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by: Kevin Steiner

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Submitted anonymously

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Decisions, Decisions, Decisions

Velocity is constantly going through phases that require major decisions on which direction to take. We lost our Service Center to the hurricanes last fall and now must decide if we want to borrow the hundreds of thousands it will take to replace this building or enlarge our production building to handle the Service Center part of our business. As most of you know, we were able to lease a building on the airport to act as our Service Center until we decide what to do. The present building is less than half the size of our previous building and is just not capable of handling the workload we have. We have been forced to move our maintenance and electrical work to “T” hangars with additional hangars for our demo and training aircraft. This is not an ideal situation and decisions must be made soon as to what to do about it. In addition, we have signed a contract to construct a couple UAV version of our airplane and this requires even more space. Now we have several customers who are ready to start on a twin version of our XL and we just don’t have the time or the space to complete the prototype for testing purposes.

All this will require some serious soul searching and decision making as to where we want to go with Velocity. Do we drop our “Head Start” programs? Do we stop the customer technical support program and use the manpower for the UAV and twin? Why not look at other airport sites where large buildings already exist and are available? Why not just sell the business and let someone else worry about it? Scott and I have been trying to make intelligent decisions regarding all this and it is not easy. I know that everyone who runs a business must face these problems daily and come up with solutions. We are no different. You, our customers, have been just great in being patient while we continue to struggle with all this and we ask your continued support as we look to the future. If you have any advise that you would like to share, please do so. We are open to any and all suggestions.

Update On TIO 550 (twin turbo, twin intercooled) Continental

In our last newsletter, I commented on the work being done on the turbo version of the 550 Continental engine. This work is still in progress and I can only show you the pictures of the cowling modifications that Scott Swing made to make everything fit properly.
As Scott mentioned last newsletter, we will be making molds of these mods so that if we duplicate this engine installation in the future, we will already have the parts ready to glass into place.

We will have to wait until after Sun-N-Fun to complete the airplane and do the flight-testing. This should be a wild ride.

Hartzell Propeller
I reported in the last newsletter that Hartzell is making a two and three bladed propeller with the semi-scimitar blade design just like that used on the Cirrus aircraft. Well here it is on our XL demo airplane. We will report here when the testing is completed. Hartzell claims a 3 to 4 knot increase in speed with a better rate of climb. Time will tell.

**Reflector Group Sponsor Of A Velocity Fly-In**

I had requested in the last newsletter that those of you who are active on the “Reflector” might want to sponsor a Fly-In. As I mentioned, Velocity just does not have the time to do it alone and suggested that some of you might want to step up to the plate and see what could be done. Few, if any, of our competitors are doing this on their own and rely on the private sector to sponsor regional fly-ins. Perhaps one of you on this group would like to bring it up as a suggestion to see where it goes. Velocity would be willing to help but the bulk of the work would have to be done by you.

I just returned from a motor home convention that is sponsored by a group called the FMCA (Family Motor Coach Association) to which I am a member. They sponsor this convention each year and the last one was held at the Georgia State Fair Grounds. Final attendance was over 7000 motor homes with over 14,000 people in attendance. Over 3,000 volunteers were needed to make it work. Something like this takes a ton of work to make happen. With a Velocity/Reflector fly-in, it would not be nearly as difficult but the need for an appropriate meeting place, housing, food, parking, transportation and entertainment would all require volunteer participation. Let me know if you are interested.

**How You Doing Out There**

A couple of back-to-back articles in the March AOPA magazine caught my attention and I got to thinking about our customers and just how comments made by a retired airline pilot, Barry Schiff, and contributing editor, Mark Twombly, might apply to you.

In Barry’s article he lamented about the need to sell his almost new Citabria, which he dearly loves and flies often, due to the lack of adequate hangar space at his airport. As it turns out, a jet operator was granted the lease on a hangar that had previously been jointly leased by several small airplane owners including Barry. Unfortunately, the Citabria called Santa Monica Municipal home and finding hangar space was not going to be easy. Barry looked at other hangar space on the airport and found long waiting lists or found that hangars were simply not available. At one FBO, the waiting list would be at least one year and the cost for his tail dragger would be a whopping $1,575 per month. He
looked at other airports and found the closest hangar would require a six-hour round trip drive. One of Barry’s comments was that 30 to 40% of the hangars serve as warehouses for businesses that have nothing to do with aviation (electrical contractors, plumbers etc.) or storage for exotic automobiles for the rich and famous.

