FLORIDA *JET-EZ*

IT STARTED with a visit with the Rutan guru Robert Harris in Covington, Tennessee. I wanted to build a Long-EZ, but Robert suggested making it my design. The fuselage is 4 inches wider and 6 inches longer in the rear seat. Outside it looks the same, but the internal structure is different. The blended winglets are integrated with the wing spar. The canard is a GU canard modified for stiffness. The gear is moved aft 1 inch so it will safely sit on all three wheels without anyone in it.

You'll notice I don't have one of those spinny things — we went jet. It's a modified GE-T58-8 turboshaft engine that puts out about 840 pounds of thrust, roughly 600 hp. It does 190 knots true in the climb at 2,500 fpm all the way up to 17,000 feet. Fuel burn drops to 31 gallons per hour doing 250 knots true. It carries 24 gallons in the two inboard pods and baggage in the outboards. All told I can carry 160 gallons, enough to go 4.5 hours with a reserve.

The goal was to have a simple jet that flies like a Long-EZ. Goal achieved. It comes off at 80 knots when heavy and over the fence at 80 knots on all landings. It's not harder to land than a piston-type aircraft, just different because of the engine. The time lag from idle to power can be up to 4 seconds. It just takes planning.

It takes a village to build a jet. In addition to Robert, Mike Yancey was instrumental in the machining, Terry Sweat designed all of the circuits, and Ryzard Zadow flew chase on a lot of the te flights. The list of vendors and individuals who contributed to this project could be a article in itself.

Rick Finney, building his own jet, said more people have climbed Mount Everest than have built their own jet. Humbling.

Lance Hooley, EAA 450541; Kissimmee, Florida
E-mail: *plainbuilder@yahoo.com*