Team Rocket

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Team Rocket 5-20-2024 newsletter

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Mike Gordon flies the Atlantic

Mike Gordon, who recently purchased an F4 Raider, built by Ray Ward, flew the Atlantic in early April. Here is a link to a quick note about it on the Homebuilt Airplanes forum.

Mike had this to say about his flight:

"In February I became the lucky owner of Ray Ward's F-4 Raider, the Blue Rocket. When I showed up on his door I had 3 hrs of tailwheel time and 5 hours of single engine piston GA time in the last 25 years. Ray magnanimously got me up to speed in his Luscombe, before checking me out on the Rocket.

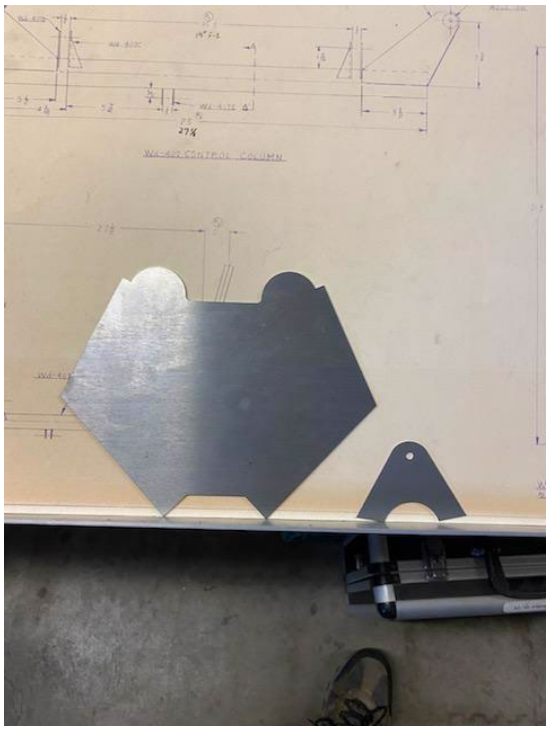
With under 10 hrs total time in the Rocket, I flew it from South Carolina to its new home in Leverkusen Germany on April 9th, 2024. The trip lasted 5 days encompassing over 4500 nm and 36 hrs of flight time, while using 275 gallons of 100LL, 3 quarts of oil, 4 Red Bulls, and a box of Cliff bars.

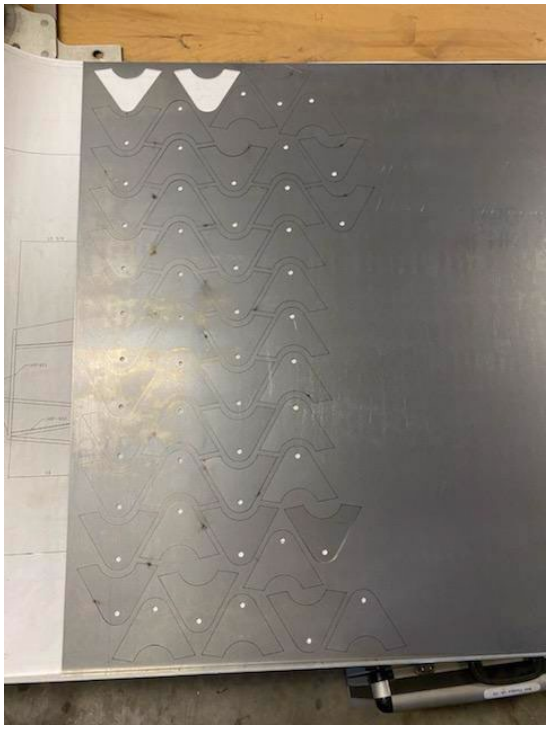
Some might say this is a testament to luck, or exceptional pilot skill. In reality, it was a testament to the amazing characteristics of the Rocket. The balance, control harmony, and performance allowed me to fly 9 hours a day, climb over any weather, operate at -10 deg F, and plan 800 nm legs with alternates 400 nm away.

I was able to plan and fly 175 KTAS at any altitude above 5,000' burning 7.3 gph or less. For the low levels I did in Canada, Iceland, and Scotland, 155 KTAS burning under 8 gph (average). The planning, studying, learning, and paperwork were extensive and took me a month, but I had a lot to learn about SEP airplanes and the Rocket.

An amazing experience in all aspects (except the paperwork)! "

Mike has a much longer text PDF, which is worth reading, and more photos, can be found HERE.

