

## DAVE'S SONIC

Dave Schmelzer is building his first airplane; he admits he has never built anything in his life so the thought of building an airplane was 'overwhelming' – he couldn't even read blue prints. For three years he looked at kits at Oshkosh and came home empty handed as he couldn't find one that he thought he could start and finish in a limited amount of time. He finally discovered the all metal taildragger Sonic which when compared to other kits is relatively easy to build and also inexpensive; Dave figures he will have less than \$25,000 in the plane from prop to rudder.

He ordered the kit in August of 2005 and a few months later many shrink wrapped boxes, palletes, tubes, and flat sheets arrived on his doorstep. The manufacturer provides all the parts even the engine unassembled. After inventorying a 'whole bunch' of pieces he started building in November of last year; Bob Harrington mercifully taught him how to read blueprints and has assisted him along the way. Jim Dobben, as an EAA Technical Advisor, regularly inspects the progress and many other helpful EAA members keep an eye on the project.

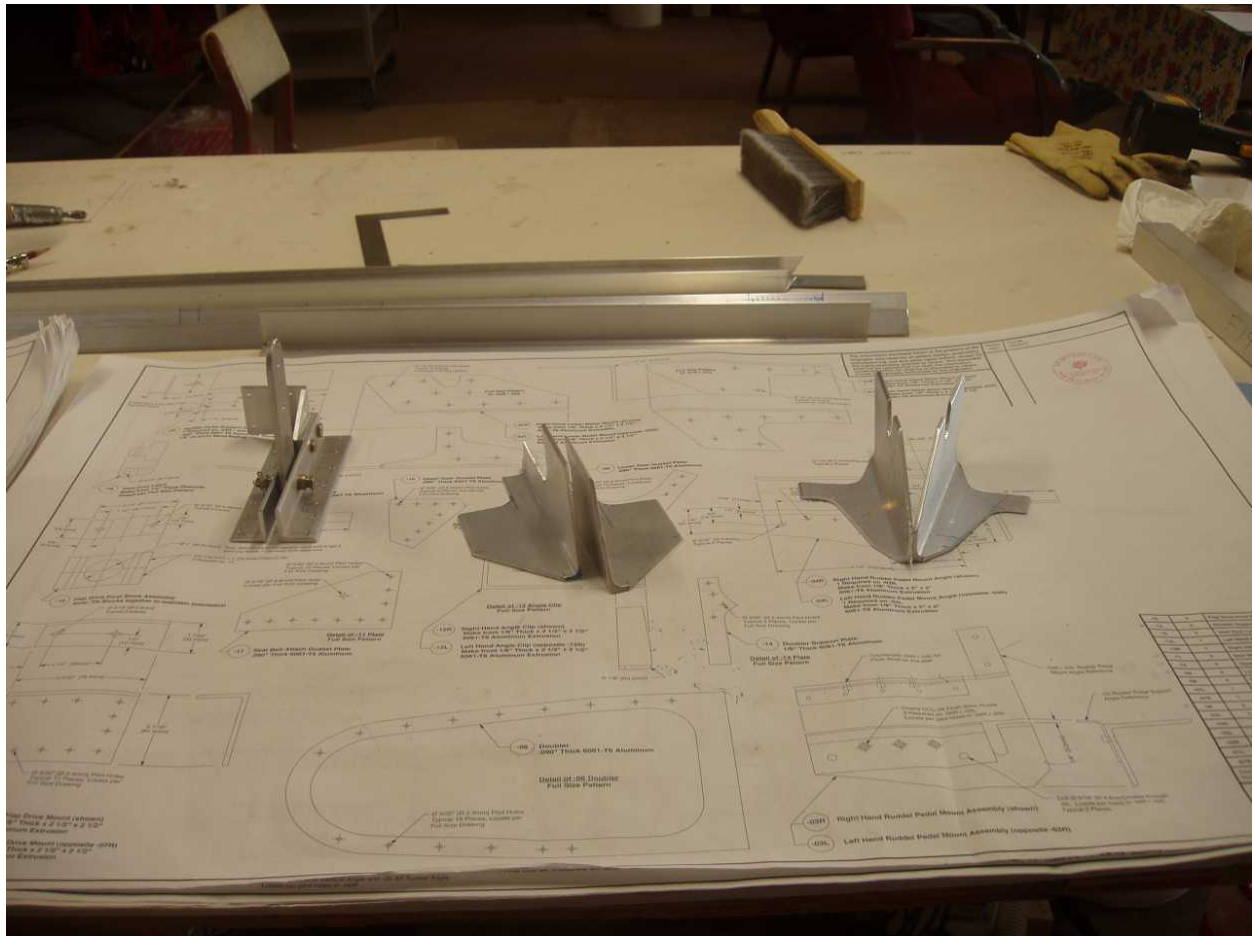
After working with many links of channels, angles, and flat stock everything is done on the project except the fuselage; the finished parts are stored in a hangar on the field while Dave works in the EAA Hangar and the Ghetto Hangar to finish up the 13,000 rivets! The instrument panel will be unique in a Sonic as it is a dynam electronic display (to most of us, a glass panel); in addition there will be a com radio, transponder, intercom, and lights for night flight. There will be dual sticks and it will be rated for aerobatics as well as qualifying as a Sport Pilot approved airplane. He will fly it with his handheld GPS and satellite weather receiver in the cockpit with him.

When all in one piece the airplane will have a length of 17'7" and a wing span of 22' and will weigh in at 620 lbs. empty weight. The engine is an 80 hp VW based engine and it will cruise at an average speed of 135 mph while sipping only 3 ½ gallons of gas per hour from the 16 gallon tank. The range is 550 miles with take off distance 400 feet and landing 500 feet; the stall speed with flaps is 40 mph.

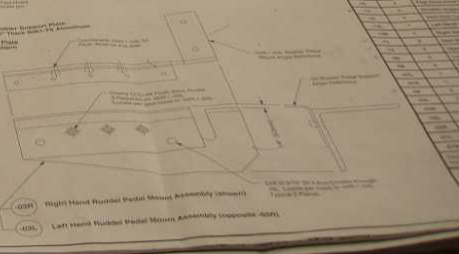
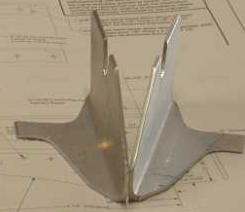
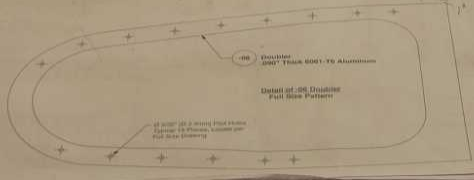
He has chosen a classic color scheme of gray on the top, purple on the bottom with red and gold stripes and as an added bonus the plane will be equipped with a smoke system. Dave claims this is a 'hopping around' plane but we really wonder what that smoke system is going to be doing in the skies over Midland?







Use three Alcoa (9000) 1/2" Thick x 2 1/2" x 2 1/2" Wash Extrusion  
Detail of 26 Dredging Part Size Pattern



Dave Schmelzer has recently painted his Sonex. Here are the before and after photos. It is getting very close to being finished.



