



# Skywriter



Monthly Newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club

April 1996

## Survey Says!

by Stu Simpson

The results of the CUFC's survey are in and the numbers may surprise you. We learned a lot about where our members are now and where they want to be in the future. So let's get to the goods.

36 people completed and returned the questionnaire, which is about half of the membership. I hate to say it guys, but you're getting on in years (at 31, I'm the second youngest). The average age is 48, with the youngest being 23 and the oldest 75. Most everyone is married and has kids. CUFC members come from all walks of life; we have lawyers and laborers, computer experts and cops, truck drivers and businessmen, machinists, engineers, and Ph.D.'s. You name it, we've probably got it.

23 respondents have some form of ultralight licence, mostly private ratings. 9 of you have PPL's (two for helicopters) or higher, there was one AME ticket. And what a wealth of experience! Between us, we've logged more than 16,000 hours during a total of 300 years of flying. That's an average of 316 hours each over an average of 8.8 years each.

There's good news for the training industry in that half of those responding planned on getting further training, most being ultralight pilots wanting to earn their Recreational Pilot Permit.

29 respondents are either owners or partners in an airplane, 21 of which are UL's, 5 are home-builts, and 3 are conventionals. Keep in mind that some people own more than one plane.

Everyone who owns an ultralight has a pretty good set of gauges. Nearly all UL owners have the basic seven including ASI, altimeter, tach, CHT, EGT, Hobbs, and a compass (homebuilts and conventionals, of course, are required to have these instruments). Our pilots seem to be quite happy with what they've got because very few plan on adding additional instruments in the future. Half of us have radios, and of those who don't, about half plan on getting one.

Most of the respondents fly out of Indus. Bob Kirkby's Wild Rose Aerodrome places a distant second, and the rest are flying from strips scattered around Calgary. As many of you know, quite a few of our members live in other towns and cities in southern Alberta, and other parts of Canada.



Jim Corner's Kitfox.

What gives us the most frustration about flying? By far, the most common complaint is the weather, especially wind and turbulence. Other gripes include regulations, cost and availability of parts, maintenance, hangar rash, rushing for a flight, the long drive to the airport, the attitude of "spam-can drivers", and not having enough time to fly. It was a pleasant surprise to find that some people were quite satisfied with the current state of affairs and weren't frustrated with anything.

The survey says that the vast majority of ultralight pilots got into the sport on account of the low cost of flying UL's. But what makes them stay, and what gives our pilots the most satisfaction?

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(Survey - continued from page 1)

It turns out the answers are as varied as the people you ask. The most common response is the freedom from red tape and regulation that ultralight jocks enjoy. And then there are the good things like group flights, cross countries, chasing trains, open-air cockpits, landing on grass runways, the camaraderie and enthusiasm of the pilots, and the "barnstorming" nature of ultralights. But mostly, so you say, it's the pure, absolute fun of flying basic, low and slow airplanes that keeps you coming back for more. Obviously, we're doing something right.

Enough day dreaming, back to business. 18 out of 36 have built at least one plane, which implies another field of great experience and expertise. As for the future, the vast majority (29) said they'd like to build a plane. Some were budgeting for 7 to 10 thousand dollars, and a few even as high as \$40K, and more. But most expect to pay about 20 - 25 grand for their machine and want a high-wing, 2-seat, taildragger (with trikes a close second). Biplanes make up the next most popular category.

Most future builders (65%) say they'd prefer to build from a kit. The most popular type of mill will be an auto conversion, with the Rotax 912 being quite attractive also. Very few expected to put one of the current crop of Rotax 2-strokes in their next machine.

Just for kicks, we asked each member what their ultimate fantasy airplane would be. We got some very interesting answers, including P-51's, a P-38, an ME109G (with full armament), a KR-2 that can handle grass strips, an Ercoup

e, a Waco UPF-7, a 3/4 scale F4U Corsair, an amphibious Kitfox, an RV-8, a Pelican, a few Rebels, a Maverick, a Feisler Storch, a Skybolt, a Cozy MkIV, a Citabria, a Pilatus PC-9, and one fellow who simply stated, "any new airplane".

One of the goals of the survey was to find out how to improve the CUFC, so we asked a bunch of questions on how to do just that. We started by querying what you like about the club. The common denominator is the friendship found among the members who all share the same interest. The next best thing is how we pass around our knowledge and experiences. The monthly meetings are very popular (especially those with guest speakers), as is the newsletter and the club hat.

So what needs improving? Two things, apparently. Firstly, members want to see more group flying events, both local and cross country flights. Secondly, more guest speakers at meetings would be very welcome. Many respondents asked for more hangar-flying time at the meetings, not surprising, since we only get together once a month. You'd also like to see a broader range of topics presented monthly including more technical subjects like engine maintenance, building tips, products (including kits) and service info, airmanship, and flying technique.

I found it odd that despite our members' depth of experience, less than half of the respondents felt they had something to contribute to the club at meetings. I'm guessing this is more a reflection of the fear of public speaking than anything else.

