



Skywriter

Monthly Newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club

May 2002

From The Cockpit

by Bob Kooyman

As I write this, the last blizzard of winter is melting and the snow banks are retreating into hiding places behind the trees and bushes. It is spring! At last! The violent winds of April are beginning to blow themselves out and flying weather has returned.

Before you head out and jump into the plane to head off to the wild blue yonder, there are several matters to attend to however. It is time for the spring annual. At the April meeting Brian Vasseur and Wilf Stark did a wonderful, spontaneous presentation on the work that has been required to prepare their RANS for the summer ahead.

First and foremost is to drag the plane out into the bright light of day and do a thorough walk around to reacquaint yourself with (her/it). Then get up close and personal. Look for hanger rash and fabric damage that may have occurred when you weren't looking. Look into the tailcone and confirm that your aircraft didn't become a rodent apartment over the winter. Climb into the cockpit and sit down. Did the cockpit shrink a bit over the winter? Is the Plexiglas in need of a good cleaning and polishing? Are the controls till free and clear? Pull the seat belts up and check their condition and fit. Climb

out and conduct a thorough walk around. Look at each hinge. Pull a couple of bolts and look for wear. Check for frayed cables. Look for corrosion. Check the tailwheel for free rotation and casting. Then look closely at the spring for any signs of cracking.

Walk back into the hanger and dig out that checklist for periodic maintenance, which you made when the plane was built. And bring your toolbox back out to the plane.

Remove the cowling and look for stains that indicate leaks. Then inspect the engine. Exhaust system tight? Pull the plugs and check their color. Too rich or lean? Clean/replace and reinstall. Does the engine require decarburizing? If you have an electrical system, it also requires inspection. Look for loose or frayed wires. Check the acid/water levels and charge the battery.

Gasoline which has sat over the winter really shouldn't be used, so grab a jerry can and drain the fuel tanks. Then follow through your fuel system looking for accumulations of water. Now is a great time to replace the fuel filter. What is the condition of the fuel lines, soft and pliable or getting old? Consider replacement of any that need it. How well does the primer injector work? Does the fuel pump need a rebuild? What is the condition of the impulse line to the fuel pump? Remember that this is a special hard plastic line to transmit the pulses from the crankcase. Reassemble everything and check for

leftover parts.

There is one part left for inspection and reconditioning, the pilot. The club, through the efforts of Stu Simpson will be putting on a recurrent training seminar on Saturday, May 18. Transport Canada plans to attend and the seminar should qualify for recurrent pilot training.

Now we are off for a Great summer of flying. →

Coming to Calgary ...

Carl Hiebert

Photographer Aviator Author Motivational Speaker

Confining to a wheelchair since a fluke hang-gliding accident in 1981, Carl Hiebert astounded the aviation world when, five years later, he became the first person to fly across Canada in an open cockpit ultra light aircraft. His inspirational achievements have earned him the Vanier Award for outstanding Canadians and the Honorary Guild Shield for enhancing the quality of life for all Canadians.



Saturday, May 11, 2002
7:30 PM

Dalhousie Community Church
5511 Baroc Road NW

Tickets:

\$20.00 each

Children's Pass (age 10 and under): free

To order or reserve your tickets, call

Susanne: 256-2894

Fax: 201-7903

This event is a benefit for Trinity Mennonite Church's Building Fund.
Donations accepted at event.
Visit www.carlhiebert.com.

For Sale

Continental 65 - with prop, 300hrs, high compression pistons make it an 80hp, \$5500. Call Don (250) 427-2046. (05/02)

Loran-C - Apollo 604 with antenna, works great, \$200. Call Bob Kirkby (403) 569-9541. (04/02)

Propeller For Sale: 2-Blade wood, 68x32 tractor for Rotax 503DC. Leading edge protection, 60 hours TT, great condition. \$350 CDN, obo. Includes bolts and mounting plate. Call Stu at (403) 255-6998 or e-mail simpsont@cadvision.com for pictures. (02/02)

Andy's 1993 Challenger II is for sale. 340 hrs. Fully enclosed. Stitts covered. Endura paint. Always hangared. Larger wheels. Skis. Rotax 503 DC, DI. 10 us gal fuel tank. \$16900. Nice aircraft. Call Andy at (403) 247-3245 or email gustafsa@shaw.ca (03/02)

