



Skywriter



Monthly Newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club

July 1992

View From Above

by Paul Hemingson



At the June 3, 1992 CUFC meeting I handed out registration forms for attending the Red Deer International Airshow (Aug 1-2/92). We need some help to pull everything together. Particularly some ground support and information booth setup, etc. Please phone Gord Tebutt if you can volunteer. A dozen pilots stepped forward for registration. I hope to get these registrations to the airshow organizers the third week of June so that we can be pre-registered early for accommodation etc. One concern I have is that they may consider our contingent too large and ask us to cut back on numbers, or provide our own accommodation. Any doubling up in rooms would be much appreciated. I propose that those pilots who registered meet at my fly-in on July 1 and perhaps on July 15 to discuss group flight arrangements, the fly-by routine, etc.

We also saw a video that Don Rodgers made on the trip to Banff. Stu Simpson, Gord Keegan and Don made the trip successfully, albeit a bit bumpy enroute home. I commend these guys on this flight into the mountains to prepare themselves for the Abbotsford flight. They picked their weather, their route and planned the flight...and it came off as planned. Their next flight is a two day excursion to Radium the weekend of June 20, 1992.

Don has done some experimenting with different video camera mounts to solve the problems of vibration and camera control. It is not an easy problem to solve. I just bought my first video camera and am finding out now just how difficult it is to mount for

acceptable control and isolation from vibration. Over the summer I will experiment with the video camera and hope to get some interesting footage for future club meetings.

The second item of business at the meeting was an update on the new regulations and recent developments from TC and the various stakeholders. The Central Technical Committee (CTC) has now been formed and is gearing up to tackle the outstanding issues with the new regulations and make a unified proposal to TC. Lindsay Cadenhead, of TC, is spearheading the effort to get a consensus. Essentially, we have been told to get our act together and resolve the problems with training, pilot standards and airworthiness issues. At our June 3 meeting I asked for members to put their names in the hat so that they can be screened and perhaps accepted to do some sub-committee work with UPAC/CTC to solve the problems. Dave Loveman (President of UPAC) has been asked to put together a list of pilots with experience and knowledge. I plan on getting these "member profiles" to Loveman before the end of June, if not sooner.

I got mail. One letter was from Lindsay Cadenhead of TC acknowledging my query regarding continuing the I-xxx registration. Essentially it is being revisited by the CTC. I recommend you read Lindsay's article in the June Canadian UL News. He will be writing a regular column to keep all pilots updated, answer questions, and set the record straight where disinformation has created misconceptions and misunderstandings. This is an

excellent initiative and will help all parties understand the status of negotiations.

Many of you will remember Paul Pontois from a few years back. He is building a Himax from his garage in Quebec. He tells me he will attend Oshkosh this year and welcomes meeting any CUFC members. You can contact Paul at the TEAM (Himax) booth...just leave a message with the appropriate time and place to get together.

Tom Thomas of Eckville wrote to tell me about the use of UL aircraft for agricultural spraying. Tom is a responsible UL pilot and took courses and obtained much training and information before attempting this activity on his own farm. I have been picking his brain for information so that I can write an article on this topic and get in front of those flying farmers who are contemplating this activity. Tom invites any UL pilot to fly into his grass strip...sounds like a nice day trip. Tom's strip is located west of Bentley and 3 km north of the junction of Highways #766 and #12.

Coming Events

July 12 - Try-again fly-in brunch at Bob Kirkby's strip. Fly or drive. Bring a friend. 0800 to 1200 hrs. If it rains again this will be re-scheduled for August. For info call 569-9541

July 19 - Vulcan fly-in breakfast. 0800-1100 hrs.

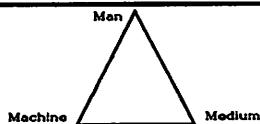
July 25 - Nanton fly-in.

August 1-2 - Red Deer International Airshow. For info call info line 403-340-2333.

August 7-9 - Abbotsford International Airshow, BC. Info line 604-852-4600.

Safety Corner

by Paul Hemingson



Save Yourself

A topic came up the other day with a flying friend of mine. It was about the dangers of our mindset to put personal possessions ahead of personal safety. Basically, we were talking about situations that we (and others) get into and how we react.

For example, if we are driving down an icy road and something occurs that jeopardizes our vehicle, we tend instinctively to take evasive action, the objective being to save our vehicle from getting scratched or dented. We might, for example, try to keep on the road and try to steer around, or brake to avoid the incident. But meanwhile staying on the road in the general direction of our intended course. Staying the course through can sometimes be the wrong course of action. Taking to the ditch is often a last resort, when maybe it should be considered one of our first options.

This got me to thinking about flying and some of my experiences where I felt at the time that my best course of action was to save the airplane. After all, we all have a considerable investment in our machines and no one wants to scratch, dent or generally bend his pride and joy. And I guess it follows that if you get the machine down in one piece, than you will also be just fine. But this attitude can get a guy into trouble.

The problem with this philosophy is that you are betting that you can get the machine down safely. You might and you might not.