We're definitely a social bunch. So it's no surprise to learn that about 70% of people would like to see two or three

flying events (i.e. fly-ins) per year, and a similar number of social events. Some people, bless their hearts, wanted to hold as many as ten per year. Twenty of you want the CUFC to make more connections with other similar flying clubs. Some suggestions include UL clubs in Alberta, the rest of Canada, and the U.S., as well as the R.A.A., and a hot air balloon club.

Where do you want to go? Evidently, everywhere. 90% of you want to make cross-country flights, most to destinations between 50 - 100 miles away. Destinations listed include the small towns surrounding Calgary. But there were some more ambitious travellers who want to go to B.C., Saskatchewan, Manitoba and the northern States.

Which brings us quite nicely to our next topic. How many would participate in a journey of 500 miles or more round-trip? 21 out of 36. Again, the destinations vary, with all points of the compass getting equal billing. A few stated they'd go only with ground support and with rental accommodations. We're clearly an adventurous lot.

And finally, we asked "What do you think of Skywriter?" We wanted to know what you want in the rag, what topics should we be covering, and what  
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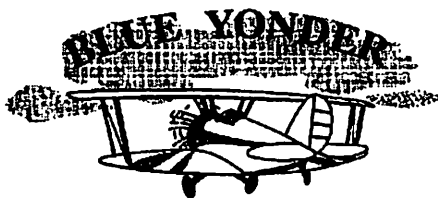
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Skywriter is the official publication of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club and is published 12 times per year. Opinions expressed by our writers are not necessarily those of the club. Articles and letters to the editor are very welcome from any readers. 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

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# The Net Minder

by Wilf Stark

There are two recent additions on the Internet that might be of interest. In Canada, Canadian Aviation magazine has opened a website (<http://www.cavok.com>). This site is an interesting collage of private, commercial and government information. It offers everything from advertisements to descriptions of worthwhile organizations, (eg: Calgary 781 Wing's complete Air Cadet program is described). You can browse by province, scope of subjects, scheduled events, and several other categories. Weather info is being brought on to this site in the future. Check it out.

In the U.S., a commercial website (<http://www.airparts.com>) has recently opened. There are a broad range of lists available across the entire spectrum of aviation. This site does, however, try to entice you to 'sign up' for a lot of services, at a small monthly fee.

The Ultralight Home Page, mentioned last month, has grown. It now has additional pages from manufacturers, as well as a greatly expanded classified ads section (mainly US). A lot more international ultralight groups are now listed as well. This site is worth visiting monthly. That's it for this month. Don't get 'lost' in the Net.

## Classified

**Intercom** - 2 place Ultracom including 2 headsets, in good condition, \$400.00. Chris Kirkman 280-1843.

**Looking for** - 9 other folks to buy a \$1000 share in a Woody Pusher homebuilt. Design similar to Challenger II, all metal with low-time Continental O-235. All structural parts built; needs cover & assembly. Objective is to have a plane in which to get Recreational Pilot Permit very cost-effectively. More details from Wilf Stark at 271-7120.

**Rotax 447** - with gear box, wood prop, exhaust, carb, 40 hrs, \$600.00. Dave Dedul 403-823-6054.

**Jeppesen** - CR-3 circular flight computer, new, \$20.00. Bob Kirkby 403-569-9541.

**Kolb Wings** - like new, ready to fly. Jim Creasser 226-0180.

**Props** - 2 wood props: 64 x 32 and 64 x 34, \$200.00 for both. Damien Belanger 1-823-3027.

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

(Survey - continued from page 2)

needs improving. The vast majority of you favour technical based articles on things such as flying technique, building/how-to, and safety. Member's stories and experiences rate highly also, as do new products and news briefs. Humour is definitely welcome, fiction is not.

CUFC members seem very satisfied with Skywriter (thank you for the kind comments) but suggested some improvements, namely, a broader scope of articles and, as mentioned, more technical content. There's also a wish for some aircraft evaluations. Respondents want more contributors to the rag, but only 1/3 felt they had something to contribute in the way of writing articles. Only a few people outside the club read Skywriter, but those who do, enjoy it.

So there's the raw data, now what does it mean? Overall, I think we're seeing a natural maturing of the club and it's members. Of course, this goes hand-in-hand with the growth of the sport flying industry. Just look at where we are now and where we were ten years ago. Back then, open-cockpit, dacron-covered pushers, such as Beavers and Chinooks, were the norm. Nowadays, we're seeing more and more UL's that look like conventional planes that shrunk in the wash.

Our pilots say they want slightly bigger, and certainly more capable airplanes with more advanced and reliable engines. That's not to say we

hear the death knell of two-stroke-based UL flying - it's clearly here to stay. But more capable airplanes will allow us a practical means of achieving the goals we're apparently reaching for. Goals like advanced flying skills and higher ratings.

