



# Skywriter

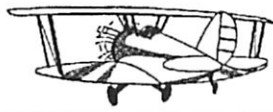


Monthly Newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club

January 1995

♪ Off We Go ... ♪

by Wayne Winters



I was so excited about doing my portion of the news letter that I jumped on my typewriter and got off to a terrific start before I realized I didn't have any paper in it!

We have sure had some great flying weather to finish up the 1994 year and it has been a good one for the club. There have been a lot of fun and exciting things happening in our meetings plus we have had a number of very interesting people join us as new members. The life blood of any organization is those new people that join and bring their ideas and enthusiasm.

### 3rd Annual New Year Party

Be sure to mark the date of Saturday, January 28th, 1995 on your social calendar. That will be the day of our 3rd annual New Year party. Last year was a super success and since it worked so well we will do the same this year. The Pot Luck supper will start at 7:00 pm (1900 hrs) and a silent auction will run all evening, along with music, dancing, loud laughter and quiet chuckles. Remember, the way the silent auction works is that items that you don't have a use for are donated to the club and throughout the evening you can go around and see what the last bid was on the items you would like to buy and up the bid. The best price by 9:15 pm or there about, buys the item. Last year the club made over \$300.00 from the auction and we all had a lot of fun doing it. Be sure to let your spouse, or who's ever spouse you are bringing, know and plan on being there. Dress is the same as last year - formal/casual to semi-formal. We all look forward to seeing you there! Also, try and round up as many items from commercial folks as you can.

### Alberta Aviation Council 1995 Get S.E.T. Workshop

The date is February 17, 1995 with the last pre-registration (save money) date February 1, 1995. Registration forms are at Blue Yonder Aviation, located on the Indus Airport, or phone me at 936-5767.

### The December Meeting

Thank-you once again for your support in filling our meeting place. We had our election of officers and the positions of Vice-President and Secretary were up for re-election. Our last Vice-President, Doug Ward, was re-nominated and agreed to let his name stand again. We had a very quick vote with an enthusiastic majority in favour, thus Doug is our Vice-President for the next 2 years. Our last Secretary, Bernie Kespe, was also re-nominated and agreed to let his

name stand. Again, with an enthusiastic vote Bernie was voted in for another 2 years. We would all like to thank these gentlemen for their time and service past. We are looking forward to continuing having them as our Vice-President and Secretary.

The door prize program went smoothly again, and we thank those involved and those who participated.

A most interesting session of how the new airplane kits that members of the club are building developed. We are going to see a lot of new birds in the sky this next year.

After a confession session we had a look at a video that Larry Motyer brought that discussed aerobatics. There was some great footage of the scrunched up expressions on the faces of the aerobatic pilots as they pulled high "G" maneuvers. It really showed us the stress and strain they put on their carcasses while doing their air show routines. I know it gave me a whole new respect for the air show performers we see every year.

We would all like to wish you and your families the very best in the NEW YEAR.

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# Letters

From readers



To the Editor:

Subject: Beaver Owners Association

I'm just starting to get things organized and I am waiting to see how much interest there is out there. What I hope to do is provide owners with the names of suppliers and manufacturers of parts for the Beavers. I would like to publish a newsletter every quarter with safety news, service information, classified section and stories about what others are doing with their Beev's.

Beaver kits used to be made a few miles from where I lived. As a matter of interest I had worked for Spectrum Aircraft developing the Stits covering process for the 550. I was also running a flight school with two 550's and one 35 as a renter. I now work for the DOT as an Airworthiness Inspector. I've built 30 aircraft that range from MX's to Rans S-10's. I'm just finishing off a Kit Fox and then I hope to start rebuilding two BRX 550's. The 550's will be getting Subaru AE-81 engines or Rotax 532's and a steerable nose wheel that will be based on a Rans design. I've located the molds for the fiberglass parts such as pods and a chap in Ontario (Back Forty Developments) is making replacement 4130 main landing gear with improved shocks. Really tough gear. The lady that made the sails at the factory is tooling up and sails should be available soon and I can supply Stits information for conversion. I've also acquired a complete set of 550 & 650 factory drawings.

Could you please have your fellow Beaver Aviators contact me with their names and addresses so that I can include them on my mailing list. The only expense for members will be to cover the cost of producing and mailing a newsletter. I have estimated the cost to be about \$20.00 a year based on the number of responses I have received so far. The first newsletter will be parcel post because of the power dump of information I have. This is a volunteer organization set up to put owners in touch with others.

I'll keep you in the loop and let you know what is happening. Would you pass on this letter to the club. In the mean time if you need something or information give me a call and I might be able to point you in the right direction. Blue Sky.

