



CAN THIS AIRCRAFT'S PERFORMANCE MATCH ITS LOOKS?

News / Manufacturer



We first saw the Innovator, a blended-wing, two-place composite pusher, when it was displayed as a scale model at Sebring's Sport Aviation Expo little more than a year ago. Wide and sleek with a twin-boom tail, its projected performance numbers were as attention-grabbing as its appearance. Now a full-scale flying model is on display here at developer Commuter Craft's exhibit. The Innovator's looks are still killer, but how's the performance?

"Our first flight was in September of last year, and we've exceeded expectations in almost every category," says Commuter Craft founder and president Richard Hogan, the Innovator's designer. Powered by a 180 hp Titan IO-340, "our top speed in extended cruise is 207 mph, and at 75 percent power, it cruises at 185 mph, and the rate of climb is 1,750 foot per minute."

Can This Aircraft's Performance Match the Design?

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Development of the kit-built aircraft is far enough along that Hogan has opened the order book for the Innovator here at Sun 'n Fun, and "response has been fantastic," he said. Hogan plans to have the first 13 aircraft constructed in a builder-assist program with experienced builders, to help improve the kit and construction processes, and expects the first of those to be completed early in 2017, "and by summer next, we'll be in general production of kits," he said.

Hogan trained as an aeronautical engineer, but when he graduated college at the end of the Vietnam War, "there were 10 aeronautical engineers for every job. I became a structural engineer, but always stayed close to the aviation field, and waited until I had the opportunity to get back into it."

Can This Aircraft's Performance Match the Prop?

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The aircraft, whose wings are foldable for easier storage, is designed to support powerplants from 120 hp to 250 hp. Transferable delivery positions are available for a \$500 deposit. The standard kit price is \$49,000, and Hogan is also offering a show special. "We're locking in the price for them—\$46,400," he said.

Visit Commuter Craft at commutercraft.com.

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