I find it gratifying to note that many of our members are conventionally rated pilots and are able to operate much higher-performance airplanes than the rest of us. Yet here they are, hangin' out with the bug-smashers and flying from grass runways. These are obviously men who know a good thing when they see it.

As for the editors of Skywriter, we've already instituted some of the changes you asked for (see Bob Kirkby's article on tail-draggers). We'll try hard to reflect the views and interests of our members, as well as inform, educate, and entertain you.

But we need your help. You're asking for new contributors, so please pitch in. Skywriter staff will help with any editing, and you'll get to see your name in print. Contact either me or Kirkby for more info.

Many thanks go to Wilf Stark for help in composing this survey, and to Bernie and Ida Kespe for getting it in the mail. But most of all, thank YOU for taking the time and effort to complete it and return it. It was definitely worth the effort.



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## President's Message

by Ed D'Antoni

All who attended the February meeting appreciated the presentation from Sig Becker and Lauren Beaupre of Calgary Springbank Flight Service Center. We are all aware of Air Traffic Control and Flight Services. Their presentation re-awakened an awareness of the great job Flight Service Specialists perform. FSS are always somewhere in the background, ready and willing to help those in need.

In the Classified Ads this month you will see an ad from Wilf Stark, looking for partners in a Woody Pusher. The Woody Pusher is a fabric and metal homebuilt aircraft. Wilf's plan is to get a group of fliers to complete the aircraft then use it to obtain their Recreational Pilots Permit or Private pilot's licence. It looks like a good idea and I hope it is successful.

I gave our editor a copy of "The Great Ultralight Adventure - a 2850 Km flight from Madrid to London". If space is available it will appear elsewhere in this newsletter. If not, a few copies will be available at the meeting. We have been giving serious thought to organizing a similar flight. In order to get some U.S. participation we thought a flight originating at the Coutts/Sweetgrass border and ending in Wichita (1000 miles) or Boise Idaho (400 miles). Anyone interested in helping or participating, please contact me for more information.

I just received a copy of the Recreational Aviation User Group's proposal to the Transport Canada Recreational Aviation Steering

Committee. This proposal recommends an independent, user-run organization called the "TECHNICAL COMMITTEE" assume responsibility for all non-production aircraft in Canada. The proposals cover Ultralight Aircraft, Sportplanes, De-Certified Recreational Aircraft and Amateur Built Aircraft.

The categories of aircraft and long term goals seem reasonable. Except for what I've read in COPA over the last several years, I am not that familiar with all of the background work that has gone into this proposal. I do have a concern with the implementation and financing of this task.

It seems to me that the Technical Committee is taking on the massive task of setting standards, procedures, and qualifications for everything including basic design approval, construction methods and inspections. A massive paper infrastructure already exists for all of this. I would feel more comfortable having the technical committee simply take over using the existing rules and procedures and slowly make changes with the consensus of the users of the system, namely YOU and I.

Transport Canada, via Lindsay Cadenhead, is looking for feedback on this proposal, so let him know what you think.

Send your comments to:

Lindsay Cadenhead Project Manager,  
Recreational Review Project.  
Aviation Regulation,  
Transport Canada (AARRD)  
Ottawa, K1A 0N8  
Fax (613) 990-6215.  
Internet address: cadenh1@tc.gc.ca

## News...

...from the Blue

### Will That Be One Lump Or Two

An RAF student pilot was on a low-level training mission in a Folland Gnat when he hit some power lines over Wales. He managed to eject safely, landing in a farm yard. The farmer's wife rushed over to help him and tutted him up to the house. She then said, "I'd make you a cup of tea, but the electricity's just gone off."

### You Know You're Having a Bad Day When...

A USMC F/A-18 pilot, on manoeuvres in Australia, blew a tire and collapsed the landing gear upon arrival at Darwin. So a crane was sent over to clear the runway. But the strap used to hoist the fighter broke, grounding the plane once more. So crews tried again. But this time the whole crane toppled right over, sending the Hornet to earth again. The mess was eventually cleaned up and a Boeing 737 was cleared to land. But the 737 was damaged after it struck some debris that was still on the runway. And one other thing - the Hornet pilot's nickname is 'Lucky'.

### The Caterpillar Club

Ever heard of such an outfit? Not likely. The Caterpillar Club is a group that was originally established in 1921 by Irvin Parachutes. Its membership was open to anyone who had ever saved their bacon by jumping out of a disabled airplane with an Irvin brand parachute. Remember, in those days, parachutes were made from silk, which comes from caterpillars. The Caterpillar tradition continues today with over 35,000 members, though the company contends there are likely more than 100,000 folks eligible for membership. Switlik Parachutes also has their own Caterpillar club, with more than 27,000 members.

### Round & Round We Go

Stop and count the jugs on a radial engine sometime. You'll find each row of cylinders has an odd number of them. It's because the crank has to make two revolutions to fire all pistons. For example, the firing sequence of a seven cylinder radial is 1-3-5-7-2-4-6-1-3... etc. If round engines had an even number of pistons, the even numbered ones would never fire.