I remember one particular engine failure where I tried to extend my glide to a smoother, more acceptable field. This nearly got me into trouble. My objectives were admirable. That nice field that I wanted to reach was a perfect landing out place. The problem was I could not quite reach it, but didn't know it until it was too late. I ended up hastily putting it into a field that gravity, drag and sink rate selected for me. It all happened so quickly that I can't take much credit for the uneventful landing. I just ran out of ideas and airspeed about the time I ran out of altitude.

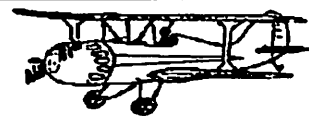
As it turned out, I didn't myself or the machine, and after a few minutes of collecting my thoughts, and correcting

the problem, I managed to take off again. But the outcome could have been worse.

What kept me from making a more prudent decision was the desire to save the machine instead of myself. By

One Pilot's Opinion

by Bob Kirkby



This month, almost the entire newsletter is devoted to Stu's story about the trip he, Todd and I made to Radium. This is definitely the most exciting trip I have made in my airplane yet. Being my first flight into the mountains, and of such long duration, I found it to be both extremely exhilarating and exhausting. It certainly was good to have the Hot Springs waiting for us when we got there. I will leave the rest of the story for you to read in Stu's column, where he has done an excellent job of recounting a great trip.

On the morning of June 7, Stu and I took off from my strip at 0730 hrs bound for Okotoks and the Okotoks Airshow. We stopped at Indus to join up with Todd and found a lineup of ultralights on the taxiway waiting for us. After a quick briefing as to flying positions, etc. 6 airplanes took off, one after the other. Todd lead the way in his amphib Beaver (at 55 mph!), Larry was second in his Merlin, I was third in my Renegade, Stu was fourth in his Rocket Beaver, Tony was fifth in Bev's blue Merlin, and Bev road shotgun in the fastest airplane of the bunch, the Rans SR-7.

Entering the circuit at Okotoks must have been quite a spectacle for those on the ground. We crossed over the field from the west to join the left downwind for Runway 16 in line-a-stern with about 1/4 mile separation. Just as Todd joined downwind, balloons started launching and drifting over the runway. Fortunately there was lots of spacing and we had no close encounters, but at various stages in the landing sequence we had balloons under, over and beside us. As I turned onto the taxiway after landing, I spotted Jim Creasser standing beside the intersection waving us in - nice to see a familiar face. Don Rodgers arrived about a half

adopting the mindset of valuing possessions more than my "hide", I could have ended up with both a broken machine and broken bones.

I think what I did was instinctive. Instinctive yes, but rational NO! I believe I am wiser now and hopefully the next time I am confronted with a situation that imperils me and the machine, I will select an option that considers myself first. Aluminum, dacron, rubber and metal can be replaces...

hour later.

The show people gave us a warm welcome and marshalled us into a grassy area next to the taxiway that they had reserved for any ultralights that may show up. We parked our aircraft in display mode and headed for the pancake breakfast, which was great.

If you didn't make it out to Okotoks that day you missed a great little airshow. There were a couple of Harvards, helicopters, a sailplane, hang gliders, a Pitts, an Ag-sprayer, a gyro and lots of flying types to jaw with. Most of the above put on flying demos.

Stu and I flew out about 1100 and the rest stayed into the afternoon. This was a fun flying event that should be on you "must attend" list for next year.

On another subject, I have been contacted by a company in Calgary by the name of TD Communications. They are non-aviation related dealers for Icom, however, they do carry the Icom handheld VHF transceivers. They quoted me \$652.00 for the A21 and \$550.00 for the A2. If two or more people get together to purchase at the same time they say they will offer a substantial discount.

I will bring some literature to the next CUFC meeting, but in the mean time, if you would like to know more, contact Dean White at 274-4663. Their address is 1007-H 55 Avenue N.E. Or give me a call.

My fly-in which was scheduled for June 14 got severely rained out. I am re-scheduling it for Sunday, July 12, between 0800 and 1200 hrs. Food and refreshments will be available, so fly-in or drive in, weather permitting.

Around The Patch

by Stu Simpson



Running the Gauntlet

It was 6:20 am when I yanked the starter cord on my RX-45 Beaver. I had been awake more than an hour as the Rotax sprang to life and warmed up. A few feet away, Bob was just strapping in to his Renegade bi-plane. We had to hurry if we were going to keep our appointment with Todd. We were slated to rendezvous with him in the air south of Bob's strip.

The wind was light, but gusty, from the north-northwest. I silently wondered if it was the same upstairs and if it would cause any problems for the adventure we'd planned.

I blasted off first and made a right turn to the south. As soon as I lifted the wing, I was catapulted downwind. The winds aloft were 15 - 20 kts. Too bad we weren't headed for Florida today.

I watched Bob takeoff and form up on me and together we headed south for Indus.

Todd wasn't quite ready for takeoff as

we fired past Indus airport. So Bob and I simply turned our noses into the northwind and just kind of hovered over the field, waiting for Todd.

Soon enough he taxied his float-footed 2-seat Beaver to runway 28 and lifted into the early (God, it was early!) morning air. We all turned westward and began a one-and-a-half hour battle with the breeze.

