[PREVIEW] Team Rocket News 10-31-2017

1 message

Vince Frazier <vincefrazier@gmail.com> Tue, Oct 31, 2017 at 2:57 PM
To: Vince Frazier <vincefrazier@gmail.com>

October 31, 2017

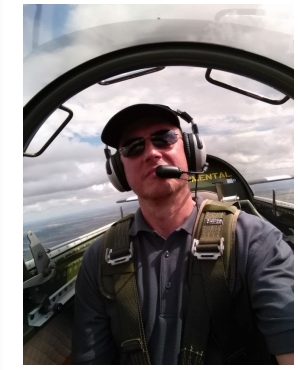
Happy Halloween everyone!

First off, what a strange holiday. Spooks, goblins, sugar-crazed kids running through traffic in the dark... too weird. It seems like a good time to stay in the shop and make airplane parts to me!

October Updates:

Since the last newsletter, a **LOT** has happened. Dan Grimm and I traveled down to Taylor, TX with the first 2 empennage kits, aka the Indiana empennage Mk.3, and delivered them to beta builders, Mark Frederick and Brian Rodgers. Mark and Brian, both expert builders, are tearing into the kits, looking for any tweaks that need to be made ASAP. So far, everything is looking good. They are also putting together a draft for the much needed assembly guide.

Flight reports:



Since my BFR had lapsed, Mark was gracious enough to take me up in the 65hp Champ for some BFR fun. I've flown Champs before and they all fly like 70 year old airplanes, which is to kindly say that they do indeed fly, but with disdain for any control input that you may use. I even had to use those pedal things on the floor. Ugh. And the rudder, well, it must have been broken because the ball only passed through the middle of the skid/slip indicator, never actually stayed there. Furthermore, the control stick seemed to be only loosely connected to any control surfaces. Well, we made it back in one piece, with no parts left on the runway.

Later in the day, Mark must have had a temporary fit of insanity because he also let me fly the green machine, an F1 Evo with 300+ hp. I'm pretty sure that I only used about 200 of those horses, not wanting to abuse someone else's airplane.

What a difference from the Champ. The Evo is smooth, stable, and just a joy to fly. Seriously, what a joy to fly. I made a couple laps around Taylor in no time at all, did some slow flight, steep turns, and other familiarization before heading back to the airport. After all, I was burning someone else's gas... you just can't abuse that privilege no matter the temptation. Even the landing was a breeze. This airplane makes a guy look good!

Empennage deliveries coming very soon:
After returning from Texas, while Mark and Brian were working on the initial Mk.3 construction, the Indiana shop was busy ordering the proper size shipping boxes. They should arrive this week. Even though we have 98% of all of the empennage parts ready to ship... it's kinda tough to ship without the proper boxes!

We've also been busy getting other documentation together, i.e. packing lists, issuing serial numbers, and drafting the annoying, but mandatory, product acquisition agreement, which I'll be sending to kit builders shortly.

Empennage kit status:
The entire initial batch of 12 empennage kits have been sold. As soon as we make sure that no tweaks are required, we'll get the next batch underway. If you're interested, we're fielding questions and even taking deposits on the next batch.

Fuselage kit status:
Although we still don't have fuselage skins in our inventory, the first QB "canoe" has been

produced out in Colorado. Another "canoe" is underway out west as of this writing. Several other projects are popping up around the country. Yay!

Finishing, canopy, and wing kit status:
No big changes to report here. The finishing kits and canopy kits are complete, in-stock, and available. The new wing that we've teased about remains in the design, but actively being worked on, phase. Believe me, if we had any announcements on that project, I'd be bursting to tell.

Mark's F1 Evo project:
Sorry, Evo wings aren't available, but that won't keep Mark from using the set he has on hand to build his next Reno racer, a Continental IO-550, supercharged, beast with planned retractable gear.

Continental IO-550, supercharged

Yowza.

Mark Frederick after a long day of flying, loading airplane parts, and discussing upcoming Rocket and Raider production.

Round inlet cowling update:

Tony Clinton is working on the new round inlet cowling, using the molds that produced the cowling on Jeff Linebaugh's F1. At last report, Tony was fabricating an insert to make the lower cowling deeper, or shallower, depending on engine choice. Tony plans to make the new cowls from carbon fiber.

Round inlet cowling molds.

Carbon fiber -vs- regular fiberglass:

63 grams

128 grams

As you can see, the carbon part is roughly half the weight of the fiberglass part. Kinda makes you stop and think about those large composite parts.. like the cowling.

Tips, tricks, and advice from the home office:

We mentioned this last month, and want to reiterate it one more time. Aircraft builders have an absolute responsibility to educate themselves fully on everything related to the aircraft in question. We strongly suggest that you do the following, at a minimum, if you're building, or buying, an F1 or F4 experimental aircraft:

1. Browse the FAA regs related to experimentals. www.faa.gov
2. Join EAA. www.eaa.org
3. If you're going to build an F1 or F4, get on Van's website and buy a set of RV-4 preview plans. www.vansaircraft.com
4. Visit www.harmonrocket.com and buy a set of HRII plans.
5. Buy an AC43.13. And any other book that interests you regarding aircraft building and maintenance.
6. Always, always, always ask questions. We're glad to answer, or point you towards a source of information.
7. When you're building, never do it alone. EAA Technical Counselors, or other knowledgeable folk, for example other RV or Rocket builders, should always be called on to look over your shoulder occasionally. It may save your life.
8. Visit the www.f1aircraft.com website and browse the links page. There are lots of links to other Rocket pages. Check them out.

More random photos:

Dinner, Texas style

Vince, Brian, and Dan having a beer out on the back deck.

Later, Vince, Dan, Mark, Cheryl and the dog, Ellie enjoying some conversation.

A tiny snake skin. Now my wife will never go to Texas again. Sigh...

More later! Until then, build wisely, and fly safely.

Vince Frazier

Contact me at vince@f1aircraft.com

www.f1aircraft.com

www.flyboyaccessories.com

toll free 1-888-835-9269

or 1-888-8FLYBOY

Team Rocket News by Vince Frazier
3963 Caborn Rd. N. Mount Vernon, IN 47620 USA
Sent to vincefrazier@gmail.com — Unsubscribe

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