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# One Pilot's Opinion

by Bob Kirkby

## Taildragger - Part 2

In the last issue I discussed the dynamics of controlling a taildragger on the ground. In this article I would like to take it a little further and provide some techniques for doing tight turns on the ground and takeoffs and landings.

When flying out of a grass strip you are quite often faced with having to do tight turns at the ends of the runway. Most of the grass strips I've been to are no more than 50 feet wide and they usually do not have a turnaround area at the end. In an ultralight taildragger without differential braking this can be a little nerve racking.

In my last article I discussed how the C of G being behind the main wheels results in instability in lateral rotation during forward motion. In other words, when the taildragger is moving forward any deflection of the C of G from the line of motion develops into an angular acceleration around the opposite main wheel. We looked at how best to control this and keep our airplane accelerating in a straight line.

When taxiing, however, we can use this to our advantage to execute a tight turn in much the same way a race car driver uses the instability in his aft C of G car to do a controlled skid around a corner at high speed. The technique is really very simple but it takes practice to keep it under control. First, it is important to always turn into the wind if you have a crosswind component. That way the wind will assist by pushing on your vertical stabilizer in the direction of the turn for the first half, thereby accelerating your turn. In the second half it will be pushing against the direction of turn and will provide angular deceleration to help stop your turn. Turning away from the crosswind will have the opposite effect, making it more difficult for you to stop or control the turn.

Enter the turn at a moderate taxi speed leaving enough room for your tail to swing around without hitting lights or markers that might be at the end of the runway. Apply a burst of power just as you apply full rudder. You want enough power so that you feel the tail just start to swing out, but

not more. (Using differential braking, if you have it, at this point will greatly reduce the amount of power required.) As you swing towards the half way point you will feel the rate of turn start to increase. A terrifying, out-of-control feeling will overcome you as the side of the runway passes in front of the nose. Here's where you need fortitude. Keep the power on a little longer because you'll need some of that prop wash over the rudder to stop the turn smoothly. As you pass the three-quarter point apply opposite rudder and start to decrease the power. Let the aircraft go a little more than 180 degrees so that you can move back to the centre-line before stopping.

It sounds easy but don't be fooled. Take it real easy the first few times and don't be afraid to stop, get out, and finish your turn by hand. There is a fine line between a successful turn and going off the runway, and it all depends on the amount of power applied and for how long. With practice, though, you will eventually be able to turn that taildragger on a dime, with or without brakes.

Now that we can turn around we are ready to takeoff. I always stop my turn on the centre-line but at about a 20 degree angle to it. Then I do my final in-cockpit check and take one last, good look down the runway to be sure it's clear. Once you start the take-off roll the runway will be out of sight for a while. It's now critical to monitor the sides of the runway with your peripheral vision. Don't look out one side and then the other, monitor both at the same time so that you can detect a sideways movement early. Since I discussed at length in my previous article the techniques for keeping the tail tracking straight at this point, I

won't elaborate again. However, we do have some choices to make at this point in our take-off roll.

As we start to roll at full power the asymmetric thrust starts to pull to the right (assuming a Rotax turning the prop counterclockwise), and the slipstream is pushing our tail to the left. As we gain speed and the tail lifts, the asymmetric thrust will start to decrease but the right torque rolling force will become more effective. Add to this any crosswind component we might have and keeping the tail straight becomes a constantly changing challenge as we pick up speed.

We will want to keep the tailwheel on the ground until we are sure we have enough rudder authority. There may be a temptation to hold the tail down all the way up to lift-off but I don't advise this if there is some crosswind component. It would be like trying to combine short-field technique with crosswind technique, which is unnecessarily complicated if not required. Once the tailwheel breaks ground contact you will have to input more rudder, then fine tune the rudder inputs as asymmetric thrust decreases and the rudder becomes more effective with increasing speed.

Although the main wheels have not yet left the ground, you are essentially flying because the aircraft has freedom of movement in pitch and yaw. This is why taildragger takeoffs are so much different than on tricycle gear. Now you have to maintain straight and level "ground-flight" until you reach rotation speed. Once there, a gentle tug on the stick and you are in the air and the aircraft is in its element. The handling differences between a  
*(continued on page 6)*



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(Opinion - continued from page 5)

taildragger and a trike suddenly anish.

Eventually you will have to land and make another transition between air and ground. At least at this stage of the flight the power is at idle so you do not have to contend with the angular rotational forces of asymmetric thrust, slipstream and torque. If there is no crosswind component then it's a piece of cake.

Landings can be made in one of two ways. You can reverse the take-off procedure by flaring into a level attitude and letting the main wheels settle first, then gradually lowering the tailwheel as speed bleeds off. I don't know why, but in taildragger lingo this is called a "wheel" landing. It has the advantage of good runway visibility through to contact. The disadvantage is that you still have a "ground-flight" stage prior to the tail settling which may require lots of rudder work in crosswind conditions.

