



# Skywriter...



Monthly newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club - COPA Flight 114

## March 2007



*Ken Taylor prepares to head out for another mission in his recently completed Challenger. For more details, see Ken's article detailing the construction of the Challenger inside this issue!*

# From The Cockpit

By Garrett Komm

## What Happened Last Night?

For those of you that did not attend the CUFC dinner, I am not sure that we can describe what you missed. All I know is that in a round about way, we were able to do some good while abandoning our inhibitions. The Between Friends Club was able to send a couple of kids to a camp as a result of your generosity.

I am really thrilled to be a part of this fund-raiser, since we can send a needing child to a camp allowing them to see another part of their world and in some small way, give a break to some deserving parents. Bob is a true gentleman for his efforts and his partnership with us. There are a few people to thank, they include Dave Procyshen, whose hosting and planning of the event was above standard. To Louise Nesterenko (Wow, don't know what to say!) and Barb Forman whose proficiency made the auction a very endearing event. Without their participation this dinner would have been less than memorable. Thank you to all of you who purchased items during the auction. I believe that we will need a bigger venue next year. Again, thank you all.



**BoatCraft**  
6316 - 106 Street Edmonton, AB T6H 2V3  
Phone (780) 437 4919 Fax (780) 433 4373  
e-mail: sales@boatcraft.com.

West System Epoxy products, Fillers and Additives  
Carbon Fiber, Kevlar, Fiberglass Cloths and Tapes

Light Weight Okoume Mahogany Plywood  
(Thicknesses: 1.5, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 12, 18 mm)

Paints, Stainless Steel Fasteners

Alberta's Sailing Supply Centre  
Stitch & Glue Sea Kayak and Canoe kits  
Waters Dancing Boat kits - www.watersdancing.com



**Light Engine Services Ltd.**

AUTHORIZED  
**ROTAX**  
REPAIR CENTRE

For Rotech Research Canada Ltd.

- Aircraft Sales - Service
- Rotax Engine Sales - Service - Parts
- Engine Test Stand Service
- Engine/Flight Instruments - Radios
- Propellers - Spinners - Accessories

Call: 780-418-4164  
or 1-866-418-4164  
e-mail:  
lightengine@clearwave.ca

RR1, Site 6, Box 11, St. Albert, AB T8N 1M8

I had the chance to take off and land the RV-9... what a rush. I didn't cause any structural damage and the plane is still an exciting aircraft to fly and thousands agree with me. Dan and I had the airport to ourselves this last weekend and we used every single runway available at Indus two mornings in a row. We also had the chance to do a flyby for some RC pilots at the field just NW of Indus. We also had the chance with IDGG to do a three plane formation for a bunch of folks getting a balloon ride out by Langdon. There are few things as heartwarming as seeing a crowd waving enthusiastically as you fly by. We don't go out of our area that often but that does not deter us. We are satisfied to be where we are. Guy Murchie in 1954 said it well:

'Sometimes I feel a strange exhilaration up here which seems to come from something beyond the mere stimulus of flying. It is a feeling of belonging to the sky, of owning and being owned - if only for a moment - by the air I breathe. It is akin to the well known claim of the swallow: each bird staking out his personal bug-strewn slice of heaven, his inviolate property of blue.'

We are a fortunate few. Wishing you tailwinds and no bumps.

Garrett Komm

→

## Calgary Ultralight Flying Club

### COPA Flight 114

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

**President:** Garrett Komm  
403-257-3127  
kommair@telusplanet.com

**Vice-President:** Ted Beck  
403-936-5369  
tbeck@outlandcvr.com

**Secretary:** Ed D'Antoni  
403-247-6621  
dantoni@telusplanet.net

**Treasurer:** Ken Taylor  
403-863-2157  
ktaylor2157@yahoo.ca

**Director:** Robin Orsulak  
403-651-9064  
vquest1@yahoo.com

**Past President:**  
Dave Procyshen  
403-257-8064  
dprocyshen@shaw.ca

**Web site:**  
[www.cufc.ca](http://www.cufc.ca)

### Skywriter

Skywriter is the official newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club - COPA Flight 114, published 12 times per year

