



Skywriter



Monthly Newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club

September 1991

View From Above

by Paul Hemingson



The highlight this month was the 8th Annual Red Deer International Airshow (August 3 and 4, 1991). Club members participated in both the Static and Fly-By events.

I flew my Hiperlite Biplane (I-EXP) during Friday's mid-day thermal bumps to make last minute checks and arrangements for display, hanging and registration. On Friday evening Todd McArthur, in his two-place amphibious Beaver I-EAN, flew in wing-to-wing with Stu Simpson in his single Beaver I-BKG and Ron Sondergaard in his Crusader I-FOG. Later on, Bev Befus arrived with his Merlin I-CIW. New kid on the block, Ted Orlick, also came in. I understand they all had a smooth and uneventful evening flight into Red Deer. Hats off to these members for participating. Next year I hope we can get more birds to Red Deer as well as a more interesting demo flight. Three months ago we had a dozen or more pilots intent on going but it dwindled to five for various reasons.

Now is the time to get our ideas together and practise up for a more dynamic program next year. Your thoughts?

The success of our Club display (and personal comfort) must go to Howie Bowie for building the overhead tarp to keep us cool. We would have fried our brains without it. Thanks Howie. Now if we just had a bar and...

Thanks also to Chris Kirkman for getting a Club banner made up to skirt our information table. We will use it again. We signed up a few new members.

Gord Tebitt deserves special recognition for trucking all our stuff to Red Deer (and back) as well as "gophering" for fuel. Without Gord's help, we would all have been greatly inconvenienced.

Our Fly-By demo on Saturday and Sunday was well accepted judging by audience applause. Lots of folks also stopped to chat with the UL owners and also pick-up brochures from our display tent. Thanks to all the members who stopped by to help out and support us. Ken Eastham got hold of a dandy photo board which we used to display photos - thanks Ken. We are looking forward to your videos. Commander Collins was present to help out and handprop various aircraft including Staff Sergeant Sondergaard's Crusader.

Getting out of Red Deer on Sunday evening can be hectic. Bev, Todd, Ron and Stu got an early clearance to take off from taxiway Alpha around 6:00 PM while Runways 29 and 34 were being used simultaneously to exit the larger aircraft. Some joker in an unregistered Beaver UL also took the opportunity to take off without radio or authorization and made all of us look like incompetents. He wasn't from our Club...but he needs a little "clubbing". If you know him, lay a few verbs and adjectives on him. We don't need his image in the UL community.

I don't like to rush any phase of my flight so I elected to wait for the girdlock to break-up. About 6:30 PM I got clearance to take off from Alpha and climbed out over a half-dozen aircraft holding for the active. I climbed to 4700 feet and had to

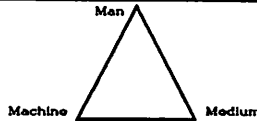
compensate for drift because of the quartering headwind (approximately SE at 10 mph). We always seem to fly against the wind and against the sun. By watching the cars on Highway #2, I could judge that I was keeping pace with the holiday traffic. Airplanes are supposed to be faster than cars, so I flew miles west so the ground-bound folks wouldn't get the satisfaction of beating me home.

En route, I raised Ron and Todd on 122.75 and passed over them as they were setting up to land at Olds-Didsbury for fuel. I angled off to the southwest and headed for a few farmer friends north of Cremona to say hello. This added 10-15 miles to my trip but I wanted them to know I was OK. I had prearranged to fly over/stop depending on circumstances. From there, I followed Highway #22 south and skirted the west side of Springbank control zone. Thanks to my trusty ICOM A20 radio, I was able to inform Springbank Tower of my position since I had overheard some in-bound traffic and didn't feel like being broadsided on such a nice day. I had a conversation with the controller on duty about the "I" in UL registration and, after reporting the traffic and clearing their zone, was wished a safe flight home. I arrived home at Priddis around 8:30 - tired but wired with ideas on how to improve things for next year.

Wayne Woloshyn of Transport Canada phoned me about the recent number of UL agspray accidents. I don't condone/condemn the use of ULs for spraying but, if a guy is going to spray, he needs information on how heavily loaded ULs respond in the high density altitude environment. Safety first! I will reply to Wayne with my own ideas and yours -- got some??

