Team Rocket Newsletter February 12, 2023

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Darry Hudec - 40 hours now

Darryl Hudec had his first flight back in November and now has 40+ hours on the clock. He was able to take his lovely wife, Milanka, for a flight. Judging by the grins, it must have gone well.

Darryl has an appointment at the paint shop soon. We're saving a place in front of our Oshkosh display just for him. (Although there is room for more, if anyone else is ready by then. That is a distinct possibility as several builders are getting quite close to completion.)

Randy Price - 1st start up

Randy Price, from Greenbrier, Arkansas, sent a video a few days ago. It shows his first engine start. Here's the URL to the file:
http://f1aircraft.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Randy-Price-1st-start.3gp

As you can see from the video, his project is moving along quite nicely. I believe that is Randy's dad in the video, cheering the start up.

Al Mullenbach - cowling mods

Al Mullenbach has made several cowling mods to accommodate his 6 into 1 custom exhaust system.

Al is using a Sky Dynamics cold air induction and their 6 into 1 exhaust. The mods he's made to the lower cowling are readily apparent, and a sometimes necessary evil to fit all of the speed goodies inside.

Perhaps if there is enough interest, we might be able to talk Al into making a mold of the lower cowling modified area. Raise your hand if you're interested! (Email me separately from this newsletter to let me know.)

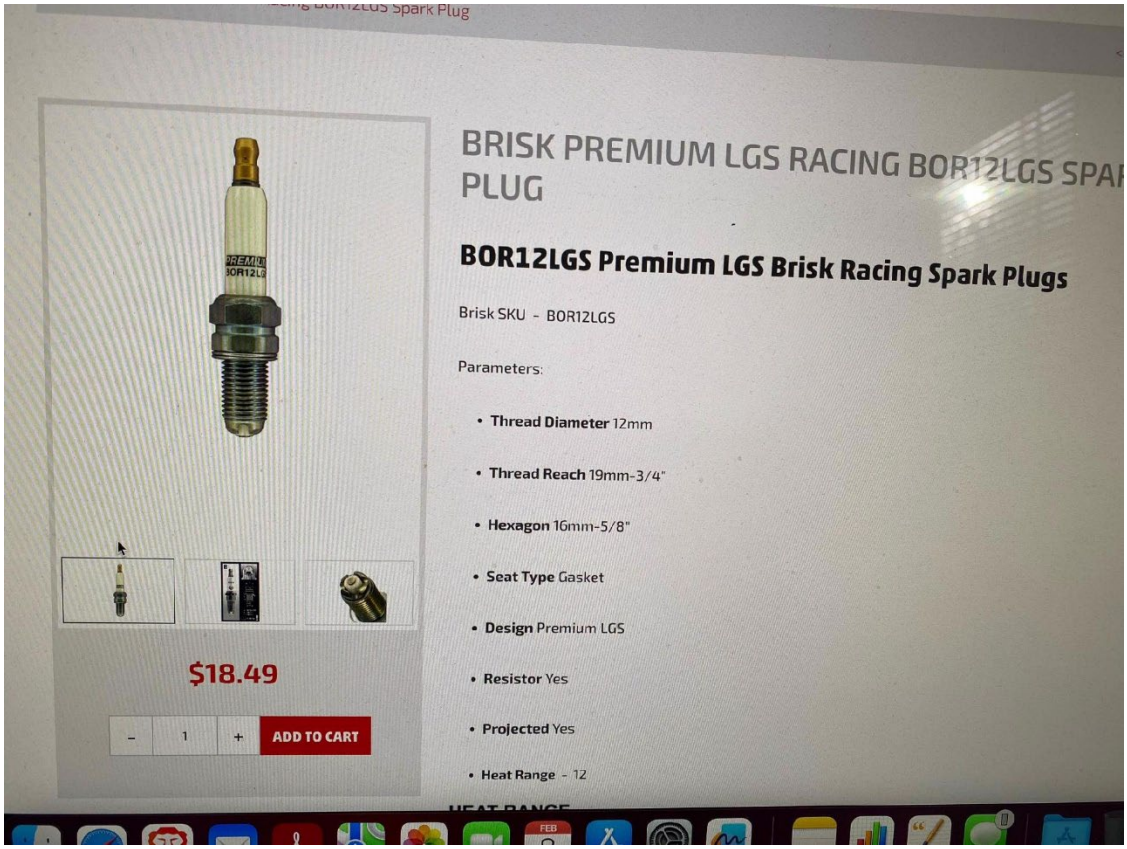
TOOLMASTER

Ray Ward - taking a break after 5 fuselages

Ray Ward has built 5 fuselages, starting with his now flying F4 Raider, which now has over 400 hours on it in the past 4 years and 1 month.

Ray is retiring from the fuselage production business, at least for now, to concentrate on flying and enjoying his retirement. All the best to him!!!

All I can say is that I could not have done any of this without Ray's help. Anyone who sees him at Oshkosh should buy him a beer. (And one for me too.) Ray has been instrumental in helping me tweak the airframe construction, get the SDS ignition system rolling, and help make the 4 into 1 exhaust for the Raiders. The latter 2 are a big reason that Ray's F4 is so efficient.



