

# BRISBANE VALLEY FLYER

June - 2021



Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield, Cressbrook-Caboonbah Road, Toogoolawah, Q'ld 4313.

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New on the scene - the Magnus Fusion 212. *See page 17*

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### From the Club

## Pre Covid-19



Hello all a

Our next meeting will at club house on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June so I hope to see you all there.

Peter Ratcliffe, BVSAC President

### **Flying with the X Factor – the X-Air Hanuman**

By Rob Knight

As part of a holiday in New Zealand I planned to validate my RA-Aus Pilot Certificate and use it to take my granddaughter, in recent remission with leukaemia, for a flight. I called RAANZ (the Recreational Aviation Association of New Zealand) for advice. At their suggestion I then contacted the Manawatu Microlight Club in Feilding and arranged to meet and booked a validation flight. A month later, on a typical autumn day for the region, I arrived at NZFI (Feilding airfield) as planned.



*The X-Air Hanuman*

Located in the North Island, NZFI lies about 20 km ESE of RNZAF Base Ohakea. It is surrounded by flat to rolling lush green Manawatu pastureland diced by long trails of black tar-sealed highways. With a single bitumen runway and parallel grass for gliders, Feilding is home to a wide spectrum of operations and thus, periodically, intense circuit activity. Strict operating procedures are applicable.

Ready to validate me was Bill Penman, the CFI of the Manawatu Microlight Club. Bill has a mountain of experience; some 40 years in Air Traffic Control, much at RNZAF Ohakea, and he is currently the Chief Controller at Palmerston North Tower. After applying for RAANZ membership and getting a comprehensive briefing on local airspace and airfield operations from Bill, we walked out to the Club's dark green X-Air Hanuman.



*The X-Air Hanuman's wide cockpit and clear lexan doors.*

Like all X-Airs, ZK-MMC was manufactured by Raj Hamsa in India but, unlike the earlier X-Air-582, this is no open cockpitted, minimum aeroplane. It is much more sophisticated with a fully enclosed cockpit and lots more dials on the dash. Holding 80 litres, it runs a Rotax 912 using around 14L/h so its flight endurance is around 4 hours 45 minutes with an hour's reserve. Therefore, at an 85-knot cruise, one could expect a still-air range around 400 nm.

After a radio call on 124.1, NZFI's unattended frequency (CTAF for Australian pilots) we taxied for runway 28. In addition to its wide cockpit, immensely impressive is this aeroplane's visibility, provided by its low-mounted engine and full-sized lexan doors. The bungeed main gear was firm and the positive nosewheel steering provided a good turning circle.

After the run-up, DVAs, obligatory radio call and a good lookout I taxied onto the 28 centre-line and straightened the nosewheel. Applying throttle, it leapt forward and before I even got to full power Bill was quietly suggesting that I raise the nose to fly it off. We took around 70 metres of ground roll to get airborne with 10 knots of headwind, and that was with  $\frac{3}{4}$  tanks and two not-so-littleies on board.

Bill advised 10° flap and 55 kts for  $V_y$ . This seemed contrary to aeronautical theory but he was totally correct as the POH later confirmed. Thus configured the VSI settled at 880 fpm.

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Considering the low engine position and the lowered flaps, the attitude for the climb was higher than I expected, but visibility ahead was still quite acceptable. To keep the ball in the middle required just the lightest touch on the right pedal.

As Bill had already warned, the ailerons were decidedly firm but there was no issue with lateral control. Holding just the tiniest right rudder to balance slipstream yaw we climbed straight ahead until, at 800 feet, we right turned to vacate the circuit.

The big lexan doors allowed great lateral visibility and out to port a few showers washed the horizon. Ahead, green New Zealand countryside stretched away, climbing imperceptibly into the central North Island's Volcanic Plateau with the pointy peaks of Mt's Ruapehu and Nauruhoe rising over the nose.

Climbing, with the aeroplane trimmed, the elevator felt lighter than the ailerons and more powerful, obviously aided by the slipstream. Comparing the feel of each control, harmony was quite limited, a trait the Hanuman holds in common with its older sister, the X-Air-582.

We levelled off, set 5000 rpm and trimmed. The level flight over-the-nose visibility was fantastic, the best that I have ever seen in any single engined aeroplane. After playing with the attitude for a bit Bill suggested we try some level turns so I obliged. Turns at 45° bank were a breeze with height easily maintained and the speed falling to around 72 kts. Balancing adverse yaw was undemanding; Bill had warned me that, while rudder input with aileron was certainly necessary, a little went a long way. He was dead right again.



*The Panel as the pilot sees it.*

Considering our weight, the cruise speed was excellent at a consistent 85 kts. The ailerons were even heavier at the higher speed but the tail surfaces were slightly lighter, the extra airspeed not compensating for the lost slipstream. Hands-off the aeroplane flew well - there was no tendency to diverge. A stick waggle indicated it was neutrally stable in pitch but lightly spirally unstable, which is as it was designed.

Stalling was straight forward. Basic stalls were just a squashing mush with immediate reversion to controlled flight on relaxing back pressure to decrease the angle of attack. Stalls at varying flap positions were similar except

the nose pitch down at the point of stall was a little more definite with each increase in flap extension. However, with full flap and 4000rpm the stall was quite sharp with a definite torque induced left wing-drop. Unstalling with the stick, and simultaneously stopping yaw with rudder, gave an immediate recovery. Adding full power, the total height lost in the wing-drop stall was less than 150 ft.

