



Skywriter



Monthly Newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club

July 2002

From The Cockpit

by Bob Kooyman

After one of the longest, most dragged out winters I can remember in Calgary, spring blew through (literally) and we are into summer and the flying season. Lots to do, see, and investigate. I didn't make it over to Okotoks but I heard it was a great breakfast with a large number of aircraft in for the event. I also heard that a number of the folks in attendance could have used a visit to our ground school seminar and some lessons on how to fly traffic patterns with or without radios.

Grab your family calendar and jot down the dates and times for some of the upcoming fly-in breakfasts.

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

Bob has extended the hospitality of his field to the Club for our annual Calgary Ultralight Flying Club fly-in breakfast at Chestermere-Kirkby Field on August 10.

Contact Bernie Kespe 255-7419.

Lastly, those Fabulous Men in Their Flying Machines take to the air again in the Alberta Air Adventure Tour to Dawson Creek August 26-30 2002 To join contact Stu Simpson 255-6998.

I'd like to extend a tip of the White Smithbilt to the Men in Blue for an excellent job of crowd control and overall management. Once again, Calgary showed the world that it really knows how to put on a party.

The cold rainy weather had put a damper on my flying this spring but nothing to compare with the G-8. I wish the Power That Be had taken a somewhat more enlightened view of general aviation and at least allowed flying on the east side of Calgary. All flights into/out of both Indus and Chestermere were grounded. (How many training flights did you have booked Wayne?).

It was a great time for airplane watching, however. From my office in downtown Calgary I got to watch U.S. Air Force One arrive and both Air Force One and Two take off. One group of guys that had an even better view were the people from STARS. They have put a number of photos up on a website and I urge you to go have a look. The URL is <http://139.142.1.18/pics/>

One plane that caught my eye was the white B-117 in the third row down. The registration is C-GCPH. Hmmm. If you go to www.tc.gc.ca/aviation/activepages/ccarc/en/current_e.asp?x_lang=e and type in the tail letters you will find out that STARS has acquired a new helicopter. Now who was flying C-IGSV??

Another site I like to visit is www.abbotsfordairshow.com/2002.html. It looks like Abbotsford has another wonderful show lined up for August 9-11, 2002. Unfortunately, Lethbridge has had to cut their show out this year due to the insurance woes.

Lets all have a safe happy summer and I look forward to some GREAT Tales when we meet again in the September. →



Lots of RV's at Lethbridge Fly-in Breakfast, June 15th. Photo courtesy Bob Kirkby.

For Sale

Fisher 404 - bi-plane, 65hp Rotax 532, VHF radio, excellent condition, easy to fly, \$13,500 OBO, Ron (403) 207-1147 (07/02)

Piper Vagabond PA17 - 10hr since total rebuilt, Continental A65 10 hrs STOH, \$25,000 OBO, Glen Clark, (403) 279-1036 (07/02)

COSMOS Phase II Trike - 1997, loaded with extras, 582 Rotax, 6-blade prop, 14.9 wing, electric start, trailer, high-speed/two-step floats (new), BRS900. Hangared, immaculately cared for and maintained only 200 hours. \$35,000 OBO. Call Ted (403) 722-3810 or trmatt@telusplanet.net (07/02)

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 (05/02)

Kolb Firestar - Single seat ultralight, 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 (05/02)

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, \$150. 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)

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 (02/02)

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. (02/02)

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 ads 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

Zenair 601 UL - Jabiru engine, 100hrs, 500 TTAF, good radio & intercom, fresh annual, 100mph on 3gph, 5hr range, Dave 780-459-8535 or 458-8324.