So with a whopping ground-speed of 30 mph, and a crab angle of 30 degrees, we watched the Rockies inch steadily closer. For better or worse, our Rocky Mountain adventure had begun.

The Dragonflies were in the air again, headed this time for Radium Hot Springs. It was supposed to be a proof-of-concept flight, to practice for our journey to Abbotsford later in the summer. We hoped this trip would give us a glimpse of what mountain flying is all about. Better to find out now than learn it the hard way enroute to Abbotsford.

Our plan was to fly to Banff, meet our

ground crew, and refuel there. Then we'd follow the highway to Eisenhower Junction, Hop over the Vermillion Pass and fly south to Radium. Sounds pretty simple, right?

I was beginning to think it wasn't quite so simple as we flew past the southwest corner of Calgary. We had been in the air more than 45 minutes and had only travelled about 20 miles. I began to think about cancelling the trip and trying another day.

But the weather looked much better in the mountains, so we decided to press on. We would make our go/no-go decision at the mouth of the Bow Valley.

In the meantime, we radioed Springbank Flight Services and told them our plans. The flight service specialist who answered suggested we file a flight plan. I spent the next few minutes giving him the information he required and he opened a plan for us. We continued on toward Banff feeling a little more secure knowing that someone else was looking out for us.

It took us more than ninety minutes to reach Bear Hill, which is essentially the mouth of the Bow Valley. I radioed Todd and told him I would make a turn into the valley toward Banff and see what the wind was like. Then we'd make a decision about continuing or going home.

As I crested Bear Hill, I banked left to follow the valley. I'm not sure why, but our head wind was gone and had actually turned into a slight quartering tail wind. I knew then we'd have good weather to Banff, and probably beyond.

I radioed my wingmen.

"Dragonfly flight, this is Dragonfly 01. The wind here has really dropped off. I recommend we continue on to Banff."

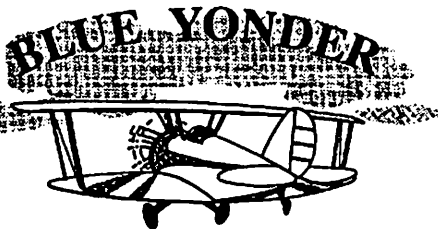
"Dragonfly 03 copies. Uh, roger that." Todd replied.

"Dragonfly 02 copies." said Bob.

The Bow Valley was beautiful that morning. The sun was shining, the sky was clear blue, and the mountains were a jagged mixture of deep green and stone grey. Who could ask for more?

We finally landed at Banff where our ground crew was waiting. Bernie Kespe had graciously volunteered to haul our gas and tools for the weekend in his pick-up truck. His wife Ida, and my wife, Tina, completed the ground crew

(Continued on page 4)



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(Gauntlet - continued from page 3)

roster. They had been waiting at the Banff airport for nearly an hour and were beginning to worry.

After 2.5 hours in the air, we were quite relieved to land at Banff. But we knew the toughest part of the trip, the flight from Storm Mountain to Radium, still lay ahead.

We spent the time at Banff snacking on fruit and refueling the airplanes. Then Bob discovered a broken bracket on his engine. He and Bernie spent about half an hour on field repairs so Bob could go on. Just as Todd and I fired up again, Bob had another problem. Cable on his electric starter had broken. That required another fifteen minutes to repair.

As a result we didn't leave Banff until 10:15. The weather was still good though. In fact, it was getting better as a layer of high cloud was quickly forming. This would help keep daytime heating down and make our ride a little smoother. When you're flying the Rocks, every little bit helps.

We were all pretty tense as we lifted off from Banff and turned westward. The flight to Banff, while a little long, had been relatively easy. But we didn't know what to expect beyond there. The Vermillion Pass is quite high, about 5800'. We had all heard horror stories about gale force winds coming down from Storm Mountain and we were worried.

Still, it was really the only safe route we had to cross the continental divide. We flew on.

About five miles east of Eisenhower Junction, as I flew along the south side of the valley, I looked over to keep an eye on Bob and Todd on the north side. Suddenly, to my amazement, I saw an Armed Forces C-130 Hercules go screaming up the valley at our altitude. I frantically called Bob.

"Dragonfly 02 you have a C-130 coming up on your right!"

I heard Todd call the same warning. Bob calmly replied he already had the Hercules in sight. I quickly began scanning my tail for any other "Herky-birds" that might be looking to snack on some Dragonflies. Fortunately, there were none, so I turned my attention back to getting past Storm Mountain.

Bob was up at about 7500' when he shot the pass. He reported the air as quite bumpy, but still manageable.

I went in next, at about 6500'. I'm sure I had a death grip on the stick as I watched the highway go by underneath me. The ride was bumpy, with most of the gusts coming in the form of cross-winds. I'd be warned first by the wind on my face, then feel the tail being kicked around back there. The wind was unpredictable, coming from every direction. A couple of times it wanted to stand me on a wingtip, but I worked the controls, stayed level, and continued on.