The best glide is achieved at 55 kts also with the flaps extended 10°. Trimmed to fly hands off with no power, the VSI hovered around the 500 fpm down mark. The book gives a glide ratio of 10:1 and this was borne out in practice. This lowered flap for best L/D could indicate that the design angle of incidence is set low which might explain, at least in part, the excellent cruise speed for the horse power.

We carried out an overhead rejoin at 1500 ft AGL and joined crosswind for 28. We waited for a glider to establish itself for 28 grass before making number 2 for the bitumen. With 20° of flap, we flared nicely over the threshold and it rumbled gently on its mains.

The second approach was a full-stop to try a short take-off. With 10 kts of headwind, 20° flap, and full power before releasing the brakes, we were airborne in about 50 metres.



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After sending me out for three solo circuits, Bill signed my logbook. I was now Hanuman type rated and eligible to operate RAANZ aircraft using my RA-Aus Pilot Certificate for three months. If my NZ stay exceeded that I would need to pass RAANZ Air Law and take a pilot test and become Certificated under RAANZ requirements.

So, I got to take my granddaughter for a flight and for that I am deeply grateful to Bill Penman for his kindness, generosity and time. I must also thank the Manawatu Microlight Club for their hospitality and the cups of tea that we drank. I would heartily recommend this organisation to any other Pilot wishing to validate an RA-Aus Pilot Certificate in New Zealand.



*X-Air Hanuman ZK-MMC, Feilding, New Zealand  
(Image by Ashleigh Knight)*



*Ashleigh and "POP" in MMC.*



*NZFI from 1500ft in the afternoon sun.  
(Image by Malcolm Knight)*

Happy Flying

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### **A Truly Timeless Tri-Pacer**

By Dale Smith, Aug 3, 2019

“All you have to say is this... ‘I don’t care what it costs.’ And then, of course, you’ve got to really mean it, which, of course, no one ever does.” - Quote from 1999 movie *“Blast from the Past”*.

When it comes to PA-22 rebuilds, there are good Tri-Pacers and there are great Tri-Pacers, but there is only one “truly better than the day it was built” Tri-Pacer. Here’s the love story behind it.

The one thing I like most about attending events like Sun ‘n Fun and Oshkosh AirVenture is the opportunity to just wander around and look at the airplanes. Walking the grounds with the sun barely up and the dew still dripping from wings, I sometimes am lucky enough to come across an airplane with a story that just has to be told.

Such was the case when I happened upon my friend Darin Hart, owner of American Legend Aircraft Company on a sunny Wednesday morning. He was busily wiping Lakeland’s “liquid sunshine” off of the most amazing looking Piper Tri-Pacer that I have ever seen. It was like stepping back some 60-years to a spring morning in Lock Haven, Penn. just after the pristine PA-22 rolled off the assembly line.

“This is without a doubt the nicest Tri-Pacer in the world,” Hart said. “And it’s not just because we rebuilt it. It’s as close to brand new as you’re ever going to find. And it should be considering the owner spent nearly \$250 thousand dollars on it.”

While he had me at “the nicest Tri-Pacer in the world,” the thought that the owner had spent “nearly \$250 thousand” U.S. dollars having it rebuilt meant this was a story that had to be shared.

But you can’t put a price on love. “A lot of people say I’m nuts and that I’ll never get my money back,” explained the Tri-Pacer’s proud owner, Mark Wyant. “But, I’m okay with that. That’s not what this is all about. This is not just any airplane to me. It represents a lot of great memories and a very special part and person in my life.”

Bringing back great memories and paying homage to his father are the two reasons why Wyant began the project to rebuild his beloved Tri-Pacer in the first place. But to understand how we got where we are today, we have to go back to 1974 when Wyant was an eighth-grader in Dallas.

“When you’re going to school in Garland, Texas if you don’t play football, there’s not much left for you to do. I was too skinny for football, so I spent a lot of time reading,” Wyant said. “I got a copy of *Anyone Can Fly* by Jules Bergman and I was hooked. I read that book three or four times.”

“It was all about Bergman learning to fly in a Piper Tri-Pacer. It was full of Tri-Pacer stories and pictures and that was my introduction and motivation to learn to fly,” he said. “And, of course, I fell in love with the Tri-Pacer from the book.”

When he turned 15, Wyant started taking flying lessons at Dallas’ Addison Airport (KADS) in a Cessna 150.

“Then my dad and I got the idea of buying a Tri-Pacer together,” Wyant said. “We started looking around for a nice one. Turned out there was one for sale at Addison Airport where I was learning to fly. My dad and I went over to look at it together.”

“I just fell in love with it right there and we ended up buying it for \$5,000. Later that night I snuck back into the hangar where it was and my best friend Jon Contreras just sat in it with the master on and all the lights flashing,” he said. “I wouldn’t have been more proud of it than if it was a new Learjet.”

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"I finished up my license in 8664 Delta at nearby Rockwall Airport. It was a lot more fun to fly than the 150," he said. "Two months after I got my licence, I flew my mom and dad a thousand miles up to Indiana to see my grandmother. My parents were very trusting – neither of them was a pilot. I even took my grandmother for a ride back in the summer of 1976. It doesn't seem like that long ago."

Wyant said that during his senior year in high school he took a lot of his friends up flying and that the guys on the football team were now looking up to him – literally.