Brad Allore  
1/Fax: 604-465-0982

To the Editor:

The following is a letter I wrote concerning the Mohawk kit builder's manual which might be of interest to readers.

Dear Sir:

RE: Mohawk - A Kit You Can Build For \$6500

After reading glowing articles in an aviation newspaper and a monthly magazine dedicated to home builders, I decided to call the listed number and order the Builders Manual. I received it in less than a week and read it in detail as I killed time flying as an airline passenger. After only a few minutes I felt I had wasted \$135.00 US (\$186.00 Cdn). If you discount the section on covering and finishing, the assembly manual is woefully inadequate and consists of only 45 pages of actual assembly instructions. This includes photographs and sketches. No instructions or drawings are given for the cowl, tail wheel or control cables. Many critical dimensions are missing or given in such a fashion that one could not accurately build the proposed kit. An AUTOCAD disc of drawings is included with the manual, but it gives very little additional information. Drawings for critical items like wing struts and wing attach brackets were not included in my manual. I mailed copies of drawings to the publisher asking for critical dimensions to see if it was at all possible to build this aircraft. At this time I have not received a response.

As an example of the many errors, page one of the construction manual has the builder start with a 132" length of tubing, induce a slight upward bend at 48", this is station 48, then 86" further along the length of tubing (called station 86 in the manual but it really is station 134) another bend is made. Somehow we have already used up 134" of a 132" tube and still have about 30" to go. A great deal of verbosity goes into describing how stations are used, then used improperly once, and then they are never mentioned again. Tubes of various lengths are added to this base tube to form one fuselage side. Instructions indicate the tubing lengths given are about 1/2" longer than necessary to allow for proper beveling prior to welding. The builder is told to build joint to joint and not worry if one is out up to 1/2". Since not enough information is given to determine the proper connection locations the builder will never know how accurate the fuselage has been constructed. The danger here is that the builder will probably end up with an improper angle of incidence. It only gets worse as one reads on. Sketches of items such as the lift strut attach bracket are shown in the assembly section, but no part drawings or fabrication instructions are given. After fabricating two fuselage sides on a flat surface they are assembled

to form a cage. The fuselage is shaped by simply pulling in the top and sides. This "pulling" results in bends of more than 15 degrees, this would result in bent tubes not perfect bends at the welded intersections as shown on the sectional drawings. Sectional drawings show the fuselage is widened 5" at the centre, but no mention of how this is done is made in the manual. Essential final assembly details like C of G, C of G limits, angle of incidence, dihedral and wash out measurements are not given.

I believe the publishers intent is honourable, but I do not believe the manual is anywhere near adequate for someone who has not previously scratch built an aircraft. I am concerned that many future home builders will purchase this manual with the intent of getting into the air cheaply. If they encounter the problems I foresee they will probably walk away from this hobby/sport, and this is unfortunate. I would be interested in hearing how other Mohawk manual purchasers feel.

Ed D'Antoni  
Calgary, AB



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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 or Fax to 403-291-1112.

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

R.C.A.F. Association  
5430 - 11 Street N.E.  
Calgary, Alberta

# Around The Patch

by Stu Simpson



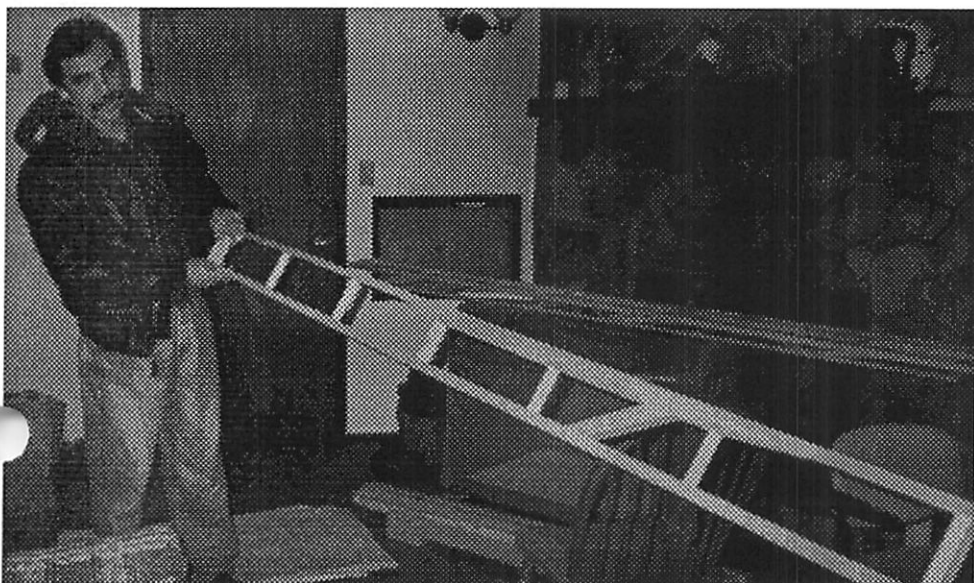
## Winging It

Well, I've begun the final stage of building the HiMAX structure. I started work on the wing spars on December 2nd and they're now 90% completed.