1995 TEAM Himax.- 314TT, 60hrs SMOH on Rotax 503DC, 2-blade ground adjustable prop, good panel, spinner, speed fairings, VHF antenna, large cockpit, always hangared. Great performance and handling. Only \$9500. Call Stu at (403) 255-6998 or e-mail simpsont@cadvision.com (02/2)

Tundra - two for sale, both with Rotax 503 and 100 hrs, one enclosed - \$15,000 and one open - \$14,000. Garrett Komm 257-3127 or 874-6447. (0202)

Super Koala - Rotax 503, DCDI, Culver wood prop. Airspeed, Altimeter, Tach, CHT, EGT, Hour meter, Fuel gauge. Heated cockpit. Less than 200 TT on new engine and airframe. This is an attractive, predictable and easy to fly taildragger. Open to any serious offers. Dale (403)293-3826. (01/02)

Notice: Classified ad are free to CUFC members. Call Bob Kirkby to place or renew your ad 569-9541 or email to kirkby@skywalker.ca

Ads reprinted from the St. Albert Flying Club Newsletter

Floats - with lockers, spray rails, water rudders and rigging. Suitable for ultralight or home built up to 1500 lbs, weight 130lbs, \$3000 OBO. Reg Lukasik 780-459-0813.

Flying Events

May 19 - St. Alberta Flying Club's annual Rotax Speed 60 air race. Contact Carl Forman 283-3855.

May 12 - Sundre Flying Club's annual Mother's Day fly-in breakfast, 8 am to noon, contact Ron Botham at 403-638-4155.

May 26 - Medicine Hat fly-in breakfast, 9 am to noon, contact Boyne Lewis 403-527-9571.

May 26 - Camrose fly-in breakfast.

June 2 - Lacombe Flying Club annual Fly-in breakfast, 403-782-3827.

June 9 - Innisfail annual fly-in breakfast, 7:00 - 11:00. 403-728-3457.

June 9 - Bonnyville fly-in breakfast, 7 am to 11 am, 780-826-7457.

June 16 - Lloydminster fly-in breakfast, 8 am to noon, contact Martin Johnson 306-893-2776.

June 21-23 - COPA Annual Convention 2002 celebrating 50th anniversary. The COPA Red Deer annual rust remover safety seminar will be held at the same time. See web site for details: www.copanational.org

July 10-14 - Northwest EAA fly-in, Arlington, WA. See details on web site: www.nweaa.org

July 13 - Nanton Lancaster Air Museum annual fly-in at AJ Flying Ranch. Breakfast 8:00-10:00. Lunch 11:00-1:00. Under-wing camping available. Contact Joe English 403-646-2834.

July 20 - Kirkby's annual fly-in breakfast at Chestermere-Kirkby Field, 8:30 to noon. Contact Bob Kirkby 403-569-9541

July 21 - Vulcan annual fly-in breakfast, 8:00 to 11:30am. Contact 403-485-2633

July 23-29 - EAA Airventure 2002, Oshkosh, WI. See details on web site: www.airventure.org

August 3-4 - Lethbridge annual airshow with the Snowbirds.

August 10 - Calgary Ultralight Flying Club fly-in breakfast at Chestermere-Kirkby Field. Contact Bernie Kespe 255-7419.

August 26-30 - 2002 Alberta Air Adventure Tour to Dawson Creek. To join contact Stu Simpson 255-6998.

September 8 - Calgary Ultralight Flying Club BBQ at Dave Boulton's airstrip. Contact Bernie Kespe 255-7419.

September 14 - Glen Bishell's annual fly-in and all-day BBQ at Carstairs-Bishell airfield. From 8:00 am on.

Skywriter

Skywriter is the official newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club and is published 12 times per year. Forward your articles and letters to:

Editor: Bob Kirkby 569-9541
e-mail: kirkby@skywalker.ca

Assistant-editor: Bernie Kespe (see below)

Calgary Ultralight Flying Club

Meetings of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club are held on the second Thursday of every month, except July and August, at 7:00 pm, at the Northeast Armoury, 1227 - 38 Avenue NE.