"I was suddenly the big man on campus, so to speak," he said. "Not many high school seniors have their own airplanes. The Dallas Morning News even did an article on me when I got my license on my 17th birthday."

While Wyant loved his Tri-Pacer, once he was out of high school, his head was turned by airplanes that were just, well, "sexier." Youth has a way of doing that to you.

"We had it for about a year then sold it," he said. "You always want to go further and faster. I went on to become a CFI and fly freight at night. After a while, I went to work flying for American Eagle and finally as a 767 pilot for American Airlines."

With 8644D gone but not forgotten, Wyant spent a total of 22-years flying for American, but while he loved his job, when the opportunity came along to take an early retirement from flying the line, he took it. And while he had a logbook full of hours in a wonderful assortment of aircraft types, he never forgot about his first love.

"I always knew my Tri-Pacer was out there. I kept checking on the FAA registry for it and fortunately nobody ever changed the N-number," he said. "That airplane just meant so much more to me than tubing and fabric. It has a history with me – a short one, but a very meaningful one in my life."

"My dad passed away some 19-years ago and he was always very supportive of my flying. That meant so much to me. It was one of those things that he and I shared a great attachment to," Wyant said. "My dad couldn't fly because of poor hearing and eyesight. But that didn't stop him from loving time in the cockpit. He loved to fly. This right seat was his whenever we flew together."

"As time went on, whenever we would buy another airplane: Whether it was the Mooney, Bonanza or the Aerostar – when we flew together, we'd laugh and say, 'It sure beats the Tri-Pacer.' But that little airplane meant something really special to us," he said. "That's why I had to get this airplane back."

As luck, or maybe fate, would have it, Wyant's first love was living not far away in Tyler, Texas, which is about 80-miles from his home in Dallas.

"I had searched out the owner's phone number and called to see if he was willing to sell. His answer was no," Wyant said. "About a year later, I called and asked again. Same answer. Another year later, I decided that I was going to give it one last shot so I called and offered him twice what it was worth. That got his interest."

As Wyant happily admits, he ended up paying "stupid money" to get his beloved Tri-Pacer back. But, as we all know, when it comes to settling affairs-of-the-heart, some things just can't be measured in money.

"When the owner had finally agreed to sell the Tri-Pacer he had described it as being in 'excellent condition and always hangared,'" Wyant said. "When I arrived at the airport, I found that, yes it was in a hangar alright, but leaning up against the hangar was more like it. It was horrible looking. It hadn't been out of that hangar for a long time."



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Anyway, Wyant was too deep to turn back now so he bought 8664 Delta and flew her back to Addison airport. While many an owner would have been totally disheartened by the sad condition his high school sweetheart was in, he saw it as an opportunity to not just bring his beloved Tri-Pacer back to the way he recalled, but make her even better.

"That's when I contacted Darin Hart at American Legend Aircraft Company. When I decided to do a restoration, I didn't want just any restoration – I wanted to make this Tri-Pacer as good, or better than the day it left the factory in Lock Haven," Wyant said. "You can't find many people that can do that."

And who better to do a "factory fresh" restoration on the Tri-Pacer than a company that currently makes factory new "Cubs?" Which is precisely what the craftsmen at American Legend Aircraft Company have been doing since 2004 with their popular Legend Cub series.

Along with manufacturing new Legend Cubs, Hart has become a legend of sorts amongst the Piper community with the exceptionally high-quality aircraft rebuilds that come out of his facility in Sulphur Springs, Texas.

"American Legend Aircraft Company actually started from our work doing high-quality restorations on Cubs. I think we've won five or six Lindy Awards at Oshkosh over the years," Hart said. "People call us on a weekly basis wanting to do a restoration on a Cub, Champ or Tri-Pacer, but they have to be really serious for us to do the job."

"For us just to pull the covering off and replace it, without doing anything else will take 400-man hours and cost USD\$38,000," he said. "And that's not sandblasting the frame or replacing any hardware. That's just the covering. The price scares a lot of window-shoppers away."

Hart said that when Wyant called him about rebuilding 8664D, his first response was that the airplane wasn't worth the cost of just stripping and recovering it.

"But then he explained the story behind it, I could tell that this wasn't really about the airplane to Mark, it was much more," Hart said. "I am very proud that he put his trust in us to do the work for him."

While Wyant was more than happy to pay American Legend Aircraft Company's premium price for the work, there was one catch, if you will.



*Much corrosion and rust*

"We started the project in late January and Mark said he had to have it at Oshkosh that July. So we had inside of six months to rebuild the Tri-Pacer," Hart said. "I think he was a bit surprised when I said that would be no problem at all. We are a production shop so we are used to getting airplanes in and out quickly. We don't have room or time to keep projects sitting around for years."

While the timeframe was not out of the ordinary, the team didn't have any time to waste. Hart said that a big part of what sets an American Legend rebuild apart from another is the research and detail they put into a project.

After stripping the airplane and inspecting the steel tubing, wood ribs and components they set about repairing and replacing whatever needed doing. All-

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in-all, Hart said it was in serviceable condition for a 60-year-old airframe.

“We took the frame down and sandblasted it clean then replaced what metal tubing wasn’t up to our standards,” Hart said. “It’s essentially a new airframe. Then we replaced every nut, bolt, pulley and cable. Everything is brand new.”