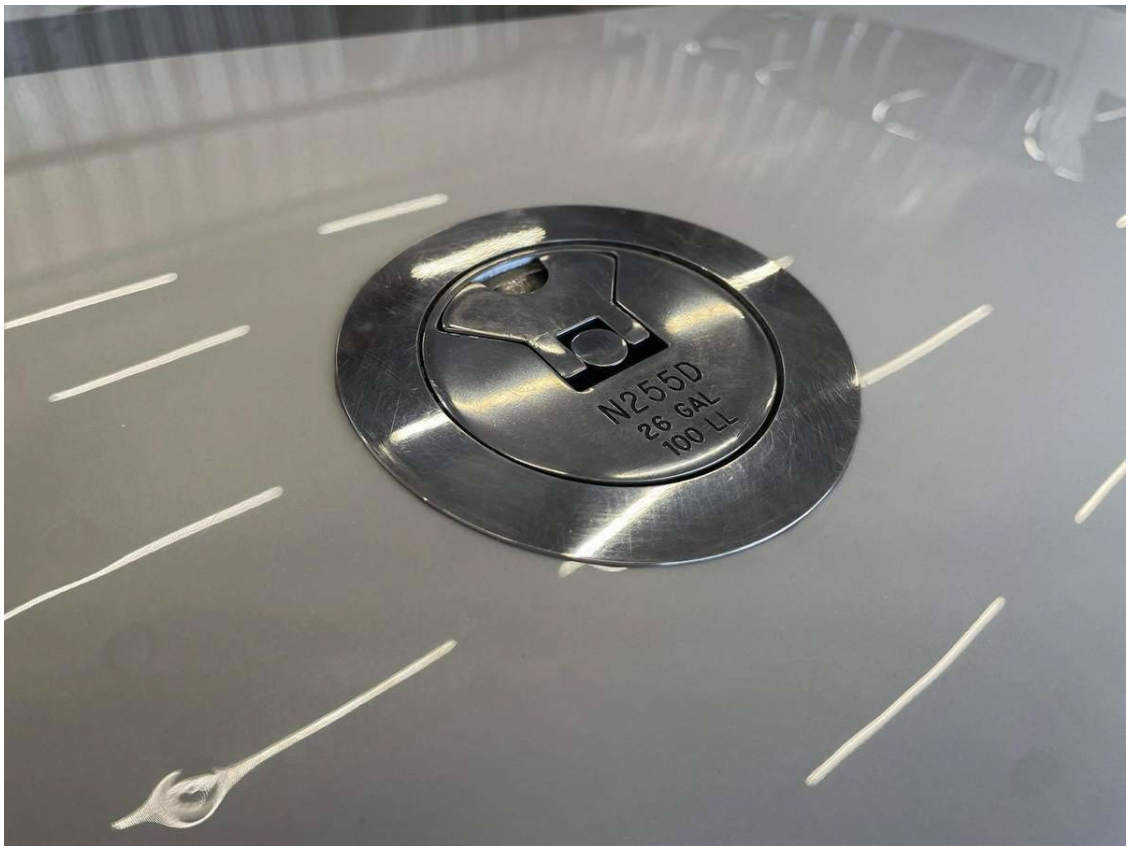




Laser cut parts - but only for steel parts!

Of course we have laser cut parts, but in steel, not aluminum. Here's a few interesting photos of the ones that go into making up the control stick torque tube.

They are cut, deburred, bent, and then placed in a welding fixture for TIG welding. The final product, with black Cerakote applied for rust prevention, is shown below.



Darryl Hudec's gas cap hack

Darryl wasn't happy with the way that his gas cap fit. Probably none of us are all that keen about their fit. We all are accustomed to wrestling the things in or out of the filler hole.

Darryl cut away a small portion of the cap as shown in the photo above. Then he installed a thin secondary O-ring. He says that this raises the cap slightly in the filler neck taper and allows the cap to function more smoothly.

In other news from Darryl, he expects that there may be an article about his Rocket in the October issue of Sport Aviation. I can't wait to see it.

And his Rocket also won grand champion kit built at Sun and Fun last month. Results are shown below.

Wow. Very cool.