I know there are people out there who have no idea what a wing spar is or how it is constructed. So for those of you who do, please bear with me while

I go through this stuff step-by-step.

A wing spar is essentially the primary load bearing member of the wing. It extends outward from the fuselage and the wing is built around it. Some planes have only one spar that extends the entire wing span. Others have two spars in each wing, one front spar, and one rear spar. The HiMAX has two spars per wing, and they're strut braced.



Bernie holds a rear spar. Note "ladder" construction and stru attach point.



A completed spar with plywood web attached.

The HiMAX spars are best described as small ladders stood on their sides. The "ladders" are nearly 12 feet long. The front spars are 6 7/8 inches wide the rear ones are 5 3/8" wide. The upper and lower pieces of the spar "ladder" are called spar caps. These pieces, 3/4" square, are cut from specially selected sitka spruce and give the wing most of it's strength.

The instructions say to cut the spar caps to the proper length, then space them the correct distance apart and add the "rungs", or vertical members. There are reinforcing members added at the wing root area (where the wing joins the fuselage) and at the strut attach points (mid-way along the spar).

Once the spar "ladders" are constructed, 1.5mm plywood is attached to one side. This plywood is referred to as a "spar web". The web provides additional rigidity to the spar and gives extra gluing surface area to members of the spar "ladder". Extra gluing surface area translates to extra strength.

It's all pretty straight forward, but it's quite time consuming. As I mentioned, there are four spars and they have to be built one at a time.

Once I'd cut my spar caps and verticals, I glued them together using the straight edge on the bench as a guide. After the glue had dried, I added the strut attaching diagonals and the root reinforcing diagonals. The angles on these pieces are quite precise and my investment in a good protractor paid off.

Once all four spar ladders were built, I cut and fitted the spar web pieces. The ply is glued on and held in place with small staples. I estimate I used about 1000 or more staples on each spar. And, of course, the staples have to be removed once the glue is dry. It took me about 2 1/2 hours to pull all the staples. I used a pair of pliers and had to wear a leather glove to prevent blisters.

Once all the staples are pulled, it's a matter of removing excess glue and checking the fit compared to the wing ribs.

(continued on page 4)

*(Around - continued from page 3)*

I was pleasantly surprised to see my ribs fit the spars very well. I'm really looking forward to assembling the wing structure.

On a different note, Christmas came a little early at my house when a letter arrived from Paul Pontois. Pontois is a CUFC member who lives in Quebec and is also building a HiMAX. He sent a few photos of his plane that gave me a much better understanding of the wing structure.