I prefer the more traditional three-point landing technique. This requires that you flair into a level attitude and gradually pull back on the stick in order to keep the aircraft just off the ground. Once you reach the normal on-the-ground attitude, let all three wheels settle at the same time. The advantage of this is that you immediately gain tailwheel control, plus you contact the ground at a lower speed - ideally at the stall. The disadvantage is that you have to transition to using your peripheral vision for maintaining centre-line as you increase your attitude for touchdown. But having done lots of

taxiing before we went flying, we should be good at using our peripheral vision by now - right!

In either case, once you are on the ground do not let up on the tight rudder control. Even though the aircraft is slowing down under idle power, the same angular acceleration forces are at work and letting the tail drift too far before correcting will result in the same opportunity for a ground loop.

The above notwithstanding, read your aircraft operators manual carefully. Some manufacturers will clearly spell out the best take-off and landing methods for their particular aircraft. Depending on the design, some tails will lift at very low speeds whereas others will have to be pulled up. Some manufacturers recommend only two-point touchdowns while others will recommend the three-pointer. Obviously you should use the techniques recommended by the designer, at least until you have a lots of experience with the airplane.

One last cautionary note. If you are flying ultralights or very light aircraft you will most likely do you first taildragger flying from a grass strip. Your first landing on a paved runway will give you a bit of a shock. At first you might think the extra friction of the tail wheel on the pavement will make it easier to control the tail, but since you are use to the wheel sliding around on the grass it will feel like the wheel is stuck to the pavement with glue. You will find your feet have suddenly become very heavy on the rudder pedals and if you aren't very careful it may ruin your day. I would suggest a wheel landing for the first occasion in order to keep the tail wheel

off the pavement until your speed is minimized. And before taking off again do a little taxiing to get the feel of it all over again.

Handling a taildragger on the ground and through air to ground transitions is most definitely different than handling a tricycle geared aircraft. It is not necessarily more difficult but it does require the learning of different skills. Even the handling differences from model to model are more pronounced in taildraggers than trikes. So when it comes time for you to move to a taildragger, read, get some dual, and take the time to get lots of ground practice before venturing skyward. I also strongly recommend not flying with a crosswind of any kind for the first five hours. But don't shy away from taildragging. It can be a lot of fun and it definitely keeps your skills sharpened.

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## Calling All Air-Heads

Another installment in our never-ending quest to discover the Air-Heads among us!

1. What is the distinguishing feature of the Kaman KH-43 crash-rescue helicopter? What name was this helicopter known by?
2. What is the primary difference between the Quicksilver GT-400 and the GT-500 ultralights? What is the GT-500's claim to fame?
3. Where is the speed brake located on the LTV A-7 Corsair II attack bomber? And what does "LTV" stand for?
4. Name the local air traffic control facility that goes with each of the following radio frequencies (all are in MHz): 121.9, 118.2, 127.2, 127.9, and 122.8.
5. What is the registration ident of the Calgary Police Service's helicopter, HAWC1? (Hint: Read the question carefully)

Look for the answers elsewhere in this issue.



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# The Cure For Cabin Fever? Go flying!

by Ron Axelson

Winter can offer some of the year's best flying weather; the air is silky smooth and everyone's plane performs like crazy in the dense atmosphere. At least that's how I remember it. But the winter of 95/96 kept me out of the air for what seemed like an eternity with above normal snow falls and below normal temperatures. My Ercoupe flew only once between mid-November and the end of February. Talk about cabin fever!

I simply couldn't stand it any more, so when the weather turned better a few weeks ago, I was out to Winters Airpark in a flash. There were a few people there hangar flying, and Bob Kirby flew in with his Renegade. Wayne was up with a student (students never feel the cold through the excitement of learning to fly). I stopped to ponder whether or not Wayne was capable of taking over in an emergency after sitting in back for an hour and facing the full brunt of a more than chilly slipstream.

Lets go flying, I said to myself. Then I spent an hour shovelling the airplane out of a three-foot snow bank. After a fairly intense walk-around I climbed into the left seat and luxuriated in the feel and smell of my airplane. Out came the check list, which took only a few minutes to run through.

Then I primed the old "Conny" a couple of times, switched on the mags, and hit the starter. Surprisingly, she caught right away. After a few shots of primer to act as choke, she settled down and within a minute was purring like a kitten. Okay, I thought, lets do a couple of circuits to see if I remember how to get the airplane off and back onto the ground. Then, maybe a cross-country to Vulcan.

On taxiing towards runway sixteen to do the run-up, I noticed friend Kelly Kuzyk driving in and thought its always better to fly with company. So I pulled over and shut down to find out if Kelly had any plans. As it turns out, he was heading up to Bob Kirkby's to meet Stu Simpson and Jim Corner. They had plans do a cross-country together and practice formation flying. What a brilliant combination that would be; a Challenger, HiMax, and KitFox all in formation, with high cover being flown by the Ercoupe!

The flight with Kelly to Kirby Field was

uneventful. He and I staggered our departures, compensating for the cruise speed difference, so that we arrived within a minute or two of each other.