Floats - with lockers, spray rails, water rudders and rigging. Suitable for ultralight or home built up to 1500 lbs,

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
e-mail: kooyman-eng@home.com

Vice-President: Stu Simpson 255-6998
e-mail: simpsont@cadvision.com

Secretary: Bernie Kespe 255-7419
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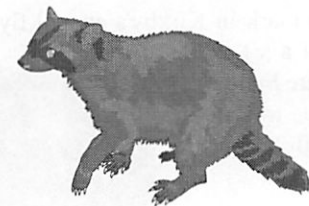
Director: Dave Procyshen 257-8064
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As a U.S. Air Force security guard, James was sent to check on a tripped alarm out by the base runway. On his arrival, he found that the culprit was a rather large raccoon who was sitting right in the middle of the runway. He ran around in circles flapping his arms and yelling in a futile attempt to scare the animal away. Suddenly, the Control Tower came on the Public Address system: "Tower to the airman at the end of runway 9, you are cleared for immediate departure."



Beware the Wind

by Wayne Pederson

Finally, after weeks of inclement weather and wind Saturday was a great day for flying! After a thorough check over and fuel its off in the blue yonder with the Kitfox II. After some exercises to get reacquainted with the plane it was time for some circuits. The first landing was ok but I knew I could do better. The next three were as nice as you could get. My time ran out for the day, we hangered the Kitfox hoping holiday Monday would treat us fine weather wise.

You got to like Mondays that are holidays, you got to love them when the weather cooperates to build some hours! Early morning found me back at the hanger with my 10-year-old daughter who was eager to cash in her birthday coupon that I gave her for a "free" flight. The air was so smooth and we spent an enjoyable 1.1 hours flying over friends farms, parks and of course our house.

When we landed my daughter got out of the plane with a big smile and said "you know dad, I was born to fly! I loved that!" What more could a dad ask for! All those hours away from my family while building the 'fox are now starting to reward my family who unselfishly shared me with the plane.

One hour later I was back at the hanger with my soon to be eight year old son. The Kitfox looked so beautiful in the sun that I grabbed the camera and snapped a few. I checked the windsock a few more times. The sock kept changing directions but was basically limp. Things were a little bumper now and we had to climb 2500ft AGL in order to get into the smooth air. We enjoyed the countryside and following the little tractor-trailers on the highway. Before we knew it an hour had slipped by. Coming back towards the field and starting the decent I could feel the air becoming more turbulent. Over the field and looking at the wind sock was cause for concern. It was swinging quickly 45 degrees to East-West and the 45 degrees the North-South runways. I told my son that he would have to be very quiet and let

dad concentrate as this is going to be a tough landing. I finally decided on the runway and set up the circuit. When I turned final I realized that I was going to have to maintain power in order to minimize the bouncing around that we were experiencing. (later my son told his mother that it was like being in an elevator we were quickly going up and down). I set up for the crosswind and flew a steady 50 mph approach speed trying to keep as steady as I could. About 10 to 12 feet from the ground I slowly back off the power to idle in anticipation of setting up for the flare and landing. BANG No sooner had I pulled the power we dropped like a rock and bounced big time.

Where did the wind go and why did the wind gust stop now of all times? Instinctively I applied full power hoping to salvage the big bounce and fly out of it and do a go around. The wheels kissed the ground twice in an effort to break gravity and get us in the air - we're going to make it! Aghhhhh - a gust of wind caught the right wing causing it to stall and the plane to pack it in off the left-hand side of the runway. Noise, Dirt, Commotion - Everything is in slow motion but happing so fast. This can't be real - this can't be happening. The passenger door flew open as the right gear collapsed and protruded through the cabin floor. Instinctively I reached over and grabbed my son and pulled his leaning body back in the cabin. Then silence... Silence can be so loud at times. Quick check to make sure my son and my body parts were responding properly then turned off the master, mags, fuel and out of the plane. I gave my son a hug and reassured him that everything was ok and will be ok. The shock of it all seeing your plane angled nose down into the soil. I got on the cell phone and gave the RCMP a call and told them we were ok and not to roll any rescue equipment if a witness report came in. I retrieved the papers and license from the plane and started the long walk back to the hanger. A phone call to Nav Canada and my insurance company took care of the business end of things.

The sick feeling in my stomach is starting to build as I start to realize the magnitude of the problem. I dread the phone call to

my partner telling him all his hard earned cash and sweat equity is crumpled in the dirt. I do realize that the blessing of life and families are so basic to our happiness and I still have both. I know God protected my son and I and despite the loss of an airplane I still can count abundant blessings in my life and especially the life of my son.

