

# T-18 NEWSLETTER



*Mac Booth and his Thorp T-18  
he's from Daleville, AL  
a very familiar face at our events.*

## IN THIS ISSUE:

**Oshkosh 94**

**Building a fiberglass dash cover**

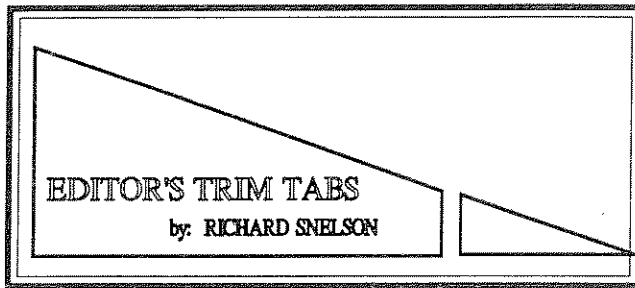
**Thorp T-18 Mutual Aid Society Membership List**

## Upcoming Events

**Kentucky Dam Oct 7-9**

**Placerville, CA Sept 23-25**

*NOTICE: (STANDARD DISCLAIMER) As always , in the past, present, and future newsletters, we would like to make you aware that this newsletter is only presented as a clearing house for ideas and opinions, or personal experiences and that anyone using these ideas, opinions, or experiences, do so at their own discretion and risk. Therefore, no responsibility or liability is expressed or implied and is without recourse against anyone.*



To our Members:

I've included the latest membership list in this newsletter, because, I believe that only through our sharing of knowledge and acting as mentors, for new builders, will we keep the T-18 adventure alive. Use the list to find someone that lives near you. Give him a call and ask if he is building, flying or just thinking about it. If you can, go see their project, better yet, take them for a ride in your T-18. Believe me, this will get a stalled project going again.

Our Kentucky Dam fall gathering, October 7-9, is nearly here. Call now and make your reservation. This event is the best time to share building and flying experiences with our new members. We have a great fellowship of old friends, and want to welcome and open our minds and cockpits to the new members wanting to learn about and build their own Thorp T-18. Drive to this event folks, even if you can't fly. We promise a great time and many opportunities to ride in a Thorp T-18.

Sept 23-25 is the 3rd annual Placerville Fly-In. I hope you get this newsletter in time to know about this event. I did send Hal Stephens a membership list, earlier, so he could send out a special mailing about it. Call either Hal Stephens at (408) 365-8836 or Jim Critchfield at (916) 621-1584 if you plan to attend.

Future articles for the newsletter include: Cleveland Brake Maintenance, the list of T-18 drawings, Mark Landoll's Harmonic Dampener for Lycoming Engines, and Installing a Navaid Devices Auto Pilot. We still need your articles on building and flying the T-18, so please continue

to write and send articles.

Congratulations to Coyt Johnston of Snyder, OK he flew his T-18 for the first time. He is having a fly-in on October 22, 1994 and we are all invited. Let him know if you plan on attending. His phone number is 405-569-2895.

And finally, I didn't forget the Flying Nut Contest Winners. I promise to get the Don Taylor T-18 parts off to those of you contributing articles soon.

Rich

## Oshkosh 94

Call it Oshkosh jitters - I was not looking forward to flying into Whitman Field again, after the crazy traffic encountered on my trip last year. Being wiser, I didn't go a day early like everyone else. Instead, I waited until Thursday, the first day. Leaving Decatur, IL early, we were over Ripon in 1hr. and 45 mins with only one airplane in sight, in front of us. We had guessed correctly the field was closed except for inbound show planes. It was simply follow the railroad tracks and then a close in base to final turn. The controller had time to comment, "Good job by the Thorp". We all have to get lucky once in a while and set it smoothly on the numbers. Not like last year when our clearance to land was; "You guys just keep coming you're doing fine" and my landing wasn't crisp.

With more luck, I managed to get a parking spot near the end of a row in the general area of the long established T-18 parking. The ground crews were letting RV's take over all the central parking, therefore, pushing everyone else out of the area. With the large number of RV's being completed, in the future, there won't be any parking for other types in the rows 9-11 area. I think we should try to rope out a couple of rows, if some of us get there early next year.