I was suddenly awestruck by our surroundings. I felt like we had strayed into some sacred chamber of the gods. Holding absolute power, they seemed to peer down, grey and unflinching, at these three puny Dragonflies who dared to challenge them. I knew they could squash us with just one mighty blow from a stormy fist. I silently hoped we hadn't pissed them off.

Todd was last into the pass. He was flying a few hundred feet higher than I, about a half mile back. I don't think he was too busy because he had time to take some great pictures.

Once we got by Storm mountain the ride really improved. I recall one high valley that was simply incredible. It had an entire gamut of colors. Stunning green meadows, dark green pine trees, white snow, and baby blue glacier. I could hardly believe the spectacle. This was scenery you just don't see unless you're flying.

Then I heard a surprising call on the radio.

"Dragonfly 01, this is Canadian 667 Heavy. Do you read?"

What could the big boys possibly want with us, I wondered.

"Canadian 667 heavy, Dragon 01, go ahead." I replied.

The jet crew had been asked by Springbank to contact us and relay our status. I told them we were doing fine and expected to arrive at Radium at 12:30 local time. Canadian 667 confirmed our information and relayed it to Springbank. The Canadian Captain concluded his communication with, "Dragonflies 01, 02 and 03, have a good flight". I thanked the jet crew and signed off. I smiled to myself, thinking how nice it was to have such guardian angels. It was also neat to be able to play with the big boys, even for a short time.

We soon made Kootenay Crossing and I noticed the huge contrast between the Vermillion valley, that we had just

left, and the Kootenay Valley we were now in. This valley was wide and spacious, while the last one had been narrow and seemed to scrape our wingtips.

Bob had been circling at Kootenay Crossing waiting for us. He'd gone on ahead because he needed to run his engine at a healthier RPM and Todd and I just couldn't keep up.

From there, we cruised the next 20 minutes to the Radium Pass. I spent a fair amount of that time climbing so I could make the pass. I had no idea the next five minutes would be the most exciting of the day.

The pass into Radium is narrow. I mean really narrow. It's only about half a mile wide and there are simply no emergency landing spots along the highway. (I suppose Todd could have landed in the hot springs pool, but it would have been a bit embarrassing.) We were really sweating as we wiggled our way past the tight peaks. But we could see the Columbia Valley on the other side and we had just about made it.

Waves of relief swept over me as we popped out the other side of the pass. I could see Bob spiralling down to land. Then I noticed he wasn't really circling. I started looking for the airport and knew why Bob wasn't circling. He couldn't find the airport!

I wondered if the thing had been abandoned and nobody told us. Just as I thought about diverting to Windermere, I looked down and spotted the strip. Bob had spotted it also and was now on downwind. Todd must have been laughing at us because he could land on the Columbia River if he had to. But, he landed after Bob and quickly cleared the runway. I landed last, at 12:15 pm.

All of us were extremely relieved to be there. I think each of us was a little surprised that we had made it at all. We were also pretty pleased with ourselves. We had faced the unknown, had run the gauntlet, and had come out unscathed.

Bernie, Ida, and Tina arrived a few minutes later and helped us tie down. Then we went into town and found a motel for the evening. Next, it was time for some grits.

We spent the rest of the afternoon at the Radium Hot Springs pool relaxing and talking airplanes. We had a nice dinner together and headed back to the airfield to prep the airplanes for the

(Continued on page 5)

(Gauntlet - continued from page 4)

return trip in the morning.

I turned in early because we had a 5:30 wake up the next day, and planned to be in the air at 6:30.

That's exactly what happened. We fired up and blasted off right on time. We had to start this leg of the trip with a climb from 2650' to more than 7000' to clear the Radium Pass safely.

As we circled upward, I noticed how perfect the morning was. Cool and clear with hardly a breath of wind. That's what I thought anyway, until Todd called with some weather news. He reported that the winds aloft were pretty strong from the north. I worried it might really slow us down as we headed home up the Kootenay Valley. We'd just have to wait and see.

In the meantime, we each used the north wind to help our climb.

Finally, we could delay no longer. We turned toward the pass. Todd went in first, with me a quarter of a mile behind, and Bob following with a bit more altitude. The winds in the pass were quite turbulent compared to those in the valley. Fortunately though, the bumps were mild and easy to handle. We eased out the other side and turned north.

Mysteriously, the north wind had disappeared and again had turned into a tail wind for us. Maybe the mountain gods were on our side after all.

I gazed north looking for the pass into the Vermillion Valley. It was then that the unbelievable beauty of the day hit me. In all my life I have never seen a sight so breathtaking. The morning sun made the mountains actually seem alive. It was a view so spectacular that I will never forget it.

The morning air was like glass. It was cool and smooth, as only morning air can be. I was very glad we had dragged our butts out of bed so early and that we could enjoy such utter perfection.

The flight north to Eisenhower Junction was uneventful, except for the amazing scenery. We stayed to the west side of the valleys to exploit any sun-warmed, upslope air. Bob was regularly making 360's to keep from getting too far ahead of us, and we even had the chance to line up so Todd could take some pictures. Life just doesn't get any better than that.