Safety Corner

by Paul Hemingson



Remove Before Flight

"Remove Before Flight". The bright red flagging hangs from the pitot cover, protecting it from insects/dirt that are wanting to enter and potentially plug it off. It reminds us that our airspeed indicator is a fundamental instrument and we guard it accordingly. But, maybe it should also remind us to remove a few other fundamental things before flight.

For example, maybe we need a bright red flag to remind us if we are hurrying the pre-flight or rushing preparations for the flight. A bright red mental flag that contains a few cryptic yet prophetic words. It might read something like "Remove Unsafe Practices".

Some other red flags to remove?

One might be "Remove Your Ego". Maybe you had yours removed when you were 12 years old but most of us did not. Are you contemplating doing something foolish or dangerous? We all do from time to time. Like impressing your friends with a mini airshow or buzzing up the locals. Think again! Many a pilot has got

himself in trouble by not removing his ego. I just finished reading a book about Pioneer Bush Pilot Noel Wien of Alaska. He is described as a quiet and competent man who did not fall to machoism. The author describes Wien as a cautious, methodical practitioner who carefully planned each flight. He survived over 40 years of bush and mountain flying where scores of more flamboyant, but less prudent pilots did not.

Another red flag might read "Remove the Temptations". This could apply to lots of situations. For example, the temptation to not check on the weather when you are contemplating a cross country. Or worse yet, failing to not plan your trip at all. No line on a map, no alternate airport pre-chosen, no en-route estimate of ground speed or fuel consumption or ETA. We need to be receptive to en-route feedback that tells us how our flight is progressing. If we don't recognize the feedback, or do not take corrective action, we may be quickly limiting our options. Are you familiar with the destination airport and procedures? Just "winging it" without some a priori and en-route calculations can quickly turn a routine flight (if there is such a thing) into a case study for crisis

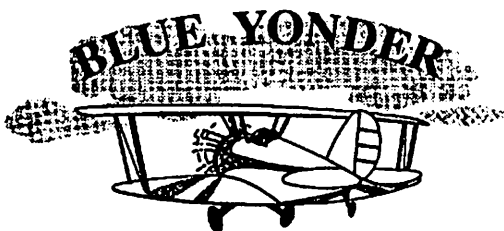
management.

"Remove Diversions" might be another red flag. Don't let yourself be distracted or swayed by others. Plan your own flight and assessment of potential problems and your preventative and contingent action(s) if a problem arises. For example, if you are contemplating a "group flight" with machines of different speeds, a number of seemingly minor problems can grow into bigger ones. First off, you can anticipate that separation will increase with time. Who is leading? Who is following? Where is the guy I spotted a minute ago one-half mile away at the 2:00 o'clock position? Who had the frequencies and radio to lead us in? Where is he? It's a big sky and a loose formation can become a lost formation. And by blindly following a leader who is not now in sight, do you know where you are? Or were you distracted earlier and not paying attention to pilotage? You can see how quickly routine turns into crisis. Don't be pressured to comply/participate if you do not feel comfortable with someone else's plan.

Another red flag might read "Recheck the Mundane". It has been said that we retain only 20% of what we read. Our memories are short. A safe pilot recognizes he can't trust his memory and uses checklists. How many of us have forgotten to reset our altimeters at take-off. Not a big deal but it kind of gnaws at you when you are cruising along and wondering what your true altitude is -- especially when you check the map and find that there are some radio towers en route and you are not sure if you are above the tops?? But gnawing can turn to an ulcerated bite when you are guessing that you are at the 1000 foot AGL circuit height of the destination airport. Aircraft in the circuit are all at the same altitude for good reason -- i.e. its easier to spot another aircraft at your same level than one higher or lower. Are you at 800 feet, 1200 feet?? Kind of hard to tell the difference isn't it! Enough said, use checklists and this won't happen.

One of the biggest barriers to safety is clear and lucid forethought. Any pilot can increase his effectiveness and safety by applying a little thought to what he is doing, why he is doing it and how he plans to do it. And decisions made on the ground are likely to be more rational than our thought processes once a crisis manifests itself. Recognize the feedback you are getting from your instruments, the weather and your progress en route so that you can take timely corrective action.