Now the questions that have been keeping me awake for the last two nights.

What went wrong?

What would I do different given the same landing circumstances again?

Then the random answers and thoughts constantly going through my mind.

Did the hard landing break the seat thereby jamming the controls on the attempted go around hindering my reaction to the crosswind gust?

Should I have just let the plane keep bouncing after the hard landing?

Should have I maintained power to the ground and wheel landed?

Did the hard landing put me in a nose high attitude and when full power was applied a stall occurred?

The conclusion after talking to others flying that day, talking to my old RPP flight instructor, and reviewing the weather reports is that I indeed hit a dust devil or wind shear. Given the wing loading and lightness of the Kitfox, the drop would not have been recoverable. Solution: Be aware that the upper winds were going a different direction than the windsock on the ground. In windy / gusty conditions land with more speed and wheel land the plane

Over and over I have played this accident through my mind trying to find the answer. Was it weather related - you bet. Was it pilot error - yes. I should have landed at a faster speed and/or with power to the ground. In my opinion a pilot could always have done a better job (20/20 hindsight). After only 80 hours of flying (20 t/d) I have so much to learn (continued on page 4)

Beware - continued from page 3

and hope that I can learn the easy way next time. Meanwhile my other son has taken up growing Bonsai trees and maybe I should jump into that hobby with him, as it seems safe enough. Seriously, thanks to an encouraging wife and children, I will be back in the air after rebuilding some confidence with an instructor and a new respect for Mother Nature. I will miss the Kitfox but have great memories of building and flying to reflect upon.

Fly Safe and enjoy

P.S.

Yes - my partner took the news well and has been very supportive.

Yes - we had full hull insurance.

Yes - we had shoulder harnesses on that held us in place

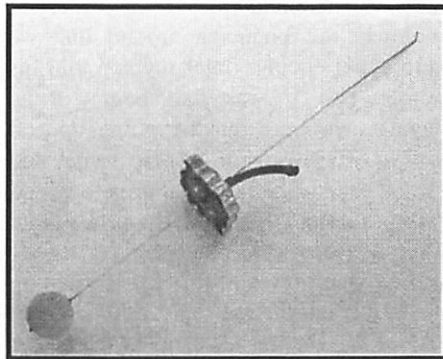
Wayne Pedersen is from Claresholm, AB and can be reached at 271-7222. Thank you for sharing your experience with us Wayne - Editor.

Gas Tank Floats

Airplanes with boot cowl tanks have had float wires sticking out of their fuel tanks for decades. Float wire gauges are standard equipment for Cubs and many homebuilts. And I have seen float wire gauges replacing the Aeronca Champ (Model A) gauges after they wear and fall apart.

These float wire fuel gauges are simple and direct. Many use a cork float, but the cork tends to fall apart or crumble because the additives in today's gasoline dissolve the sealant that holds the cork together. Many of the old cork floats used shellac as the sealant, and alcohol and toluene make short work of shellac. The float literally crumbles, so make sure your cork is in one piece. Even then the cork float will slowly disintegrate, become fuel-soaked, and sink. That's when it needs to be replaced.

Here are some tips, gathered from the Internet, which will prolong the life of your float:



1) Carry a spring-style clothespin in your aircraft. Clip the clothespin on the wire to hold the float above the gas during storage.

2) Seal the cork. Obviously shellac is not the way to go, as the thinner for shellac is alcohol. Some sources recommend an epoxy. Another sealant, Hot Fuel Proofer, can be found at your local hobby shop. It keeps nitromethane from dissolving dope, so it should work in this application, too.

3) Use an alternate float. Replace your cork float with another type of float. Some sources suggest using an old brass carburetor float. For easy soldering I would use a brass welding rod.

