete, I moved onto the Engine Start checklist. The engine started successfully, and without incident. I then energized the radio electrical bus. I also entered the direct-to destination for the return flight to KHFD into the Garmin GTN750. The return flight plan was to fly at an altitude of 4,500 feet to KHFD.

I attempted to obtain the 1B2 local weather report by again keying the radio microphone four times on the CTAF frequency of 122.8 MHz and received no weather report. I tried again and received no weather report. I tried at least one (1) more time and received no weather report. Then, the voice of another pilot came onto the radio and said that if I were trying to obtain the weather report, I should try "12345" which I interpreted to be 123.45 MHz. I thanked the pilot, changed the Garmin GTN750 radio frequency to 123.45 MHz, keyed the microphone four times, and received no weather report. I tried this same process two more times and received no weather report. I heard nothing on that frequency. I then referenced 1B2's weather on ForeFlight. As 1B2's weather is not reported on ForeFlight, I used KMOV's weather report on ForeFlight as a surrogate. KMOV's weather was as follows:

- Wind was 070 at 10 knots
- Temperature / Dew Point was 21 / 4 degrees Celsius
- Atmospheric Pressure was 30.23 inches Hg
- Sky clear with very high cirrus clouds

Like the morning, the winds favored a Runway 6 departure. I confirmed the wind direction and magnitude to match the windsock's shape and direction at 1B2.

I moved the aircraft enough to check the brakes. Both brakes worked equally and as expected.

I radioed my intention to taxi along Runway 21, which was not being used, to the end. While taxiing, I noted the surface of Runway 21 to be completely covered with grass, unlike Runway 6. I also noted the relatively even level of Runway 21 as compared with the unevenness of Runway 6.

Once at the end of Runway 21, I performed all the engine run-up checks per the spiral-bound checklist. All engine run-up checks appeared normal. I then taxied to the very end of Runway 6, to include all the displaced threshold, and with holding the yoke in the full-back position to reduce the front aircraft weight on the nose wheel, I applied full engine power to perform a soft field takeoff.

All engine gauges were confirmed normal while at full power, and the airspeed indicator came alive as expected. Soon after crossing the numbers at the end of Runway 6, I again started to experience pitching and bouncing up and down, and this time, it was worse than upon landing. It became very difficult to keep full back pressure on the yoke. The pitching and bouncing would stop and then reappear as when we landed earlier.

At 60mph, I relieved some yoke back pressure and expected that the aircraft would start to lift into ground effect, but it did not. I checked the airspeed again at 70mph, and the aircraft weight was still on the wheels.

At this point, I pulled the throttle to idle and aborted the takeoff. I applied brake pressure to both brakes evenly, and I could feel the airplane skid evenly on the hard packed dirt runway. I intentionally veered slightly to the left of my initial path to avoid a large bush in front of me. The airplane bumped up and down once or twice as it crested the edges of the taxiway that runs perpendicular to the end of Runway 6. The aircraft came to a halt nose down on the near side of a wire fence that separates the 1B2 property from an adjacent farm.

I promptly deenergized the magnetos, and the aircraft master electrical switch, and I turned the fuel tank selector to the off position to halt the fuel flow to the engine. Claire and I opened both doors, removed our seatbelts, and evacuated the aircraft on foot, and with no assistance. We mustered approximately 30 feet away from the left wing.

Claire and I awaited the Edgartown, MA fire department, police department, and EMS, and local MA State Police Trooper near the airplane. Both Claire and I were evaluated by the Edgartown EMS team, and were released without any need for hospital evaluation.