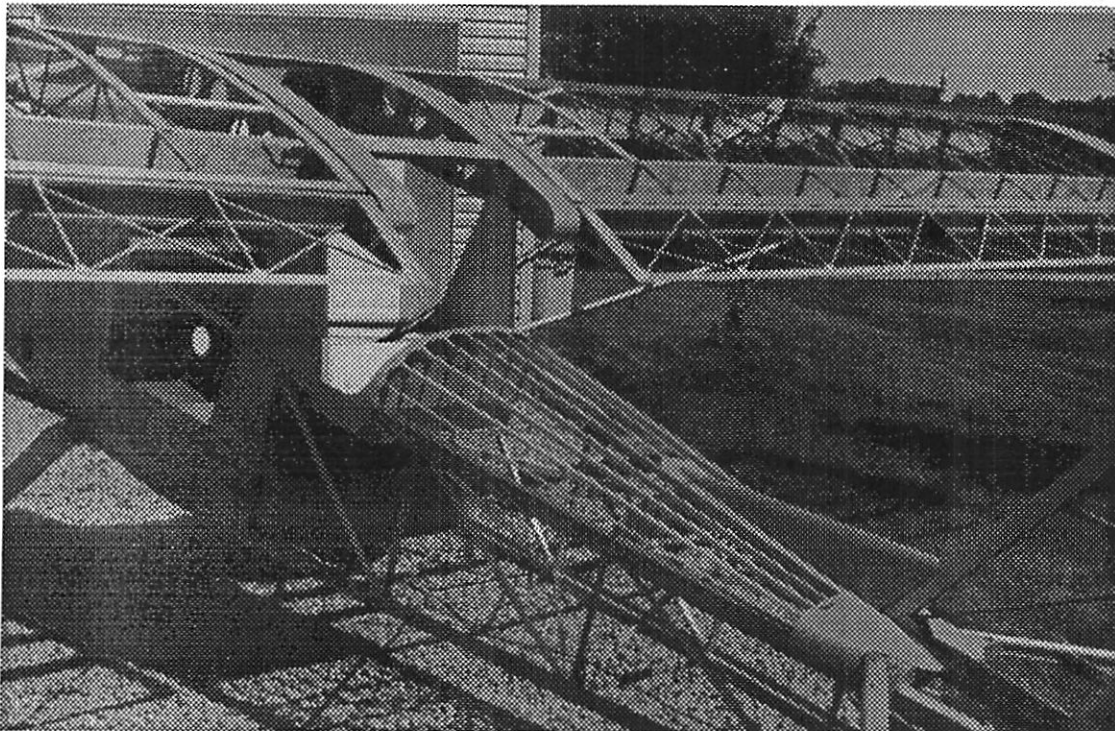
I also noted several differences between his plane and mine. For instance, he's using the Zenoah engine and the spring aluminum landing gear. Paul's also added a few extras to the cockpit area, such as extra windows and extra cargo space. He also added wing tips and a small fillet to the front of the tail fin.

He reports in his letter that he now has the plane covered and painted, and is looking forward to the first flight in 1995. Hopefully he'll send a story and more pictures outlining his progress.

Well, that's all the news for this month. Next time you hear from me, I hope to be well into the construction of one of the wings. Stay tuned.



*Paul Pontois' HighMAX. The front office. Note extra window on fuselage side, spring gear, wheel pants, streamlined struts and Zenoah cowling.*



*Good view of wing structure on Paul's HighMAX. Also, note the rear turtle deck and small fillet on vertical stabilizer.*

## **Annual New Year Party**

*Saturday  
January 28  
7:00 pm*

*At the RCAF  
Association*

**Pot-Luck Dinner**

**Silent Auction**

*Contact Wayne  
Winters for pot-luck  
and auction  
contributions.  
936-5347*

# A Little Prop Wash

by Douglas J. Ward



The November meeting was great. We had an excellent meeting, with great turnout, along with the bonus of some new faces. We had a revealing conversation about what members, which were at the Nov 5th T/C meeting, drew from that meeting. There appeared to be varying opinions, but it was generally felt to be basically a positive meeting. I feel that some of the recommendations that the CUFC submitted will be considered before any final rulings are made or changed. It does look potentially good for the UL guys.

There was a good discussion about how many of the members, who are in the process of constructing aircraft, are doing. This only involved people in the Calgary area. I am sure that there are CUFC members in other areas, who are also building. It would be great if we could have some correspondence from them about their projects. Everybody locally seems to be planning some sort of test flight in the spring. Hopefully, there could be a lot more Ultralights buzzing around the Calgary area next summer.

I received a Fax, through the courtesy of Bob Kirkby's fax machine, from a man named Arnaud De Nanclas, who lives in France. He got my name from Brad Allore. He appears to have been and still is a Beaver Dealer. And guess what! He has a RX650. And he is having trouble with it. A quote from him: "Can you please help me. I will not want that my future customer died with this crazy machine!!!!". I will certainly be of all the help I can to this

man. I personally feel that the RX650 is a good aircraft. It is having a few teething problems, as does every new design. With the testing which is going to be done in Quebec on the airframe and some common sense, I feel that this machine will eventually end up with as great a history as the RX550.

I just received the Nov 94 newsletter from fellow CUFC member Reg Lumsden. Reg operates Reg's Air Cooled Engines out of Surrey, BC. Lots of important info in it that I would like to pass on to our fellow members. Reg runs into all the problems that show up with all the different styles of Rotax UL engines. Reg knows Rotax like Carter knows Liver Pills.

1) Coolant: Reg receives many damaged engines which were overheated. These engines appeared to not have had top quality coolant used in them. These problems often occur when two types of Anti-Freeze are mixed. It tends to cause a thick jelly-type substance to form in all areas of the Cooling System. If you are not sure about what is in your engine, drain it, flush it, and then install top quality Anti-Freeze which is compatible with aluminum. This information could save Liquid cooled Rotax users a lot of trouble in the future. A liquid cooled Rotax is just as susceptible to cooling system damage as your liquid cooled automobile cooling system is.

