



Skywriter...



October 2014



Norm Vienneau and his friend, Royal make the trek to Ram River Falls. See Norm's article for more details.

October Meeting Reminder

September's meeting will be held at the Aerospace Museum at 7 PM. Some of us meet at the Perkins Restaurant at 32nd Ave and Barlow Trail NW around 5:30 PM. Feel free to join us.

Monthly Newsletter of the Calgary Recreational & Ultralight Flying Club – COPA Flight 114
Our Mission: To promote safety and camaraderie amongst aviation enthusiasts.

From the Cockpit

By Bashar Hussien

2014 COPA for Kids, a lost opportunity

On September 27th we were ready to take to the sky 50 kids and show them the joy of flying. Carl, Bob and Ed worked for three weeks prior to the COPA for Kids day planning, preparing, assembling the volunteers and assigning them to different tasks. Our club members were ready with their beloved airplanes to take 50 of the future generation to the sky and show them the glory of being a thousand feet above the ground, making them feeling the ability to move in three directions, the excitement of the take-off movement and the pleasure of the successful landing.

Carl and Ed received the candidates' names and everything was ready to rock and roll with one reservation, weather permitting.

The weather forecast was not bad for the weekend, but few days before the date, forecast story changed and the clouds and the morning fog was more likely for the Saturday. Well pilots know how the weather can impact their plans and they develop their seventh sense to feel the weather. As well, pilots develop the mindset of accepting the weather impact on their plans as well as they accept the fact that they fly only when weather permits.

On Friday September 26th Carl had to break the news of postponing our Saturday event due to bad weather. I imagine the disappointment of 50 kids, who were dreaming about flying, maybe for few nights. I also imagined the parents' disappointment for missing a good event, and explaining "why" the kids are not flying in the very next day. However, there was still hope of commencing COPA for Kids event on Sunday September 28th. Carl made his arrangements and put "Plan B" in action and we were ready to fly on the Sunday, weather permitting.

On Saturday evening, the forecast and the TAF didn't

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improve and Carl had no option but to cancel the event. Further disappointment was in store for the kids and their parents, and maybe some negative impact on them when they discovered how the weather impacts the general aviation.

We canceled this year COPA for Kids but the hopes are still there with our kids that one day, one day they will hop into a cockpit and enjoy flying. Our job is to keep the hope high and realize our kids' hopes when weather permits.

I highly thanks Carl, Bob, Ed and all the volunteers from our beloved club for their dedication and commitments toward general aviation and most important, toward our future our kids.



Calgary Recreational and Ultralight Flying Club

COPA Flight 114

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month, except July and August, starting 7:00 PM at the Aerospace Museum, 4629 McCall Way NE Calgary.

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Skywriter

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CAVU Dreams

By Ken Beanlands

So, to be quite frank, not much has happened this month for me on the aviation front. I did manage to get in a few flights including a great day of fly-in golf with Barry Wood and Jim Corner in Vulcan. We were treated to the spectacle of watching the Air Cadets launch their Schweitzer 2-33A gliders all day which just added to an already great day.

As I continue to make progress (albeit slow progress) on the Buttercup, I find that it's hard not to consider what will come next. In the past, I've talked about possibly building something aerobatic. However, I don't think I'll be able to sell Renée on that one. One aspect of aviation I've come to enjoy flying Chrissy is the ability to land on most runway surfaces from grass to gravel and even a snow covered lake. My only complaint has been the extended take-off distance my faithful steed needs to become airborne. It's not uncommon to see 1400' runs on warm summer days out of our field.

Last summer while in Oshkosh, I happened by the Bearhawk Aircraft booth and noticed what I thought was a Bearhawk Patrol on display. It was in the Bob Barrows (the original Bearhawk designer) signature paint scheme but was missing something... FLAPS! I took a closer look and realized that it wasn't a Patrol after all. It was an all-new plane designed for the LSA category. To be honest, I was underwhelmed by the idea, especially when I heard it only had an A-65 up front.