I'm sure the last minute change in the forum date from Tuesday to Thursday resulted in a lot of folks missing it. I'm sorry that happened, and want to explain that, we got the call from headquarters after the newsletter was in the mail. I did like having it on Tuesday, however, since it allowed us to get the T-18 events over before the weekend. In spite of the date change, we had more than 100 people in the tent. I'm never quite sure what to discuss in YOUR FORUM. It is your forum, and you should choose the topics we cover. I've been covering safety concerns in the past and would like to keep that a part of the agenda but need help in selecting other topics. So please send: Suggestions for the forum.

The Friday noon cookout at the Nature Center is my favorite T-18 event. It's a chance to relax and enjoy the company of a lot of old friends. We had a good crowd, a good lunch and a good time. I hope Bob Highley can get the Nature Center again next year. (By the way, we collected too much money and have a surplus toward next year's cookout.)

Our Friday's banquet attendance was good and the crowd enjoyed Lee Skillman doing his usual fine job as master of ceremonies. Thanks Lee! It was especially nice to have Dick Cavin with us at the banquet. Dick has done so very much for all of us by his contribution of writing and getting the newsletters out for so many years. The organization wouldn't be here if not for Dick's efforts. We greatly appreciate your help Dick.

Bob Highley, our T-18 owner and resident Sun-Fun staff member, gave a talk on what it takes to put on a big airshow. It sounded like he needed to get back to Florida right a way, to start work on 95. Right Bob? Our second speaker, serving with short notice, was Don Pridham a member of Don Taylor's, round the world, flight crew. His talk was very interesting, but too short and left us wondering about "the rest of the story." Maybe Mr. Pridham will honor us with that next year.

Again this year, Phil Tucker of Sport Aviation furnished the Thorp T-18 awards. Four new T-18s were flown to Oshkosh 94 and won a copy of Charley-Mike-Charley the book by Clive Canning about his famous T-18 flight from Australia to Great Britain. Our congratulations to the builders; Bill Williams, Earl Ody, Harlo Mckinty and Larry Whetzel. This was really our lucky year since RoxAnne and I brought home the award for the best Thorp T-18 at Oshkosh. This award winner is chosen by the former Wright Brother's award winners and this year we had seven at the fly-in to do the selection. My thanks to those folks for awarding us this honor. I'm sure they had a hard time making a single selection from the large number of fine T-18s on the flight line. The 1994 Wright Brother's Award winners were Ron and Jane Hayes of Blue Springs, Missouri. They were in Dayton just before Oshkosh to receive the award. Congratulation to the Hayes.

The Saturday afternoon airshow brought an absolute mob to the flight line. There were too many people and lawnchairs. A few had no appreciation for the show planes. I saw folks leaning on wings and putting their feet on wheel pants. This gets my dander up real quick. I couldn't take it any longer so we pulled out before the airshow Sunday. It might have been that I really just wanted to get back to flying instead of watching others doing it. Until next year. Good building and flying.

Rich.