2) 912 Owners-Carb fittings: Rotax has issued a Bulletin about the fuel inlet Banjo fitting (#940-872). It must be torqued to exactly 90 in/lbs. If you

are not sure, contact Reg for the bulletin. Something about a possible engine fire comes to mind.

3) Mukuini Dual Diaphragm Fuel Pumps: If you have replaced your fuel pump, it is very important that you purchased and installed the CORRECT ONE. The correct Mikuni pump has two CURVED outlet spigots along with a STRAIGHT pulse spigot. Near the pulse spigot, there is a very small chamber which has a very small vent hole (0.0145"). That's about 15 thousands of an inch.

4) Pulse Lines: Don't be afraid to replace this line annually, or when ever you feel it does not look good. If this line becomes softened, due to the migration of oil and fuel from the crankcase, it may start to pulse instead of the diaphragm in your fuel pump. Don't forget the diaphragm in your fuel pump. It is recommended that it be replaced at least once every two years.

5) Gear Box Filler/Vent: Be aware that if your Gearbox is equipped with vent (#941-110) it may be susceptible to water entry, if your aircraft is stored outside. Moisture within your gear box will shorten it's life. BE AWARE!

6) Metal Spark Plug Caps (Bosch Type): They don't fit NGK spark plugs very well. They are designed for Bosch Plugs. They tend to work loose from an NGK plug due to engine vibrations. Reg's cure: put a 6" nylon tie loosely around the base of the NGK plug. Put another 6" nylon tie over the Metal Spark Plug Cap and through the previously installed tie. Pull the bottom one up tight and then tighten the one over the cap. This will hold the Bosch Metal Cap safely on the NGK plug.

7) Propeller Torquing: Reg has found a lot of problems on Type A and Type B Gear boxes which were traced to improper torquing of the propeller, or prop misadjustment. With ground adjustable props, be sure that the blades are all set at the correct pitch. Too much pitch will cause low takeoff RPM. You should notice this. Blades at different pitches will affect the life of your gearbox and your Crankshaft. Another very important point if you have changed your propeller from the original supplied prop, be sure that the Mass Moment of Inertia (M. M. I.) for your prop is within the specs for the gearbox that you are using. A type B box can stand about 3000 lbs of MMI. A type C box can stand about 6000 lbs of MMI. If you are not sure, contact the propeller dealer and get the specs. The wrong MMI can internally destroy your gearbox!

If you have any questions or concerns about the fore mentioned problems, don't hesitate to contact Reg at (604) 581-7414. Safe Flying.



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# An Unforgettable Slice of Flying - Arkansas Style

by Wayne Winters

"Goollee Honey, where's my catfish pole, moon shine jug, possum gun, and road kill recipes - I'm going to Arkansas!"

John Birch, the general manager, of the Merlin Aircraft Company made arrangements for some magazine writers to ravel to Jonesborough, Arkansas to test fly and evaluate two Merlins, one with the Rotax 912 and the other powered by a 110 hp Subaru engine. John and I had been talking about the Merlin company building the E-Z Flyer kits and this would be a good opportunity to have them and the writers check out the E-Z Flyer prototype. We made arrangements to ship the E-Z Flyer down, and I was to arrive and meet John in Jonesborough on the 10th or 11th of December. The date quickly arrived, and so did I via the Bid Delta bird. Arriving in Memphis, Tennessee, I had a slightly rocky start as my first rental car ran out of oil a few miles from the rental agency (I guess they never check the oil in these units)! This worked in my favour though because they upgraded me to a top of the line Chrysler Intrepid with loads of Zoom (I got caught by Barney Fife my 5th day out), soft seats, Dolby stereo and luxurious quiet comfort.

By the time I got the second sled it was getting late so I decided to stay in Memphis, and where else but right across from Graceland on Elvis Presley Drive.

The next morning, Sunday, just like a hound on a new adventure, I couldn't sleep so I did the "free" on foot tour of

Graceland (until a security guard tossed me out), then off to Jonesborough, some 60 miles away. I didn't have a clue where the private strip was, but with the help of the local Highway Patrol folks, and their radio call to a patrolman/pilot, I was able to drive right to it.

At 11:30 am that morning my first sight, as I drove up to the main hangar, was John Birch re-fueling the 912 Merlin. He said that he wasn't expecting me until tomorrow and that the E-Z Flyer wasn't there yet. Gulp, I thought, it was supposed to be here by now.