**Editor:** Ken Beanlands  
403-295-2079  
kbeanlan@telus.net

# CAVU Dreams

*By Ken Beanlands*

I recently received a newsflash from Adam Hunt at COPA National. In it there was an announcement for the "2007 John C. Webster Memorial Trophy Competition" which honors the memory of John Webster who was killed in August, 1932 in St. Hubert, Quebec, while practicing to represent Canada in an aerobatic flying competition The Trans-Canada Air Pageant.

Even though the trophy was established in my neck of the woods (Shediac, NB), this is the first I've heard of the Webster Trophy. I eagerly went to the website ([www.webstertrophy.ca](http://www.webstertrophy.ca)) to learn more! What I learned was that the award was established to honor the "Top Amateur Pilot in Canada". Excellent, I thought. There are definitely a couple of pilots in the club that would qualify for this prestigious award in my opinion!

So, I continued reading to find out more. Hmm... It appears that Ultralight aircraft cannot be used to compete in the competition. Neither can homebuilts. Furthermore, it appears that Ultralight and Recreational pilots are also exempt. Apparently, the award is to be targeted towards Private pilots working towards their Commercial, not recreational pilots who have mastered the skills required to safely and accurately fly their own aircraft. In fact, they suggest that the best thing to do is rent an aircraft from a local club. Sure, these pilots are amateur, but do they really represent the best amateur pilots in Canada?!

Although I think it's a great idea to honor the pilots it's targeted towards, I also think that the competition is too narrowly targeted to truly name the "Top Amateur Pilot in Canada". It would probably be more appropriate to title it the "Top Commercial Student Pilot Award". Let's face it, a lot of the best amateur pilots in Canada simply do not qualify for this trophy.

First of all, Ultralight (and I from what I can tell Recreational) pilots are excluded! Then you find out that non-certificated aircraft cannot compete! This effectively eliminates about half of the non-commercial pilots and aircraft in Canada! Try telling Stu Simpson that he does not qualify as an amateur pilot and you'll get an ear full (oh yeah, he carries a gun too ☺). I'd love to see the reaction of our club members if one of the trophy coordinators were to do a presentation of the rules at one of our meetings! Can you say "lynch mob"!

You could easily argue that the top ranked amateur aerobatic pilot in Canada is the best amateur pilot by

default! After all, they exhibit far better knowledge of the flight envelope for the aircraft they fly than the typical Webster Trophy candidate. Unfortunately, many of these pilots fly experimental aircraft (either show planes or homebuilts) and would not qualify.

How about the bush pilot that has mastered safely flying his Murphy Rebel (Canada's top selling aircraft) into back-country lakes and rivers on floats and skis? Since he built the plane, he is far better qualified to handle any issue that may occur with the aircraft in a remote location than most commercial students. His knowledge of weather goes well beyond accurately reading a TAF (likely unavailable at his favorite fishing hole!). He has to use his experience and skill dealing with local weather patterns to determine if it will be safe to fly. His best skills likely include determining the best run to land in on the lake of choice, accurately determining water depth or snow drift height, docking the plane on a fast flowing river, and accurately reading the surface and approach winds on a lake surrounded by hills and trees without the aid of a windsock. Oh right, he cannot compete as his stead of choice does not qualify nor can you readily rent a plane that would properly showcase his talents. It's likely that he wouldn't even pass the test as his radio and airport procedures are not up to snuff. But then again, those skills are simply not required for the type of flying he excels at.

Let's face it, the amateur pilots that I would rank as the best I know in Canada, either don't qualify for the award, or cannot demonstrate their talents in qualified aircraft, or both.