4) Another replacement could be a Ping-Pong ball. Before you get bent out of shape, I checked around to see what fuel does to the Ping-Pong ball. I've found that there have not been any problems, and that some have used the Ping-Pong balls for more than a year in the fuel tanks of a Celebrity and Baby Ace. Of course, if you are the kind of person who wears a belt and suspenders, coat the Ping-Pong ball with Hot Fuel Proofer or use the suggested clothespin trick for long-term storage or you could do both.

The gauge can be built using 1/16-inch stainless welding rod. Drill a hole in the top and bottom of the ball and used JB Weld to attach the Ping-Pong ball (see picture). JB Weld, a two-part epoxy, is available from your local hardware store, and it is said to be fuel-proof. ➔

Flying Events

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 noon. Info: 403-485-2633

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

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 - St. Albert Flying Club annual Fred Herzog memorial fly-in breakfast, St. Albert airport.

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.

September 15 - Rocky Mountain House Air Show and Fly-in Breakfast, 403-845-4742.

Milky Blue Oil

by Brian Vasseur

In starting the annual inspection on the 582 powered Rans S12 I decided that the first thing to check was not just the fluid levels but the fluids themselves. I had a sick feeling in my stomach when I found that the rotary valve oil tank contained not clear blue oil but a milky gray fluid. An email to Bob Robertson at Light Engine Services confirmed that this was antifreeze in the oil, and it was a common problem, and it could not be ignored. I gave a brief writeup on the problem in the last newsletter. The rotary valve controls the intake on the 582 engine so it's a fairly critical piece of the engine.

Checking the online maintenance manuals at

<http://www.kodiakbs.com/tiintro.htm> showed that this was not going to be an easy job and many parts and special tools would be required. There's actually 21 individual parts that make up this assembly so this is not something I could do myself. I considered taking the engine to Wayne Winters who has done a lot of maintenance on these engines but considered that with students backed up to fly and Dan Mitchell putting the pressure on him to finish the Harvard this wouldn't be fair. I decided to take the engine to Bob Robertson in St. Albert who could do it fairly quickly.

I showed up at Light Engine Services on

the St. Alberta airport about 9:30 and we got to work on the engine. First thing on the list was to fully degrease the engine with Varsol and rinse it with a pressure washer. With a clean engine he got to work with me paying very close attention.

First he removed the Rotary Valve Cover which required undoing almost all the screws on that side of the engine. to come off. Removing this cover and the valve itself, which is just a notched out round plate exposes the driveshaft, 90 degrees to the crankshaft and driven by a gear between the crank throws.

The next item Bob removed was the water pump cover, and then the impeller which is driven from the other end of the rotary valve shaft. After removing the retaining clips he then screwed on a special short shaft which he then used to hammer out the rotary valve with all the bearing assemblies. This required heating the case and lots of careful hammering to release the shaft. I closed my eyes a lot during this part.

With the drive shaft released Bob pointed out the two flaws on the shaft caused by the wrong coolant where the two coolant seals ride. No salvaging this \$170 part. He also did an examination of the drive

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to be done cautiously since not all engines have a retaining clip on the water pump bearing and it can be knocked out the engine requiring a disassembly.

Looking at the technical manual it shows a number of seals, bearings, springs, spacers, etc. and identifies different types of loctite required. Bob has probably done this work a hundred times, yet he methodically checked the manual at each step to confirm the exact sequence and instructions for assembly at each step. By this point I was absolutely convinced I did the right thing by not attempting this repair myself.

Now Bob started to reassemble the engine with the new parts and reinstall the Rotary Valve. This must be done carefully with a dial gauge to find TDC. The valve can be installed two different ways but the timing will be wrong if installed backwards so you must be extremely careful when doing this. The rest of the assembly gets put back together and torqued to the correct values or insatllted with loctite where a bolt is not normally torqued.