As we cleared the Vermillion Pass and turned into the Bow Valley, we could clearly see the last bend before the town

of Banff. Todd reminded us all to keep a sharp eye out for C-130's and even talked to a helicopter pilot flying in the area.

We coasted into Banff at exactly 8:30, after holding a few minutes to allow a Mooney to take off. We even managed to arrive ahead of our ground crew.

The hardest part of the trip was over. The rest would be a piece of cake. We took off again at 9:15 after refuelling and thanking our ground crew.

We absolutely could not have made the trip with out Bernie, Ida and Tina. It was an added bonus that Bernie is an experienced ultralight jock and really knew how to help. The trip was just as much their adventure as ours.

The air was still rock steady from Banff to Calgary. We felt only the occasion bump, as if the air above the hills were yawning, just coming to life. We simply couldn't have asked for anything better.

As we passed the southeast corner of Calgary, Bob radioed that he was going on ahead to his strip a few miles



Entering the Rockies at Exshaw. The vertical line on the right is Todd's antenna.

The aerial photos were taken by Todd and the ground shots by Tina and Bob.

away. I would follow in a few minutes, and Todd would fly on to Indus, a couple of miles east.

I looked over at Todd off my right wing and gave him a thumbs up. Since his radio battery had died, he replied the only way he could. He gripped the stick between his knees and gave me two thumbs up. I couldn't have said it better myself, so I gave him a final salute and peeled off to the north-east.

I landed a few minutes after Bob and thought about the adventure we'd had. We'd done what some said was crazy. We'd flown ultralights in the mountains and done it safely. We'd logged nearly eight hours flight time in two days without so much as a hiccup. And we had a ball!

Still, it was sure good to be back. As I taxied down the runway, Bob called on the radio.

"Dragonfly 02 to Dragonfly 01, welcome home." he said.

I simply replied, "Roger that."



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Skywriter is the official publication of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club and is published 12 times per year. Opinions expressed by our writers are not necessarily those of the club. Articles and letters to the editor are very welcome from any readers. Address correspondence to: Bob Kirkby, RR 7, Calgary, AB T2P 2G7

Meetings of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club are held the first Wednesday of every month at 7:30pm at

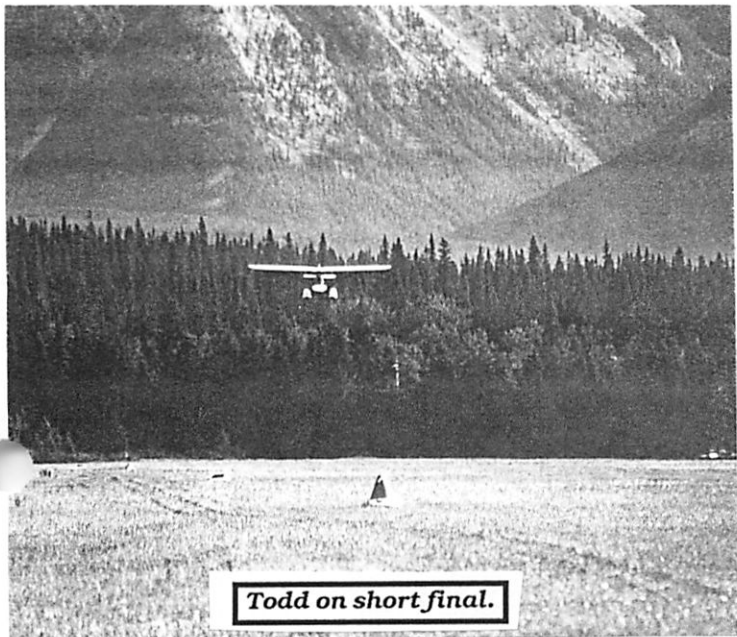
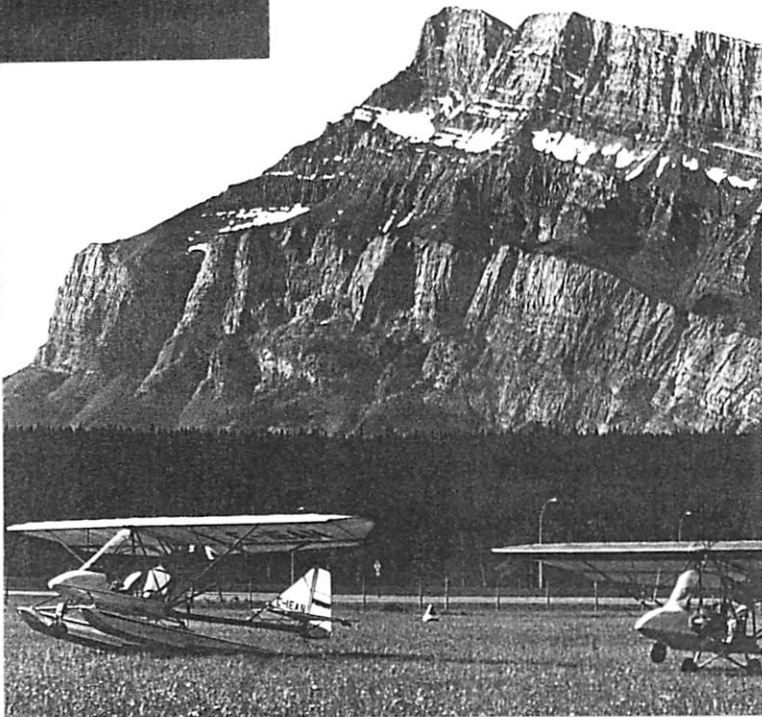
R.C.A.F. Association
110 - 7220 Fisher Street S.E.
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Entering the circuit at Banff.