As I said, rewarding pilots that excel in aviation is, in my opinion, a very good thing. Every year the Royal Canadian Air Cadets operate regional gliding schools across Canada. The students that attend are chosen through a selection process that has students being judged on overall conduct, verbal interview with a selection panel, school marks and their score on a Transport Canada style exam. Then, the student from each region that completes the course with the highest combined written and flight test scores is then awarded with a week of high performance soaring in Elmira, New York. These awards help drive students to not only "pass", but to excel during their training.

Of course, the title of "Top Amateur Pilot in Canada" is not for me! Heck, I can't tell east from west or left from right half the time. I've given to always turning in the same direction, that way I'm bound to be right half of the time ;-)

→



# Building A Dream

By Ken Taylor

What would you do if you didn't have to work for a living? I'm sure most of us have asked ourselves that question. Sometimes the question is rephrased as "What do you want to be when you grow up?" As a child, we have more time to dream than perhaps we do as adults. And with each tomorrow, we had more time to dream the impossible. But as the years passed, the list of unfulfilled dreams became ever longer.

When I was young, I dreamed of being an astronaut. In the era of man walking on the moon, what boy didn't want to be one? Later, it was enough just to be a fighter pilot. From the first time I watched "Top Gun" to today, I still get that desire to strap myself into fire-breathing bird and rocket through the air. I twice considered pursuing that dream but was led to disappointments by the reality of too many people pursuing so few positions as military fighter pilots. And in my case, with a challenging engineering future ahead of me, my mind was focused on staying the course.

Throughout university, not only did I dream of flying but I also dreamed of designing and building airplanes. At first this seemed a little far out there but as time went on, I began to believe that this dream was, in fact, one that could actually turn into reality. All it would take was money and time. Yet after graduation, the difficulty in accumulating enough money and time for flying became very apparent.

Why is it that a car loan often accompanies that new set of wheels in the driveway? And why does a mortgage come hand-in-hand with that nice house we live in? Well, whatever the reason, buying an airplane becomes a lower priority when trying to pay down debt. And buying a kit plane that will take years to build is even lower on the priority list. So why do we bother to even dream about such things? Well, if you're a pilot, you already know the answer. Few things are closer to the heart of a pilot than to fly.

After receiving my private pilot's license a few years out of university, I began renting airplanes as most new pilots do. But as time became more valuable, with the on-going competition with student pilots to rent airplanes at local flying clubs when the weather was VFR, it became more difficult to regularly enjoy the freedom of flight. Sometime after moving to Calgary, I became involved in the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club (CUFC). Much to my surprise, I learned that owning an airplane was actually something I could afford. Not only that, I could actually build one! Many other members in the club had already done that, so why couldn't I? Hmm, now what would I really like to build?

Perhaps the first factor I considered was the seating. Previously, I'd taken a number of people flying as most new pilots do. However, in the times I flew alone, I always wished for better visibility to view the land and sky around me. Most rental planes have side-by-side seating with limited visibility out the right side. However, tandem seat airplanes solve the visibility problem albeit with other drawbacks such as a smaller instrument panel and a less sociable setting. But with an intercom, communication with a passenger shouldn't be so significant.



Looking at structure, I preferred to build a plane with a strong aluminum frame. Fabric covering offered a lower cost, more forgiving, and lower construction time alternative to metal skin. Given the abundance of ultralight planes with Rotax 503 engines, I was satisfied that this was a higher value, lower risk option than many other available engines.

When I finally considered the history and general acceptance of the design, I ended up choosing to build a Challenger II. At the time, there were some 3000 Challengers flying globally and 400 registered here in Canada. Not surprisingly, there were several flying in the Calgary area. When I finally wrote the cheque for the kit I learned that another local

builder was also early in the process of building a Challenger II. Throughout the project, Robin Orsulak and I helped each other out and edged each other on. The "Challenger Junkyard Wars" lasted about four years until two new Challengers took to the skies.