In the final analysis, Barry will not keep his fabric-covered airplane on a tie down space and has, instead, decided to sell his beloved treasure.

Mark Twombly, in his editorial, talked about the large number of airplanes parked on his Florida airport, that haven't been flown for years. Speculation on the reasons included the high cost of fuel, insurance and maintenance and the thought that just leaving it parked would be less expensive. In reality, according to Mark, this makes little sense as the hangar or tie down continue to accumulate and the cost to put the airplane back in airworthy condition might be higher than if kept in flying condition. One thought was that many may just lost interest; some may have had family, career, or other major influences that bumped the airplane down their list of life’s priorities.

“There is no question that flying around in a general aviation aircraft just for the fun of it is an expensive way to get your jollies compared with a lot of other sporty things we can do with our time. But, if flying is expensive, not flying can also be costly,” comments Mark. In addition, keeping current is just not going to happen if our flying activities come to a screeching halt and the added cost of regaining currency could be quite expensive.

Well, we can read anything into these articles we want but I think there is a lot of truth to both. I know some of our Velocity people have fallen into one of these traps and is the reason we see many of our airplanes on the “For Sale” lists.

And Then There Is This Insurance Thing

I recently read an article on the cost of insurance comparing the new Cirrus (with the parachute) to a Mooney (retract) and a Cessna 182 (fixed gear). The Cirrus average was $10,000 a year, the Mooney about $6,500 and the 182 $2,800. Cost of the airplanes averaged about $350,000 with the exception of the 182, which was about $300,000. It is quite clear that the parachute has done nothing to reduce the cost of insurance for those who purchase the Cirrus. One would think that this new technology would result in fewer accidents with a subsequent reduction in insurance premiums. Insurance premiums are determined by the amount the insurance companies pay out to those who make the claims. Cirrus has been involved in many more accidents than the other two and thus the higher premiums. Part of the blame is on the high technology instrument panels on the Cirrus and the other is the deployment of the chute when a safe landing might have been made without using this device. Many articles have been written about the training necessary to prepare a pilot for the use of the “glass cockpit” displays and the higher then normal accidents caused by not understanding this marvel of technology.

If your going to install a “glass panel” in your Velocity, be prepared to get some additional instruction on how it works. Stay VFR until you can successfully complete “under the hood” IFR training with an instructor who is familiar with these great new instruments.
Orders Up - Production Backlog Grows

Velocity, Inc. is both blessed and challenged by a dramatic increase in recent orders. Business is strong, and we are especially encouraged by a growing number of buyers from outside of the United States. Velocity is truly gaining worldwide exposure! We sincerely appreciate those who have selected Velocity, Inc. as their kit aircraft supplier - and thank everyone for their patience as our team works to increase production to reduce our current 6-month long manufacturing lead time. We are looking to hire several new people to fill positions in the following areas:

* Purchasing
* Shipping/Receiving/Parts
* Fastbuild Sub-Assembly Construction
* Fiberglass Laminators

Welcome New Velocity Service Center Staff Members

We are pleased to introduce two new talented and professional people to Velocity.

Tom Keenan joins the Velocity Service Center as a pilot, A&P certified mechanic, and soon to be Service Center mentor. Already an experienced general aviation mechanic, Tom is learning specialized knowledge about Velocity construction and maintenance from Scott Swing (President/Owner of Velocity, Inc.). Tom is also a Certified Flight Instructor and will be helping with Velocity Flight Transition Training, performing demonstration rides, and representing Velocity, Inc. at air shows.

