

Maryland *Zodiac CH650LSi*

Life after Oshkosh

I initially considered the AMD Zodiac because I wanted a special light-sport aircraft (S-LSA) that was approved for night flight and instrument flight rules (IFR). Initially ordered as a 601, my request to install the newly TSO'd Aspen Avionics EFD1000Pro primary flight display (PFD) coincided with the company's plans to transition to the Zodiac 650. N117FA debuted at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2008 as the first IFR-approved glass-cockpit S-LSA. I liked the idea of working with a U.S.-based company, and it turned out to be a good decision. For use in training, the simplicity of the Zodiac's airframe, use of conventional materials, and the Part 33-certified Continental O-200 were appealing.

Some local flight schools were reluctant to get involved in light-sport training, but I saw this as an opportunity. N117FA is equipped rather uniquely for a light-sport aircraft; my goal was to have one aircraft to provide sport, private, and instrument training. The Garmin GNS530W's traffic displays are a safety benefit, and the canopy is perfect for clearing turns. Aspen PFD features, such as map details and navigation data, can be turned off at the touch of a button to prevent the aspiring sport pilot from

becoming overwhelmed. With all functions enabled, the situational awareness for actual IFR far surpasses what was formerly available only for the big iron. As an instrument trainer, the Zodiac is economical, stable, and provides an approach speed that gives the student time to react without getting behind the plane. At a fuel burn of approximately 6 gph, the Zodiac saves about \$20 an hour at today's fuel prices over the typical IFR trainer. With a rental rate comparable to the going rate for a Cessna 172 in the Washington metropolitan area, you give up two seats that are rarely in use during training for a modern cockpit with the latest avionics.

At 105 knots, the typical cruise is about 15 knots slower than the maximum allowed by LSA regulations. Once inside the cockpit of the Zodiac, it is comfortable, so rushing the flight would only shorten the fun. My son and I can leave our home west of the nation's capital and be at Ocean City, Maryland, in just over an hour.

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New Jersey *Nieuport*

N795CH is a scratch-built Graham Lee 7/8-scale Nieuport 11 and the realization of a boyhood dream. I was born on June 10, 1925, less than seven years after the end of World War I. I grew up in the 1930s, and the flying aces of that war were my boyhood heroes. Names such as Rickenbacker, Nungesser, Luke, and Lufbery and the aircraft they flew—Spads, SE-5s, Camels, and Nieuports—were as familiar to me as my own name.

Half a century later, in 1989, I saw a Graham Lee Nieuport 11 in the fly-by pattern at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh. The pilot's white scarf was streaming back from the cockpit, and red, white, and blue ribbons were flying from the wing struts. Wow! The dream was reborn; I could build one of those. My wife, Jeanne, and my daughter Chris encouraged me to begin.

Very early on the morning of July 2, 2008, with six wild turkeys as witnesses, *Mighty Mouse* and I broke the surly bonds for our first flight. Airport Manager Wayne Rumble arrived just in time to get some pictures.

I am grateful for the advice and assistance I received from my friends in EAA Chapter 287: Tom Callahan, certified flight instruc-

tor; Larry Winchell, flight advisor; and technical counselors Walt Hoster and Gene Beatty. Special thanks to Bobby Thomas, designated airworthiness representative, the late Graham Lee, and the KC Dawn Patrol.

My dream could not have been realized without the support and guidance of EAA and its members.

Charles J. Haury, EAA 88732
Ocean City, New Jersey



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