## Wanted

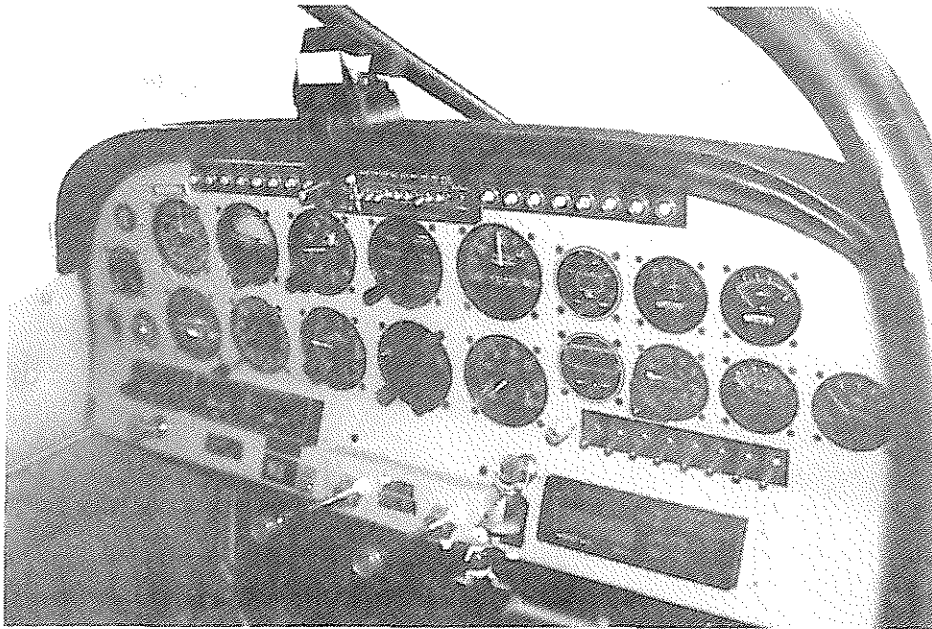
Not certain about building, buying or finishing. Will consider buying parts/plans, unfinished project or flying T-18. Please call or write. Don King, 19876 Route 52, Hopewell Jct. NY 12533. (914) 227-5084

## For Sale

Dean Cochran of Broomfield, CO is again supplying exhaust systems. Call him at (303) 466-3472 for details.

# FIBERGLASS DASH COVER

Charlie Brown, a Glasair builder and hanger neighbor insisted that flying a new Thorp T-18 with a piece of black carpet draped across the dash top just wasn't to aviation standards. So with Charlie's instruction on the use of foam and fiberglass, a dash cover project for my "All Metal T-18" was started.



*Note: This article describes the steps to follow in building an attractive lightweight panel top that can be used to house instrument panel lights. Using foam as the core material provides two safety benefits: it will crush in a crash without cutting your head, as aluminum could, and it's an insulator so it won't short out fuses and wiring if, there located at the top of your panel.*

The dash cover is designed, using a sandwich construction, and extends aft over the instrument panel to provide a glare shield for night flying. The overhang is 2 inches thick at the instrument panel, 3 inches long and tapers to a 3/4 inch rounded end. The core material for the cover is Clark Foam. It's a small cell rigid foam that can be bent into position and fixed in shape with an application of fiberglass cloth and resin. The foam is available in 1/4" thick 24x48 inch sheets from Wicks Aircraft's Supply 410 Pine St. Highland, Illinois. Their phone number is (800) 221-9425. Purchasing two sheet will give you some extra material for future projects that may come up.

Using the instrument panel top as a

pattern, cut a 3/4" plywood former to the profile of the top. A second former is then cut to match the curvature at the rear of the top cover. In the T-18 this second former matches the dash bulkhead that is under the front edge of the windshield. Space the formers apart to match the distance your instrument panel is located from the bottom of the windshield and fastened them to a work table using drywall screws (Fig 1). To stabilize the mock-up add two spacers between the formers flush with their tops.

Four pieces of foam are then cut to extend across the width of the instrument panel former and to build up the tapered panel lip. Each one is increased in width by 1 inch. The

