

SONERAI

NEWSLETTER

It was time to send out a re-up notice to those people that haven't sent in their 1989 subscription, but I decided instead of just a post card I might as well send out something to everyone to take advantage of the Postal fee. At first the idea for a Swim Suit Edition sounded like a good idea but it was nixed by the Vice-President of the Company. So the next best idea was to send everyone coupons good for \$100 on their next propeller order but the same problem cropped up. So we have ended up by deciding to tell the story of the First Great Trip to Sun-N-Fun in March of 1983 which in the life of a homebuilt is practically ancient history. But first, the Notice of Re-enlistment.



If you look on your address label and see a PD 89 by the address I have you on record as paid up for the next year. If you paid and don't see it, strike it up to computer error and let me know. In order to get a new update on everyone, please fill out the form even if you have paid, especially if you're building so we can see how you're progressing. This might be the time to add any helpful ideas that you have made or interesting trips that have been made in 1988. 12⁰⁰

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ St. _____

Zip _____ Tele. _____

Sonerai _____ SN _____

Airc.Status _____

Hours Flown _____

Improvements this year _____

Dear Ed,

Just a short note to tell you thank's so much for the Sonerai Newsletter. I enjoy reading about so many of the problems others have that I have had to solve as the years have passed. I now have 738 hours on old #1 and she's flying great. Just took a 1000 mile airport bum trip including a three state area, Ohio, Indiana & Kentucky. I went to all the airports in Indiana I hadn't been to before. It was quite interesting the different remarks and treatment you receive when you fly in and ask if you can sleep in their lounge or pitch your tent by a hanger. Was gone three days. For food, fuel, oil, hanger storage and lodging I spent \$64.00 and had a ball.

I hope your new home in Wisconsin will be wonderful and the best of luck there. If you are ever in Merrillville or Valpo area give a call. We will do something even if it is wrong. Have a great Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Yours in Sonerai Flying,
Mel Lamb - N4ML

P.S. Had the canopy fly open---Makes a great drag chute! That's another story.

" Whose idea was this anyway?"

I'm not sure how the trip got started. Bob O'Day had flown down to Florida in his Sonerai with several other Sonerai's a few years before and said that it was a pretty good time with no real problems to speak of. I had been interested in the trip for a few years and thought that it might be good for business purposes to make a showing at the Spring Fling. So we began to make plans a few weeks early and in so doing mentioned the idea to Bob Brown who had just flown off his restrictions and decided that a longer flight would be a good shakedown. I believe the thinking at the time was that if you can get to Florida and back then any other trip would be a piece of cake. Sure sounded like a good idea, as I said.

So in the following weeks we tried to make sure that the Sonerai's were in the best shape possible and also thought that it would be better to add a little range so the trip could be made in only two or three stops. Bob Brown already had wing tanks of 3 gallons each so the total of 16 gallons would give him about 4 hours maximum in the air. I ended up testing a 6 gallons aux. tank that was fastened to the front floor boards and used a VW fuel injection pump as a transfer device to fill the main tank as needed. This left the front seat free for baggage along with the aft baggage area and seemed to hold a pretty good weight and balance. It was decided that O'Day would use my set-up so an additional tank and pump were ordered with time running out. As it worked out the tank was installed just before leaving but the weather precluded any chance to get it tested---however mine had been just fine so no problem was seen. We should have seen hat as a problem.

Time was spent getting all the charts together when suddenly the take-off day arrived with reasonably good

weather for a start. Bob Brown and I would be in the air and over DuPage Airport at 6:30 and orbit the field so Bob O'Day could climb up to meet us. We called DuPage Tower at the appointed time and asked to circle at 2500 feet while the final Sonerai took off-- except we could look down and see that the engine wasn't starting as planned. So we circled round and round until it was obvious even to the Tower that something wasn't going as expected, so we got permission to land and of course were met by Bob O'Day taxiing out to greet us. Well it seemed like a bit of a shaky start but we soon had a flight of three cleared for takeoff.

