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THIS DATE IN HISTORY
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season-opening winning streak at 13 games

Love at first flight

■ **Plymouth tennis player Neu plans on becoming airline pilot**

When tennis practice ends, some Plymouth players might go to their job or grudgingly do homework.

Panther senior Braden Neu sometimes drives to the Sheboygan airport to fly a plane.

"A lot of people want to come with," he said.

Neu, who has his student pilot license, has already taken teammates Gaven Marx and Ryan McEvoy for a ride in a four-seat Cessna 182.

"They both thought it was really cool and they want to go again," he said.

Marx has done it twice. The first time was in late September with Neu and his mother, who is a flight instructor.

"I thought it was going to be interesting to see Plymouth from a different perspective," Marx said.

They flew for 45 minutes, although Marx admits he thought it might not last that long when his headset was on the wrong channel and couldn't hear Neu.

"They did a stall, which is like a maneuver where you kill the engine and let the plane free fall for a couple of seconds before you start it back up again," Marx said. "I didn't really know what was happening, and

I thought we were going down. But then they got it under control. It was really cool; exhilarating."

And it actually helps on the

tennis court, especially at doubles, since Marx plays No. 2 and Neu is at No. 3.

"When you're playing tennis as a team, you have to com-

pletely trust the person," Marx said. "And I had to have complete trust in Braden the entire time we were up there."

Not only is Neu's mom a pi-

lot, his stepfather - who is from Alaska - flies charter jets for his job (which includes pro golfer Rory McIlroy).

His stepdad also owns a T-28 Trojan - think Vietnam-era fighter trainer aircraft used by the Air Force and Navy - that he flies at air shows.

Neu was in sixth grade when he was asked to go for a ride, and he even got to steer the plane as they flew over Road America and Crystal Lake.

"Then I kind of fell in love with it," Neu said. "It was pretty massive for only fitting two people, and it was really loud."

Neu says he was still shaking a bit after landing, but continued to fly with his parents.

He never took it seriously, however, until he began flight lessons last year.

Neu wants to be a pilot for American Airlines and is leaning toward attending the University of Oklahoma to study for it.

He hasn't flown alone yet, but is hoping to after two more months of experience.

"There's so much stuff you have to remember, in case anything goes wrong or something like that," he said.

"But it'll be a lot of fun."



BRADEN NEU plays No. 3 doubles this year. - Photo by Sara Baltus

PLYMOUTH'S BRADEN NEU already has his student pilot license. - Submitted photos



JEFF CORNETT (left), stands in front of his T-28 Trojan with stepson Braden Neu.

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