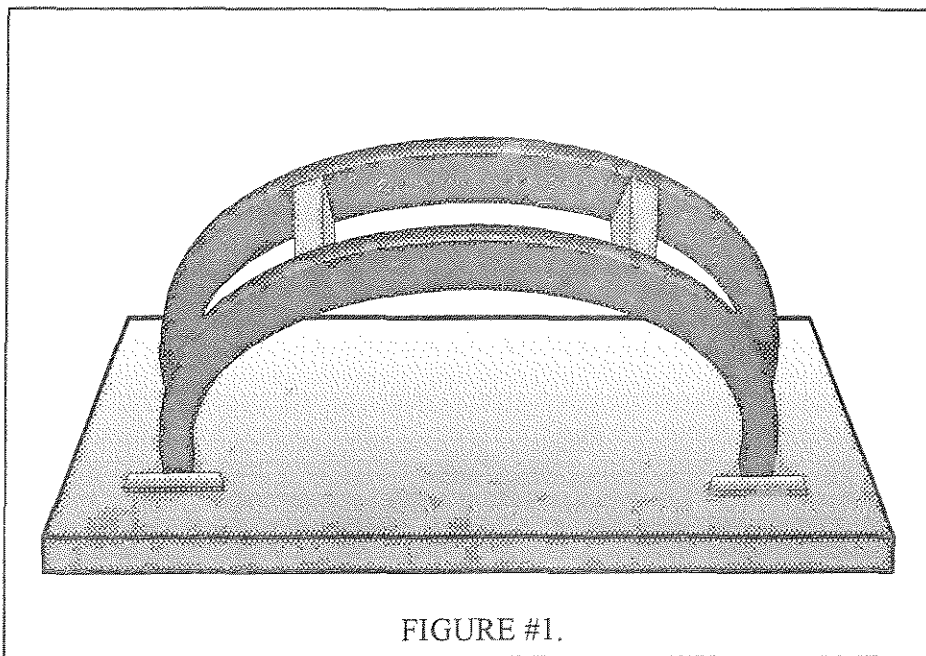
first should be 3" wide x 34" long, the second 4" inches etc. to 6". Using a hot glue gun fasten the 3" wide strip to the instrument panel former letting it extend out about 3/4". Just put 3 to 4 spots of glue across the top, so it won't be difficult to remove the top assembly from the former later. The 4" wide foam is glued on top of the previous piece and extends 3/4" out over the edge of it. Use more glue here as we want the two pieces to stay together permanently. Continue the process for the other two foam pieces building up the front edge height and sloping profile.

is soft and will shape easily. I have a compass hanging down from the windshield center post right into the dash top center. So an addition cut out was necessary in the top to allow for the compass. Again coat the cut-out with resin to seal it. Complete the fiberglass foam sandwich by painting the underside and edges with resin. You won't need any glass cloth here as the assembly is strong and will hold its shape without it.

Before covering the top trim and fit the cover to the airplane. Since my instrument panel is supported at the top by two shock mounted brackets in just the right location, and the top is very light, two long # 8 screws through the top into two Rivnuts in the brackets will hold it in place. Just let it float at the back. It should just extend up to and under the windshield flange without touching it.

To cover the top use a non-reflective naugahyde for the front edge. Start by gluing (3M Upholstery

Figure # 2



A single piece of 1/4" foam is then used to cover the build up and extend to the windshield former. But first it's necessary to profile the sides of the build up for the top to lie in place without gaps. Fig. #2 shows the panel side profile after the pieces are attached and cut to shape. Using a sharp knife do the rough profile shaping and then finish with a rasp or Stanley Surform Plane. Test fit the top cover sheet as you proceed with the trimming. If you're satisfied with the fit, hot glue the top in place. Cut one more strip of foam 3/4" wide and glue it to the top front edge of the whole assembly. Using a rasp or sandpaper round this piece over on the front and back edges. Don't trim the top cover at this time as it will be done after the assembly is removed from the formers before it is covered.

The next step is to seal and fix the foam shape by applying fiberglass and resin to the top. First a coat of either Polyester or Epoxy Resin is applied to the top surface. After it

cures knock off any rough spots with sandpaper and cut a piece of fiber glass cloth to extend from the back edge of the 3/4" inch rounded strip to the windshield end of the panel. Trying to get the cloth to lay down over the 3/4" front edge and across the flat top at the same time is impossible and isn't needed anyway so don't bother. Wet the surface of the top with the resin and lay the cloth in place. Brush on additional resin as needed to fully wet the fiberglass. Allow the assembly to cure over night and then remove it from the forms, being careful not to tear it at the glue spots.