The hangar was abuzz with activity as about 8 people were in various stages of fixing, watching and hangar flying. I met Kevin Adams, one of the owners of the Merlin company, for the first time. He was an exciting sort of guy and a lot younger than I had expected. I could see that he would be needing the seat cushion in the E-Z Flyer.

Next, I met Scott Hagenmaker, whose hangar and 1/2 of whose field we were using. Scott is a gray-haired young chap of 37 that did the "good to meet ya's" with a wide grin and a sparkle in his eye. I know we would get along "jest fine" - as he'd say. There were 2 fellows and about 15 hands working on the Subaru Merlin. Scott and his team had to remove the 912 from one aircraft and put it in another. The Subaru was going into the first aircraft (where the 912 was), which needed repairs and the installation of the new engine and drive package. All the work had to be completed in a couple of weeks. Things were looking pretty good when I got there, except the Subaru was not running right. Kevin went out to taxi it around and see if the power would come up. It didn't and by a process of elimination we found it was a spark plug that was not firing.

Formula Power had sent it with Champion plugs. I suggested that we throw them as far away as we could in favour of Bosh or NGK plugs. We did and solved the problem.

On our way back from picking up the new spark plugs (at prices so low I don't even want to mention them in Canada) Kevin spotted the R & S Truck Line trailer that was hauling the E-Z Flyer. I swung around and we caught up with him and had him follow us to the airport. Next we beheld an awesome sight - the E-Z Flyer. It had arrived safe and rash-free.

That afternoon the local EAA Chapter was having a meeting/lunch in the hangar and no one could believe that I wanted to assemble the E-Z Flyer out in the cold - burr, it was only 33 degrees outside! Big deal, I had just left 0 degrees the day before!

Their local EAA Chapter is very active, as we would find out over the next few days. Scott's hangar has "wandering traffic" from 0800 hrs to 2000 hrs every day, with folks ranging from cotton and rice farmers to air line types, to retired enthusiasts, to home builders, to copter fliers, to ultralight buffs and even the local FBI Swat Team. Scott has even had his field bussed by B52 Bombers on 2 separate occasions. He operates an AG Spray business, does aircraft maintenance and is a Merlin dealer. With all this activity his field has become the congregating point for aviation buffs in the county.

I got the E-Z Flyer ready to fly late Sunday afternoon and test flew it. Wow, what performance at 260 ft ASL! Kevin had to leave that evening and was anxious to test fly the new airplane his company was going to build. He jumped on board, solo, and headed out for a test hop, but once airborne he just kept flying. His first landing wasn't perfect, but he got it all sorted out (I found out after that he didn't have that much ultralight time and it had been quite some time since he had flown). On his second touch and go you could see him at 5 feet AGL let go of all the controls and yell, "Ya-hoo." He came around again and landed, then after taxiing over to the hangar, got out and said, "That has got to be the easiest airplane, ever, to fly. It was really a lot of fun." I thought, glad he likes it.

Next, John Birch took it up. By this time it was starting to get dark and after the flight John said that it had been a long time since his last "in the open" flight and that he was a bit nervous, but quickly, the fun overcame the fear and he too couldn't believe how easy it was to fly and land.

(continued on page 7)

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(Arkansas - continued from page 6)

They were both so excited they got me and everybody in the hangar excited, even Scott. He said, "Maybe I'll have to fly that - but when it warms up outside."

Monday was a day of airplane washing and test flights to ready ourselves for LeRoy Cook from Kitplanes Magazine, who would be arriving the next morning. The weather had not been cooperating that much and Tuesday was much like Monday, overcast with low ceilings. Never-the-less, LeRoy arrived at about 11:00 in his 172. I met him for the first time in the circuit as I was up checking out the countryside which was all covered with water from the rains of the previous 2 weeks. At only 260 feet ASL the land was flat and soggy with minimal emergency places to land. The E-Z was performing well and climbing like a rocket. Normally it cruises at 5500 rpm and 50 mph. Here it was cruising at 5100 rpm and 55 mph indicated! What a difference! On take off you could rotate and hold the nose at 40 degrees and climb at about 650 fpm with a 240 lb heavy in the front seat!

LeRoy checked out the 2 Merlins and was very impressed. John told me it was a good sign when he started doing touch and go's, and kept doing them. It meant that he was obviously enjoying it. Next, it was time for him to fly the E-Z Flyer. He went up and put it through all it's paces. When he started doing touch and go's he just kept doing them. Finally, when he came back he said, "You have sure names this airplane right. It is really easy to fly." He said that he was surprised that I just turned it over to him without even doing a check ride, but after flying it could see why I had.