Bob also noted that the cap I was using on the Rotary Valve oil tank was the wrong one, and appeared to be from a regular oil bottle. The regular cap has a gasket and a pinpoint vent hole in the centre. He also made a special point of pointing out that you must add 310ml of oil to the system after assembly. Due to the way the venting is setup it's possible for the system to appear full with less than 100ml of oil. Bob showed me a perfectly good crank with a perfectly
(continued on page 6)



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Milky Oil - continued from page 5

ruined rotary drive gear, run for 5 minutes, which is now an \$1100 paperweight

Total cost for this repair came to well over \$300 including 1.5 hours labour which is about the minimum you can expect to pay. It should be noted that the 1.5 hours labour is for an engine in the condition as it comes new from Rotax. Any extra time required to remove extra mounts, brackets or other addons, or any cleaning required is added to the cost. It's

to your benefit to have your engine clean and stripped before shipping to for repair.

I would also like to thank Bob for his patience in allowing me to take notes and pictures so I could do a writeup on this. Looking over his shoulder and taking notes for this article added extra hours to the job.

Bob has another business in the same shop called Aero Controls and he makes custom cable and throttle assemblies for aircraft companies across North

A m e r i c a . He has a well equipped shop with several lathes and spools of equipment and his workmanship is top quality. He has many months of backlogged work which is a good indication of the quality of and demand for the product.

Now, I just have to get the plane back together. Next month you'll hear about what happens when you say to yourself " I might as well fix this since it's apart anyway". →

COPA Convention

by Bob Kirkby

COPA's 50th Anniversary convention was a huge success. With over 600 attendees it was the largest yet. This is amazing considering it was in Alberta and, of course, Ontario has the largest number of members.

The success is in no small part attributable to the excellent job done by the convention committee, made up of the Red Deer Flying Club, a COPA Flight. The wonderful weather help too.

I spent much of my time wandering around the airport talking to attendees and admiring the aircraft that were flown in. There were a surprising number of homebuilt aircraft.

For ultralights the Lethbridge club flew in with 4 and the St. Albert club flew in with 6. The Calgary Ultralight Flying Club was conspicuously absent from the

flight-line, although I did see 4 CUFC members who drove in. We owe a big thank you to the Lethbridge and St. Albert boys for highlighting our segment of recreational aviation. CUFC missed a great PR opportunity.

Joe Harrington and Brian Wilson from the Lethbridge club did a presentation on their ultralight adventure to Manitoba and back last summer. Wayne Winters followed with a presentation on his Ultralight trip across Canada in the Merlin two summers ago. Both were well attended and well received.

At the Friday evening BBQ and Awards presentations our own Stu Simpson was one of the COPA award recipients. Stu was honoured with an Appreciation Award for a "Great Contribution to Ultralight & Recreational Flight." Among other things this is in appreciation for the leadership Stu has shown over the past 10 years in encouraging ultralight flying and organizing group flights in the Calgary area. Since Stu had to work that night on the G8 Summit security team, I brought the plaque back with me to present to Stu at the earliest opportunity. Congratulations Stu, it's well deserved.

Seminars ran in four streams beginning Friday at 1:00 and continuing until Sunday afternoon at 3:00. There were plenty of interesting topics for everyone. I chose a couple on maintenance, which were excellent, several other good ones, and the best of all, a medial seminar on aging presented by Dr. Knipping, COPA's Aviation Medical Advisor. The seminars alone were an incredible bargain for just \$45. If you didn't attend, you definitely missed something good.

Lethbridge Fly-in Breakfast

The week prior to the convention I flew down to Lethbridge for their first annual fly-in breakfast. This was held at the Lethbridge Airport and put on by the Lethbridge EAA Chapter & COPA Flight. It was a huge success with over 150 meals served and 33 airplanes flying in. There were plenty of ultralights and homebuilts on the flight-line. The number of RV's was particularly impressive. See the picture on page 1.

Not only was I very pleased to be going to my first fly-in breakfast of the year but I had the honour of presenting the new Lethbridge COPA Flight with their Charter. President Hans LeBlanc and Vice-President Brian Wilson accepted the Charter on camera for the local TV news. I don't know if it ever made the news though.

Don't for the annual Kirkby Fly-in Breakfast on July 20, and watch out for that tower to the north! →



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My Merlin Project Part 5

by Andy Gustafsson

July update.

