Welcome to Chesapeake Ranch

Airport Arrival Pilot Brief

Background
These notes are intended to decrease your anxiety and reduce the potential for surprises while operating at the Chesapeake Ranch Airport. They got longer than anticipated, indeed, it takes longer to read them than to fly into the airport. The special characteristics of the airspace over the Chesapeake Ranch Airport, MD50, create the need to operate in an area more confined than that which you may be accustomed to. MD50 resides in restricted area R-4007, and inside the Class D airspace of the Patuxent Naval Air Station. If you wish, you may contact Patuxent Approach Control (ATC), 122.05, to gain entry to R-4007 when it is active, which is much of the time on working days and some of the time on weekends and holidays. Approach Control may be too busy to provide services, in which case you may choose to divert to Duke airport (2W6). Patuxent tower, 123.7, should be contacted prior to entering the Class D airspace if approach control has not cleared you to 'Chesapeake Ranch'. While it is always correct to contact Patuxent Approach and/or Patuxent Tower, it is not required if you choose to fly the VFR corridor which has been provided by Patuxent Air Traffic Control for VFR operations at MD50. Most pilots choose to use the corridor. The same traffic pattern is used for ATC directed arrivals and corridor arrivals. The only difference is that ATC directed arrivals should use the normal 45 degree upwind or downwind leg entry, while corridor arrivals use the path described below. Please avoid making a long shallow high speed straight in approach.

The traffic pattern is constrained by an ATC memorandum of authorization to be within 1 mile of the MD50 airport, and below 800 feet MSL (which is typically 650 to 700 feet AGL). You should plan on using this pattern even if you fly an ATC directed arrival in order to fit into the traffic smoothly. An entry/departure corridor one mile wide aligned on an inbound course of 153 degrees magnetic is defined for corridor arrivals. This corridor contains arrival and departure traffic, possibly head to head, at the same altitude, keep your eyes outside the aircraft looking for traffic. Aircraft not equipped with radio may be encountered, do not assume that radio silence means no traffic.

General Notes
The airport is located in a residential area, in rolling hills that are densely covered with trees. The tree cover obscures the houses, the hills and the airport. Although the runway can in no way be classified as a forest landing site, if you are accustomed to high speed flat approaches, you will be putting on a demonstration of

your Clevelands. The locals, while friendly, need little to no encouragement to critique your landing, unmercifully. MD50 is a 2500 foot lighted asphalt runway, which is roughly twice as long as most Pilot Operating Handbooks specify as landing distance over a 50 foot obstacle. When is the last time you demonstrated to yourself that you could achieve the POH figures? The lower than is now common pattern altitude, 650 to 700 feet AGL, and the surrounding tree cover, render the touchdown zone obscured unless a pattern is used which is much smaller than the allowed one mile maximum radius, a normal left hand pattern not more than 1500 feet lateral distance from the runway is suggested. Even better, stay within gliding distance of the runway in your landing configuration, as there is no place to go if it gets very quiet. The key to comfort in the pattern is to slow the airplane down. A maximum speed of 105 knots in the corridor and 90 knots in the pattern is suggested. Get the gear down and the aircraft trimmed before you arrive. Consider making your final approach slow, with little or no power. Minimize energy and maximize the angle of descent if you wish to come close to POH landing figures. If you can't touchdown in the first 1000 feet of runway at near stall speed, on the main gear, or are uncomfortable in the pattern, divert to Duke airport, 2W6, and call your host to come get you. You may be able to raise someone on the CTAF who will contact your host or come get you, but the frequency is not regularly guarded.

Use the CTAF of 122.7 as indicated below to inform and be informed of traffic. This CTAF frequency is in use at Cambridge airport, Maryland airport and others, please avoid stepping on other users.

Chesapeake Ranch Airport is a private non-commercial airport owned and operated by the Property Owners Association of Chesapeake Ranch Estates (POACRE) for the exclusive use of it's members and their guests. There are no commercial facilities or services available. That said, you will find a warm welcome at MD50, as you should expect in southern Maryland. Whatever you need, someone in the community will be able to help you find it. After your arrival, take the time to ask one of the local pilots any questions you may have.