President: Bob Kooyman 281-2621
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Visit the CUFC web site:
www.cadvision.com/cufc/

Emergency Procedures 101

by Brian Vasseur

Now that I'm a partner with Wilf in the RANS S12 I figured it was time I learned to fly it. In the middle of April Wilf and I finally found a night where the weather seemed quite promising.

I'm ashamed to admit that up until then I had only 1 hour of dual in the last 6 years, so obviously my skills weren't even close to what they should be. Wilf, who has a stake in how well I fly the plane, agreed to play checkpilot.

The first thing on the training plan was how to deal with a fire on board. It was fairly evident that he had put some thinking into this exercise because he had obviously rigged some key wires in the panel to short and create a real fire. Since we hadn't started taxiing yet we weren't in any real danger and Wilf tried valiantly to find out which switch to turn off. I took what might not have been a realistic approach to the problem and just got out of the airplane. In hindsight I think Wilf's solution to turn the master off would be more appropriate if this ever happens in the air.

This incident does vindicate my decision to remove the primer from the panel since the extra gasoline might have made this a more difficult problem to fix. Luckily the damage was limited to the one wire that shorted, so we were able to remove the

offending wire and put the plane back together in an hour. An unexpected benefit is that the second engine temperature gauge works now.

Next on the list were stalls and circuits, and more circuits. After about 40 minutes I switched to the left seat and we did more circuits. Since we were using Runway 34 we were flying right hand circuits to stay away from the horses to the west. Overall the circuits went pretty well and most of my landings were pretty good.

After more circuits I had learned about as much as I could that day, and signalled to Wilf this was the last one. As I was on downwind across from the hangars I thought I felt the engine surge. It was barely noticeable but I recalled Bernie Kespe saying that's what he thought about his engine just before it siezed. Within a few seconds the engine started to cut out altogether and I signalled Wilf to get us on the ground. The engine ran fine all the way back. We dipped the tanks and had lots of fuel. We did find a possible short on the lighting coil wire, but that's separate from the mags so shouldn't have caused any problems. It's possible it was garbage in the fuel system from changing all the fuel lines. Whatever it was I'm not convinced I know what the cause was.

The lesson learned from this was that you really can expect an engine problem when you least expect it, that Wayne Winters' advice to always have a spot to land in sight was advice I'm glad I followed, and having lots of altitude gave us a lot of time to deal with the problem without having to deal with a crisis.

The next time Wilf and I go flying I'm going to have a discussion with him about just "simulating" the emergencies. →

First Annual CUFC Safety Seminar

Saturday May 18
10:00 am to 12:00 noon
At Chestermere-Kirkby Field
(Main Hangar)

Don't miss this opportunity to freshen your knowledge and skills before the summer flying starts.

Donuts and coffee provided - bring a lawn chair. More details at the May meeting.

Hiperlight Production Moves to Michigan

As of January 1, Thunderbird Aviation acquired the tooling, manufacturing rights, and name for the single and two-place Hiperlight aircraft from Sunrise Aircraft.

Ron Jones, a principal of Thunderbird Aviation, says that production of Hiperlight kits should begin early this summer at their new factory located in Shelby Township, Michigan.

In the meantime, Jones is asking all current Hiperlight owners to contact his company so they can create a database of users. Thunderbird Aviation will supply parts and service.

Thunderbird Aviation is located 20 miles north of Detroit.

To contact them, write:
Thunderbird Aviation,
50230 Mile End Drive,
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Michigan 48317
Phone: 586-212-5862
E-mail tbirdrj@aol.com



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Lacombe

by Carl Forman

On Sunday April 21 Ivan Myslawchuk and I flew to Lacombe. Bruce Piepgrass provided ground support. We departed Chestemere-Kirkby Field at about 9:30AM. The winds were out of the north at 5 to 10 miles per hour. Ivan's Kolb Ultrastar cruises at between 55 and 60 miles per hour. With the gentle headwind and the leisurely speed of the Ultrastar, we had plenty of time to enjoy the scenery. Our first stop was at Linden which is forty miles north. Bruce drove up to the airport just as we were shutting down our engines. After a twenty five minute rest and refuel stop, we took off for the sixty mile trip to Lacombe. We flew about eight miles to the east of the Red Deer airport and skirted the east side of the City of Red Deer. Once past Red Deer we angled west, crossing the highway near Blackfalds and approached Lacombe airport from the west side.