Last month I was looking through the digital pages of

EAA's Experimenter magazine and happened across a blurb on the Bearhawk LSA. I was surprised that Barrows had decided to enter the plane in the Valdez STOL exhibition event held at Oshkosh this summer. I was even more surprised by the numbers: 94' take-off roll and 140' landing!

I did some more digging and found a fairly complete article in the February 2013 issue of Experimenter (I really love that magazine). It turns out that the plane now sports a C-85/O-200 hybrid of about 110 hp. It should be noted that Barrows is deathly allergic to electricity and none of his planes have been equipped with any of those new-fangled devices like starters, alternators or batteries. As a result, his empty weight is a paltry 730 pounds! I would guess that with Bob and a minimum amount of fuel on board, it was likely sitting around the 920 mark ready-to-compete. That's a power to weight ratio of just over 8. Compared to my old Cessna 150, with its 1600 lbs gross and 100 hp engine, it's almost half!

The design is also flexible enough to fit a number of different categories quite well. As a Canadian ultralight, you could build it and have a plane with a 450-500 lbs useful load. In the US, the 1320 lbs gross weight gives it about 550 lbs useful. However, if you're okay building it as an amateur-built, Barrows has rated it with a 1500 lbs gross. The factory demonstrator tipped the scales at 818 lbs with electrics and an O-200. I suspect that you could install a lightweight starter, battery and alternator and keep the weight under 800 lbs. I couldn't help but wonder how it would perform with a Rotax 912S. I suspect that with the lighter engine, you could keep the weight near the 750 lbs mark, but with electrics.

It's also quite economical burning only 4.5 gph at 98 mph and 6 gph at 118 mph. That's certainly nothing



to scoff at. With 30 gallon tanks, there's plenty of range for cross country flights.

Construction is also economical as it can be built entirely from plans. Having said that, Bearhawk Aircraft is capable of selling you as much or as little of their complete kit as you want. Many guys buy the stamped wing ribs, formed spars blanks and landing gear oleos then build the rest from the plans.

For those not familiar with the Bearhawk line, they are all built with similar construction techniques. Fabric covered steel tube structures for the fuselage and tail with an all-aluminum wing braced with a single strut. The only thing that troubles me is the 0.016" wing skins used on the LSA model as it's only slightly thicker than tin foil. I doubt it would survive even the lightest of hail storms.

Another thing I've always liked about the Bearhawk line is that it isn't just built for midgets. Over the years I've looked at a number of nice airplanes only to find that I'd need a significant amount of Vaseline and a big shoehorn to fit in them. Planes such as the Midget Mustang (OK, the name should have given that one away ☺) and even the J-3 Cub simply don't fit me. Not so with the Bearhawks. The Patrol is a full 32" across, 8" wider than the Cub and 3" wider than Chrissy. Bob Barrows may be skinny, but he is tall, so the leg and head room are more than ample for even the largest guys. The LSA seems to share the Patrol's general dimensions including the generous cabin.

So, is there a Bearhawk LSA in my future? It would certainly compliment the Buttercup nicely giving me a more capable off-field machine for days when I don't need (or want) the speed. Fortunately, the plans are cheap and Christmas is coming...

Oh well, I still have a couple of years to decide "what's next". For now, I'll just keep plugging away at the Buttercup.

See you all on Wednesday night! ➔

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Flying a Rotax two-cycle to Ram River Falls

By Norm Vienneau

I have long wanted to try the strip at Ram River Falls but always wondered how the Rotax 582 in the Buzzard would handle the higher elevation. I have leaner jets in my 582 because Bishell's in 3400' ASL and I usually fly at 4500' to 5500' ASL. When you compare this to Manitoba as an example, where people fly at 1000' to 1500' ASL, the Rotax book says to use leaner jets for our altitude.

I noted that August 26 and 27 had us under a super nice high pressure area and light winds (no winds) were predicted for this time period. I think the 26th was a better day but my pilot friend Royal and I had picked the 27th as the day to try this new experience. Royal flies a pretty little Savage Cub, with the 100 HP Rotax 912. The plane is light to handle and fly, but grooves rock solid through the air. The plane will leave the ground in about 400 feet from his strip west of Didsbury. My plane takes a little more (1200 to 1600) depending on load.