Stu touching down first.



Todd on short final.



Bob stirs up some dust.



Three Dragonflies take a well earned rest at Banff.

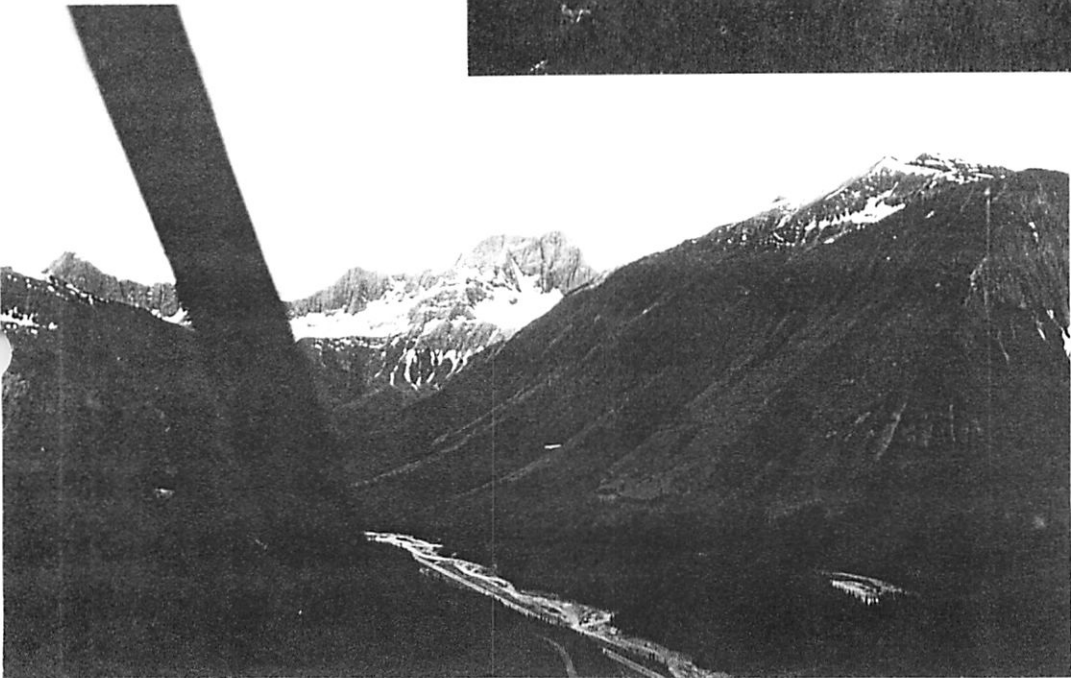
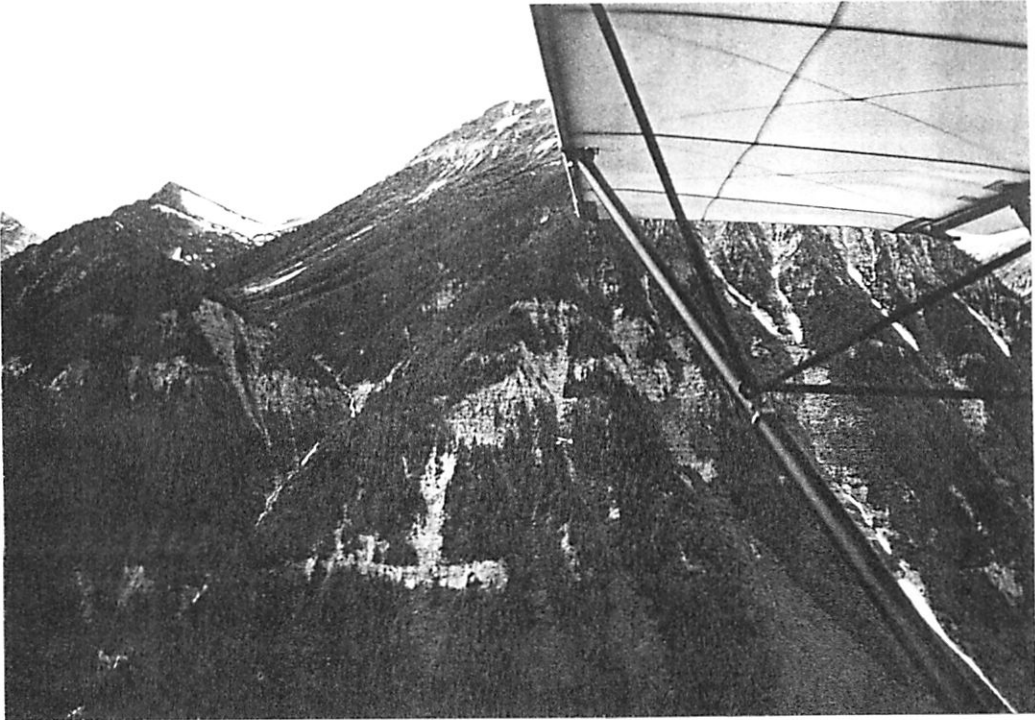


Entering Vermillion pass. Stu is at lower left.