As Bob O'Day accelerated and then rotated we heard him quickly call for an emergency landing. He didn't seem to be out of control and there wasn't any smoke so Brown and I got permission to fast taxi down the runway back to the hangers. As O'Day taxied in from his rather short flight we all shut down and decided it was time to take stock of the situation. It worked out that when the fitting was made to pump the fuel into the main tank the pop rivets that secured the fitting in place (until the epoxy hardened) had not been filled and as the nose came up on takeoff the fuel rushed to the back of the tank sending two streams of fuel running down the instrument panel. That didn't seem to me to be any reason to abort a takeoff, but O'Day probably isn't near as brave as I am so I tried to take that into consideration.

Our "takeoff" was delayed about an hour as a fix was made to the tank but it was still early and we had never intended to make Florida in one day. As we progressed south into central and south Illinois the weather began to force us a little west of the intended track but we eased around it to gradually pick up our course and make the first stop at Bowling Green, Kentucky. The additional fuel made this quite an easy leg of about 3 hours and 10 minutes which still seemed like a long time to sit in that rather small cockpit. Bob Brown tried his best to liven things up by using up almost all of the 6500 feet of runway 03. We were

quite impressed with his ground handling ability but it worked out that he hadn't planned the demonstration. It was a combination of a carburetor stuck in full lean (with a fast idle) and Azusa brakes that for some reason decided not to work. But, we were all there in Kentucky anyhow, so after a leisurely pit stop, refuel, and weather check at the very helpful flight service station, we proceeded to drop Bob Brown's cowlings to get the stickly mixture back to full rich where it belonged.

The next scheduled destination was Macon, Ga but it didn't look too good for a direct shot over the higher ground by Monteagle, Tn so we were advised to head straight through Nashville down to Huntsville, Al and then ease back to the East to head in to Macon. (This procedure has been necessary several times since then since the terrain by Huntsville is quite a bit lower than the direct route.) So off we went with reasonable visibility and ceiling following directions to the letter. Those of you who fly homebuilts know that our comm. isn't always the best and we were proving this very ably by now. Bob Brown was saying something about "oil" or a word that sounded like that but O'Day and I were never quite sure what was happening. Since we had to deviate so much for the weather, our flight time was getting right up there over 3 hrs.

Passing Fayette, AL. we noticed that Brown wasn't with us anymore. Calling on the radio had no effect, but with the visibility the way it was it was not easy to keep all together. Our formation flying had been quite loose with the planes several miles apart at times. We had each impressed on the other that everyone was responsible for their own navigation at all times since there was never a guarantee that we could stick together, especially since the communications had been so bad in the past. So at the time we assumed that he would be meeting us in Macon. About now, O'Day was asking me what I estimated our flight time remaining to Macon might be (about 15 minutes) and pulled up real close to follow me. Since he had never



During last years Sun N Fun fly in I had a chance to get over to the Space Center and get to know a few of the astronauts on a personal basis. Here I am talking to "Hoot" Gibson at one of the very expensive hang-outs the astronauts frequent. We were discussing the effects of exposure to cosmic radiation in the Shuttle program.

thought to follow me in the past I was very impressed with his decision and did my best to be a good "leader". A call to Macon Tower got a quick response and a "cleared to land" before the airport was even in sight. So Bob stayed right with me even though a DC-9 asked us to make a 360 on downwind to give him a little more time to squeeze in.

We landed fine and after taxiing to the ramp, shut down and proceeded to fall out of the Sonerai's in 80 degree weather trying to get out of our down jackets and long underwear. The line of weather we had passed through over Tennessee was of course a warm front with quite a temperature change, and we had traveled about 400 plus miles to boot. The line crew really thought we were nuts, but of course they don't fly little airplanes without heaters. Total flight time was right at 3:40 hrs.

O'Days' problems were two --- the numbers on his Nav frequency dial had come loose and tumbled leaving him unable to pick up the Macon VOR, and in the process of flipping his chart over, had let it get away from him and watched it fall to the front floor boards. So with no navigation available and a dwindling fuel supply, I guess I began to look pretty good as a leader. (The only time I might add.) We had made it to the planned destination but where oh where was Bob Brown? O'Day thought that his last Comm near Fayette had been to let us know that he was going to stop there and then meet us in Macon. So being wiped out ourselves and after waiting around a while, we left word with Flight Service where we would be rooming and hitched a ride into town.