Dan Anderson joins the Velocity Service Center as the company’s new Chief Pilot. Dan is a Certified Flight Instructor and will be the leading person to conduct Velocity Flight Transition Training, demonstration rides, and helping out at air shows. We were lucky to lure Dan away from his full-time instruction job at Pan Am
International Flight Academy in nearby Ft. Pierce, Florida. In addition to his Velocity duties, Dan will be organizing a flight school specializing in teaching new students to fly in the new Light Sport Aircraft and licensing program. No, Velocity, Inc. does not have a model that fits into the Light Sport Aircraft category - but the company is branching out by organizing a small flight school that features the Fantasy Air Allegro 2000 aircraft, which is available as a kit for individual enjoyment, or as a ready-to-fly (certified) Light Sport Aircraft for flight training and rental. The Allegro 2000 is imported from the Czech Republic. Velocity, Inc. plans to lease a number of Allegro 2000 aircraft from Southeast Sport Aircraft, Inc., a Sebastian based company and the official sales distributor of Allegro 2000 aircraft for all of Florida.

Congratulations Paul Baribault

Velocity, Inc. is proud to announce the promotion of Paul Baribault as it’s new corporate Secretary and Treasurer. Accustomed to fulfilling a number of office duties including being the Purchasing Agent and Office Manager, Velocity, Inc. is most fortunate to have Paul accept the responsibilities that come with becoming an officer of the company. Paul takes over for Bonnie Swing, who formerly held the position of Secretary/Treasurer, and who is hoping to enjoy some well deserved time off to enjoy family and travel.

Loss of Hangar Space Limits Service Center Offerings

As readers might know from seeing previous articles on the hurricane aftermath at the Sebastian Airport, the company lost the use of the Velocity Service Center building. While we are fortunate to have found new and temporary hangar space on the airport property, the new space is smaller in area and lacks the infrastructure that was once in the original Velocity Service Center building. Things are quite crowded in the temporary Velocity Service Center building - so crowded in fact, that we do not have room to offer all of the Velocity
Service Center services that were once enjoyed. Faced with the situation that there simply is not enough room to offer both Head Start support and aircraft inspections/repairs, we have elected to give our highest priority to Head Start customers and to greatly curtail aircraft inspections and maintenance. Future Head Start customers are urged to plan and confirm their visit to Sebastian well in advance of their desired arrival date. Local hotels are frequently booked to capacity and there are few bargains to be found. Please feel free to ask Kristy Allen or Melanie Francis - the two people who really run the office - for assistance in finding a local place to stay during your Head Start visit. Please note too, that Velocity is changing its policy that allows Head Start participants to work largely without one-on-one technical assistance. Up until now, Head Start customers had the option of asking for “a lot” of help (30-hours or more of Velocity tech-time assistance per week) - or - little to no tech-time, i.e. “I’ll call you if I need you”. If another builder is waiting for an opportunity to enter the Head Start program, Velocity may insist that Head Start customers accept a minimum amount of technical assistance each week. We feel this will help customers reach their assembly goals sooner and open up space for new arrivals.

**Machine Shop Running at High Capacity**

Thanks to the hard working efforts of Kevin Kramer and Fred Ulrich, the factory machine and welding shop is quickly catching up with fulfilling back-ordered metal parts. While Kevin and Fred and relatively new to Velocity, they are both experienced machinists and welders.

Fred recently “retired” to the Sebastian area and we’re happy that his wife allowed (or was it pushed?) Fred out the door to offer 20-hours of his talents each week. Now I’m not one to give away someone’s age, but Fred told me he is happiest working on metal working machines built before 1950. Lucky for him (and us), we have a few machines that will keep Fred happy!

Kevin Kramer is the Machine Shop Department head and also keeps (very) active with welding and machining work. It has been great to see his enthusiasm, organizational skills, ability to fabricate parts, and patience at work! Kevin comes to us from the City of Vero Beach, where he worked as a
KPC's
(Kit Plans Changes)

KPC's are listed in downloadable PDF form on the Builder Construction manual page.

KPC 181
Affects: All Standard Airplanes
Manual Section: 6.2.2 for STDFG and 6.1.3 for STDRG.
Date of change: 04/02/05
Remove the second and third instructions concerning foam in the keel. The Standard keel has no foam in it.

KPC 182
Affects: XLRG
Manual Section: 6.7.3
Date of change: 04/02/05
Change the 3" x 9" dimension on the first instruction of page 6-30 to 3" x 10-1/2".