The day the kit arrived was one of great satisfaction. Like the times we head out on big adventures, the excitement of the fun times to come was difficult to contain. The Challenger kits come with the tubular fuselage structure essentially built. So it didn't take much effort to visualize an airplane from the skeleton of metal. In fact, I was able to put a cushion on the pilot's seat, climb into position and take a few minutes to dream of the future flights this plane would take me on.

Beginning with the tailplane, it was relatively easy to learn the basic metal skills of drilling, deburring, rigging and riveting as well as the basic fabric skills of fitting, gluing, heat-shrinking and sealing. And so it did not seem to take long before six pieces of the plane were ready for priming and painting. I was satisfied with my progress but little did I know then about all the obstacles that I would face along the way.

With the tailplane out of the way, I began constructing the wings. The spar structure of the wings was assembled at the factory and I took over with the installation of ribs. Perhaps it was at this time that I really began to understand that putting together a kit plane was considerably more difficult than building a RC model plane. I recall many times measuring more than twice before drilling once. And despite the acceptable results, perfection seemed ever more unattainable. Eventually, fabric covered the wings and once again I felt satisfaction with my project. But there was a winter that I did little on the plane as I needed warm weather to complete the fabric work (due to my unheated, unventilated garage workshop).

Not long into the project I began designing the instrument panel. With the help of software and a plotter, I was able to make dozens of revisions and sequentially print each one (full-size) and position it on my airplane. When the day finally came to fabricate the panel, I sent an AutoCAD file to a local Calgary shop that cut the panel out of aluminum with a computer controlled water-jet. The result was awesome. After a short visit to another shop to bend a structural lip along the bottom, I was ready to begin installing the gauges that I had been purchasing over the previous year(s). And although I had visualized the results many times, to actually see and touch it gave me a feeling of satisfaction and pride. I recall bringing my semi-complete panel to a local club flying event to show it off like a baby.

The wiring came next and seemed to last for the duration of the project. When I first thought I was 90% done, I may yet have had another 90% to go. With each new wire that was added, the bundles had to be tie-wrapped again so that everything was just right. And the wiring of the instrument panel was perhaps more of a work of art than function. Oh well, that kept me doing something during a cold winter (or two).

When the warm weather of spring finally arrived, I was able to begin priming and painting my plane. I really wanted a metallic look to my plane and consequently shied away from using Poly-Tone, even though I used Poly-Brush to seal the fabric and Poly-Spray for primer. I ended up choosing a two-part Endura for paint (plus flex agent) for a nicer finish but may have reconsidered that decision had I known the degree of difficulty associated with applying it. I was able to borrow an HVLP paint sprayer from fellow CUFC member, Carl Forman, to whom I am grateful. It made the process of priming and painting a little more



enjoyable or a little less annoying depending on whether the glass is half full or half empty. But in hindsight, it probably would have been better for me to take all the parts to a paint shop and get them painted quickly and professionally. With each project we learn things about ourselves, what we like to do and what we don't. Note to self for next project.

In time, the plane parts were moved to a hangar and final assembly began. But as straightforward as the process seemed, the devil is in the details and the process took months. Still, in July of 2005, my plane passed the final inspection. Registration took another month even though all of the paperwork was in order and it was dropped off at the local Transport Canada office.

During the time I was waiting for the Certificate of Registration, I began the engine testing. The Rotax manual provides a detailed procedure for the first hour of operation. Robin Orsulak was there to help



me and it went well. However, I seemed to have spent a few hours tinkering with the idle trying to get it just right. In the end, I settled for a higher idle speed that gave a much smoother running engine. Interestingly, as I worked through perhaps the first ten hours of engine operation, the sound and performance seemed to improve to the level experienced by other owners.

Finally, in October of 2005, my Challenger took to the sky with the aid of Robin as my co-pilot. After an interesting lift-off, I rapidly became aware of the flying characteristics and was able to fly more confidently. After two or three circuits of dual, I took the plane up solo and had my first real lesson on performance difference of a lightly-loaded Challenger II versus one closer to gross weight. If the Cessna 172's I previously piloted were considered docile, the Challenger II was sensitive. On the ground I adjusted the elevators and ailerons to get a near vertical stick in straight and level flight. And after enough flights I became very comfortable in this agile airplane.

