

MOJAVE TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM FOUNDATION
After Action Report – April 19, 2014
Mojave Experimental Fly-In (MEFI)
Plane Crazy Saturday



Saturday, April 19, 2014 was an amazing day at Mojave Air & Spaceport! The ramp was full of aircraft all the way from the old tower to the new tower! Homebuilts, air racers, one-of-a-kind experimentals and historic aircraft were lined up for free public viewing. Earlier in the week the sounds produced by powerful aircraft engines and record setting speed runs was music to the ears of connoisseurs of air

racing!

Lee Behel's GP-5, "Sweet Dreams" set three new FAI World Records at the Mojave Experimental Fly-In (MEFI). 3 km Speed – 377.6 mph; 15 km Speed – 378.7 mph and the 3 km Time-to-Climb in 2.00 mins, breaking the old record set in 1999 by 20 seconds!

Can you believe this Super Sport Class Reno racer has a highly modified liquid-cooled small block V-8 Chevy engine? Talk about sounding sweet! Lee didn't know it, but on the day he set the record he flew over my house, the wind was howling, but the wind didn't hold a candle to the



powerful sound of that gorgeous flying machine!

In September of 2012, it was equipped with a special version of the EPI, Inc. Mark-9 PSRU (Propeller Speed Reduction Unit) and competed in the Reno Air Races Gold Sport Class. The Chevy engine is a fuel injected (Engine Control Unit) ECU-controlled, 625 HP V8 engine built by Paul Hasselgren. It qualified at 363 mph, finished third in two of the heat races and finished fourth (359.6 mph) in the Sport- Gold race.



Special thanks to Mojave Air & Spaceport, CEO, Stuart Witt; Deputy General Manager Karina Drees; Airport Operations Manager, Kevin Wojtkiewicz and all of the security, tower and staff for their support in making this outstanding event possible.

The airport tower recorded well over 500 Operations, making it one of, if not, the busiest days in the history of Mojave Airport! Great job by Controllers, Carl Ingram and Nick Booker!

Elliot Seguin, Jennifer Whaley, Steve Slaughter, and numerous Scaled Composites and Spaceship Company employees worked together behind the scenes to make this week of setting World Records happen. Elliot coordinated with the Federal Aviation Administration, Flight Standards District Office at Van Nuys and the National Aeronautic Association and continually encouraged pilots to enter the competition.

There were nine record attempts, by five different airplanes, seven of which were successful. As far as we know this is more record attempts set by more airplanes at a single event than has ever happened in the history of aviation record setting!

Many thanks to Elliot Seguin for bringing so many of his racing friends to Mojave Air & Spaceport!

Mike Patey from Provo, Utah, broke two world records in his highly modified 780 Lancair Legacy, with an IO-550-G engine. He surpassed the 1000 km speed record set in 1975 of 300.9 mph, by going 319.0 mph this

year and exceeded Mike Melvill's 2000 km speed record set in 1994 in the Rutan Catbird, by again attaining a speed of 319.0.

A crowd of interested pilots and spectators gathered around as Mike shared some of his stories about his record setting flights.

An article online stated that that the powerplant is a one of a kind supercharged 780 engine that Mike built with his own induction design. He also did other



modifications, including cutting the wings back and building custom wingtips.

Mike and his identical twin brother, Mark, are both pilots and business entrepreneurs. Their families are all engaged in aviation and the brothers set twin world transcontinental coast to coast speed record flying their 'twin' Lancair Legacy aircraft, wingtip to wingtip in both directions, west to east and east to west, in 2011.

For the last two years Mike has raced in the Sport Air Racing League in the unlimited category. Last year, he finished the season as the only undefeated racer the entire year and set numerous all time track records.





Tom Aberly in the Phantom bi-plane attempted to break the 3 km Time-to-Climb record set in 1996, but unfortunately wasn't successful. He will be back next year to try again!

Paul Dye, Editor in Chief of KITPLANES magazine gave a great message at Plane Crazy Saturday and again at the MEFI Banquet. He discussed the lessons learned by all the years in flight test and operations of

the Space Shuttle and how they can be applied to experimental aviation to make planes and operations safer and better.

Dye was Lead Flight Director at NASA - Johnson Space Center on all of the Space Shuttle flights for 20 years, from 1993 to 2013.

He owns two homebuilt Van's aircraft, an RV-3B, which he flew to MASP and an RV-8.



The RV-3B is painted with a unique flying blue dragon called 'Tsamsiyu.'