However, on touch down I tapped the brakes to turn off on the taxiway (3/4 of the way down the runway) and felt little or no response. The ground was frozen under the thin layer of moisture created by the morning sun. So I had little choice but to just hang on while the energy bled off without brakes. It turned out to be no real problem and when back-tracking I could see the smiling faces of the boys, signaling everyone's sense of relief.

As I climbed out of the cockpit the first sight I saw was Kelly, with pail and sponge, washing off the effects of his landing. I opened my mouth to comment, but decided to let him continue the foreplay with his love-bird.

Everyone had a radio and Stu suggested we communicate on 123.4. We divvied up call-signs of Dragonfly 1 to Jim, Dragonfly 2 for Stu, Dragonfly 3 to Kelly, and Dragonfly 4 to myself. We decided to make Okotoks the first stop.

Kelly was first off, followed by myself, then Stu, and Jim. Because the Ercoupe doesn't fly well under 85 mph, and the ultra-lights expected to cruise at 55 - 60 mph, I climbed to create a safety margin of 300 feet above the flight. I watched as the boys got sorted out and formed up in an echelon left with the KitFox leading. The HiMax was next, and the Challenger took Tail-End -Charlie. What a terrific sight they made from above.

Our course took us within a mile of Indus, at which point I decided to play scout. I throttled up and arrived at Okotoks with no conflicting traffic. I joined left base and landed on runway sixteen. With canopy open and radio on, I watched and listened as Jim advised Okotoks Traffic the Dragonflies would over-fly the airport and join the active left-hand circuit for sixteen.

Meanwhile, a Zenair 601 on the ground advised he was back-tracking on thirty-four for immediate departure. In other words, he was in direct conflict with inbound traffic and the active circuit. As he back-tracked the Dragonflies arrived mid-field with Kelly peeling off first to join the circuit for sixteen. Because all aircraft carried radios, though, everyone was aware of the situation with the 601 departing straight out. One does wonder, however, what would have happened

if the ultra-lights had arrived Nordo and five minutes earlier.

After a quick refreshment and a whiz, we lit the birds again. The ultra-lights departed southbound from the intersection, leaving me behind to do my run-up. In the meantime, an instructor climbed out of a C-150 in the run-up area and left a student pilot on his own. Is this a first solo, I wondered?

I held short as the student sat at the end of sixteen visualizing his take-off. Then the radio crackled to life advising a C-172 was downwind for landing on thirty-four. This was immediately followed by the student advising he was about to roll on sixteen. I hit the push-to-talk and suggested we have a problem here. Okotoks Base broke in and instructed the C-172 to abort and join the active circuit. Two incidents within half an hour!

By this time, I was way behind the Dragonflies. After climbing out, I switched to 123.4 to discover the flight had gone west. While busy catching up, I was forced to listen to Stu provide a long monologue description of his old Black Diamond stomping grounds. And just as I caught up and got them visually, the flight changed heading for Indus and began the climb to traverse the range of foothills just west of highway 2.

All too soon home base was in sight and both Kelly and I left the flight to land at Indus. Once down, I reflected with Kelly that life doesn't get much better than when you've got a good bunch of guys to share the fellowship and experience of recreational flying.

## Coming Events

**April 28** - Red Deer Flying Club's Annual Fly-in Breakfast, 08:30 to 12:00, Red Deer Airport. Contact Ron Schmidt (403) 342-6707.

**May 4-5** - Wetaskiwin Flying Club Annual Fly-in Flea Mart/Trade Show, Wetaskiwin Airport. Contact Ernie Rind (403) 352-0013.

**May 26** - Annual Calgary Flying Club/RAA Fly-in Breakfast, 08:00 to 11:00, Springbank Airport. Contact Club at (403) 288-8831.

**June 15-16** - Okotoks Flight Centre Transportation Days fly-in, vintage aircraft, aerobic flying. Contact OFC 938-5252.

**July 13-14** - Wings Over Calgary Air Show, Springbank Airport. Contact Sheila Epp (403) 276-2176.

# The Great Adventure

*The following story was pulled off the Internet by Ed D'Antonio*

MADRID to LONDON September 2-8, 1995

The Great Adventure involved pilots flying microlight aircraft between Villanueva Del Pardillo Airfield near Madrid in Spain and Radwell Airfield North of London UK. This entailed crossing at least three European countries and the English Channel. They could start and finish the event anytime between 12.00 GMT Saturday 2nd September 1995 and 16.00 GMT Friday 8th September 1995.

A Microlight, as far as this event was concerned, is an aircraft as defined in the UK: An Aeroplane having a maximum total weight authorized not exceeding 390 Kg, a wing loading at the maximum total weight authorized not exceeding 25 Kg/Sq M, a maximum fuel capacity not exceeding 50 Litres and which has been designated to carry not more than 2 persons. Pilots were provided with a Fly Book containing the definitive rules and detailed advice as to how they could go about conducting such a flight but thereafter they were on their own.

