

Dear Nat,

9/24/96

Quite a time now since I send you some news. I felt it necessary today. First of all, congratulations on the wonderful scoring done at Oshkosh by COZY builders. You deserve it, Nat, as much as the builders, by your great design and support. No question about it, you help a lot getting those outstanding workmanships.

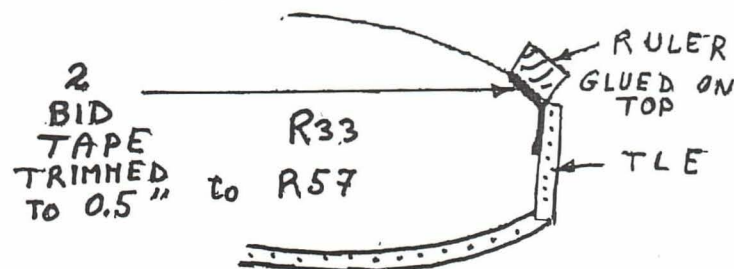
Now let me update what is going on in our area. The Cozy group in France is building up quite fast in the Paris area. We are 6 now.

- Gilles Desgruelles, Cozy 3 flying
- Yves Pranal, building a Cozy classic
- Alain Raposo, building a Mark IV
- Jean-Pierre Portehaut, building a Mark IV
- Bernard Cannac just starting now a Mark IV
- myself, Benoit Lecoq finishing a Mark IV

We are meeting fairly often and sharing orders. Exchanges work quite fine and it is very nice.

Now about my progress, the structure is nearly finished except for linking winglets to wings for storage space reasons. I am waiting the very end of the project because wing with winglet takes a lot more space in the garage. Apart from that, I finished the fuel strakes including the leak test. I am happy to say there was not one leak. Yes, None! You could understand I was quite happy with that. At the beginning of the test I found I had leaks on both sides, but the leak rates were the same, so I started questioning about my test set up and indeed the bike tire valve I was using to inflate the tank was leaking. So I changed everything and started by testing the test set up alone first and from there everything was fine. I suggest that you pass on to other builders because doing that first hand would have saved me a few wondering days.

I have a trick that could help other builders to get that same result. Before closing the top strake skin, I added a small 90 deg. tape at the top of TLE inside the fuel tank (not necessary on the luggage compartment part) and also between the spar and BAB. This is done by gluing a ruler on top of these and taping a 2 BID below. After cure you remove the ruler, sand and trim to 0.5". This behaves like a tape and allows to keep more flox at the junction of the leading edge and aside the top along the fuselage where it would in the other case slide along it when doing the closing. The weight addition is nothing compared to the flox saving when closing the strake:



The engine cowlings from Featherlite were then matched perfectly without any problem. Think about it. I had to sand less than 0.1" of the cowlings along the wings to get the match. Again your design!!!! I am now in the finishing process which I started on the bottom of the fuselage at the same time I was doing the

glassing of the strakes bottom (to save the number of flip overs which have to be scheduled ahead). In fact, I sometimes ask help to flip over the fuselage. It needs 6 to 7 friends or relatives, so we prepare a nice drink party (with French wines), call up friends. 15 minutes to flip over the fuselage, and a drink party then on!!!

I also want to point out about one thing that worries me a bit. I am reading and hearing a lot about guys willing to cut the lower winglet, have a retractable main gear, and so on. As an airline pilot who is security and flight safety minded, please, please, point out that an accident is always, always is made of little individual occurrences that alone would not be a problem, but on the bad day those tinies would add up very sadly to create an accident. Our job is to detect those tiny things one at a time as much as possible and remove them right away. But, as a human being, we have to admit that some of the tiny mistakes will be hiding sometime even for the best pilot ever. A few examples:

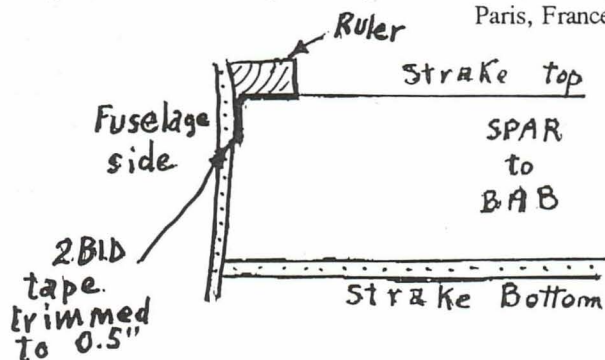
-The lower winglet. Alone yes it can improve performance to remove it, but the day you are leaving for a long flight with a heavy passenger at the back, while hot air, while tired by a nice dinner the previous day, while weather is not so good, while c.g. is too far back....Do you want me to go on? No, I guess.

-Retractable gear. One day a friend told me. You airline pilots never forget to extend gears. I reply very strongly by a very loud No, No!!! and on our airliners we have a lot of warnings to remind us our mistake, not to mention the Ground Proximity Warning System which I do not think can be set up on a small airplane. To me it is useless to retract the main on our Cozy. It means less fuel, more weight, more mistakes, not to mention more building time for a slim speed increase.

In our world we say, "there are bold pilots and old pilots, but no old, bold pilots". We always have to ask the question: Am I doing the right thing?

We are building our reputation ourselves. Regulations are changing a lot right now. Let us convince our administration to go our way, not "Murphy's law" way (i.e. strong and limiting for us). What are your feelings about that? There are some new designs shown in Oshkosh prior to flight testing. Berkut or E-racer do not have lower winglets. Looking forward to your reply and again, thanks a lot for your design.

Benoit Lecoq
Paris, France



Editor: Benoit, thank you for your thoughtful letter. I agree with everything you say. I feel badly about those who set a poor example for others. Unfortunately, there are some builders who are unwilling to learn from the experience of others, and are destined to have to learn from their own experience.