Speaking of efficiency, Dennis (at SDS, I believe) suggests these spark plugs for those running their SDS ignitions. He suggests that you might see up to 20% better fuel economy. !!!! Wow! I hope to hear a full report from Ray for the next newsletter.

Airplane Plastics - shop visit

My wife, Tammy, and I visited the Airplane Plastics faciity in Tipp City, OH a few days ago. Our excuse was to drop off some canopy parts, but the real reason was that Jeff and Becky Rogers promised to buy our lunch. Well, I've never been one to turn down a cold beer and some bar food, so we met them at TJ Chumps for a delicious meal.

In the photo above, Vince, Chuck, Mike, Jeff, and Kenny pose for the camera in one corner of the surprisingly large facility. Actually, their facility is comprised of several large buildings that are somewhat segregated into production, storage, Boeing (special) products, and a couple of large off-site buildings filled with Jeff's woodworking projects, CNC equipment, and other stuff Becky may or may not know about.

I promised not to reveal any of Jeff and Becky's trade secrets, but what I can say is that they have some amazing techniques for forming plastic sheets into all manner of aviation related products. Mostly canopies, of course, but some other high tech display panels that were causing many "What's that do?" and "How did you do that?" questions to come from me.

Naturally, any shop that deals in high tech needs protection. Here is Tucker, the trained killer, ninja attack dog. One look at that ferocious face is enough to stop any would-be thief in their tracks. In this photo, he's protecting the panel saw from intruders.

This Plexi bubble is the master pattern that Team Rocket slider bubbles are compared to for fit. It also is used to mark the rough trim lines. It took us a few minutes to spot the Team Rocket bubble because there were literally hundreds of different canopies stored in every available space.

Of particular interest to a geek like me was the F4U Corsair bubble, which has a fairly extreme shape. Jeff showed us how it was produced and, let me say, it was not a simple process. Also, that bubble has a pronounced bend along the lower edge where the Plexi meets the frame. That bend is put in rather crudely, but that is to match the original WWII

parts. It was a hoot to hear Jeff talk about putting that crude bend in an otherwise very elegantly made part. For those who are interested, here is a URL that shows an F4U canopy: https://plane-encyclopedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Corsair-Taxiway.jpg

Over in the off-site storage facility, coincidentally next to Jeff and Becky's home, we found some F1 canopy parts, boxed up and ready to go. Naturally, they are stored right next to the FW-190 canopies. The variety of canopies you can find here is unmatched.

All in all, we had a wonderful visit with some good friends and I was overwhelmed at the size, tidiness, organization, and efficiency of their operation. I was impressed! Our Rocket canopies are but a tiny piece of what they do. Very cool!

Throttle quadrants - available very soon

Price hasn't been set yet. Probably somewhere in the mid-$400's. We're just waiting on Blake to get the final frame coating done. Email me separately from this newsletter if you're interested and I'll reserve one for you.

Ron Patterson - F4 project for sale

You've got to see this project. Here is the URL:
https://vansairforce.net/community/showthread.php?t=214198

And another to a photo page:
https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipMdZdzYlJLUoDABKE2spGJq45AVlDLgKmCjN2iWsKHezEI-J4eft9_AZSyx3kouQg?key=d1ktWTN5MGlWUVpfb25QOXExMFFkaF9XRVRYQVpR

Ron was the very first person to belly up to the bar when the Team Rocket parts began coming out again in about 2017. Hats off to him for being fearless! His project is turning out very nicely, and he has some very interesting mods to boot. Someone is sure to get a nice project although we're sad to see that Ron is bowing out. All the best to him.

Team Rocket Forum - map feature?

We're often asked "Where are the other builders located?" I can't ethically give out this info because some people want their privacy protected. However, for the rest of us, I've added a map to the forum. The idea being that those who are building can email me (separately from the newletter please) with their name and address and a line that says I can add their name and info to the map. Heck, Google already knows all of these things, so I don't see much harm in adding it to a private forum.... with permission of course.

If anyone knows of a map app that can automate this process, please advise. Until then, I'll add each builder's location individually.

The forum URL is in the section below.

Reminder **- New Team Rocket forum launched**

As everyone knows, the old forum was as reliable as a British car, and just as quirky. After much whining from me, Blake was gracious enough to replace the hosting and set up a new forum.

The data from the old forum is still there, so we shouldn't have lost any of the legacy info.

If you had access to the old forum, your username and password should still work. If not, there is a password reset function on the log in page. Or just contact me if you need an account set up.

NOTE: *The log in button is hidden in plain sight at the extreme top left of the home page. It's easy to overlook, but it's there!*

It is my sincerest request that building questions be directed to the forum. That way everyone can benefit from the tribal knowledge of shared responses, and I won't be quite as overwhelmed. Incidentally, we have almost 50 projects under construction at some level. With that many brains out there building, there are gonna be a lot of good answers if we all use the forum.

https://f1aircraftforum.com/

House and shop progress:

The drywall is up and mudded! Woot! We're going to be painting and putting down the flooring this coming week. By golly, we're starting to see some light at the end of the tunnel.... after 2 full years. (For comparison, our other 2 home building projects took 6 months from start to moving in.)

We hope to be moved in by March1, and have some *limited* Rocket activity soon afterwards.

Contact us at:

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