“Univar Aviation Corporation has a tremendous stock of parts for these classic old Pipers so it was easy to buy practically everything we needed,” he said. “Control surfaces, ribs, flying wires, struts, the entire exhaust system: even the fairings that go around the struts – things you think you’d have to fabricate you can buy from Univar.”

Hart said that instead of overhauling the 160-horsepower Lycoming engine, Wyant wanted a brand-new engine because that’s the way it left the factory in 1958.

Speaking of achieving that factory look, Hart said that one detail that many restorers overlook is the painstaking replication of the original factory stitching.

“Darin went back and found the original build sheet on this airplane to find out how they laid the fabric on, how it was stitched and even the location of the ‘dollar patches,’” Wyant said. “The way they stitched it all is exactly to the original Piper specifications they published in their production manual. Everything is as authentic as it can possibly be.”

“Also, most people don’t realize that the back half of the baggage compartment was originally made of canvas cloth,” he said. “Most have long since replaced it with the same fabric as they use to cover the exterior, but that’s incorrect. We found original OEM canvas and put it back where it belonged: including the strap that holds the tow-bar in place.”

Of course, you can’t put all that work into making every detail factory correct and then rattle-can any old paint scheme on. So, while Wyant liked the yellow and white scheme the Tri-Pacer had when he flew her as a teenager, it wasn’t as she left the factory.

Since they already had Piper’s dimensional drawings of exactly where the stripes and N-number laid out on the airframe, Hart contacted Piper Aircraft restoration expert Clyde Smith a.k.a. “The Cub Doctor,” to find out the exact colours the factory would have used in 1958.

“He knew by the serial number what the exact colours were for that airplane,” Hart said. “Santa Fe red and Daytona white. It’s a very classic combination for Pipers.”

“The only difference in the factory paint and what we used was that ours is shiny, while the factory originally used a matt finish, we felt the shiny paint would hold up better and be easier to clean,” Wyant said. “All of the interior fabric is also Piper spec. Turns out it was the same upholstery that was originally from a 1958 Mercury Marquis automobile, which we were able to find from a supplier.”

Hart said that while finding the original material to redo the upholstery was easy, replacing the original batting material used for cabin “sound-proofing” was much more labour intensive. But, again, if it was done at the factory, it was replicated in Mark Wyant’s Tri-Pacer.

While it’s crystal clear that Wyant and American Legend spared no effort, nor expense, to make the Tri-Pacer as 1958 as possible, that type of originality won’t work when it comes to an airplane that’s actually going to fly in today’s airspace. Especially with the 2020 ADS-B mandate on the horizon.

So how do you keep an airplane looking like it’s right out of 1958, while having all the avionics capabilities Wyant needs to safely navigate around Dallas’s busy airspace? Well, turns out a bit of visual trickery works every time.

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“My friend Jon that had sat with me in the airplane the night I bought it in 1976 and I took the panel



*Panels – OLD and NEW*

rework on as our project. All of the instruments were sent to Keystone Instruments in Lock Haven where they were rebuilt and the faces were repainted in the original off-yellow colour,” Wyant said. “Most people think they’ve yellowed with age, but they were originally that colour so that they would show up better when lit by the red cabin light.”

Wyant was even able to locate and reinstall the original Piper ashtray that came in the Tri-Pacer. Not that there’s any smoking allowed.

While he was able to add in many OEM details, when it came time for equipping the Tri-Pacer with the mandated new-generation avionics, Wyant was faced with a more difficult challenge and that’s where the high-tech trickery comes in.

“I wanted anyone looking in the cockpit to see an airplane the way it was in 1958, but I also needed avionics that give me the same safety and capabilities I have in my Citation Mustang,” he said. “To accomplish what I wanted, Jon took an original Narco Omingator and a VLR-3 low-frequency receiver and cut them down so that they were about an inch and a quarter deep. We needed several “donor” radios to accomplish this and it took more than two months to pull it off.”

“We mounted them to a false panel piece that looks just like they are original. They even light up when you turn them on,” Wyant said proudly. “But, when you remove the faceplate, you’ll find a brand-new Garmin GTN touch screen 750 and a Garmin GTX 345 ADS-B Out/In transponder. As it turned out once installed in the panel, the height of the 750 and 345 were the same as the Omnigator

and VLR-3 units so it’s the perfect match.”

Another significant upgrade Hart and his team performed on the Tri-Pacer was the switch from the OEM installed BF Goodrich brakes to much more modern and reliable Cleveland wheels and brakes. In addition, they replaced all the old incandescent exterior and interior lights with new LED lighting.

“Now I can leave all the strobes and landing lights on all the time, which is good for safety,” Wyant said. “For additional reliability, we also upgraded to a new lightweight, Sky-Tec starter and replaced the old unit with a new 60 AMP alternator.”



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Wyant said that true to their promise, the team at American Legend Aircraft Company completed the “brand-new” Tri-Pacer in time for Hart to fly it to Oshkosh AirVenture 2017.

“We put just about 1,800-hours in the total rebuild,” Hart said. “I have to say that it really turned out great. And that it’s a very nice flying airplane. I’ve flown it to Oshkosh and to Sun ‘n Fun in Lakeland and it’s a very comfortable cross-country airplane.”



*New upholstery*

“Although, I can see why Piper quit making them. They are very complex airplanes and they couldn’t compete with the Cessna 172 for production,” he said. “In particular, the control cables being fully interconnected were very sophisticated and labour-intensive to install. Compared to the Piper Cub, the Tri-Pacer is probably twice as complex to put together.”