We weren't on the ground too long before a few of the local pilots drove over and shared some hangar talk and generally made us welcome. Next, Bruce drove us to a restaurant for lunch. For the return trip, we departed runway 34, did a right hand circuit and headed for Linden. Our return trip more or less retraced our outbound route.

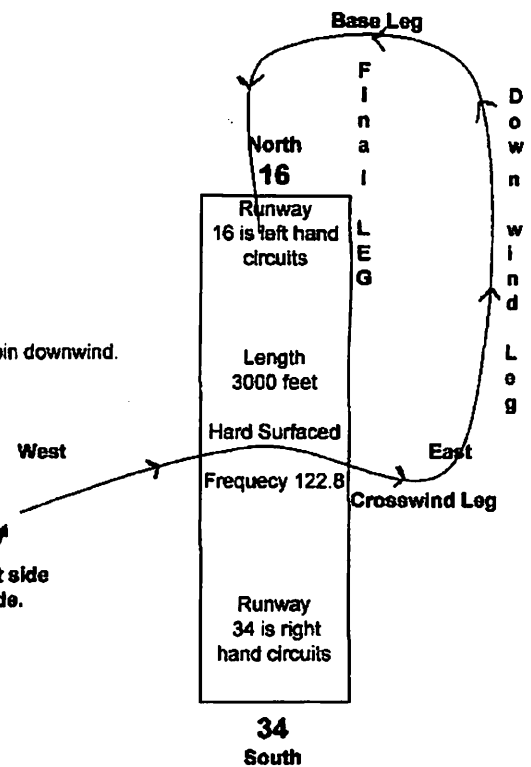
On the right is a diagram of the Lacombe runway which shows how I planned to join the circuit and land. It includes the radio procedures that I intended to use.

Lacombe Alberta
 .9 mile Northeast of the town
 N52 29 18 W113 42 44
 Elevation 2783 Feet - say 2800 feet
 Radio frequency is 122.8

Circuit Procedures

Go line astern about 5 miles out.
 Try to keep the formation reasonably tight.
 Don't fly too large a circuit.
 Cross midfield at 3800 feet
 Descend to circuit height - 3800 feet and join downwind.
 See Radio procedures below.

Join the circuit from the west side and cross over to the east side.



Radio Procedures: Note listen early on 122.8 to try to determine the active runway.

Call four to five miles back:

Lacombe traffic this is 3 ultralights 5 miles south west(etc) at 4000 feet.
 We'll be crossing midfield to join downwind and land at Lacombe.

Depending on how busy the day is, you may have to co-ordinate your approach to the runway with other traffic. The radio conversation is straight forward.

At midfield:

Lacombe traffic this is three ultralights overhead at 3800 feet joining
 Downwind runway 16 left hand - Lacombe traffic.

When downwind

Lacombe traffic 3 Ultralights are downwind lefthand runway 16 - Lacombe traffic.

When base

Lacombe traffic 3 Ultralights are turning left base runway 16.

When turning final

Lacombe traffic 3 Ultralights are turning final runway 16 - full stop landing.

When clear:

Lacombe traffic 3 ultralights are now clear of the active runway.

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All the details of the airport were obtained from the flight supplement. My diagram was based on a south wind and a landing on runway 16. My radio procedures assumed that there would be three ultralight aircraft on the trip and that two would be

NORDO. Lacombe was an easy destination to gain experience with circuit procedures because it has only one runway and the downwind (i.e. live) side is always on the east side.

It was a wonderful trip. Similar cross country flights with ground support and hopefully more participants should be considered in the future. This is an opportunity to gain flying experience and more fully realize the recreational potential of our aircraft. →

Farewell to the Renegade

by Stu Simpson

Bob Kirkby had finally gotten lucky. After many months of advertising he sold his Murphy Renegade to a fellow in Cold Lake, Alberta. Kirkby and the new owner cut the deal in March and the buyer wanted to get it home as soon as possible. Realizing that he didn't have the experience or warm enough weather to fly it there himself, he told Bob he'd come and take it home in pieces on a truck.

It took Kirkby about half a second to change the fellow's mind. "I didn't want to see it go like that," Bob said. Rather than rip it apart, Bob would deliver the Renegade by flying it to Cold Lake.