KPC 183
Affects: XLRG
Manual Section: 6.8.2
On older Velocities the aluminum aileron brackets that fit into the wing root needs to be checked for cracks at the bends. The twisting force that is put on it by the aileron cable can start to cause cracks. This is always checked at an annual but we did have a couple of calls about this so I feel it would be the safest thing to do. The picture below shows the area's to check.
Any time you land with the brakes on or you have an unusually bad landing, it would be a good idea to check the main gear legs for cracks in the torsional wraps on the gear legs. This is more important on the retract aircraft since most of the torsional load is taken up on a smaller portion of the gear leg. This section of the gear leg is from the pivot point out about 18”.

A nose gear shimmy puts more load on the nose gear system than almost any bad landing would. If and when you have one, please check the whole nose gear assembly to ensure that you haven’t developed a crack in a portion of the gear. Over the years, we have beefed up the nose gear assembly one part at a time. These changes include the fork assembly, the pivot area, and the nose gear gussets. As more and more airplanes get out there, we see different things from different people. We may never see it here on our aircraft but we do not rely only on our experience before we change or improve something. Some of you operate in worse conditions than we do, have higher ground speeds for landing because you are operating out of higher altitude airports or have heavier aircraft. So when we hear the same thing a few times, we address that area of concern. Please don’t hesitate to make suggestions or to let us know if you have a problem with something. Some of you already do that and we appreciate it, others do not. If we don’t hear from you we don’t know that their is a problem.

For those with the Big Cleveland brake option, we have found the need to turn the discs once in a while. If you have been flying your Cleveland brakes for awhile and have noticed that they are starting to pulse or grab at about 40 mph it is time to get them turned. I am not sure as to Cleveland’s policy with this but we have had good luck with it. I am sure there is a limit as to how many times you can have a disc turned.

Nose tire balancing is important not only for shimmy reasons but also to eliminate that weird vibration you may be getting shortly after takeoff. To check this, just get your nose tire off the ground and spin your tire real fast with a die grinder or a high-speed drill with drum sander attached to it or some other attachment that can rub the tire and spin it up. You may find an rpm range where an unbalanced tire will really shake.

We have had one customer that has broken two retract nose gear pivot bolts. I know of one more but that was explained by certain circumstances. These are not AN grade 5 bolts, they are grade 8 bolts so they are very hard. If you have had problems with these bolts, please let us know.

**Kit Information**

Some of you who have been building your own wings over the last year or so did not receive the premolded inboard ribs that are shown in the manual. If you didn't receive these ribs and need them let us know. You can also build the ribs in place using the method we used to do.

If you are just building your aircraft and have noticed that we are using carbon fiber to wrap the gear legs on some of the planes and are wondering if you can do the same, you can. I used to think that you should never mix fiberglass and carbon but have since experimented with it and have had good results. The gear seems to be stronger torsionally without hurting the dampening effects of the s-glass. The reason we went to carbon wraps was because of the extra weight and extra braking capabilities of some of the XLs.
Fuel Leaks

If you asked a group of Velocity owners what part of the building process gave them the most trouble and sleepless nights while building the majority would tell you “Building the fuel strakes.” Even though most of us spend a lot of time and effort to make sure our strakes are built so they will not leak some do. I will go through how we first check strakes to make sure they are leak free. Next I will tell you how we fix leaks and some of the tools we use to do it.

Once your strakes are built it is a good idea to check them for leaks before you put fuel in the tank. The best way to do this is with air pressure. Air will show you where leaks are much faster than any liquid will. First off it is easiest to do this one tank at a time. You can make caps to block off your fuel tank lines out of AN819 sleeves and AN818 nuts. Flare one end of a piece of tubing normally and bend over the other end to seal it off as shown in the picture. Using the caps you can close off all your fuel lines except for one. Now you can hook up a gauge to the one line you have left. I use nylon or tygon tubing that can be found and most Hardware stores. I prefer to install a “T” in the line so I can attach a gauge to one side and have a hose that you can blow into to pressurize the tank on the other. This is a picture of the setup we use at our Service Center.

There are quite a few different types of gauges you can use with this setup. The first obvious one is a pressure gauge. Other gauges that can be used are an Altimeter or an airspeed indicator. I figure since you are building a plane these are gauges you may already have. The idea is to blow into the tube and pressurize the tank. Clamp the tube off and wait to see if the pressure bleeds off. I am satisfied when I can come back to my tank after 3-4 hours and not see a change on my gauge.
If you are using a pressure gauge use no more than 3 psi. On an altimeter use 1000 ft difference in altitude. On an airspeed indicator I go up to about 165 kts. Any more pressure than this and you may start to do damage to your tank.