In my last installment I was fabric covering and Poly brushing down finishing tapes on the fuselage. Since then I have sprayed the UV protection on the surface areas that will be exposed to the sun's rays. I have also painted the same with the white topcoat. White hides a lot of flaws but still you have to be very careful to keep the flaws to a minimum. I had some problems with a new-to-me spray gun and ended up with a few sags and runs in the paint. After careful sanding and repainting, I was able to save the day. The bright blue stripes did wonders for the fuselage. It gave the effect that I was looking for and "stretched" out the fuselage and made it look "finished". To make the edges on the stripes look sharp I used dark blue pinstripping. I have used it on my Challenger II with very good results. Pinstripping can be used in a number of places as highlighting and detailing, but don't go overboard with it. You don't want to make it look cluttered.

With the painting of the fuselage behind me I focused my attention on the windshield. The windshield is a hefty 1/8" thick. The best way of fitting it is to make a template from rolled cardboard and trimming it to fit. Then you just trace it on to your Lexan sheet and you have a windshield that will fit. The windshield can be riveted on, but I opted for nuts and bolts. Leave the protective cover on the Lexan until it is installed. If you don't, you will have scratches in the windshield. All my

windows, doors and skylight are clear. It may get hot inside on a sunny day but the view will be unobstructed.

The interior of the cockpit can, of course, be left alone with its pink Poly brush color. I covered the inside of the cockpit with thin rubber backed fabric from Revy. I cut the material to fit between the tubes so the structure is visible for inspection. It cuts down on the noise and gives it a "finished" look without adding too much weight. Paying attention to detail is important.

The time has come to install the instrument panel. This is one of the most important areas of the airplane. The panel has to be easy to read with a well-planned layout of the instruments. The flight instruments should be in the area in front of the pilot's seat for easy viewing with the airspeed indicator at the top and engine instruments over to the

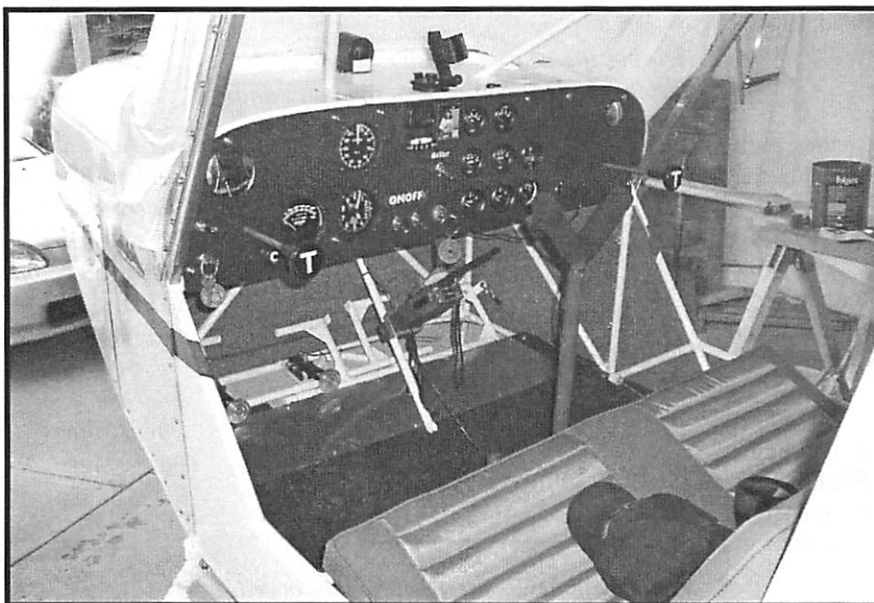


The fuselage painted in Andy's favourite colours. Photo by Andy.

right of center. This is the preferred location if the room allows. The Merlin panel has ample room for just about any instrument that you wish to install. Us Ultra-Lighters usually use hand held radios and they can be easily mounted within reach for changing of frequencies. I made a mounting bracket for my radio that fits under the panel, out of the way but easily reached and easy to see. Jerry McDonald, a member in the club and an expert in electronics came up and had a look at my entire electrical installation. One important item that he recommended was a master relay so that in case of an electrical fire, all power from the battery can be turned off. I purchased a constant service relay and installed it on the positive battery cable. Then I ran a wire to the master switch on the panel. Peace of mind.