That was a pretty courageous decision; many things could go wrong on such a trip, and the Renegade could get bent. Bob wasn't getting paid until he delivered it in one piece. Also, since he'd be making the trip in spring time Alberta, the weather conditions would be anybody's guess.

I offered to accompany Bob and fly him home in the Giant. It'd be safer to have someone else along, and a ride in the Giant would sure beat a 20 hour bus ride home. Glen Bishell offered to come along, too, just for the hell of it. He's like that, which is one of his more endearing qualities.

We waited through an abnormally frigid March and most of abnormally frigid April. Looking at the forecast, we set a tentative departure date for a Sunday in mid-April. The weather maps looked good on Saturday night, indicating the chance of tailwinds in both directions for the flight. But the weather turned into a freak blizzard for anywhere in Alberta north of Innisfail. As it was, Calgary had a wind storm with gusts up to 50 knots. The wind actually blew Kirkby's wind sock off it's post.

Bishell and Kirkby and I waited impatiently, checking the weather every few hours during the next days. If we

found a weather window, we knew it'd be a small one and that it'd likely close on us quickly. Toward the following Friday the weather started to look a lot better, though still a bit cold for flying open cockpit. The go/no go decision fell largely to Bob, who'd have to endure the cold from the Renegade's cockpit. He decided we were on.

The air still had a chilly snap to it as we taxied out at 10 a.m. We reasoned the day would warm up as it progressed, which is also what the weather guys said would happen. Boy, was that wrong.

Bishell, timing his takeoff from Carstairs, planned to meet us in the air near Three Hills. Together at last, we'd continue the hop to Stettler and our first gas stop. But Bob had a minor radio problem shortly after takeoff. Glen's radio was acting up, too, so we decided to land at Three Hills.

Several people appeared on the ramp to peer curiously at our birds. We impressed them with the fact that we were flying our ultralights to such a distant and remote place as Cold Lake.



Bishell stands guard on the ramp at Three Hills. Photo by Stu Simpson.

Airborne once more with all radios fully functional, we turned again toward Stettler. Glen informed us of a tailwind originating from the southeast. Trouble was, it's rare around here to have a warm southeast wind in any season but



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www.hotplane@hotplane.ca

summer. Sure enough, the temperature was dropping as we flew north. I was starting to worry about Bob and the effects the cold might have on him. He discovered it was a little warmer at lower altitude, so we all wandered down a few hundred feet.

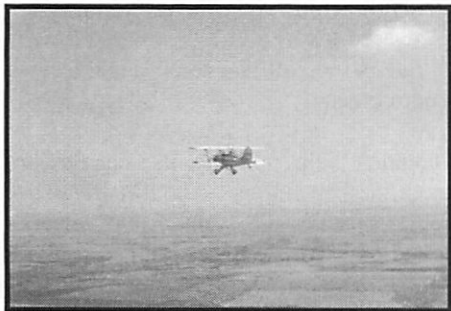
I couldn't help noticing the change in landscape beneath us. About halfway to Stettler, the world went from velvety blonde prairie to, well, just lumpy. Like crossing a street, we were suddenly over an endless and alien array of small hillocks punctuated with slushy sloughs and unruly stands of caragana. It looked positively incorrigible.

Stettler appeared right where it was supposed to be. After landing we drained our fuel cans and started looking around for a way into town for more. No sooner had the thought crossed our minds when a pick-up truck pulled up to the airport building. Gary Fink was the driver's name and he graciously offered to drive me into town for some go-juice. Gary, who's from Forestburg, is an aviation nut like us. He just happened to be in town to get plow blades and decided to stop at the airport to see if anything interesting was sitting on the ramp. He was very happy to help, but perhaps not as happy as we were to have his help.

Back in the air, it got even colder as we went north. Our altitude didn't matter much, it was just cold. Glen reported the air temperature as four degrees below zero. Normally Bob never flew the Renegade unless it was better than 5 above. *(Continued on page 6)*

Farewell - continued from page 5

This leg, to St. Paul, was 130 miles long and all over featureless, unfamiliar terrain. Navigation was without question the toughest I've done yet. Map reading was both a miserable and exhilarating chore as I tried matching a sparse assortment of landmarks to the few shades and scribbles of my chart. I'd search out a creek here, or perhaps a pipeline there, if the land hadn't grown over it in the 20 years since the map was drawn. An odd bend in an otherwise ruler-straight road was an infuriating treasure, forcing me to scrutinize the constantly leaping map to find it. Only rarely was I successful, but I had to try.