All they had to do was take a photo of the official clocks at the start and finish and demonstrate with reasonable proof that they had flown the whole way. Upon arrival participants had the opportunity to apply for a number of prizes.

## RESULTS

Participants had 18 hours from their arrival time within which to apply for prizes.

Prizes were awarded for:

1. Speed, Weightshift
2. Longest Route Overall
3. Slowest Average Speed Overall
4. Most Interesting Route Overall

Every prizewinner in all the categories above: One year subscription to FLYER magazine (or extension to existing Sub). Every finisher: Six months subscription to FLYER magazine (or extension to existing sub).

## What Happened?

From 56 entries it is not known how many actually started. 15 aircraft finished. Many pilots were delayed or

forced to abandon their flights by extremely changeable weather throughout the whole week. It was not helped by inaccurate forecasting by both UK and French meteorologists who mid week predicted very high winds and heavy rain in northern France and southern UK associated with the remains of a Hurricane. It eventually materialized in a very much weaker form 24 hours late. It did however keep many pilots on the ground. For those who timed it right however there were some remarkable performances.

There was just four minutes between the three fastest times! John Fack and Co-Pilot Andy Griffin just won the weightshift class by one minute from Graham Slater and Ron Newham in the astounding time of one day, two hours and thirty three minutes. They flew from Madrid to Abbeville in Northern France in one day! Third place was taken by Tony Baker and Nick Drinkwater. The winning average speed was a remarkable 56 Km/H which includes the night spent at Abbeville! All were flying Pegasus Quantums.

The Cyclone Hovercraft Prize for the longest route was won jointly between two aircraft who flew together, piloted by David Crane and Robert Price, Co-Pilots were Peter Callis and Barry Underwood respectively. They left Madrid in the opposite direction to everyone else and went to Portugal first! Then they flew East right across Northern Spain and Southern France to the Alps to fly over the highest mountain in Western Europe, Mont Blanc (15,780 Ft.). Then, they flew to Belgium before crossing the Channel to finish at Radwell. Altogether a flight of 2850 Km is under five days. This remarkable flight in a Pegasus Quantum and a Pegasus Quasar also won one of the two discretionary prizes; The Crane Electronics Most interesting Route prize.

All the aircraft above, as with most others, were flown from UK to Madrid before the start. Most participants were flying without any kind of ground support.

Peter Mercer and David Bremner won the three Axis class followed by Zoltan Szabados and Josef Prinz who had come all the way from Hungary to participate. The Windy Miller award (slowest average speed prize) was won by John Hunt and Peter Sutton at 14.7 Km/H. They described their journey as the Great Mis-adventure, having had to cope with an incurable mis-fire and rebuilding their engine at least three times along the way. They

also won the Sky Systems Best Story prize though perhaps in this case it might have been better called the perseverance prize. On their last leg from Headcorn in Kent to Radwell they saw a ground speed of 122 mph showing on their GPS at an airspeed of around 70 mph!

Jenny Concannon, accompanied by co-pilot Dave Buchanan received a special award for merit despite not completing the course as they rolled their machine after an engine failure in France. Jenny raised over 1000 for the charity SCOPE.

Almost everybody had some extraordinary tale.

Colin Bodill and Stuart Mills elected to land at the nearest airfield when a fuel problem and approaching darkness prevented them from reaching their planned destination. They only realized it was military when they narrowly escaped being caught in a whole series of arrester wires and catch fences upon landing on the strip. Lots of men with guns appeared and it turned out to be the most secret air base in all France!

The organizer, Richard Meredith-Hardy, caught some extreme turbulence on takeoff and flew his aircraft into a forest near Navaleno in Northern Spain, totally destroying his machine but otherwise escaping with a sore foot.

Simon Lichtenstein and Harry Cook having flown over Mont St. Michel landed in Avranches and by chance stayed in a Hotel in which the legendary pilot Antoine St. Exupery had stayed precisely 60 years before.

On the way out to Madrid, Mark Jackson landed at Henlow, only 3 miles from Radwell, where his wing blew over. Two days of repairs eventually fixed it and he successfully flew to Madrid and back again. In France he sustained such bad propeller damage he had to saw four inches of the opposite blade to re-balance it.

Tony Wells' support car broke down near Biarritz. The local garage offered to tow it home for 2000 rather a lot, so a trailer was sent from UK. In a stitch up between the garage and the local police the tow car was declared too small when it eventually arrived and they had to return to UK for another. In the meantime the broken support car was dismantled by French Customs...

*(continued on page 9)*



# News... ...from the Blue

## New Ultralight Regs Proposed

Skywriter has acquired a copy of The Recreational Aviation User Group's proposals to Transport Canada. The highlight of the document is the suggested creation of "an independent user-run (and financed) organization that assumes the responsibility for uncertified airplanes in Canada".