Paul made many points about risk management when building, testing and flying airplanes. He doesn't preach safety, but stresses managing the risks that are involved in flying. It doesn't matter if you are flying 100 miles per



hour in a light aircraft or 17,000 miles per hour in the Space Shuttle – risk management is important.



Blue Thunder II rested overnight in the Hansen Hangar on Saturday evening. Owner/pilot, Three-time Formula One Champion, John Parker, has dedicated his life to air racing.

Blue Thunder's powerplant is a story all by itself! The Ryan Falconer V-12 all-aluminum, 601 cubic inch, 660 horsepower, airplane engine was developed by RFI especially for the Thunder Mustang. It is interesting to note that the exhaust port spacing is almost exactly 3/4 of the Rolls Royce Merlin which powers the North American Aviation P-51.

For more information on the Falconer V-12 engine and Blue Thunder II racing team, go to:

http://falconerengines.com/falconer_v12.php or <http://www.bluethunderairracing.com/the-plane/specifications/>



Amazing race pilot Kevin Eldridge was on hand at MEFI showing the new ACE aftermarket cylinder for Lycoming aircraft engines.

ACE performance is an aggressive company making aftermarket cylinders for Lycomings. Kevin Eldredge and Andy Higgs are passionate about bringing aircraft cylinder design to the state of the art. Their first cylinder design is an aesthetically pleasing combination of a one piece head and barrel with modern combustion volume shapes.

Kevin said, "AX50 cylinders are a bolt on solution for any 360-720 wide deck Lycoming engine. Testing is in full swing at my new toy box in San Antonio, Texas, at Titan Aircraft

Engines. We are getting ready for something big in aviation!"

As many air race fans remember Kevin miraculously bailed out of the burning Super Corsair at Williams-Gateway Airport during the first Phoenix Air Races in 1994. What a miracle that he survived! By all accounts, the neck injury alone should have paralyzed or killed him. I'd say he had some protective angels flying with him!

For more details, see:

http://www.warbirdaeropress.com/articles/bail_out.html

Special one-of-a-kind composite trophies were made by engineers at Scaled Composites. The awards were presented at the MEFI Banquet held Saturday evening in the Witt Event Center.

Cathy Hansen & Jen Whaley at MEFI Banquet. Jen is wearing a vintage Rutan Aircraft Factory shirt from 1985!





Many familiar aircraft were on the ramp alongside the array of Experimental Homebuilts.

The MTM promotions booths was busy all day. Bill Deaver, Midge Wright, Chris & Riitta Martin, Heather Benes and Steve Rushford did a great job!

Doug Castleman, Aviation Artist had a super display of his aviation paintings and prints.



Phil and Barbara Schultz flew their vintage 1958 Twin Beech. Everyone loves to hear the two R-985 engines, especially on take-off!



Tres Clemments brought the Rutan Boomerang over from San Luis Obispo. Great to see *'The Boom'* again! I still remember the flight that my husband Al and I had with Burt and Tonya Rutan many years ago!



Tehachapi High School Robotics Team had a booth set up so they could show off their latest project. The team is sponsored by Scaled Composites!

The team began in 2001 and is celebrating their thirteenth successful year. The Robotics Competition each year is an exciting, multinational competition that teams professionals and young people to solve an engineering design problem in an intense and competitive way.

Bill Deaver took a few photos that really caught the spirit of Plane Crazy Saturday. We are so appreciative of the Edwards Civil Air Patrol unit helping with flightline safety! Lt. Kevin Finister is always on hand to guide these fantastic young people. Thank you CAP!

Here is a beautiful example of a Pitts biplane. Sierra Aviation Group from Portland, OR brought this Model 12



in for display. This aircraft is a real show stopper! Lots of ooo's and ah's from everyone!

Plane Crazy Saturday is a free family event and this photo captures the spirit of the day! Bill said it looked like this little girl was trying to fly in the wind blowing down the ramp, while her siblings enjoyed riding on Mom's shoulders and being pushed in a stroller.

Great job Elliot! Can't wait to see what you have planned for next year!

A big thank you to our Plane Crazy Saturday security sponsors: Radio Shack in Mojave; Rosamond News; Barnett Carpet Cleaning in Rosamond; Kieffe & Sons Ford – Rosamond and Mojave; Karl's Hardware – Rosamond and Mojave; and Voyager Restaurant!

Next month – May 17, 2014
Jim Payne will tell us about
Soaring in Argentina!