The Renegade glows in the morning sun. Too bad it's so cold! Photo by Stu.

The convective bumps of the afternoon only made things worse, especially down low where we had to stay for warmth. A couple of times I was more than a little worried about exactly where we were. But, sure enough, the railroad I'd been trying to keep my thumb on wandered into view; or we'd cross a powerline near where it crossed an irrigation ditch, just like the chart said it would. With each little victory I allowed myself a silent cheer. But make no mistake - all this fun was a hell of a lot of work.

St. Paul finally drifted into sight. Half frozen, Bob made an admittedly bad landing, but was happy to just be on the ground again. Before anything else we headed to the airport lounge to warm up. We met Harve Heeg of Airdrie, who has a cabin north of St. Paul. He flies a C-172 out of the St. Paul strip and was busy cleaning the foot or so of soggy snow from in front of his hangar.

While refueling I discovered I left my rear gas cap on the ramp at Stettler. This maddened and embarrassed me because I should know better. Glen and I quickly fashioned a temporary cover from a piece of tarp and some duct tape.

Just as we headed out to the airplanes to go, Glen noticed Bob's left tire was flat. Turns out part of the inside of the tire had rubbed a hole in the tube. We had to use my spare tube, which was entirely the wrong size. Bob agreed to try it after accepting the fact it only had to survive one takeoff and one landing.

The Dragonflies seem to have a short, but troubled history at St. Paul. In 1999, during our first Air Adventure Tour, Adrian Anderson's brother had a stuck valve on his Champ there. On top of that, we had to wait several hours for the wind to subside enough for us to continue the trip. I thought of all of this as we shivered in the icy wind fixing Bob's tire. At least there was no doubt this trip was an adventure.



Bob and Glen re-assemble the Renegade wheel after changing tube. Photo by Stu.

Once the tire was fixed we pondered the prospects of Cold Lake tower clearing us straight through their control zone to the Regional Airport. This would be important to minimize flight time for Bob. Would military flights preclude our transit through the zone? Looking at my watch I chuckled and realized we weren't going to have any problems.

"Wait a minute, guys," I said. "It's nearly 5 o'clock on a Friday afternoon. Any CF-18 drivers are already well on their way to a beer."

We launched out of St. Paul and stayed as low as we dared over the broken bush

and lake-covered country side. Southwest of Bonneyville, we all had a good laugh when Kirkby lost his map through the front cockpit hole.

Once past Bonneyville, we dialed in Cold Lake tower.

"Cold Lake Tower, ultralight Dragonfly 1 is with you," I radioed.

"Dragonfly 1, go ahead," the controller replied. She sounded about 15 years old, but no less professional for it.

"Tower, Dragonfly 1 is lead ship in a package of three ultralight aircraft currently five east of Bonneyville at 2900 feet, inbound to the Regional. We'd like permission to transit the zone."

"Dragonfly 1, you're cleared direct to the Regional. Wind is 180 at 10. Call the Regional in sight."

I acknowledged the instructions, happy my hunch was correct. It was tough to find the airport in the snow covered bush, but it soon appeared as a long grey stripe near a tree line. I called the tower again and the controller cleared us to the local ATF.

We gratefully set down on runway 25 just a few minutes before 6 p.m. I was a bit sad for Bob since this was the end of his last adventure in the Renegade.

A couple of guys flagged us down and waved us to the last hangar in the furthest corner of the field. And sure enough, by the time we stopped taxiing, Bob's tire was flat. But he'd delivered the Renegade safe and sound, and in one piece. All in all, Kirkby was pretty happy.

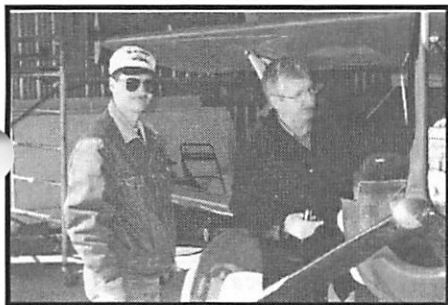
Our night in Cold Lake was busy. We had to find a proper tire and tube for the Renegade so Bob could give Gerald, the new owner, a proper check out the next morning. We found the right tire in the Renegade's new hangar, but finding the tube proved to be more difficult. We eventually located one at the local Wal-Mart. Incidentally, Cold Lake's Wal-Mart is about the size of Lethbridge.