Sherrie Dietrich & Rocky Driggers	Hernando	FL	1940	Luscombe	N28412	Bronze Age Monoplane Outstanding Closed Cockpit
CLASSIC						
Joe & Shelly Rymer	**Riverview**	**FL**	**1953**	**Beechcraft Bonanza**	**N2970B**	**Grand Champion - Classic Custom**
Dick Solar	**Punta Gorda**	**FL**	**1947**	**Luscombe 8E**	**N2486K**	**Reserve Grand Champion - Classic Custom**
Sandy Howard	Augusta	GA	1951	Beechcraft Bonanza	N1904	Outstanding Custom Classic
J. M. "Frog" Jones	Madison	GA	1948	Globe Swift	N3824K	Best Custom Classic Over 165 HP
Robbie Staton	Lonoke	AR	1947	Piper J-3	N1455N	Best Custom Classic 0-100 HP
CONTEMPORARY						
Fred Brown	**Treasure Island**	**FL**	**1978**	**Piper PA-18-150**	**N63CB**	**Grand Champion - Contemporary**
Charles Dupius	**Opelousas**	**LA**	**1972**	**Bellanca 7GCAA**	**N11650**	**Reserve Grand Champion - Contemporary**
Dwayne Waters	Merritt Island	FL	1975	Piper PA-22/20 Tri-Pacer Conversion	N3429Z	Outstanding Contemporary In Type
Jim & Selena McMaster	Bath	PA	1965	Piper PA-32-260	N3359W	Outstanding Contemporary In Type
Steve Miller	Setauket	NY	1969	Cessna 172	N46392	Outstanding Contemporary In Type
Bruce Edwards	Gorgiana	AL	1966	Piper PA30 Twin Comanche	N7827Y	Best Twin Contemporary
RJ Gritter	Catlett	VA	1977	Bellanca Decathlon	N321RJ	Best Contemporary - Custom
HOMEBUILT						
Darryl Hudec	**Stone Mountain**	**GA**	**2022**	**Hudec F-1 Rocket**	**N255D**	**Grand Champion**
Jeff Deaton	**Morehead City**	**NC**	**2018**	**Ryan STL**	**N24NK**	**Grand Champion - Plans Homebuilt**
Keith Ellis, II	**Locust Grove**	**GA**	**2022**	**Vans RV-10**	**N10KE**	**Reserve Grand Champion**
Trevor Aldridge	Bentonville	AR	2023	Super Patriot	N150SP	Outstanding Aircraft
George Shemo	Newnan	GA	2023	Vans RV-10	N760GL	Outstanding Workmanship
Marriner Nolan Smith	Fayetteville	GA	2022	Vans RV-14	N994CM	Outstanding Workmanship
Christopher Constantine	Palm City	FL	2023	Vans RV-7	N515CC	Outstanding Workmanship
Jansen & Dennis Keehan	Winter Haven	FL	2022	Vans RV-7	N227DJ	Outstanding Workmanship

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Rockets for sale on Barnstormers

I get asked "Are there any flying Rockets for sale?" The ones for sale change frequently, so it's very hard to keep up, but here are a few beauties that could be yours:

Mark Elliot's red Rocket

Roman Zirwen's red and black Rocket

World record holding HR2 Rocket - time to climb to 10,000' 1 minute 40 sec (not a misprint!)

Harmon Rocket 2

Dave Rempfer's incredible F1 Evo Rocket

To see more about all of the above Rockets... AND MORE.... visit Barnstormers.com.

I don't have a skin in the game here and I don't own shares of Barnstormers, I've just never seen this many beautiful Rockets up for sale all at once before!

1961 Cessna 182 for sale

Price, specs, and more info can be found in the PDF located HERE.

More photos can be seen in the Google Drive here: https://photos.app.goo.gl/o6vPXubbmRiRSkEa6

For more info, please contact Jan Koehler at jan.griffin.koehler@gmail.com

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Airventure 2024 is fast approaching!

Just a reminder of where the important things can be found, and a reminder that we'll have an official "Rocket" parking row at EAA Airventure again this year.

All F1 Rockets, Harmon Rockets, and F4 Raiders are welcome to park in this row. Just put a sign in your canopy for the parking personnel to see when you arrive.

See the map for the location.

Display your F1 Rocket or F4 Raider at the Team Rocket display?

YES! We'd love to have your freshly completed F1 Rocket or F4 Raider on display at the Team Rocket display in the north homebuilt vendor display area. You are guaranteed to have throngs of interested Rocketeers looking it over, but you're also guaranteed that there will be adult supervision nearby.

You'd need to be able to leave your aircraft at the display from Monday thru Friday, if at all possible. Or longer if you can. It can be difficult (but not impossible!) to move an aircraft during the show. (They'd yell at us, and our display would be empty, so ... bummer.)

Space is limited!!!!

We promise to pay you absolutely nothing*, but you'll be able to hang out with the cool kids all week. I promise that it will be a memorable experience!

** Well, maybe a t-shirt and some swag.*

Contact Vince if you think you'd be interested in this opportunity!

Vince Frazier,

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