



On January 12th, Art Treff became a test pilot as he made the maiden flight in N666AT, his newly completed RV-8. Below is Art's write-up. Be sure and visit the "You Tube" Site for an excellent video.

The photos above are from the first flight video taken by Art's wife, Jesse.

Bob G.

This past Saturday [editor; 1-12-08] my RV-8 N666AT (Lil' Snorkey) became an airplane. With only my wife, Jesse in attendance, I took a deep breath and pushed the throttle to the stop to see if Bernoulli's Principle applies to the stack of parts that arrived via UPS.

She flew like a wildthing, thanks to the IO-360 engine and Blended Airfoil constant speed prop. I was so behind the airplane that I didn't notice the VSL, climb speed or anything. I just held the attitude to between 10-15 degrees nose up.

Up at 6000', I pull back to cruise power and feel a smooth calm rumble thru the aluminum airframe. Lil' Snorkey is living up to her namesake. She runs rough on the ground-barks, farts, shakes and fouls the occasional plug down there. But up here, at altitude, she is smooth as Black Velvet.

In level flight, she flies hands off. No heavy wing, no odd behavior and the skid ball stays between the lines. Response to adding and retarding throttle is predictable, and nothing is startling. We've already done turns. Now it's time to pull the throttle to idle to slow down and observe control inputs as the speed bleeds. No surprises here either.

Once I reach 90 MPH, I firewall the levers and "Dang!!!!!!!" The rabid beast under the cowl is once again running free. I feel a buzzing as the aluminum comes to life all around me. I hear the prop overshoot the RPM limit, then feel a dull "thud" as the governor yanks the blades back to the correct pitch. My machine's teeth find still air and dig in. The acceleration is palpable thru my back, the nose pitches up 20 degrees and my right leg is text-messaging the brain that this little ship has some torque. I'm pushing forward on the stick (which was trimmed for slower speeds), mashing forward on the elevator trim coolie hat...and grinning like an idiot.

I did my testing at AVL, which is C airspace, and the tower crew was superb! I called the tower on cell 30 minutes before I was ready to taxi, and I got to speak to the person in the tower who was going to handle me, and we agreed on a plan. Once flying, the tower would ask me how it was handling and what the engine instruments looked like. We were a great team. He also said he'd watch me carefully on climbout and alert me if he saw smoke, fire, or pieces dropping off. I did not feel alone at all.

Oh, and while I was flying the first flight, even people on the radio were offering their congratulations, including a UsAIR crew, who talked to me on Tower freq, then were waiting by the tail of their jet to watch the first landing. I opened my canopy and pumped my Nomex clad fists in celebration. They jumped and shouted in return. Sometimes the closeness of this aviation community of ours makes my eyes wet.

Can't wait to fly her again! I have much more to test and explore with this fine plane, but I couldn't be more pleased. It feels so smooth and nimble, I can't believe it's mine. You tube video soon.

[editor: go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=39ZV8GTuphw> ]