Eventually, I began taking people up for rides in my plane to show them what I've been working on all this time. While many people from work had previous joked about my kit plane project, a growing number of them seem to get caught up in the excitement and awe of it all. However, there will always be some who can't understand why I would build a plane to fly around the countryside to enjoy the camaraderie of fellow builders and pilots. Perhaps they are typical of those that will only walk on the earth while we pilots soar through the heavens. →

## Flying Events

March 24, Calgary, AB - The Calgary Flying Club is hosting its first Wings and Wheels event from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The first event will be sponsored by The Calgary Flying Club, Diamond Aircraft, and Calgary BMW. Admission is \$2.00 per person. There will be snack foods available, and we expect to have a Diamond D-42 TwinStar, DA-40 glass cockpit, Diamond 20, and potentially the D-Jet mock-up and a turbine Piper.

April 17 – 23, Lakeland, FL – Sun ‘n Fun Fly-in! This is the first of the national fly-in’s. For complete details, please see <http://www.sun-n-fun.org/>

May 6, 2007, Red Deer, AB – COPA Flight 92 COPA Rust Remover at Skywings Aviation, Red Deer Regional Airport. Breakfast is served from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Seminars start at 10 a.m. and go to 2 p.m. with a lunch break. Cost is \$15.00 per person. For more information contact Wes Cooke at 403-782-5853 or email [tweld@home.com](mailto:tweld@home.com).

May 13, Sundre, AB – COPA Flight 146, the Sundre Flying Club's annual mothers day fly-in/drive-in. Full breakfast: 8 a.m. to 12 noon. Adults \$8, children 12 & under \$4. For more information contact Alf and Norma F. Bicknell at 403-638-9001

June 3, Lacombe, AB – Lacombe Flying Club's popular annual fly-in, drive-in breakfast from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. For more information contact the club's president, Len Bardick at 403-782-2540.

June 10, Bonnyville, AB – (CYBF) Annual fly-in drive in breakfast from 7:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. For more information contact 780-826-7457.

June 16, Carstairs-Bishell Field - The 11th annual Bishell Fly-in breakfast. 0800-1200 hrs [www.skywalker.ca](http://www.skywalker.ca) Contact Glenn Bisnell 403-337-2564

June 30-July 1, Saskatoon, SK – ‘Fly’n Fair’ small aircraft exhibition & antique road show taking place at the Corman Air Park, CJN5. Featuring: Brian Lehman of “What’s it worth Brian” and several other appraisers of antiques, art, & collectables. Prizes for best Homebuilt, Ultralight, Antique, and Replica Aircraft. For more information contact Vern or Sandra Rees at [cormanairpark@gmail.com](mailto:cormanairpark@gmail.com) or visit [www.cormanairpark.ca](http://www.cormanairpark.ca).

July 11 – 15, Arlington, WA – Arlington Northwest EAA Fly-In and Sport Aviation Convention. This makes a great 3-4 day, long weekend camping trip for Calgarians. For complete details and to book your camp spots on-line, see <http://www.nweaa.org/>

July 14, Chestemere-Kirkby Field - The 16th annual Chestemere-Kirkby Field Fly-in breakfast. 0830-1200 hrs [www.skywalker.ca](http://www.skywalker.ca) Contact Bob Kirkby 569-9541

July 23 – 27, Oshkosh, WI – AirVenture 2007! Need I say more? If you are interested in participating in a convoy flight to Oshkosh this summer, please contact Ken Beanlands [kbeanlan@telus.net](mailto:kbeanlan@telus.net). For complete details, please see: <http://www.airventure.org/>

August 12, Westlock, AB – Annual fly-in from 7 a.m to 11 a.m. Aircraft and pilot prizes available. For more information contact 780-349-5650.