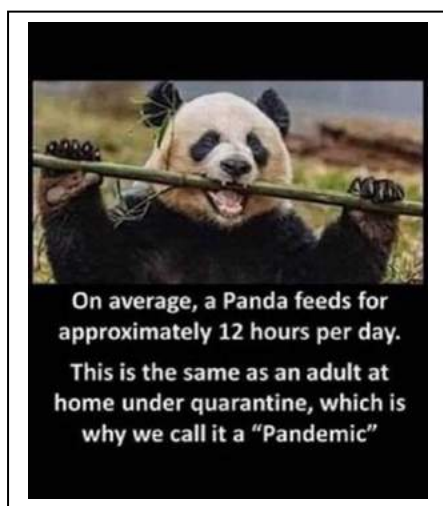
No matter how complex or how much it ultimately cost, Wyant says that he is thrilled with how his beloved Tri-Pacer turned out. “I believe it’s the finest example of a Piper Tri-Pacer in the world,” he said proudly. “I don’t mean that as any type of hyperbole, but I truly believe that we achieved our goal in every way.”

So, you have to ask, now that the Tri-Pacer is done, what are his plans for it? “Back in 1958 people thought they were dumpy looking and nicknamed them ‘flying milk stools,’ but today, I think they’ve become retro,” he said. “My son is 13 and he’s a fan of the way it looks and flies. I’m slowly teaching him to fly the Tri-Pacer and he’s loving it.”

“Today, it lives in my hangar next to my Citation and my hangar/office is right inside. Every day when I walk in, I take a minute to give her a little pat,” Wyant said. “This is not just an airplane to me; it represents a lot of great memories and a very special part of my life and the people in it. There is no question that I own the world’s most expensive Piper Tri-Pacer and I’m totally fine with that.”

To see the full gallery of photos of the rebuild, go to [avmdevelop.wpengine.com/tripacer](http://avmdevelop.wpengine.com/tripacer)

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### **Orders from Heaven**

By Lee Dalton (from Air Facts Journal)

*First, a disclaimer: I think this story is true.*

Once upon a very, very long time ago, the Salt Lake City Police Department decided to experiment with using an ultralight aircraft for patrol work. I don't know for sure, but I suspect some police officer who was also an ultralight pilot found a creative way to have some fun and get paid for it.

I guess, too, that the experiment wasn't very successful so it was short-lived. But it did produce one really great story.

Seems that one day, a little boy didn't come home from school on time. His mother suspected that he'd stopped to play somewhere along the way, but after driving around for a time and not finding him, she called the police.

The ultralight was immediately dispatched.

Low and slow, the ultralight cop fluttered around the neighbourhood along the boy's route from kindergarten to kitchen door. It didn't take long for the pilot to spot a little guy wearing the clothes the mother had described, playing on the merry-go-round at a community park. The police department had installed a pretty powerful loudspeaker system under the little flutterbug, so the cop picked up the microphone and sent his voice booming through the evening sky, "Tommy Jones, GO HOME!"

The story is that the merry-go-round came to a screeching stop, a small face looked upward for a moment and then the cop tagged along as the little guy raced as fast as his legs would carry him straight to his house, where he disappeared inside.

His mother later called the department to report that her son had arrived, out of breath with eyes so wide they looked as big as dinner plates.

When his breathing settled down enough so he could talk, the li'l fella blurted out, "Mommy, I was playing in the park when GOD told me to go home!"



*Not your typical police vehicle, but apparently it was effective.*

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### **Mysteries of Flight: Roswell Solved?**

What really happened 73 years ago that got people believing we weren't alone?

By W. David Pond (PUBLISHED JUNE 16, 2020)



In 1947, something crashed in Roswell, New Mexico, and although rumours emerged from the get-go, they really got heated up in the 1970s that the craft in question was an alien spacecraft that the Air Force recovered and quickly secreted away. The even bigger news was that there were bodies. Alien bodies. The government, for its part, lied from the start, saying that what had crashed was a weather balloon. So, what of these theories of aliens and spacecraft and government cover-ups? Is there anything to these wild stories?

Like all the best conspiracy theories, the Roswell story has at its heart a real event. There was a crash, and the Air Force did hide the stuff away from sight, and the government did cover up the truth.

It was sometime before June 14, 1947, that a worker spotted debris in an isolated piece of land near where he was working. William Brazel, the ranch foreman who made the find, stashed away some of the debris. The parts consisted of rubber, pieces of foil and other relatively common materials, though some reports say that they did resemble a disc.

At some point shortly thereafter, the Air Force became aware of the site and came out and gathered up all it could find and trucked it off.

A report in the Roswell paper in early July of that year called the craft a “flying disc,” though it did also point out that the device, whatever it was, had a goodly amount of “Scotch” tape holding pieces of it together.

The military identified the object as a weather balloon and also referred to its associated “kite,” disregarding the suggestion that it was a flying disc. The idea of disc-shaped spacecraft was old hat by 1947, so the suggestion that the U.S. government was being secretive and possibly deceptive about such a find was tantalizing.

After recovering what it could and gathering up the remainder of the recovered debris from Brazel, the Air Force transferred it to a base in Fort Worth, Texas, all the while continuing to deny that it was anything more than a weather balloon.

