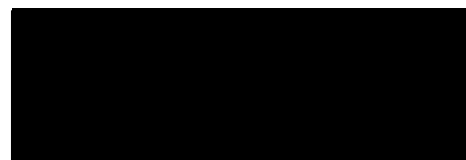


On March 2nd at approx. 1230 I made my approach to KVRB after receiving clearance from KVRB ATC. I was at 1000 feet AGL 4 miles out from the airport descending from 4000 feet as I returned from a solo cross-country flight from La Belle, FL (X14). ATC cleared me to come straight into Runway 4 on a 5-mile final. They noted that there was traffic ahead of me and I would be second in line. I acknowledged the command with a read back and continued with my approach. As I approached the airport I slowed my airspeed to 93 KIAS to initiate 10 degrees of flaps approx. 3 miles out and trimmed forward but added more power to maintain 1000 feet. At approx. 2 miles out I slowed my airspeed to 83 KIAS and initiated 25 degrees of flaps, trimmed forward and dropped down to approx. 800 feet. At approx. 1 mile, I initiated 40 degrees of flaps and reduced airspeed, in addition I trimmed for 63 KIAS. This caused considerable floating, but put me above the glide slope. So, I reduced airspeed once again to descend and I pushed the nose forward to lose altitude and touch down just passed the number "4" on the runway. The info via ATIS was reporting winds out of 360 @ 9. I brought a little more speed than intended into the ground effect and as I flew in ground effect the A/C yawed to the left and I over corrected to the right thus causing a bigger Yaw and as the A/C touched down, it touched down on the right side of the center line with the nose pointed at a 45-degree angle to the left. It felt like the right main gear touched down first, the left, then the nose wheel. The A/C was going faster than anticipated, so my rudder inputs/ brake inputs upon touch down may have exacerbated the issue. I attempted to keep the A/C on the runway but it was carrying too much speed so I ended up off runway, in the grass, and in the process the right wing struck a runway sign and caused some damage mid wing and underneath to the aluminum alloy. I was able to control the A/C to a stop and maintained contact with ATC. ATC gave me clearance to get back onto the runway and hold short of taxiway Charlie. A/C was maneuverable to its parking spot. Once I received clearance from ground control, I continued to the parking spot and commenced my shutdown procedures.

Looking back on it, the main issues that led to the incident were: I Brought too much speed with me into ground effect and I did not remain in ground effect long enough to let some of the speed dissipate before I touched down. Also, I gave too much rudder input to counter the initial rudder input given in an attempt to stay on the centerline. Having said that, if I could go back in time, the best option, given the exact same approach, is to do an immediate go around.

Since the incident, I have been educating myself further on crosswind landings and different techniques that are out there via the internet, in addition to performing remedial touch and go's with a qualified instructor on board. These remedial sessions have increased my confidence and have been of great help in an attempt to improve my crosswind landings.

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Mario Urueta.

MARIO URUETA