The day before the planned excursion I filled my tanks to the top and did some minor maintenance on the Buzzard. My tachometer was not working the way it should so I changed the tach, changed the plugs (after gapping them to the proper specs) and gave the plane a good once over. As I was doing the work

on the plane Royal sent me a text with an article about the Olds/Didsbury flying club and their efforts to maintain the Clearwater strip. The Clearwater strip is at the base of the Forestry Trunk Road with access to the valley that brings you into the Ram Falls airfield.

We decided that we would leave Carstairs about 7 AM, head to the Clearwater and land there first. If all was going according to plan we would take off to the Ram Falls field and complete our adventure.

Of course when you are planning a trip like this you leave some room for flexibility and as it turned out we didn't get wheels up till 7:15. Remember I said I might take up to 1600 feet to get airborne. Well with two 10 gallon tanks full I think I took more.

The air going west was smooth as could be at this time of day with just the slightest headwind of about 10 to 15mph. I decided that since I had 45 miles to go I would test climb and get up to 7000 ASL if that was possible. I flew the Buzzard at wide open throttle and saw about 6150 RPM as I continued to climb. The plane was flying well and as we approached the Clearwater Strip area I checked heading and distance to Ram Falls. It showed about 30 miles and the track was along a valley. Rather than landing and losing all that altitude I had worked so hard to gain, I mentioned that we should probably keep going to Ram Falls while the going was good. Royal agreed and we continued on.

I was still flying the Buzzard at pretty much full throttle and at 7000 feet EGT's would not raise much above 1000. For those unfamiliar with two strokes, the Bing carburetor pours lots of gas into the motor at wide open to give increased cooling with the gas and oil mix. Add to this the fact that there is less air at 7000 feet and you get a pretty rich mixture. I followed the road and then the river through the valleys but never really felt threatened by the ridges we flew over. Royal climbed to 9000 feet and was convinced I was far too close to the ridges. Perception from different altitudes can be alarming. It wasn't long before we followed the road and rivers and the GPS told us Ram Falls Airstrip was a mile away at 12 o'clock. We did an inspection pass over the strip and then entered a downwind for runway 26. My first attempt at the runway was far too high (mountain terrain can really mess up your





I lined up to depart first with a plan to fly the river valley out. It took almost 2000 ft but I was off and climbing. There was some funny gusting on takeoff and the Buzzard bucked a little more like a bronco than a Buzzard. The trees were well below me but it seemed like they were much closer than they really were. I kept climbing out from the 5350 elevation of Ram Falls to the 7000 feet I felt comfortable flying in at. Royal climbed to 10,000 ft and kept marvelling at the views that were below him.

My flight again was just a little bumpy but Royal did mention he had some pretty good bumps at his altitude.

As I followed the river and the roads out, there was one last ridge to either go around or over. I had lots of altitude and could see Cow Lake on the other side of the ridge. I elected to go over the right (low) side of the ridge and we broke out of the foothills.

15 minutes later were in Sundre for a rest stop. Then, with a nice tailwind home, the Buzzard took me to Royal's Didsbury strip at a 90 MPH ground speed. Airspeed was only about 65 MPH. The Savage cub has to carry 15 degrees flaps and just idle along but stays beside me nicely.

It was a great day and an accomplishment for me, my Buzzard, my pilot friend and his Cub. And oh yeah we left Clearwater for another adventure day.

Smooth Skies ➔

perception) and I called that I was doing a go around...

Royal slipped her hard and was able to get to the level he wanted for a good landing.

My second run at the surface was much more successful and I was able to put the plane down without any bounces or things that would indicate my newness to this kind of adventure. Good thing as there was a truck and camper at the end of the runway to watch us touch down.

We didn't stay long on the ground and in fact, did not even get a chance to walk to the falls to check out the sights. We were not sure how long the weather would hold (although it was a perfect day) as earlier reports and weather radar did show some activity that could be cause for concern.

We backtracked on runway 08 and I tried to raise Royal on the radio. For some reason I could hear him, I could hear my side tone but he could not hear me. We stopped the planes poked and prodded the connectors and we were able to get things back on track.