August 26, St. Albert, AB – Fred Herzog Memorial Fly In Breakfast from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the St. Albert Airport, identifier CES3, coordinates N53 41 25 W113 41 37. For more information contact Ben Strafford at 780-458-1606 or email [larandben@cruzinternet.com](mailto:larandben@cruzinternet.com).

→

# For Sale

**JEFFCO FUEL TANK SEALANT**, I have after sealing my wing tanks 1-1/2 gal. of Jeffco sealant left over. This is exactly half of the total purchased volume. This is a two to one mix ratio product. I am extremely happy with using this superior quality fuel tank sealant..... \$210.00 ... (You save GST and shipping costs of thirty two dollars). Calvin Thorne, cell (403) 860-7582 or home (403) 932-4325, email cbthorne@telus.net

**RX 550 Beaver TTE** 140 hrs Rotax oil-injected 582 with 3 blade Powerfin ground adjustable prop. Complete with wing tanks. All skins U.V. clear coated as well as wing upgrade. Full panel with GPS, custom cargo bags, and several extras. Dual helmet/headset with intercom and PTT also available. Always hangared. A very reliable airplane! \$12,500 Contact Darrell Booth email: dbooth1@shaw.ca or 938-3379 (02/07)

**1968 Cessna 150 H**, 5200 TTSN, 150 SMOH (2004 engine), prop O/H in 2006, Sky-Tec "push-button" starter, oil filter kit, Challenger K&N filter kit. New avionics upgrade including: King KX-125 with glideslope, Garmin GTX-320A Transponder with Mode C encoder and PSE PMA6000M-C audio panel/intercom. STOL features include flap gap seals and VG's. Numerous interior upgrades. Sold with fresh annual. Asking \$35,000. Contact Ken Beanlands (403)295-2079 or kbeanlan@telus.net (10/06)

**Beaver RX 550**, 422 hr TTAF, 90 hr since total rebuild. 100hp Subaru, 3 blade warp drive prop, Mono 2000 amphib floats with electric retract, all surfaces in Cenconite with Polytone, extra wing tanks, carb heat, radio intercom, GPS, full gauges. Will consider interesting trade for single seat UL. Always hangared in Kaslo B.C. \$14,000.00. Contact: Russ White - umm48611@telus.net (09/06)

**1987 Challenger II**, 447 Rotax rebuilt, new fabric on fuselage, new upholstery, new wheel pants, panel, 157-TTSN, very clean airplane, can be seen at Glen Bishell's airstrip. \$13000. Ken Johnson - 546-2586 (06/06)

**ASTROTECH Aircraft Chronograph** Digital Clock and stop watch, panel mount in 2 1/4 " round hole, Model LC-2...\$25.00 (06/06)

**1947 Aeronca Super Chief 11BC** - 1610 TTSN, C85-8F, 910 SMOH, 110 SPOH. Looks and flies beautifully. Cruise at 95 mph. Stall at 38 mph. Comes complete with hand held radio with external antenna and intercom. Buy today, fly tomorrow, and for about the same price as a kit. \$31,500. Call Mike Sweere for more details. 337-4860(h), 809-9353(c) or mmsweere@xplornet.com (05/06)

Notice: Classified ads are free to CUFC members. Contact Ken Beanlands by e-mail to place or renew your ad (see masthead). Ads will be dropped after 6 months unless renewed.