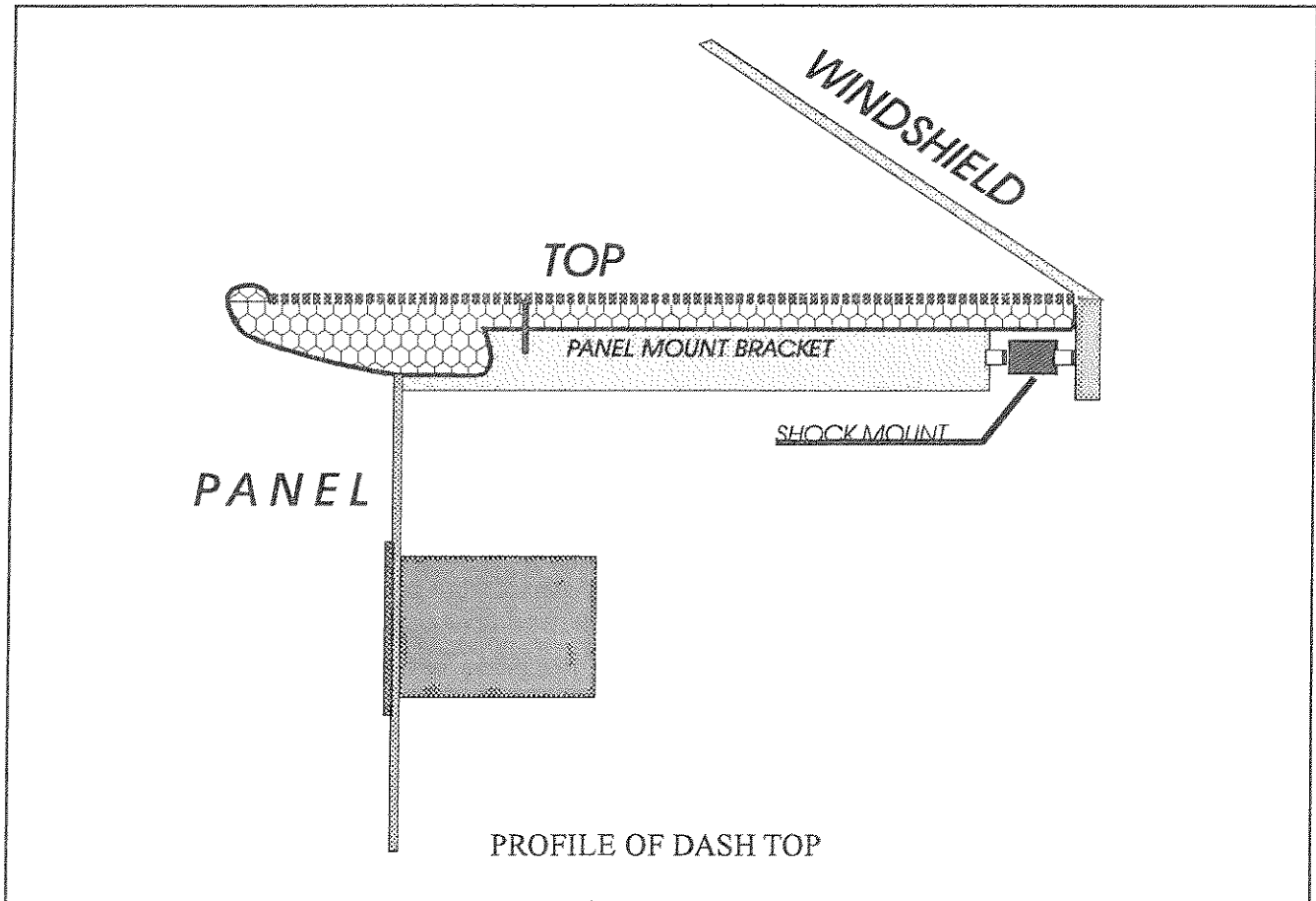
Using a rasp shape the profile of the underneath front edge to a nice taper and round the front edge. The material

Cement) and stapling one edge of the material across the top just behind the 3/4" strip. A heavy duty hardware store stapler is best for this. Starting at the center the material is stretched over the front edge and over the tapered bottom front. Pull it tight at the center and glue and staple it working out from the cen-

ter. Working carefully the material will stretch and cover the edge without any wrinkles. Cut around the compass cut out and cover it separately. To complete the top covering glue on a non-reflective carpet or upholstery material.

the idea and method used to make a light weight good looking dash cover for my all most all metal Thorp T-18. By changing the shape and size of the forms this dash cover method should work for any aircraft type. Good luck!