In summary, when you remove the pitot cover, consider removing a few other flags.



AVIATION

936-5767

- Flight Training
- Ground School
- Rentals
- Intro Flights \$20.
- Gift Certificates

Located at the Indus-Winter Aire-Park

Dealers for

Macair Merlin

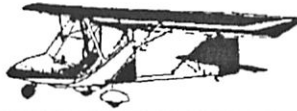
- 2 place
- fully enclosed
- cabin heat

T.E.A.M. mini-MAX

Build and fly this popular kit for only \$6500.00

Guest Article

by Stu Simpson



When was the last time you had a real, honest-to-goodness adventure. Something that, when you tell someone about it, they say, "Boy, that sounds exciting.?"

And have you ever felt like you live in the wrong era? That maybe your spirit belongs to a time 60 years ago, when barnstormers roamed the skies at the whim of the wind?

I know some guys who feel like that. And together, we were lucky to find one of those true-life adventures not too long ago. Let me tell you about it.

We had been planning this for weeks -- a weekend trip to the Red Deer International Airshow. Todd, Ron, and I agreed to meet at Indus airport to fly our at 6:00 p.m. So, after I hopped over from my strip about 25 miles west, three of us set out heading north.

Todd, in his 2-seat Beaver on floats, and I in my 42hp single Beaver, flew in an echelon right formation the whole way. Ron, flying his one-of-a-kind Crusader, initially flew on ahead of us but returned and joined the formation to make a V in the sky.

The first half of the flight was punctuated by moderate thermal activity until we reached the Beiseker highway. Suddenly, as if by divine order, the thermals ended, and the air became rock steady.

So, feeling ever so much like barnstormers from the 30's we continued northward and on to adventure.

Our first stop was at Olds/Didsbury, an airport situated directly between the two towns whose names it bears. The landing was uneventful and we spent time checking our machines and using the amenities while we waited for my wife to arrive with extra gas for my plane.

She did arrive a short time later and, after refueling, we again took off and continued north. Red Deer, this weekend's aviation Mecca, was less than an hour away.

Over Olds, Todd contacted Red Deer Tower on their frequency and told them of our impending arrival. The controller told us to continue inbound and contact him again when we were

over Innisfail, about seven miles south of his airport.

We droned on, Todd and I in perfect formation, and Ron out front, sometimes hard to see in the distance. Every now and then Todd would turn his body around and hold his hand up to his face. For a minute, I thought he was wiping bug guts out of his eyes. Then I realized he had a small pocket camera and was taking my picture.

Meanwhile, the air had gotten a little cooler and smoother as the sun reached down to find the Rockies. The trees, only a few hundred feet below, were casting the long, cool shadows they do every summer evening. And the smells of the canola and wheat fields were reaching up to tickle our senses. In short, our world just couldn't have been any better.

At Innisfail, Todd called Red Deer and we were cleared into the zone. Soon, we could see the airport in the distance and my excitement grew. We were on the doorstep of participating in our first airshow.

(continued on page 4)

Classified

ABC Ballistic Chute - never used, hermetically sealed, excellent - \$1000. OBO. Paul Hemingson 931-2363.

Ivo Prop - updated 3-blade, ground adjustable, 60", composite blades. New - \$300. OBO. Paul Hemingson 931-2363.

Rotax 503 - single carb, excellent condition. \$1200. OBO. Paul Hemingson 931-2363.

Braid - for shielding ignition circuits, \$2.00 per foot to CUFC members. Also shielded wire and connectors. Bob Kirkby 569-9541 or 291-5560.

Ritz Standard A - completed and ready for covering, includes covering materials, Zenoah engine, \$2000.00. Jim Creasser 226-0180.

Lazair - Estate sale. Needs recovering but selling for parts. \$1000. OBO. 262-3959.

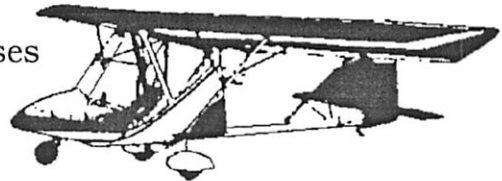
Classified ads are free to CUFC members. Call Bob Kirkby, 569-9541 to place your ad.