The operating rules contained in the 'Information Sheet for Chesapeake Ranch Airport' are the definitive guide for operating at MD50. If you feel that these notes contradict the Information Sheet, the Information Sheet has precedence. This document is not about rules, but rather suggestions which you may choose to ignore. The only rules which are referred to herein are the 800 ft MSL hard ceiling, 1nm maximum radius from the airport and 1 nm wide corridor. Even these can be avoided under ATC direction.

The grass area on the north side of the runway west of the windsock is used by pilots preferring to operate on grass. It is suggested that you not use the grass until you have had an opportunity to personally inspect the area on the ground. It is suggested that you not land nor taxi on the grass, especially on the south side of the runway, until you have performed a ground inspection. After a heavy rain, avoid the grass entirely until you accumulate a detailed familiarity with the characteristics of the surface. Stay on the hard surface, hardstand near the windsock, and grass parking area northeast of the windsock. Look for assistance from your host only if they are knowledgeable pilots. Avoid the tempting long gravel taxiway at the north east end of the field, especially if your aircraft has little prop clearance. If you are unsure of the safety of taxiing, shut down and enlist help in moving your aircraft to a suitable parking place. If you are staying overnight, please bring tiedown ropes. If you forget, provision will be made, but you may feel more secure with ropes that you know.

Runway lights are available, 5 clicks on CTAF. First time arrivals at night are discouraged. You should familiarize yourself with the field in daylight.

The primary wind indicator is the windsock, located on the north side of the runway about 1000 feet from the approach end of runway 31. Look for flags, smoke, water conditions and tree leaves for additional information. The wind is frequently from the northeast, a direct crosswind. Under these conditions, most local pilots will use runway 13 as the proximity of trees tends to decrease the crosswind component (or at least they think it does). Whenever the wind velocity is above 10 knots, expect to experience wind shear as you descend below the trees. When the wind is above 15 knots, significant turbulence below 150 feet AGL may be expected. Near sunset,

runway 31 may be unusable due to glare from the sun. The wind obtained from Patuxent tower, less than 5 miles away, is frequently different from that at MD50.

A full circuit around the pattern, in close, when arriving is recommended to study wind conditions, identify approach obstacles, plan go around points and examine taxi alternatives. Be alert for mowers and golf carts engaged in airport maintenance. Be alert for a variety of unauthorized objects on the airport including sunbathers, walkers, runners, bicyclists, bird fanciers, berry pickers, firemen and deer. Make a low pass if necessary to announce your presence and to encourage them to depart, but do not assume that they know what to do when an aircraft approaches.

Flying the Corridor
Plan on intercepting a 160 degree inbound course to MD50 five to six miles northwest of the field at the pattern altitude of 770 feet MSL (nominally 700 feet). Be sure to remain below 800 feet MSL. Slow to 105 knots if able. If you line up with the four lane highway (Rt.4) where it closely parallels the gas line 5 miles out, you will be properly positioned and on course. Please see picture Course 160, 5nm Out. The building at 11 o'clock, 1 mile, is a school. Beyond the school are four large white gas storage tanks which are often visible 25nm out. The field is not visible at this time.

Course 160, 5nm Out

Note: The prescribed course is 153 degrees inbound, but the 160 course suggested has better landmarks and is within the corridor.