(Continued on page 7)

Farewell - continue from page 6

Gerald is an avionics tech on CF-18s in 16 Squadron - the same squadron we toured in '99. He proved to be a magnificent host. He bought Glen and I each a bucket of gas for the trip home, and then bought us all dinner. He also arranged accommodations at the Lakeshore Inn; a bed and breakfast that was simply the very best place I've stayed in anywhere.

The next morning dawned clear and cold, but the wind was light. After a bit of running around town to get a few more things in shape for Gerald's check flight, we headed back to the Regional. Once the Renegade's wheel was back together Bob showed Gerald all he needed to know to start learning to fly it. Gerald crammed himself carefully into the front cockpit of his new plane and could hardly contain his excitement for the first flight.



Kirkby shows Gerald Fehr, the Renegade's new owner, what to look for in the pre-flight inspection. Photo by Stu.

The checkout with Bob went well despite the gusty crosswind that now plagued the field. It was scooting through the sock at 10 - 15 knots from the south. Since we planned to be heading south soon, I wasn't too pleased. Glen and I agreed we enjoyed Cold Lake a lot more in '99.



After the check ride, Gerald's smile tells all. Photo by Stu.

After Gerald and Bob shot a few circuits it was time for us to go. Kirkby jumped in with me, happy to be warm in an airplane again. Bish was kind enough to carry the gas cans and extra equipment. The wind on the surface at the air base was southeasterly at 10 knots when I'd checked it an hour earlier. Lloydminster was showing 15 gusting 22. That news worried me. I hoped to stay as close as possible to right angles to that wind for as much of the trip as we could. We decided to make for Vegerville for our first gas stop.



Farewell to the Renegade. Photo by Stu.

Naturally, the wind was much stronger aloft, so we tried to stay low. But even below a thousand AGL, Glen's GPS showed an average headwind component of 15 mph, sometimes 20, and sometimes 25. This was going to be a long day. One bonus for me was having Bob along to navigate while I flew and fought with the turbulence. Having him read the map cut my workload by half. We were all rather surprised to see convective turbulence from snow covered land.

The leg to Vegerville took two hours. Sometimes our ground speed was less than 50 mph. We were very glad to turn onto the downwind for Vegerville's runway 13.

On the ground we once again found a willing aviator to help us get gas. Tom Wharton drove us to town, and even lent me an extra gas can so I could fill up completely. During the drive, Tom bragged of the fantastic amount of recreational aviation activity that happens at Vegerville. For instance, when we arrived he and several others were busy fabricating a wing on an Avid Flyer re-build. The other wing was in the paint booth in Tom's hangar, where he keeps

the RV-6A he's building. A trike resides in the hangar next to Tom's, and the list goes on. Just before we left, four conventional aircraft flew in for the donuts the Vegerville guys have on offer each Saturday. The Vegerville crew has a lot to brag about, indeed.

It was while taxiing out to the active that one of my tires went flat; our third flat tire of the trip. Luckily, I bought a replacement tube in Cold Lake so fixing it was really only an annoyance. We were soon back in the air southbound for Stettler. Winds were 10 gusting 15 from the south-southeast.

This leg was the toughest one of the return trip. Navigation was still difficult; the turbulence was worse than the day before because the snow had melted; and to top it all, my radio failed. Still, we were enjoying the adventure and I definitely didn't want to be stuck on the ground driving home. Being aloft granted us a privileged view of some interesting sights. There were flocks of bright white geese or swans, each assembly at least a thousand in number. They swarmed like white fireflies against the dull barrens below. And like a smaller version of the Red Deer River, the Battle River trickled southeastward with dramatic rock protrusions guarding its banks. The late afternoon light exaggerated their parched formations, compelling them to appear even more exotic.



Bishell and Simpson, and their Bushmasters. These proved to be very capable airplanes for such an adventure. Photo by Bob Kirkby.

