

We made it across Atlantic

Saturday, 09 June 2007

Last segment of our cross Atlantic was the most eventful. We departed Reykjavik, Iceland, for

Dublin, Ireland . Weather was good with few clouds at 3500 and icing level at 6000 feet. We climbed to flight level 110, which was over the top of the clouds.

Two hours in to our flight over the

Atlantic we run in to light clouds. Outside temperature was -8 degrees and we started to get a little ice on our wings. We immediately requested higher flight level of 170 and started to climb before they cleared us. Temperature was -16 degrees at FL170 and we were not building ice, but to get a little more buffering we requested FL190.

With less than 10 knots of head wind, we had plenty of fuel to make it to London without stopping at

Dublin , which was a fuel stop. We requested direct to London for

Luton airport. We were cleared to our requested destination. Once over Scotland, We knew we made it over

North Atlantic and it was a moment of rejoice.

An hour before landing at Luton, the

Control

Center informed us that there are no ground handlers available and we can't go to

Luton . We requested to land at Birmingham airport that is about 200 miles north of

London to call and make other arrangements. After landing and clearing immigration, we were able to get a ground handler at Stansted airport.

We departed

Birmingham for Stansted. As we were approaching Stansted, It was getting late at night and the famous

London fog was causing low visibility and overcast. The ceiling was 300 feet and getting lower. Stansted Approach asked for our conformation, "N266DC the ceiling is now approaching 200 feet, would you like to proceed on ILS". We accepted the approach and descended on the ILS to 200 feet above the ground, and we were still in the clouds. At that point we realized that is as low as we want to get. We pulled up and executed a missed approach. At that point the controller suggested for us to go to

Luton that has a higher ceiling of about 400 feet, and getting lower, or divert to Southend with 1100 feet ceiling. We accepted Southend. On the way to Southend, Radar Controller said "N266DC you are now leaving my radar area, radar service is terminated, resume on navigation on your own". The feeling of being in the clouds and the Controller is telling you that you are on your own is indescribable. We are thinking, "can they do this?" We immediately requested to divert to

Luton since it was in his radar area. After all

Luton was the air port that we wanted to go to start with.

At

Luton , we had to try the approach twice. We made one missed approach and landed the second approach, coming out of the clouds at about 175 feet above ground and finally got our feet on the ground.Â

We will depart

London on June 9th at 7 am.Â

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