By now it was time for lunch and John

and I were already heading to a fantastic Chinese buffet that we had discovered the night before, while we were asking LeRoy what kind of food he liked. He said he would eat anything but Chinese and that he was used to living on the 4 basic American groups - Grease, Sugar, Caffeine and Chocolate. We never mentioned that we were Chinese food connoisseurs and headed straight for a local delicacy - The Catfish a-la-something.

We had a lot of fun with LeRoy and that afternoon he flew off again in his 172 for Kansas. There was still some daylight left so John went up in the E-Z to fly it off. Meanwhile, I phoned Wayne Ison from TEAM Aircraft (MiniMAX) in Tennessee to see if he would be there Wednesday, and could I come see them and their operation. I got a warm southern welcome so my Wednesday was planned.

The MiniMAX factory is about 85 miles south of Nashville (toward Chattanooga - don't you just love those names) and about 350 miles (one way) away from Jonesborough. The weather Wednesday was not supposed to be that great, but it turned out to be sunshine and blue skies.

I arrived at TEAM about 11:15 am and renewed old Oshkosh acquaintances with Ison and the staff. I met Darryl, the new President, but was sure that I had met him before. Their factory is in the middle of nowhere on a road that services nothing much, in rural country Tennessee. At lunch time they told me that there was only one place we could go and that the food was marginal on the good days, but it was where they always went. Closer to the centre of nowhere, without anything much else around but trees and small houses, was a trailer that was converted into a Diner. It's survival depends on local self-employed people

(working in home work shops or growing hashish in the hills). The TEAM trio was greeted on a first name basis by the 14 or 15 people that were already in the establishment. The gal in charge followed us to our table, with their "usual" large ice tea already in hand. We had the "salad surprise" with wilted lettuce, a few bacon bits and a chewy breaded deep fried surprise. I was the only one that ate it and am still wondering what it was. The other guys were all smiling!

Back at the plant we completed the nickel tour and had a close look at their new Skycycle. It has a 4130 welded steel frame which you straddle like a motorcycle with a wing above your head. At a US price of \$5995.00 c/w a Rotax 447 engine, it should be a real winner. We re-affirmed our working relationship and looked at some changes they are making. At 3:30 pm we said our good-byes and ya all come back now, ya here. The trip back to Jonesborough was uneventful except for the steady flow of country music on every radio station, the wreck blocking the freeway (4 semi's and 6 cars) and getting stopped by Barney Fyffe for speeding. It felt like I was trapped in a country and western tune, except that my dog didn't die, my horse wasn't lame and my wife didn't leave me.

Thursday morning came quickly and another writer, Jeff Richmond, was coming in. We had been working on Scott (owner of the field) and tricked him into going flying in the E-Z. Scott says that flying is a job for him and other than work and test flights, he doesn't fly that much. He took off and climbed to the height of the trees at the end of the strip, and flew around at that altitude. After a few circuits it was starting to drizzle and the strobes on the radio tower 1.5 miles away were starting to vanish. Scott landed with a big Arkansas grin on his face and said, "I could get used to this! It is really easy and fun to fly. I could sure have fun with it. I'll fly it again when the weather clears." John and I asked him why he didn't climb any higher and he said, "I never do. All the air I need to fly is enough to clear the wires and trees." Spoken as a true crop duster!

I love the way these folks talk and express themselves. A few days earlier I was asking Scott where I could buy a toque to keep our heads warm during the cool flights (nobody ever heard of wearing a helmet). I got strange looks because he didn't know what I meant. After a few charades he said, "You mean a toboggan." I replied, "No Scott, we slide down hills on toboggans, not wear them on our heads." In the store we bought a "toboggan" and wore it on our head. What else could you expect in a land that smokes Chesterfields instead of sitting on them.

(continued on page 8)



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(Arkansas - continued from page 7)

Friday afternoon Jim Campbell (US Aviator Magazine) was to arrive for his valuation and pictures. Meanwhile, Jeff Richmond, a free lance writer and Merlin Dealer from Florida, arrived, but the weather was not good, yet was supposed to be by mid-afternoon.

The bad morning weather provided me with an opportunity to slip away to Memphis and tour the Graceland Mansion. It was quite interesting, although I was surprised at the Mansion not being bigger and more luxurious. Elvis paid \$100,000.00 for it and its 20 acres in 1957. He lived there until his passing on August 16, 1977. I would not consider myself a big fan, but more of an occasional listener of his music. The thing that impressed me the most was his custom Convair 880 Jet Liner that he had converted from a 96 passenger ship to a personal 28 seater in 1975. He bought it for \$250,000.00 and spent \$800,000.00 in refurbishing it c/w 24 carat gold flakes in its 2 washroom sinks. I was impressed with the aircraft's cruise of 615 mph and its call letters - N800EP. On the tail is painted the letters TCB, for Taking Care of Business. He also had a custom 10 passenger Jet Star (550 mph cruise) that he bought at the same time as the Convair.