With the instrument panel wired and tested and most everything finished with the fuselage, the engine installation is next.

Stay tuned. →



Andy's cockpit has a very "finished" look. Photo by Andy.

F-15s inadvertently 'save the day'

by 2nd Lt. Tony Wickman

05/31/02 - EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. (AFPN) -- Two Edwards F-15 Eagle pilots unknowingly helped the Los Angeles County Sheriffs Department break up a gang-related incident May 18 while performing a flyby at the 43rd Annual Torrance Armed Forces Day parade.

According to Sgt. Brian Stover of the Los Angeles County Sheriffs Department, the parade, which was to include the F-15 fly-by, was in progress when an individual began shooting in a park near the parade route. The department dispatched deputies to investigate, and once officials were on the scene, the situation deteriorated rapidly into a violent state, said Stover.

"When the deputies arrived, they questioned some locals and were pointed to a couple of suspects," said Stover. "The deputies took the individuals into custody, and then the family and friends of the victim came out to get some vigilante justice."

According to the sergeant, the park erupted, and people started attacking the deputies and the suspects. The deputies called for assistance, and more than 40 law enforcement people armed with rubber bullets, bean bag shotguns and pepper spray arrived from several local stations to help clear the park and restore order.

About that time, Lt. Col. Bill Thornton, commander of the 416th Flight Test Squadron here, and Maj. Carl Schaefer, also of the 416th, approached the area in preparation for their flyover.

"The first pass over the park made everyone stop and look at the F-15s," said Stover. "When they turned and made a second pass, it caused everyone to scatter and empty out of the park, much like when you turn on a light and roaches scatter."

Stover said because of the flyby the deputies avoided having to deploy a skirmish line, and said the Edwards crew helped deputies deploy without force or further injuries.

Thornton later said that he and Schaefer did notice the police cars in the park, but were unaware of the events taking place on the ground.



"We have a saying in the Air Force that 'timing is everything,'"

Thornton said. "We are thrilled that our flights, although inadvertent, were able to help the police restore order and prevent further violence."

Old Short-Finals

Courtesy AvFlash

During the heat of the space race in the 1960s, the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration decided it needed a ball point pen to write in the zero gravity confines of its space capsules. After considerable research and development, the Astronaut Pen was developed at a cost of about US \$1 million. The pen worked and also enjoyed some modest success as a novelty item back here on earth.

The Soviet Union, faced with the same problem, used a pencil.

A Mexican newspaper reports that bored Royal Air Force pilots stationed on the

Falkland Islands have devised what they consider a marvelous new game.

Noting that the local penguins are fascinated by airplanes, the pilots search out a beach where the birds are gathered and fly slowly along it at the water's edge. Perhaps ten thousand penguins turn their heads in unison watching the planes go by, and when the pilots turn around and fly back, the birds turn their heads in the opposite direction, like spectators at a slow-motion tennis match.

Then, the paper reports, "The pilots fly out to sea and directly to the penguin colony and over fly it. Heads go up, up, up, and ten thousand penguins fall over gently onto their backs."

--Audubon Society Magazine

An F-15 was escorting a C-141 into Tel Aviv during the war. The F-15 pilot said, "Bet you wish you could do this!" and moved way out front and did a nice barrel roll for all to see. A little later when the F-15 was back in position behind the C-141, the pilot said, "Bet you wish you could do this!" After several minutes the F-15 pilot finally radioed, "So?" The C-141 pilot replied, "I just went back to the lav and took my morning relief!"

Some Boeing employees recently "liberated" a life raft from one of the 747s on the company's production line. Later, they took it for a float on the Stilliguamish river. Imagine their surprise when a Coast Guard helicopter "rescued" them after homing in on the emergency locator beacon that activated when the raft was inflated. Not surprisingly, they no longer work at Boeing.