Fun Flight Aviation

266-4823 or 936-5645

Dealers for:

- Beaver RX Enterprises
- Full Lotus Floats
- Acfield Aviation
- Ultra-pro Headsets



We also carry a wide variety of ultralight books, license holders, log books and general knic-knacs.

Repairs, Sales and Service is are Specialty

Call us for all your ROTAX parts

(Guest - continued from page 3)

We were eventually cleared to the left-hand downwind for runway 16. As we joined the circuit, still in close formation to impress those on the ground, I glanced down and saw Red Deer's ramp cluttered with all manner of flying devices. There were tow A-10's, some CT-33's, a CF-18, a C-130, the Snowbirds, an old blue Cessna 195, and even a CF-104. There were dozens more aircraft as well, all in the same airshow we were part of. I thought this could well be what heaven is like.

The controller brought me back to reality as I listened to him clear us to land. Ron had just turned final as Todd peeled off to join base. I continued on for about another 15 seconds to properly space my arrival, then made a steep, graceful turn onto base, then final.

The landing was good and I followed Todd onto the taxiway. The airport even had those little "FOLLOW ME" vehicles to guide us in. We taxied in, under the curious gaze of onlookers, to our assigned display/parking areas and shut down.

The ultralights had arrived.

We wheeled our planes into a hangar



Stu Simpson taxiing in on foot.

for the night and set out to find the pilot's registration tent.

Once there, we each received an envelope with copious information on the city and the airshow. But the most important article in the envelope was our performer's pass.

That little pin allowed us virtually free run of the entire airport for the whole weekend. We could get in any gate, anytime. We were allowed onto the flight line when everyone else wasn't. It even allowed us to park at the terminal, which was the best parking

available that weekend. It was like being given the keys to the toy store, which is exactly what an airshow is to any self respecting pilot. We were beginning to like this V.I.P. stuff.

The next morning we had a pancake breakfast and headed off the the morning pilot's briefing. We learned the airshow schedule (The ultralights were third, after a banner tow and the waterbombers), the minimum distance from the crowd, safe bailout areas and general safety information.

It's was great to see that the airshow organizers treated us just as well as the other performers. General aviation has been slow to take the ultralight community seriously. But the Red Deer Airshow people, from the great ground crews that helped us immeasurably, to the controllers and the show organizers treated us like royalty.

After the briefing, excited as school boys, we headed back to get our machines ready for the show.

At five to ten we wheeled our planes out past the crowd line and began our warm up. There would be four of us: Bev in his Merlin, Todd, moi, and Ron. We would takeoff on the taxiway nearest the crowd. Then we were to fly abbreviated circuits, always having someone well within sight of the crowd. On one pass, Bev would dive his Merlin and make a sharp pull-up to show the plane's climb ability.

While these shenanigans were going on, Paul Hemmingson, the president of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club, would be on the microphone explaining how ultralights are no longer kites, lawnchairs and chainsaw motors and just look how far we've come, thank you very much.

(continued on page 5)



Ron Sondergaard and his Crusader.



Todd McArthur and his amphib Beaver.

(Guest - continued from page 4)

The water bomber was on its last pass when the tower cleared us for takeoff, cautioning us about possible turbulence from the bombers.

One by one we firewalled the throttles and blasted off into airshowdom. The show went off as planned and we even got a little extra airtime because the waterbombers had finished early. At one point, during the performance, an inbound P-51 Mustang called and asked for clearance to the airport. The controller told him there was an airshow in progress and he would have to wait.

Imagine, a famous P-51 Mustang waiting because the ultralights were showing off. I loved it.

We spent the rest of the day sitting with our planes answering questions and watching the airshow. I heard a lot of comments like, "You'd never get me up in that thing!". But mostly people, enjoyed seeing our planes and learning a bit more about them. One man, examining my right wingtip, asked his wife -- "Hey, honey, have you ever see an airplane with zippers before?".