I left Graceland sad and in the rain. Upon arriving back at Scott's airport the weather had cleared and John Birch and Jeff Richmond were up in the Merlin. Once earthbound, Jeff informed me that he had never flown anything lighter than the Merlin, and nothing open. He had been a military transport and commuter airline pilot. I said, "No problem." He did a few hops then away he went. The next couple of

days saw him in the E-Z every chance he could get. He just couldn't believe how much fun it was and at the risk of sounding repetitive, how easy. He had us take in-flight pictures of him so he had proof when he told the folks back home in Florida of his escapades.

As darkness overshadowed the airport the fun was about to begin in the hangar with a good old fashioned down south Cat Fish Fry. Scott and Marty (Marty owns the grass strip and Scott owns the gravel (AG) strip at the airport) put out the word that they were going to have a "Fish Fry". Just as Scott said they would people came out of the woods from far and wide to join in. The menu consisted of fresh cat fish that was corn meal dipped and deep fried, french fries, hush puppies (spicy corn meal rolled in a ball and deep fried), deep fried bread (like a donut), pickles, salad and soda pop (pronounced sodee pop). There was more chow than we could eat, but no booze, not even beer. They are in a "dry county" and liquor is not available nor are there bars or lounges. There were about 50 people at the fry including Jim Campbell from U.S. Aviator magazine, who had just arrived. Many of the faces we had seen coming and going all week were there plus a few extra.

By 7:00 pm we were all so stuffed with cat fish and trimmin's that all was left to do was go sleep it off, just like Scott's hound dogs (everybody in Arkansas has 2 or 3 hound dogs).

The weather guessers had promised a beautiful Saturday, and boy did they deliver. Clear, calm and warm. Jeff got a bunch more E-Z time and so did I as we were taking air to air photos using a 85 HP Aeronca Champ as the

photographer's plane. With Scott at the controls of the Champ and the photographer in the front seat we wound our way around the airport snapping air to air shots by the dozen.

After doing some flying and photo shooting in the front seat of the Champ, I jokingly suggested to Scott that we "dump our load" and head back for the airport. He said, "All right" and took the controls, his face dawned by a wide grin. He dove to the field below us and began a 2-foot AGL pass to pull up just before the tree line at the end of the field. After applying full power and jumping over the trees he put it into a steep descending and turning bank back to the field. We dropped over the trees and began our next pass getting ready to pull up again at the tree line on the other side of the field. It was quite enjoyable, except for the part where my whole life flashed before me. I can see why there are not a lot of old time retired crop dusters at their re-unions.

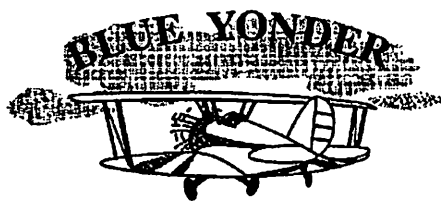
Scott told us about one of his neighbours complaining about the tire tracks on his barn. Scott said that he didn't recall making them, but it could easily enough have been him coming in, after the last hopper full, in the dark. He thought that he should have felt a bump or something though!

It was now mid-morning and Jim Campbell was ready to go up in the E-Z Flyer. Jim has flown 915 different types of aircraft including: fixed wing, jets, rotary wing gyro and ultralights. The E-Z Flyer would be number 916. It was going to be interesting to see his reactions because he had so many types to compare it with. He took off and flew it around a bit, doing steep turns, stalls, stalls in the turns, etc. On his second pass over the airport at about 200 feet you could hear him yell "YA-HOO!" Defiantly a good sign, I thought. On another pass he did the old hands off waive and yelled "YA-HOO" again. When he came in and landed Jim commented on the aircraft's stability and the ease with which it flies, lands, and handles on the ground. He said that there really isn't anything out there that is as easy and comparable to it. He said that the Kolb may be close because Holmer makes a very stable and predictable machine.

Saturday was my day to leave for home and with bushels of memories fondly packed away, I said my good-byes and left.

What an experience - Country Flying, Country Food, getting buzzed daily by fellow buffs and that good old down south hospitality.

I can't thank "ya all" enough!



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