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Still, it wasn't until the 1970s that the story really heated up. The era witnessed the growth of numerous theories positing the existence of extra-terrestrial beings, like those who supposedly had created the Nazca Lines in Peru, just one of the clues to aliens having been to Earth that was floated in a popular book, *Chariots Of The Gods*, by Erich von Däniken, and the network television movie *In Search of Ancient Astronauts* and the spinoff series, *In Search Of...*

Over the years, the mystery became one of, if not the, most famous ever, at one point counting among its believers a majority of U.S. citizens, at least according to one poll. One popular theory had the government transferring the "disc" to a remote site in the Nevada desert, now known as Area 51, for study. Some have claimed that the Air Force rebuilt the craft and flew it regularly. Others still contend it captured live aliens from Roswell and was keeping them at the base, where they were used to help design the latest-gen aircraft.

The reason for the government's cover-up of the truth behind the Roswell incident wasn't that it had found an alien craft. The object was indeed a balloon, but not a weather balloon, rather a nuclear monitoring balloon with an attached disc below it. Because nuclear programs at the time were top secret, the government had no choice but to cover up the truth.

### Conclusion?

So, a flying disc (kind of) had indeed been recovered near Roswell in 1947. And the government did indeed cover up the find. So, there was plenty of ammunition for those people out there who, like the fictional Fox Mulder of the TV series, *The X-Files*, wanted to believe. And the details, both true and later fabricated, seemed too good not to be true and, hence, created the most famous alien "encounter" ever.

My new social  
distancing shoes  
have arrived



## - Brisbane Valley Flyer -

### FLY-INS Looming

|               |                           |                                 |
|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 13 June 2021  | Murgon (Angelfield) (ALA) | Burnett Flyers Breakfast Fly-in |
| 3-4 July 2021 | Watts Bridge (YWSG)       | Brisbane Air Show               |

Just bought a log cabin home from Ikea



"To applaud a politician because he has built a hospital, a school, road etc with public money is the same as applauding an ATM because it gives you your money"

## - Brisbane Valley Flyer –

### **What the Hell is THAT?**

The Magnus Aircraft FUSION

By LARRY BEAN



*The Fusion 212*

Business jets are great in a utilitarian sort of way, but if you just want to experience the joy of flight from the front seat, look no further than the light sport category. Falling under a special FAA classification, sport pilot licenses are much easier to obtain than full pilot licenses, requiring a minimum of only 20 hours of flight time. So, if you're ready to take the plunge, you need a plane to fly. Consider the all-composite Fusion 212, which has arrived in the United States from Hungary by way of Virginia. The FAA-certified special light sport aircraft went on sale earlier this year and made its EAA Airventure Oshkosh debut earlier this summer.

The plane was developed—and the parts are built—by Magnus Aircraft, a Hungarian airframer that has been in business since 2011. The U.S. company plans to establish certified maintenance shops throughout the country. The parent company in Hungary currently has the capacity to produce two aircraft per month, but it plans to eventually establishing a presence in the United States, Magnus also has begun doing business in China.



In addition to a lightweight, full-composite fuselage, the Fusion 212 features side-by-side seating with dual controls and a 100 hp Rotax 912 engine that is available in a fuel-injection or carburettor configuration. The engine runs on unleaded automobile fuel, and primarily because of the weight of the aircraft, burns only 5 to 7 gallons of gasoline per hour, depending on payload, flying conditions,



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and engine type (the fuel-injected version is more efficient). The base model Fusion 212 is priced at \$139,900.

The company notes that the plane, which made its first flight in 2016 in Hungary, is engineered for aerobatics. It has structural load limits of plus-6 to minus-3 G, and it can be special-ordered with a slightly more powerful engine that enables inverted flight. However, The Fusion 212's FAA certificate limits it to a maximum bank of 60 degrees and a maximum pitch (up or down) of 30 degrees, putting the kibosh on any loop-the-looping in the skies over the United States—that is, any legal loop-the-looping (sic).



Farmers, ranchers, and perhaps vineyard owners take note: Magnus says the aircraft is being tested with optional equipment that would make it suitable for such tasks as agricultural operations and wildlife maintenance. There's also the Sentinel edition, which is equipped with an air-surveillance camera system—a fleet of Fusions would be much cheaper

than a border wall.

The Fusion 212 is 22 feet long and has a wingspan of 27 feet (including winglets). Its cruising speed is 133 mph to 140 mph, depending primarily on whether the aircraft is carrying one or two people (the baggage capacity is 44 pounds). The absolute maximum speed is 174 mph. The aircraft's range is 497 miles to 633 miles; take-off distance is 394 feet to 427 feet; landing distance is 492 feet to 656 feet; and the flight ceiling is 13,000 feet.

The Magnus parent company is developing an electric version of the Fusion, but that program suffered a tragic setback in late spring, when a prototype crashed in Hungary, killing the pilot and passenger. While an investigation is ongoing, no official cause for the tragedy has yet been released—though the pursuit of electric flight marches on.





## - Brisbane Valley Flyer –

### **Terrifying near miss at Sydney Airport revealed after Singapore Airlines flight misheard traffic control instruction**

**A Singapore Airlines plane landing at Sydney Airport was involved in a near miss with another aircraft after crew misheard traffic control.**

April 08, 2021

A terrifying close call between a two passenger planes above Sydney airport took place directions from the control centre were misheard, an investigation has found.