We were able to watch the show from inside our cordons around our planes



The Ultralight flight line.

and in the shade of the wings. I felt sorry for the rest of the crowd who had to sit packed together on the scorching tarmac.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention some other people who helped make our weekend great. Those people are Paul Hemmingson and Gord Tebbutt. Paul was the liason between our club and the show people and did an excellent job of arranging things for us. Gord courageously manned the club Display tent both days of the show and set up a great display. He also answered countless questions and

fostered a lot of good will toward the ultralight community. Our hats are off to both of you.

There was a debriefing, at the end of the day, and the organizers told everyone the show went very well. But they asked if the ultralights could spice up their act some, suggesting we fly a little lower and maybe add a few more manouvers to shake things up.

Todd and Bev and I got together immediately and eagerly started making plans about how we might change things. We settled on a routine where Todd and I would takeoff last, in formation, and fly the first circuitry that way. Then, I would pull off high and right, crossing over top of him and into a right 360, eventually dropping into last position. Todd wanted to show off his retractable landing gear so he would be flying a little lower on his passes. Ted, a friend who had flown up with Bev, would fly the Merlin. He planned on another dive, then pull-up and then a landing between the taxiway and the runway -- to demonstrate rough field capability. Ron would be out front this time and Paul would once again handle the P.R. on the P.A.

We then cleared all of the plans with Ken Ferrar, the Transport Canada rep at the show. He said the plans were good as long as we directed any turns away from the crowd and stayed further than 300' from the crowd line. Piece of cake.

The next morning, Sunday, was beautiful. The temperature was warm and the winds light from the southeast.

Our show went just as we had planned, though there were a few very minor problems. The southeast wind caused my turn to go a little wider than I had bargained for and it took
(continued on page 6)

Air-Flair 
AVIATION AND
PILOT SUPPLIES
Div. of Checklist Pilot Supplies Ltd.

Fall Features

Leather Jackets

\$199.00

Reg. 325.00

Clearcom Headset,
case and liquid ear
seals

\$163.95

Reg. 184.85

575 Palmer Road N.E., Calgary, AB T2E 7G4
Tel: 250-3368 FAX: 291-1007

(Guest - continued from page 5)

me a little longer to get into the #4 slot. And when I tried to land I had to land long because a T-28 was doing its run-up just off of the taxiway we were landing on. Had I landed regularly, I would have been chewed to pieces by his propwash. After touching down I had to skew off into the grass to avoid rear ending Todd. No problem, just annoying. And still heaps of fun.

The crowd enjoyed our show. My wife overheard several comments from people who were impressed with our formation takeoff and Ted's landing.

We passed the day watching the show and checking out the ground displays. I had met Capt. Jim "Z.B." Spaulding, a USAF A-10 pilot the day before. On Sunday he spent about an hour showing me around his Warthog. It was a real treat to sit in the cockpit (while everyone else watched from outside the cordon) as he explained the various instruments and controls. It is an enormous contrast to an ultralight cockpit, which often has nothing more than a yaw string, a tach, and a Hall Brothers ASI. But surprisingly, Z.B. was also just as envious of our

ultralights. He wants to get himself a low and slow bug-smasher and figured a Beaver would be just the ticket.

Just before we parted company, we traded souvenirs. I gave him my official Airshow cap in return for a shoulder patch from the 23rd Tactical Fighter Wing -- the famous Flying Tigers. I think it was a good trade.

Then, before we wanted it to be, the show was over and it was time to go home. We felt like kids who had no more Christmas presents to open.

We finally left Red Deer at 6:20 p.m. and headed south to Olds/Didsbury. Just as we left the zone Todd contacted the tower to bid them farewell. The controller thanked us very much for coming, said we were great, and that he looked forward to seeing us next year. It was an excellent way to end the weekend.

The flight to O/D with Ron and Todd was smooth, pleasant and uneventful. We quickly topped off our tanks, shook hands, congratulated each other on a great show, and took off heading our separate ways -- Todd and Ron southeast around Calgary and on to Indus, and I went south around the west end of the city toward Black Diamond.

It was only when I had gone about 15 miles from O/D that I realized the wind had not interfaced with the weatherman to give us favour.

I tuned in to the Calgary airport and was shocked to learn the winds had come up from the southeast at 15kts or better. I began to worry.

At 9:00, I was barely at the north end of Calgary. By 9:10, the sun had just dropped behind the Rocks and I was only west of downtown. I began to think

seriously about alternate landing sites. I didn't think I'd make the Diamond.