You may find that your tank will not hold any pressure and now it is time to start hunting for the leak. First thing you will want to check is that your gauge and hose set up are not leaking. Mix up a small quantity of dishwashing soap in with water and put it in a spray bottle. Squirt down your gauge and hose set up and watch for bubbles. If your tank isn’t holding any pressure you will need to blow into the tube as you do this. Next move to your fuel cap and check it. You can also duct tape over your fuel cap to make sure you are not leaking there. Usually if you have a leak in a tank it will be found somewhere along the top outside seam of the tank. You spent so much time sealing the bottom and top strake as well as the baffles before closing this leaves the area that you sealed up when closing the tank. This is the area you should target first to find a leak. Squirt down all the joints and look for bubbles. You will probably need a little inspection mirror to see up into some of the corners behind the tank. If no leak is detected move on to all the rest of the bid joints in the tank and squirt them down. Now if you still haven’t found the leak squirt down the entire exterior of the tank. The picture below is of a strake bottom that wasn’t properly sealed by its builder. After squirting down the whole tank we saw bubbles coming through the primer on the bottom exterior of the tank. Because the area was so large the outside skin and foam was removed then the tank was patch and the foam and glass were reinstalled. This is the only time we have had to go to this extent to fix a leak.

Now that you have found your leak it is time to fix it. First you want to prep the area around the leak. Using 80 grit sandpaper sand the area around the leak. If the tank had gas in it and you have blue staining you may want to wipe the area down with some alcohol to get rid of most of the stain and then sand the rest of it off. Once the leak area is prepped you are ready to seal. First use straight EZ-poxy to seal the leak. I have a helper hold the hose of a shop vac over the tank filler opening to create a vacuum in the tank. If your helper holds the hose a few inches from the opening this will create enough vacuum to help draw the epoxy in but not enough to pull it all the way through the leak. Start by painting straight epoxy over the leak area. I do this repeatedly for a good 4-5 minutes. Next mix a little cabosil into the epoxy and continue to paint it over the leak. This thicker mixture has a little better chance of sealing a leak but will not travel as far through the leak as the straight epoxy. Again do this for a few minutes. If the leak is in an area where I can put a patch I will cut a patch out of bid and place it over the leak area. If you have it place peel ply over the bid. All of this should be enough to get the job done.

When trying to find certain leaks there are few things to keep in mind. The strakes and the fuselage are both made with a dyvinicel core. Dyvinicel is a closed cell foam that gas does not affect. This foam core has pathways through it that air or gas can travel though if allowed to get to the core. When hunting down a leak keep in mind that you may find a leak in one point of the tank that has its source in another. If you are having a hard time tracking down
the leak you will have to keep widening your search.

## Completions

Email us a picture of your airplane and a little background about it to newsletter@velocityaircraft.com

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Aircraft</th>
<th>Years/Hours</th>
<th>Build Cost</th>
<th>Cruise</th>
<th>Annual Cost</th>
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<td>XL RG</td>
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I've stumbled onto something that works really well to aid in keeping oil temps low. In the front of my plane, I have installed a small NACA scoop that provides air to the wire duct that houses the oil cooler lines. I originally had this air dumping into the engine compartment at the back of the firewall, but with little cooling success since the engine compartment is pressurized from the engine cooling NACA's. So, I sealed the end of the wire duct at the firewall with RTV and opened a hole in the wire duct between the gear bulkhead and firewall. I also put a hole in the bottom of the plane between the main gear and ran 1.75” SCEET tubing between the two holes. Where the air exits the plane on the bottom, I put a lower wing bolt hole cover - so now I get some vacuum action too (strong force entering the naca up front and probably stronger pull from vacuum pressure on the bottom of the plane).

The air that comes out of the wire duct is strong and warm (I tested this by running the SCEET tubing into the cabin first) - obviously, the hot oil cooler lines are being cooled.