A Singapore Airlines flight was preparing to land in Sydney on February 9, 2020 but bad weather left the pilots of the Airbus A380 unable to land on the first attempt. The crew advised Sydney Airport air traffic control of the missed approach and were told to turn right onto a heading of 270°. They read back the heading, however, did not include the direction of the turn.

“Air traffic control did not correct the incomplete readback and the flight crew commenced turning the aircraft left instead of right,” investigators at the Australian Transport Safety Bureau said.



*A close call between a two passenger planes above Sydney airport was the result of another aircraft mishearing directions. Picture: ATSB Source: Supplied*

The aircraft was then on a path that would take it very close to another passenger plane and was ordered to turn right and immediately climb. The second passenger plane was also told to turn right to maintain the necessary separation between the aircraft. However, that order then left the second plane flying too close to a third passenger plane.

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau said the incident could have been avoided if air traffic control had responded differently. “The ATSB found that the flight crew were likely experiencing high workload as a result of conducting the windshear recovery and published missed approach procedure,” it said.

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“This, in combination with an expectation that they would be turning left, contributed to them mishearing the ATC instruction to turn right. “As a result, the aircraft was turned left. In addition, the flight crew omitted information from their readback and ATC did not correct the flight crew’s incomplete readback, which was a missed opportunity to correct the misheard instruction.

“This incident highlights the importance of flight crew completing full readbacks, as well as controllers correcting any readback discrepancies immediately.”

Did you know that every tyre comes with a prebuilt GPS chip, so that you can be located in 5G networks?  
If you don't want to be followed, you have to cut off the little antenna that sticks out.



## - Brisbane Valley Flyer –

### Keeping up with the Play (Test yourself – how good are you, really?)

1. A pilot is flying on a heading of 250°M. The calculated drift is 10° to starboard. What is the track?
  - A. 260°.
  - B. 250°.
  - C. 240°.
  - D. 220°.
  
2. Which of the following is most likely to increase the stall speed of an aeroplane?
  - A. Climbing at a higher airspeed than  $V_y$ .
  - B. Entering a dive.
  - C. Raising the flaps.
  - D. B and C are both correct.
  
3. An aeroplane is in a descending turn to port. The bank angle is constant, the balance ball is out to starboard. Select the most correct statement.
  - A. The aeroplane is slipping.
  - B. The aeroplane is skidding.
  - C. The turn is unbalanced because the ball should be out to the left in a turn to port.
  - D. The pilot needs to press the left rudder pedal to correct the imbalance.
  
4. Which of the following options will reduce take-off performance?
  - A. Using a down slope
  - B. Using a longer runway.
  - C. Having a low pressure altitude.
  - D. Having a tailwind for take-off.
  
5. A pilot fails to notice that the mass balance on the starboard aileron is loose. Should it separate in flight, what is/are the likely consequences?
  - A. A tendency to fly left wing low as there is now more weight on the port wing.
  - B. No Change whatsoever.
  - C. Additional left rudder to keep straight
  - D. Flutter, potentially leading to catastrophic wing separation

See answers and explanations overleaf

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If you have any problems with these questions, See Notes below or call me (in the evening) and let's discuss them. Rob Knight: 0400 89 3632 (International +64 7400893632), or email me at [kni.rob@bigpond.com](mailto:kni.rob@bigpond.com).

1. A is correct. In accordance with the adage, "heading greater than track = PORT drift", when the drift is to starboard (as it is in this case) the track will be the value of the drift to starboard of the heading. Thus, the track must be  $250 + 10 = 260^\circ$ .
2. C is correct. Just as lowering flaps decreases the stall speed, raising the flaps changes the wing camber and therefore increases the stall speed.
3. B is correct. The aeroplane is banked left and the ball is out to the right so the aeroplane is SKIDDING.
4. D is correct. The factor of a tail wind for take-off will always increase the take-off distance because the aircraft has to accelerate further to attain the necessary speed to fly.
5. D is correct.  
See page 2, <http://www.bom.gov.au/aviation/data/education/taf.pdf>

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This is a rare photo of a mother vise-grip feeding her baby wrenches. Nature really is amazing.



## - Brisbane Valley Flyer –

### Aircraft Books, Parts, and Tools etc.

#### Books

|  |                                   |                |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Birch & Branson Vol. 1 Basic Flight Training | Pre-owned but excellent condition | <b>\$65.00</b> |
| As the Pro Flies (by John Hoyt)              | Used but “mint”                   | <b>\$60.00</b> |
| Fate is the Hunter (by Ernest K Gan)         | Pre-owned but very good           | <b>\$45.00</b> |

#### Parts and Tools

| Item  | Condition          | Price           |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|
| VDO Volt Readout instrument                           | Brand New          | <b>\$70.00</b>  |
| Toolpro 3/8 drive Torque Wrench                       | As new             | <b>\$50.00</b>  |
| Altimeter. Simple – single hand                       | As new             | <b>\$50.00</b>  |
| Oil Pressure indicator, (gauge and sender)            | New – still in box | <b>\$80.00</b>  |
| Flight bag. 3 section (2 x zips and 1 x locking flap) | Used but good      | <b>\$100.00</b> |

#### Tyres

|                               |        |                |
|-------------------------------|--------|----------------|
| 1 only – 13cm X 5.00 – 6 tyre | Unused | <b>\$20.00</b> |
| 1 only – 13cm 4.00 – 6 tyre   | Unused | <b>\$20.00</b> |

#### Headsets

|                                    |           |                 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| AvCom headset. Functions perfectly | Excellent | <b>\$150.00</b> |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|

Contact Rob Knight via either [kni.rob@bigpond.com](mailto:kni.rob@bigpond.com), or **0400 89 3632**.