The only alternate available to me was Paul Hemmingson's strip, about 15 miles north of mine. I decided to make the decision when I was near his place.

As I drew abeam Paul's strip, I thought I could make my patch. The wind seemed to have eased a little and I still had enough gas. What I was short of, was daylight. It was now 9:25 and if I crossed the ridge that lie ahead of me, there would be no turing back I would either land at Black Diamond, or in Farmer Jones' field.

The flight across that ridge was one of the more stressful experiences in my life. I came head-to-head with that killer disease, Gethomeitis.

I was lucky and did get home, just in time. I touched down at 9:40, still legal, but I'm not sure how safe. My first airshow weekend was over.

Todd and Ron didn't make it back to Indus. They landed safely at a private ultralight strip north of Calgary, realizing they had neither the gas nor the light to continue on. They caught a ride into Calgary and picked their planes the next morning. But Ron had further trouble when an engine problem forced him back into the weeds right after takeoff. Repairs were made and the duo finally made their way back home.

Despite our minor problems (or maybe because of them), the weekend was a magnificent experience from start to finish. We had tested ourselves and our airplanes, and we had triumphed. And of course, it was great to be part of an airshow, a tradition almost as old as aviation itself. I think each of us understands now what it might have felt like to be a barnstormer 60 years ago.

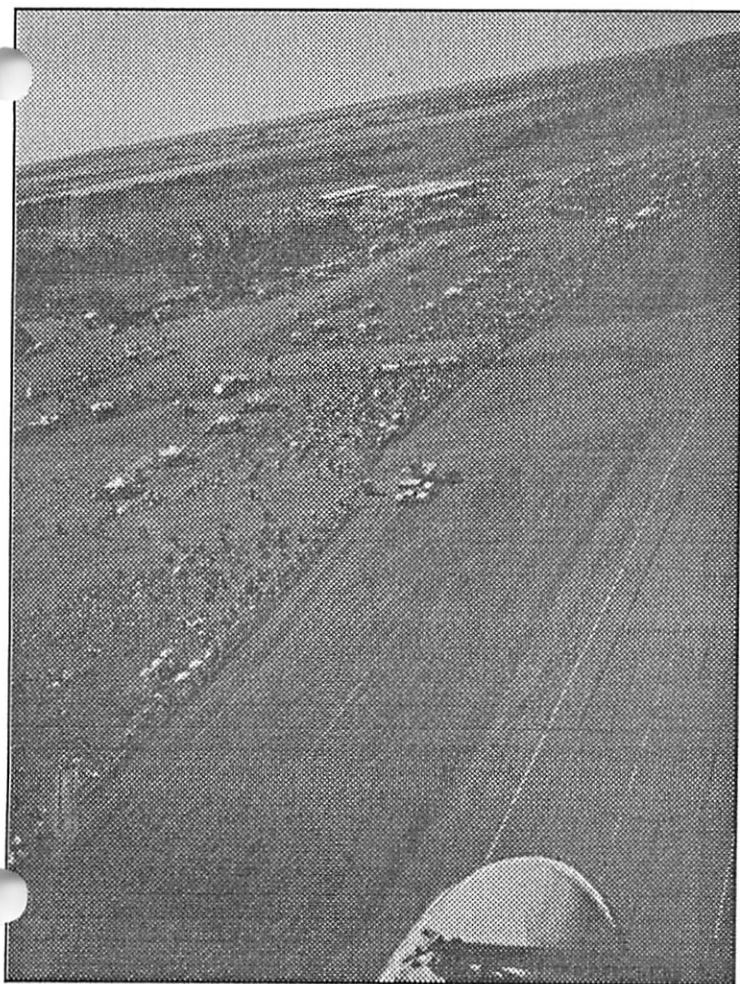
In these days of high-tech and high-speed, it's good to know that a few guys in some ultralight planes can still take to the skies, fly low and slow, and, if they're lucky, discover for themselves one of the last true adventures.

Club Hats

Our new clubs hats are now available. They are red with the black and gold crest in front.

Members - \$5.50

Non-members - \$7.00



The show flight line taken by Todd.