

EAA Sport Aviation

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Launching the Next Century of Flight





Radial Rocket

The latest sport plane design from Jeff Ackland and Mark Burrow, following the Legend, Turbo Legend, and Formula GT (EAA Sport Aviation, May 2003), is the tandem 2-place Radial Rocket, powered by a 360-hp M14P radial engine. We associate rockets with their thundering initial rate of climb, and that's just what Jeff and Mark had in mind for the

Radial Rocket.

Designed strictly for fun, it has a solo rate of climb of around 4,000 fpm, which helps provide more than adequate sport aerobatic capability.

The Radial Rocket might well have been named the "Retro Rocket," because it is also intended to evoke the image of big, high-performance radial engine airplanes of the past—"a sort of cross between a Sea Fury

and a Gee Bee," according to Jeff Ackland.

The Radial Rocket has a molded composite airframe that is mostly E-glass but with carbon fiber where most advantageous. The M14P turns a 98-inch, 3-blade constant-speed MT propeller—and because the 9-cylinder radial requires a 40-inch wide firewall, the cockpit behind it is cavernous for a tandem airplane. The prototype displayed at EAA AirVenture had a wide, fixed main gear, but a retractable gear will also be available.

The prototype Radial Rocket is a "clip-wing" with a wingspan of 22 feet, but kit versions will have a span of 25.5 feet. Empty weight is 1,650 pounds and gross is

2,450. Fuel capacity will be around 90 gallons in the kit versions—all in the one-piece wing. Max cruise is 230 mph; economy cruise is 200 mph. Vne is 280 mph.

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Epic

At EAA Airventure 2003, Rick Schrameck and his partners at Epic Aircraft announced their intention to build a six-place, pressurized, turboprop-powered, carbon fiber airplane called the Epic. Even though not a single part existed at the time, they promised to fly one to EAA AirVenture 2004, and they pulled it off. The prototype Epic, N370JP, flew from

Bend, Oregon, to Oshkosh in late July and Epic began taking orders for kits right on schedule.

Even more remarkable was that construction of the prototype airframe did not begin until January, so the airplane displayed this year was actually built in seven months. Test pilot Dave Morss made the first flight at Redmond, Oregon, on July 17. No mechanical or aerodynamic issues arose