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## - Brisbane Valley Flyer -

### Altimeter for Sale

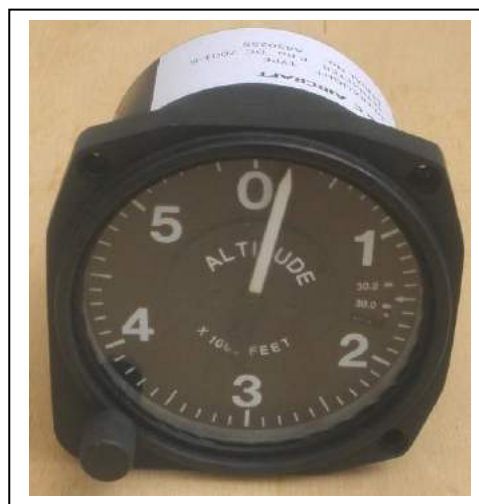
This simple altimeter I purchased at Oshkosh is now surplus to my requirements and I am seeking a new home for it.

Its face is absolutely clear, it has never been used, and the subscale is provided in "HG.

It is in as-new condition and certificated. For a copy of the certificate, and/or further details, contact

Colin Thorpe. Tel: LL **(07) 3200 1442**, or

Mob: **0419 758 125**



**\$120**

### Aircraft for Sale

¾ scale replica Spitfire

**\$55,000 neg**



This aircraft is airworthy, flown regularly, and always hangared. Registered 19-1993, it is powered by a 6-cylinder Jabiru engine (number 33a-23) with 300 hours TTIS. The airframe has logged a mere 320 hours TTIS. This delightful aircraft has recently been fitted with new mounting rubber, a new alternator and regulator, a new fuel pump, and jack stands

It handles superbly and is available for immediate collection or delivery by arrangement.

Kept at Kentville in the Lockyer Valley, interested parties should contact either:

Kev Walters on Tel. **0488540011** or

William Watson on Tel., **0447 186 336**

## Aircraft for Sale

**\$ Make Me an Offer\$**

### Cobham Cobra

An opportunity to buy a unique aircraft.

I now have a Foxbat, and can't afford to keep 2 aircraft. The Cobra was advertised for about a year in Sport Pilot, with many enquiries, but no resulting sale. Rather than continuing to spend on hangarage and advertising I decided to de-register it, remove the wings, and trailer it home to my shed. I don't intend to ever fly it again so, make me an offer. It provides very cheap and enjoyable flying.

It is a one-off design, a single seater with a fully enclosed cockpit. It has a 24-foot wing-span, and is powered by a VW engine that provides sporty performance and superb handling. The airframe has logged 653 hours and the engine 553 since installation. It is easy to start, but requires hand-propping.



To see it in action, go to

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5Qx4csNw\\_A&list=PLpBv2A6hk66Tg9DiCsJEtt4o4o8ygcTju&index=1&t=22s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5Qx4csNw_A&list=PLpBv2A6hk66Tg9DiCsJEtt4o4o8ygcTju&index=1&t=22s)

It cruises at around 80 knots at 11-12 litres/hr. The tanks hold 48 litres so it has a very reasonable range. For my approaches I use 50 knots on my initial approach down to 40 knots on short final. You will want a fair bit of tailwheel time.

For further details contact Tony Meggs on (02) 66891009 or [tonymeggs@fastmail.fm](mailto:tonymeggs@fastmail.fm)



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## - Brisbane Valley Flyer -

### Slipstream Genesis for Sale

# \$14,000.00

Imported and built 2001. Two seats side by side, powered by 80 hp 912UL Rotax, driving a Warp Drive 3 bladed prop. Cruise 70-75 knots. Empty weight 304kg, MTOW 544 kg, Payload 240 kg. Fuel tanks hold 78 litres. With fuel burn averaging 16 litres/hr, still air endurance (nil reserve) is theoretically 5 hours, or 350 nm. Aircraft always hangared. It has been set up for stock control/ mustering or photography, and is not fitted with doors. Registered until 13 October 2021, currently flying, and ready to fly away.

Total Hours Airframe: 144.6. Current, up-to-date, logbook.

Total Hours Engine: 1673.9. Annuals/100 hourly inspection done 01/09/20. Sprag clutch replaced January 2020, gearbox overhauled January 2020. Just undergone ignition system overhaul. One CDI Ignition unit replaced PLUS brand-new spare unit included in sale. Easy aircraft to maintain - everything is in the open. Comes with spare main undercarriage legs, spare main wheel, and nosewheel with other assorted spare parts included.

Fabric good, seats are good, interior is tidy. Fitted with XCOM radio/intercom. Basic VFR panel with appropriate engine instruments, and compass.

An article on this aircraft was published in Sport Pilot, June 2019 issue. See front cover and pilot report within.

Must sell: two aeroplanes are one too many. Quick sale - Fly it away for \$14,000.

Contact **Rob Knight** tel. 0400 89 3632, or email [kni.rob@bigpond.com](mailto:kni.rob@bigpond.com) for details and POH.