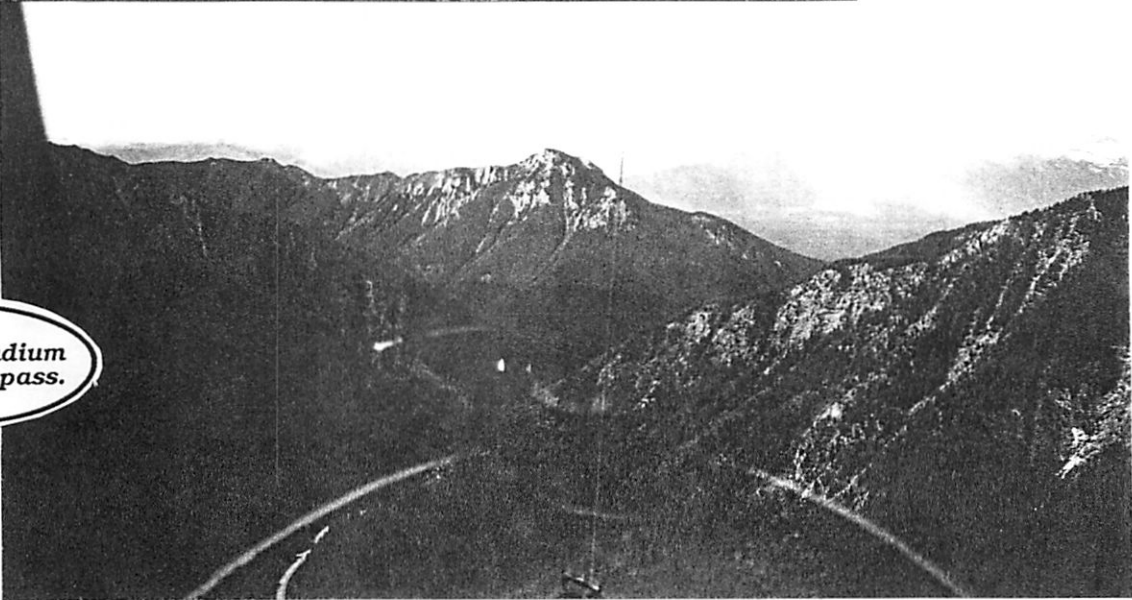
Passing Storm Mountain at a respectful distance.