(This worked out to be the case, there were a few oil leaks to fix, a damaged throttle cable and a few other assorted problems that we all put into the category of "teething problems" so often associated with a new homebuilt.)

So the next morning we woke up to below freezing conditions that seemed normal to us but about drove the locals crazy for the month of March. Bob and I had decided to head on down to the airshow since I only had a 4 day weekend

to begin with. At the time, Macon was a TRSA but neither of us thought to declare "Negative Stage 3" so even though we told them we were southbound, we were taxied to the complete opposite side of the field, and sent on our way straight out East over the swamps of Georgia. We kept edging on to the South which made them keep heading us farther to the East. It got so ridiculous that we finally "lost" contact somehow and headed on our way. I mean when you are flying a single ignition VW powered homebuilt over unfamiliar terrain and there is a beautiful wide 4 lane highway going your way, why ignore the obvious?

Since we hadn't been into the airshow at Sun N Fun on a regular basis and would have been stretching our fuel supply to make it non-stop, we decided to refuel at Leesburg, FL to stretch and be fresh for the landing. It seemed a little bit quiet for a Sunday afternoon when we pulled up, and the sign on the office gave a pretty good hint as to why. Closed on Sundays and nobody around to get any other type of fuel. (This was when fuel was not as readily available as it is today.) So off we go into the wild blue hoping that there won't be too much traffic causing any delays, but keeping Plant city available as an alternate. As things worked out we were able to slip in with no problem thanks to the parallel runways in use and sink our tiedowns into the sandy soil of Florida. Total flight time was right near 10 hrs with about 40 gals. of fuel burned for a cost of about \$ 70.00. Not bad for 1000 miles or so.

So that's how we got there, but in order to find out what happened on the way home and see what exciting things happened to Bob Brown, you will have to get next year's issue. Isn't that a bummer? See you in January 1989. Have the best of Holidays and keep that old Sonerai in the air as long as you can.

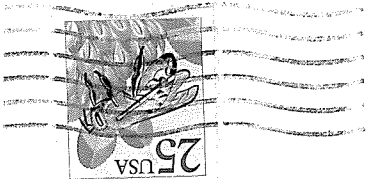
MERRY CHRISTMAS

HAPPY SONERAI NEW YEAR

To:

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Delavan, WI 53115
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Sonerai News



SONERAI PARTS LIST UPDATE

Great Plains Aircraft Supply Co. Inc.,
has the following parts in stock ready to
ship.

1. FIBERGLASS WING TIPS \$ 79.95 PR
2. FIBERGLASS WHEEL PANTS \$109.95 PR
3. FIBERGLASS BEAUTY BUMP \$ 19.95 EA
4. WING RIB KITS \$289.95 ST
(WHILE CURRENT SUPPLY LASTS)
5. TAILWHEEL SPRINGS \$ 65.00 EA
(WHILE CURRENT SUPPLY LASTS)
6. TAILWHEELS \$ 19.95 EA
7. COWLINGS (SONERAI II) \$275.00 EA
(PLUS \$15.00 CRATING FEE)
8. 5/8" LANDING GEAR \$310.00 EA
9. SPINNERS 12" \$ 40.64 EA
10. BACKPLATES \$ 18.95 EA
11. FRONT PLATES \$ 26.95 EA
12. 12V ROTARY FUEL TRANSFER
PUMP \$ 24.94 EA
13. SHRINK FIT PROP HUBS \$119.95 EA
14. ACCESSORY CASE
(LYCOMING MOUNTING HOLES) \$135.00 EA

In addition to the above parts, Great Plains Aircraft Supply Co. Inc., can supply on demand Sonerai I cowlings. Great Plains catalog is \$3.00 It has a full listing of VW engine parts and accessories as well as much technical data. Write to Great Plains Aircraft Supply Co. Inc., P.O. Box 1481, Palatine, IL. 60078, or call 312-359-6558. Be sure to look up the Great Plains booth at Sun & Fun 88 in Lakeland, FL to see the full line of VW Aero engine and Sonerai parts in stock.