**1998 Challenger II** - Professionally built, only 170hrs on LES maintained & chromed exhaust recently installed. Beautiful paint, custom seats, ICom3, always hangared, \$27,000. Call Trey @ 698-4820 or email for photos - trey.petty@gmail.com (02/06)

**Rotax 503-with gearbox** 80 hrs since OH dual carb, point ignition, manual start c/w muffler, spinner. \$1200.00. Contact: Barry Wood (403)935-4609 or barryleewood@hotmail.com (11/05)

**89 single Seat Chinook**; 447 rotax 348 TTSN 76 SOH. new wings and tail. John 239-0289 (11/05)

**Volvo aluminum block V6 DOHC**, supposedly rebuilt. Offers or \$250 delivered. Doug Fortune pentam@shaw.ca 284-3945 (11/05)

**TEAM Tandem AirBike** - pre-welded fuselage, c/w full set of plans and manuals for Single Place including welding plans and stress analysis, and partial plans for Tandem. \$2000.00 obo. Dave Goldsmith, Calgary, (403) 289-9310 (09/05)

→

## CUFC 2007 Annual Dues

Please remember to pay your 2007 Dues at the next meeting. If you don't plan on attending, please send your \$25.00 dues to:

Ken Taylor  
90 Mt Douglas Villas SE  
Calgary, AB  
T2Z 3R5

BLUE YONDER



AVIATION

936-5767

Located at  
Indus-Winter  
Aire-Park

## Dealers for

Easy Flyer

T.E.A.M. mini-MAX

Build and fly this popular kit for only \$6500.00

Merlin

- Flight Training
- Ground School
- Intro Flights \$25.00
- Gift Certificates
- Rentals (Block time)



# Scenes from the CUFC Annual Banquet and Auction

*By Collin Cleland and Andrea*





# The Sportstar Files

By Ed D'Antoni

Gilles Mercier of Edenvale Flight arrived Saturday morning January 20 to check and tests fly the Sportstar. He arranged to be here until the following Friday to make sure we were trained and checked out before he left. The aircraft check and test flight were complete by about 2 PM. After returning from a quick lunch at Chestemere Landing Ben went for the first flight. I then went for one circuit as surface winds were now about 18 knots and Gilles was exhausted so we quit for the day.

High winds allowed 3 hours of flying Saturday morning. The forecast for the following two days was also for strong winds, so we sent Gilles on a two day sightseeing trip to Banff. He returned overwhelmed by the beauty of the area. The wind wasn't any better when Gilles returned, but we continued the training.



At one point we headed south where we could get high enough to do some high altitude work. When tuned to Calgary tower heard broadcasts to arriving aircraft of wind readings of 28 knots gusting to 40. Gilles called Calgary Centre with "Calgary Centre this is Ultralight C-IABE over South Calgary Airport requesting a Transponder check of a new aircraft." I can just visualize them thinking "an ultralight at 5400 feet in 28 knot winds."

After doing very little flying of conventional aircraft over the last few years I was really slow with my emergency procedures. After over ten years I still remember by heart my Cessna "Engine Failure" checks. Best glide speed. Carb heat on, Master on, Fuel on both, pick landing area... a little different than our Rans S-12's. We only had mags, master and fuel. Downwind checks were even more difficult in the Sportstar as there wasn't much time on the downwind leg with continuous winds at a speed of 35 knots. Gilles was adamant that when flying the circuit we were always within landing distance of the runway. Before he left he made sure I could do a landing from



any location in the circuit. After announcing "engine failure and cutting the throttle, I would do the checks " slow to 57 knots, simultaneously determining the landing spot and putting carb heat on then checking for fuel on or switching tanks. I'd then mostly say we would never make it to the field, Gilles would bet me a beer we could and then demonstrate by actually landing on the strip.

I still hadn't completed my training by noon on Friday. We had a quick coffee and got back to the field to see winds of over 20 knots. I commented to Gilles "I wouldn't fly in this would you?" He stated "I would". We compromised. I'd fly but he would do the final landings. After several successful emergency and other demonstrations Gilles had me do a circuit on 34, I was using almost full left aileron to keep the aircraft straight as I approached touchdown. I was expecting Gilles to say I have control, but he never did. On taxiing back to the end of the runway Gilles jumped out and said do a circuit. I did. We went for lunch and Gilles signed me out on the Sportstar.

It was a great re-learning experience for me. Thanks Gilles! →

*The proud Skystar Team pose with their shiny new plane!*