The proposal contains a number of suggested changes to existing rules, including a 1200lb maximum weight limit for 2-seat UL's and passenger carriage if the plane meets certain construction and maintenance standards. 2-seaters would have a yet to be determined maximum wing loading and minimum useful load. No mention is made of single-seaters. The UL category would also incorporate AULA's.

The RAUG would like to see the creation of a new "Sportplane" category for uncertified planes above AULA's, and a category called "De-certified Recreational Aircraft". Amateur-built airplane rules would remain largely untouched, except that they'll be allowed to fly IFR and have an easier aerobatic approval process.

In a related story, in a document entitled 'A New Recreational Aviation Policy', Transport Canada states, "In future, ultra-lights WILL (emphasis

## (Adventure - continued from page 8)

Ben Ashman and Paul Dewhurst as UK pilots in French machine in Spain somehow got themselves into an incredible bureaucratic muddle with some Spanish Police entailing eventual rescue by ground from Madrid. Poor weather and time eventually persuaded them to return to base in France rather than continue to Radwell.

Ultimately everyone got home, there were no injuries, and everybody said they really did have a Great Adventure.

For more information on The Great Adventure contact: Richard Meredith-Iardy, Radwell Lodge, Baldock, Herts, SG7 5ES, UK Tel 01462 834 776 FAX 01462 732 558 E-Mail: rmh@flymicro.win-uk.net

added, Ed.) include aircraft up to a maximum allowable take-off weight of 1200 lbs." So, on the surface at least, it seems Transport has already decided to raise the weight limit of UL's in Canada. Skywriter will keep you posted on any new developments. Thanks to Jamie Roth of Transport for the information.

## USUA Proposes New U.L. Regs Down South

The US Ultralight Association has proposed the FAA create a new category of aircraft to fit between FAR Part 103 ultralights and larger homebuilts. USUA president John Ballantyne says the proposal calls for overweight single-seaters to be grandfathered into a category where the pilot is licensed for UL's (seemingly in a manner similar to Canada's regs). Two-seaters would have a weight limit of 992 lbs gross and a 39 mph stall speed. The USUA would like to see Part 103 left on the books untouched.

## Wittman Crash Cause Revealed

The US NTSB has released its findings into the crash that killed pioneer homebuilder and designer, Steve Wittman, and his wife Paula. The Board says the probable cause was the fabric separating from the wing and causing a wing-aileron flutter which ultimately led to airframe failure. The fabric delamination was a result of using nitrate dope to bond the fabric to the plywood surface rather than the specified Stits Poly-brush.

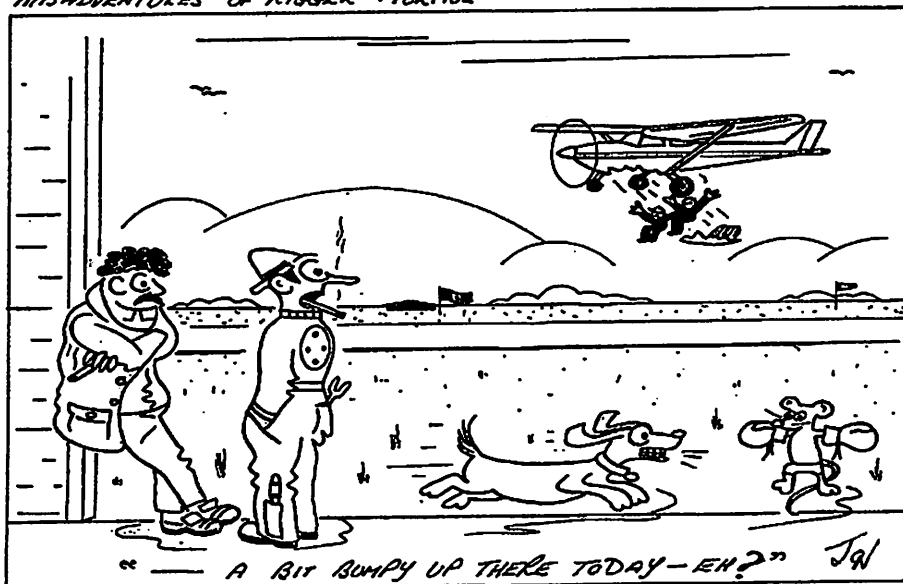
## Our Kind Of Airline

A French airline has recently reserved the following registrations for its fleet of holiday jets: F-GSUN, F-GSEA, F-GSEX.

## Air-Head Answers

1. The KH-43, known as the Husky, has two inter-meshing rotors on top and no tail rotor.
2. The GT-500 is a two-seater. It was the first airplane certified under the U.S.'s new Primary Aircraft category.
3. It's a large plate on the belly of the airplane that extends from forward of, and between, the landing gear bays. LTV stand for Ling-Temco-Vought, the company that built the plane.
4. Calgary Ground control, Springbank Tower, Calgary ATIS, Springbank ATIS, and Okotoks Unicom.
5. The MD-520N designated HAWC1 is registered C-FCPS.

## MISADVENTURES OF RIGGER MORRIS



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