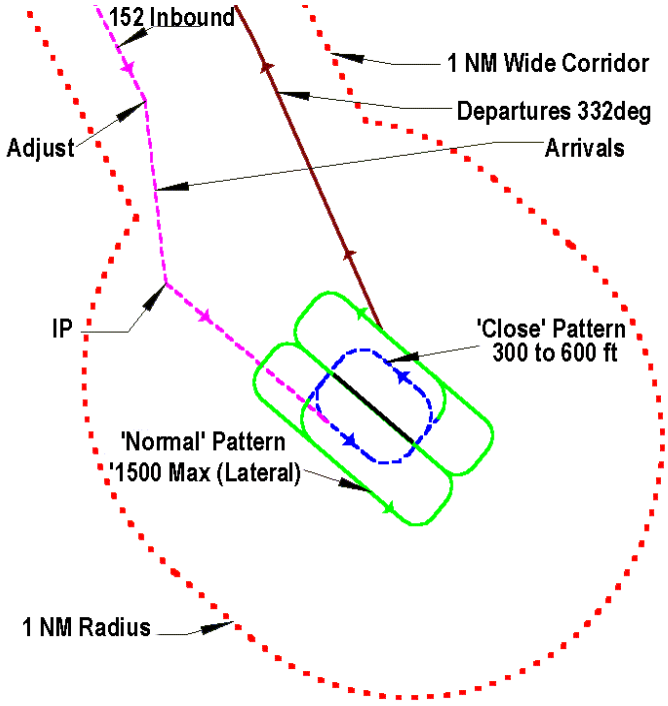
On course, at 3nm, see picture Report Country Club at 3nm. You have just penetrated R-4007. The building in the foreground is a church complex. The large triangular grassy area in the center of the picture is a golf course. Transmit on CTAF, "Chesapeake Ranch traffic, 1234, Country Club Inbound, Chesapeake Ranch". Aircraft in the pattern will respond with their position. Maintain the inbound course, look for traffic. Keep the country club on your left. There will be a microwave tower to your right. The field is not visible at this time.

Report Country Club at 3mn

The path so far described is intended to bring you down the western edge of the corridor, leaving the eastern edge for departing traffic. The entry to the pattern will be at a 20 to 35 degree angle to an extended upwind leg for runway 13, but from the 'wrong' side. See the pattern diagram.

A lake more than a mile long, roughly parallel to your course at 1 o'clock will become visible at two miles out and before the field is recognized. The field is less than a mile to the left (east) of the lake, nearer to the bay. When the field becomes visible at your 11 o'clock, see picture Lake at 1 O'clock, adjust course as necessary (probably to the right) to intercept an extended upwind 13 leg 3/4 nm northwest of the runway threshold, or just put the lake 300 feet to the right of the airplane.

If someone else reports, "Country Club Inbound", respond with your position.



Airport Traffic Pattern Diagram

Lake at 1 O'Clock

See picture, View from IP, for a view down runway 13 at the extended upwind 13 Intercept Point. Turn upwind 13, and if conditions permit, announce, "Chesapeake Ranch traffic, 1234, Upwind 13 Initial, Chesapeake Ranch". Do not proceed further southeast than the sandy beach at the south end of the lake, if you get that far, you have missed the airport (an unlikely event).

View from IP

Fly a close in (300 to 600ft) upwind 13 leg to assess wind and surface conditions. Note the windsock and parking area. See picture Upwind 13.

Upwind 13

Plan a crosswind leg close to the numbers (much closer than shown in picture Crosswind 13, Final 31).

Crosswind 13 Final 31

The view from the downwind to 13 is shown in picture Downwind 13.

Make as many circuits as you need to fully assess the situation. Make all crosswind legs close to the numbers to improve your view and to remain clear of the final approach paths. When you have made a runway choice,

announce, "Chesapeake Ranch traffic, 1234, Landing (31 or 13), (Position), Chesapeake Ranch". Remember to adjust your base and final legs for the 650 AGL pattern if you are accustomed to a 1000 AGL pattern. Make a low pass if you need to more closely examine the final approach path. If someone else reports, "Country Club Inbound", respond with your position.

Downwind 13

Departures

Depart the pattern from the downwind 13 leg by turning to a course of 333 degrees before reaching the abeam position for runway 13. Plan on keeping to the right (east) side of the corridor. When departing runway 31, if you have adequate climb performance, turn right to quickly intercept this path after takeoff, avoiding incoming traffic. Otherwise, climb in the pattern to pattern altitude, and depart from downwind 13. Transmit on CTAF your intentions prior to initiating your take off roll, "Chesapeake Ranch traffic, 1234, Departing (31 or 13), Chesapeake Ranch". Keep the country club on the left side of the airplane. At the country club, transmit, "Chesapeake Ranch traffic, 1234, Country Club outbound, Chesapeake Ranch" Remain below 800 MSL until 1/2 mile north of the country club and keep the speed below 105 knots.