Then the land got lumpy again and we knew we were nearing Stettler. About ten miles north of the town, we finally outran the cold. The temperature on the (Continued on page 8)

Farewell - continued from page 7

ramp was a pleasant thirteen degrees. Hopping out of the Giant, I heard Glen call my name. I looked up to see my gas cap whizzing toward my head. I caught it just in time and resolved to wear my helmet around Bishell anytime I've lost something on an airport ramp.

Glen soon found another kind soul to drive us for gas; a fellow who works on the airfield and was just a few minutes from heading home. We also picked up a couple of hot dogs at the gas station. Back at the field, Bob and I agreed there's not much better than having your supper on the cowl of airplane, on a warm spring evening, in the middle of a flying adventure.



Simpson and the Giant, glad to be home. Photo by Bob

We left Stettler and turned southwest for home. I noticed Bish slowly drifting off to the west and radioed that he should turn a bit more to the left for the proper course. He replied that he was right on the course his GPS said was right for Three Hills. After a few more minutes, and some convincing navigational evidence from Bob and I, Glen reasoned he might have the wrong coordinates entered for Three Hills. He checked later and found the GPS was directing him to a field southwest of Innisfail. At this writing, there's no word back on how the wrong coordinates got entered. I was suddenly vindicated in my stubborn refusal to adopt GPS as my primary nav device. And I had Kirkby as a witness. I didn't say anything about it to Glen, though. That would have been indiscrete.

We soon crossed the line where the lumpy part of the earth turned flat again. Bob and I each felt relieved to be back over familiar and beautiful territory that felt much closer to home. The lofty towers atop Three Hills' three hills soon slipped by our right side and we cursed such structures like ultralight pilots everywhere do.

Glen broke off for home when we reached Linden, peeling easily away toward the falling sun. We continued on

toward Kirkby Field, still fond of the evening and loving the simple fact that we were flying. We raced a sports car for a few minutes south of Acme and then spotted a pretty yellow Cub poking its nose out of a hangar at the Lemay strip near there.

I turned the Giant into the circuit at home about 10 minutes before sunset, then greased it on to runway 16. It was a good end to another good adventure in the sky. The adventure might be over, but we sure got our money's worth out of it, I decided. Not only was it a chance to test our airplanes and ourselves, we got the chance to say goodbye. I know I'll miss flying alongside the Renegade, but I'm pleased we gave it a good send off and a proper escort to its new home. It was the least we could do for a friend. →

Happy Birthday B52

On April 15th the venerable B52 celebrated its 50th birthday.

The Boeing YB-52 made its first flight April 15, 1952. Hailed at Wichita, Kan., on the 12th, in attendance were retired Air Force Gen. Guy Townsend, the first B-52 test pilot, along with a who's who of B-52 design and development. Still going strong, in Operation Enduring Freedom, the aircraft has been responsible for the delivery of more than one-third of all the ordnance delivered to targets in Afghanistan.

Recreational Instructor Workshop

Transport Canada is hosting the first annual Prairie and Northern Region Recreation Instructor Workshop. This is for all ultralight, powered parachute, glider, balloon, gyrocopter or other interested instructors.

Topics will include CARs updates, What's happening in Recreational Aviation, Instructional Techniques, Aviation Safety, Accident Review and Prevention and a chance to communicate with other instructors and TC inspectors

Date: 9-5, Saturday May 25, 2002
Where: Mitchinson Flying Service,
Hangar 8, Thayer Avenue
Saskatoon Airport

Contact Lenora Crane at 403-292-4131
or email: cranel@tc.gc.ca

Are you in the market for a handheld radio transceiver?

AvShop, the on-line pilot supply store, hired an independent reviewer to assess all of the transceiver models and pick the best buys. For a free copy of this 12-page review, just send a blank email to handhelds@avshop.com and check your email in 1-2 min.

Last Minute For Sale

Garmin GPSmap 295 - colour, best available. Sells for about \$2,500.00, yours for \$2,000.00. New, still in Box. Buzz Mawdsley 403-974-1205W 403-271-7931H

Kolb Firestar - Single seat, excellent condition, good panel, Rotax 447, 160 hrs TTAE. 10 minute wing fold for easy storage. Complete with enclosed trailer which can be used as a hangar. Asking \$15,000.00 For details and pictures contact Andy Cumming (403) 380-6291 or flyingac@hotmail.com