My thanks to Charlie Brown for



Material List

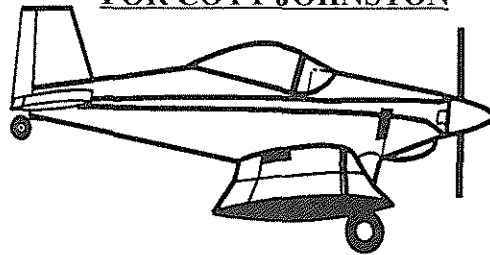
- 2- Sheets of Clark Foam 24x48
- 4 Sq ft of fiberglass cloth
- 3 ozs. of resin
- 10" x 40" of black carpet
- 10" by 48" of black Naugahyde for the front edge
- Mounting hardware

Tools

- Jig saw or bandsaw
- Sharp knife
- file or rasp
- sandpaper

# FIRST FLIGHT

FOR COYT JOHNSTON



I FINALLY FLEW N-160CJ ON THE 16 DAY OF THIS MONTH. I DID NOT HAVE MY TRIMS FOR WAITING ON THE CONTROL GRIPS AND WAS READING THE NEWSLETTER SUNDAY NIGHT WHERE JOHN GOT THE T-18 APPROVED LESS A TRIM INDICATOR DUE TO IT BEING LIGHT ON THE CONTROLS. AFTER GETTING DUAL FROM GARY GREEN AND DAVE EBY AT McALISTER I FELT I NEEDED SOME TAXING PRACTICE ON MONDAY. TAXIED TO THE NORTH END OF MY RUNWAY, NO PROBLEM THEN TAXIED BACK SOUTH INTO THE WIND RAISED THE TAIL,(JUST FOR TAXI) IT FELT SO GOOD I RELAXED FORWARD PRESSURE AND IT LIFTED OFF. IT FLEW GREAT. THE ONLY PROBLEM I HAD WAS GETTING IT SLOWED DOWN FOR LANDING. I THINK MY A.S. IS SLOW ABOUT 20 MPH. LANDED GREAT AFTER SLOWING. I AM SOLD ON THE T-18 AS ALL SEEM TO BE. I HAD DOUG RIPLEY FROM WITCHITA FALLS FLY IN SUNDAY MAY 29, HE FLYS JOHN SIMMONS AND DAVE'S T-18, BE FLEW 160CJ ABOUT 30 MINUTES, DID STALLS AND ROLLS SAID IT WAS A GOOD ONE.

I STILL LIKE A FEW LITTLE ITEMS HAVING IT READY FOR PAINT BUT IT WILL FLY FOR A WHILE WITHOUT PAINT.

I WANT TO THANK GARY AND DAVE FOR THEIR HELP WITH DUAL IN THEIR T-18S, IT WAS A GREAT HELP.

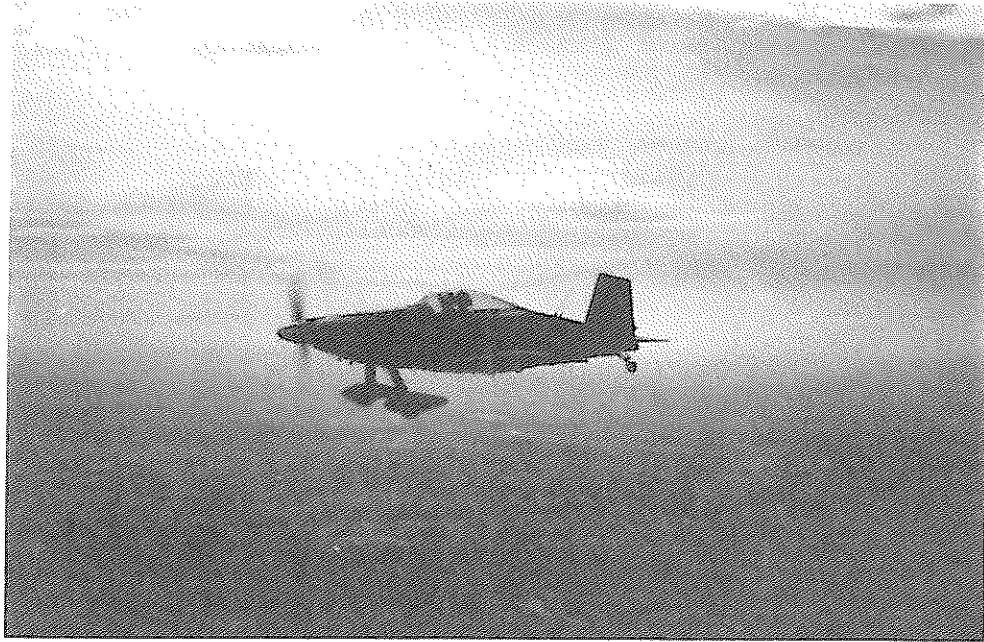
I AM ENCLOSING A FLIER FOR OUR FLYIN IN OCTOBER INCLUDE IT IN THE NEWSLETTER IF YOU LIKE. WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A FEW T-18 HERE.