*Somewhere in the valley.
Stu is in centre under
Todd's leading edge.*

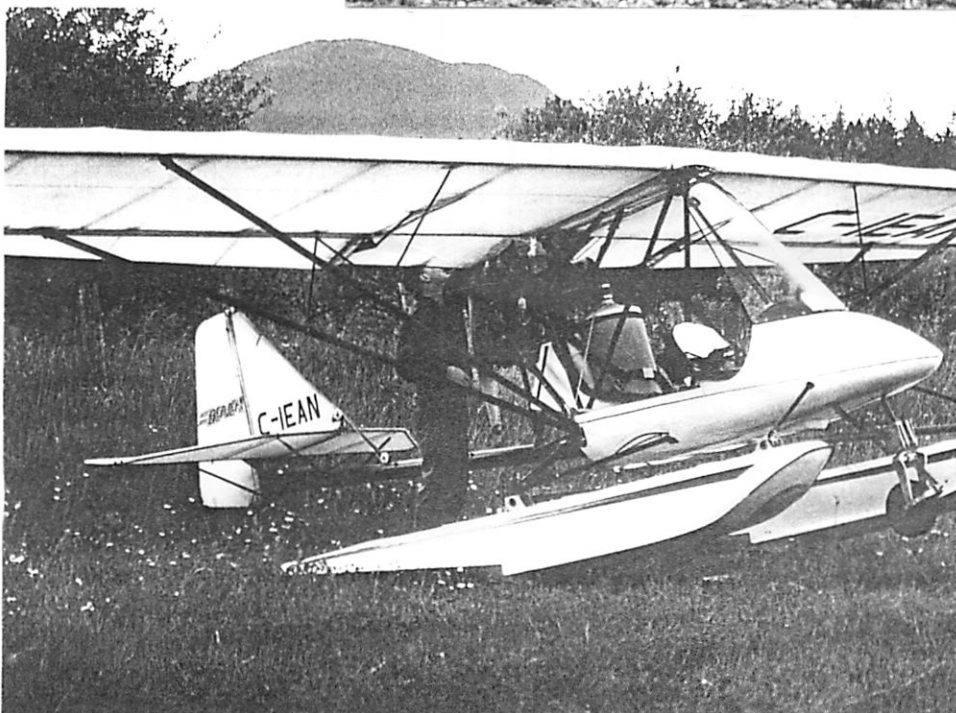


*The beautiful
Vermillion valley.*

*Entering Radium
hot springs pass.*

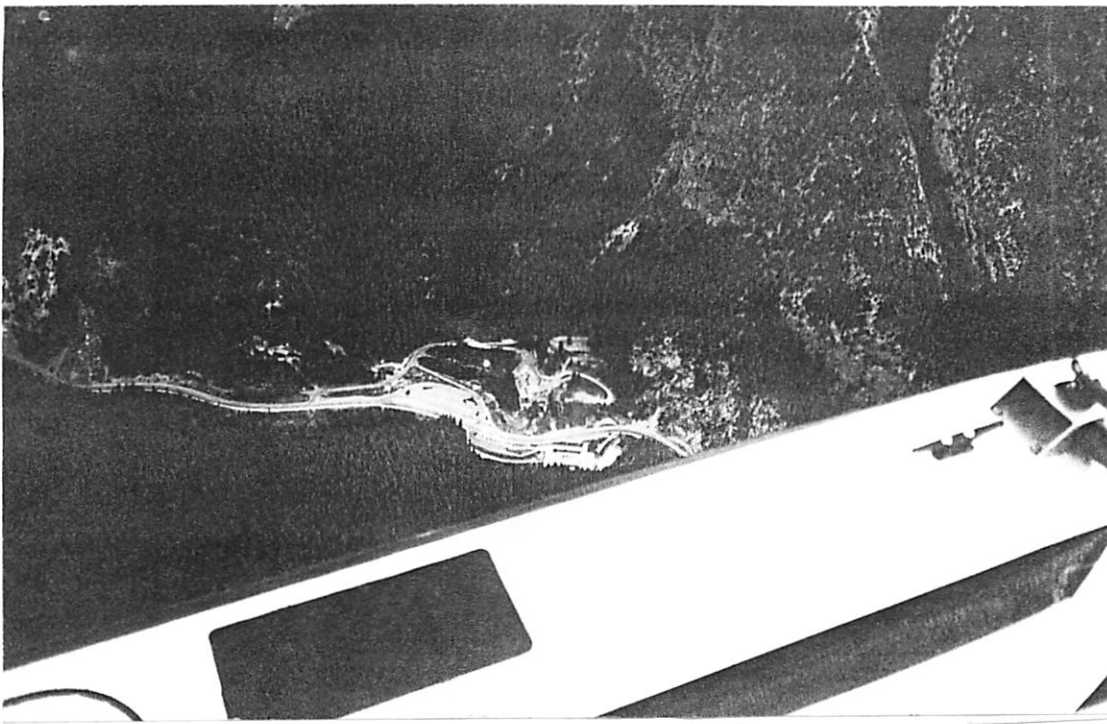


On the ground again at Radium. Notice the modern runway in the foreground. Pictured are Stu, Bernie and Todd.

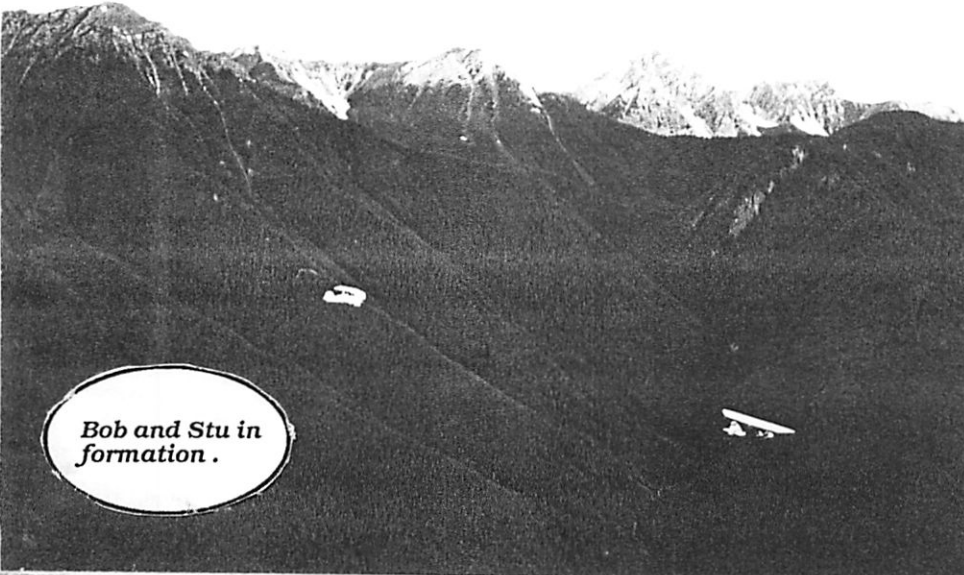


Pre-flight checks underway before leaving Radium.





*Hot springs far below.
We kept enough
altitude to glide out of
pass if necessary.*



*Bob and Stu in
formation .*



*Our trusty ground
crew - Ida, Bernie
and Tina. We could
not have done it
without them.*

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