I took this installation one step further - I made an air diverter and placed it in the cabin between the main gear. A t-handle bowden
cable operates a flap (similar to the oil cooler installation up front) and either lets the hot air exit the bottom of the plane or get diverted back into the cabin for additional heat. I've got to tell you, the additional heat is quite welcome and effective. Unfortunately, I cannot tell you how many degrees I've been able to lower my oil temp with this set-up since it's winter now and can't remember what my oil temps were last winter. I do notice that my extended climbs haven't put the oil temp above 210 degrees which is something I never had prior (at any time of the year). Also I notice my cruise temps are anywhere from 180-191 - the correct range for the engine.

Above is a schematic (Oil Line Cooling). You can also see my two aluminum brake lines exiting the wire duct. They both come into the area between the gear bulkhead and the firewall. Then they change over to nylaflow tubing in this area and then exit the fuselage to go down the gear legs.

Hope this is helpful - may help eliminate a 2nd oil cooler for those who are thinking about installing one. Also, it really is an excellent way to add more heat to the cabin.

The First Flight..... From The Eyes of The Wife

Submitted Anonymously

It was 8:30 a.m. on a beautiful Wednesday morning. The Anticipation of the first flight was practically unbearable. We had waited almost seven years for this day and then had to wait an additional two days to fly it once it was ready. This was due to gusty wind conditions.
Before I get into this amazing day, I have to say my husbands dream of a completed Velocity has been hard for me to hold on to for so many years. In all honesty, I did not always support this vision. In the beginning I fully intended to support this project emotionally and due my part financially for the six to eight months it was supposed to take to finish it. Well, there was a slight miscalculation on it's completion date. (That's a joke)

Three years into building, life happened. We became pregnant with our first child. The race was on to see who would see daylight first. Would it be the unborn baby or the Velocity which was still in pieces. Well, nine months later our son Tyler stepped into the daylight first and two years after that so did our daughter Camryn. Just shy of seven years in the making it was the Velocity's turn to shine. I can honestly say it was worth the wait. But more on that later.

In all those years of building, I asked my husband only two things when it came to his plane. The first was to get a test pilot for the first flight and the second was that I was in attendance on that day. I realize now that I may have asked the unthinkable of a home builder. I asked him to give up the experience of witnessing the first lift off in a plane which he built for nearly seven years. However, my husband doing the first flight was a thought I could not bare. My husband appeased me and found a more than qualified test pilot to do the job.

As for the first flight I do not know if I had a right to ask to be invited to his dreams reality when I was not always supportive. It does not seem fair to me that I may have intruded a bit on that special moment that he so deserved. It was not my determination, DNA and passion that finished that plane. It was all his. I do know that my husband wanted me there. He wanted to show me what he had accomplished and to thank me for hanging in there all those years. For that, I am grateful.

On the big day, I was in a panic making sure I got every last detail on tape. As I focused in the far distance on the Velocity, I could begin to hear a roar of the engine like it was next to me. The Velocity came speeding down the run way so fast I could hardly keep it in the view finder. It took off smooth as silk and continued up into the sky until a few little clouds embraced it and I lost view.

We watched it circle the airport for 45 minutes while in contact with the test pilot on a 2 way radio. It safely returned as flawless as it's take off. At that moment I understood as much as a non builder could. The pride one must have of building your own plane and seeing it fly for the first time. The look on my husbands face explained what I did not understand for all those years it took to build.

My husbands achievement absolutely amazed me as did the support of the Velocity community and other home builders that shared his passion. I could not be more proud of my husband or his Velocity.

You did an amazing job, Honey. She is perfection.
Congratulations and Enjoy
All my love
T
Wired Instrument Panel

Instrument Panel painted with upholstered glare shield for Standard RG or FG aircraft. (Will also work in an XL Panel)

All the following installed and wired using an "Approach System" Hub.

- Apollo GX60 Com/GPS with moving map
- Apollo SL 30 Com/VOR
- Apollo SL70 Transponder w/encoder
- Apollo SL15 MS Stereo Audio panel W/ 3 LT
- FM/CD Player
- Circuit Breaker Panel W/Upper Switch Plate
- Warning Lights
- Blue Mountain EFIS #1 with Engine Probes
- Blue Mountain EFIS LITE

ALL NEW AND NEVER USED

Total Invested - $38,000

Sale Price - $28,000

Contact Duane Swing or Scott Baker