(keep up the good work on the newsletter. its a great help to have somewhere to go when you stump your toe)

SINCERELY  
COYT JOHNSTON

RT. 1 BOX 178 SNYDER, OK. 73566

*Editor's Note: I ran out of space and couldn't include the flyer. The date is Oct 22. More details in the editors column.*



## T-18 FALL GATHERING KENTUCKY DAM VILLAGE STATE RESORT PARK

The Fall 1994 T-18 weekend at Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park will be held on October 7-9. The private dining room has been reserved for Sat. Oct. 8, at 7:00 PM. We will again use the buffet.

**MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS WITH THE PARK DIRECTLY. YOU MUST SPECIFY YOU WANT THE PAINE PARTY IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE QUOTED RATES.** THE LODGE MAY BE FULL OTHER THAN THE ROOMS THEY ARE HOLDING FOR OUR PARTY AS WE HAD TROUBLE GETTING RESERVATIONS THIS YEAR. RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BEFORE SEPTEMBER 7, 1994.

RATES ARE: \$46.40 (single) \$55.68 (double)

**KENTUCKY DAM STATE PARK  
P.O. BOX 69  
GILBERTSVILLE, KY 42044  
1-800-325-0146**

Camping is also available on a first come, first serve basis as well as cottages. Contact the resort for information.

Kentucky Dam State Park Airport is 30 miles east of- the Cunningham VOR (Paducah) on the 90 degree radial, 8 miles south of V178. The runway is paved, 4,000 feet long. The Airport is approximately a mile from the resort, however transportation is available for those who do not wish to walk.

**BRING YOUR OWN TIE-DOWNS.**

**Note: If the lodge is full, there is a Ramada Inn at Kentucky Dam, not far from the airport.**



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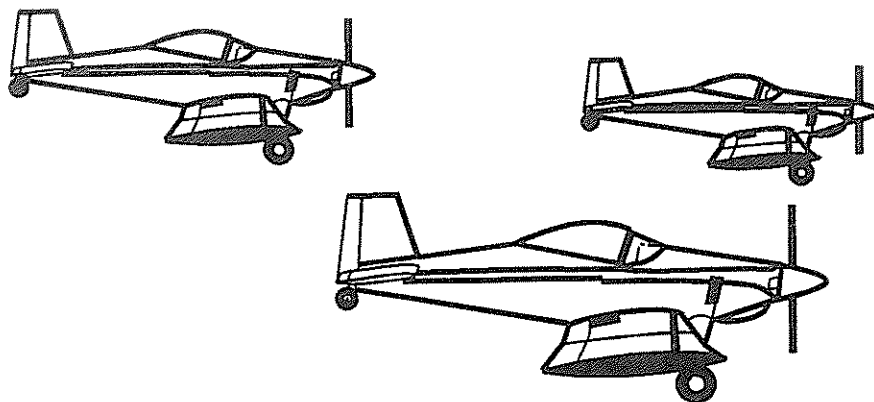
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