

by MAX KARANT • AOPA 18

Three Planes: Aztec B, Musketeer, '205'

Two new single-engine aircraft and an improved twin enter the general aviation market

Three interesting airplanes have been flown by AOPA recently. Two—the Beech *Musketeer* and Cessna 205—are brand new. The other is the excellent Piper *Aztec*, improved as the *Aztec B*.

Piper Aztec B. One of the best light twins in the world, and certainly one of the best buys (\$52,990 for the standard model), the *Aztec B* differs from the original *Aztec* in several important respects, although the basic airplane is the same. The new version is six-place (the earlier model carried a maximum of five, with baggage stuffed around the fifth seat, unless there was quite a bit of baggage, in which case the fifth seat was removed). The new model features a major improvement in this area; there actually are six seats in the cabin, and these six seats can be occupied at all times, even with baggage—depending, of course, on the plane's gross weight limitations. This roominess is the result of the new long nose (the *Aztec B*'s most distinguishing feature), and a new baggage compartment behind the cabin. The new nose compartment not only holds a considerable amount of baggage, it also houses all the radio gear on a special electronics rack. Like the rear compartment, the nose can carry up to 150 pounds for a total of 300 pounds of baggage. This great expansion of baggage space leaves the cabin open and uncluttered, giving the *Aztec B* the feeling of great spaciousness inside. Piper also has come up with a new weight-and-balance computer which makes loading computations easy.

The new long nose enhances the *Aztec*'s appearance considerably, in addition to making the ship more useful. One esthetic objection to the earlier *Aztec* voiced by some was the stubby, blunt nose. This, coupled with the need for more baggage space, brought the change in the *Aztec B*; the new nose does not seem to affect the *Aztec*'s flight characteristics.

Shortly after the *Aztec B* production line began to roll, Piper set aside N5001Y for press demonstrations, and for articles like this. I was scheduled to have the ship for two days in April. Bill Strohmeier (AOPA 52032), vice president of Davis, Parsons and Strohmeier, New York advertising and public relations agency which has had the Piper account for years, asked to go along. This was a welcome surprise; I've always regarded Bill as one of the nicest gentlemen in general aviation (even in the midst of occasionally heated controversy over some printed statement about one of his

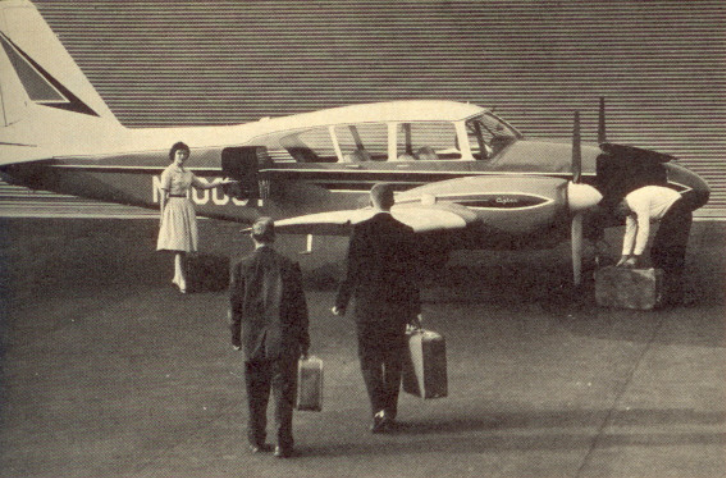
clients), and he's one of the most competent, able and dedicated pilots in the business. He was one of the original Grasshopper pilots, who many years ago demonstrated the feasibility of the small liaison plane to the U. S. Army. How well Bill and his fellow pilots did can be seen by the present U. S. Army aviation activity.

Bill also wanted to go along to see what went wrong with O1Y, if anything. I'm sure he was responsible for seeing to it that everything worked just as it should before it was turned over to me. It did; O1Y ran as smoothly as a sewing machine throughout the 16:46 I flew it 2,733 miles during those two days.

As I've said, the *Aztec B* has the same excellent flight characteristics of its predecessor and, if anything, better than the *Apache*, from which it sprang. Its two 250 h.p. Lycoming O-540-A1D5 engines give it ample power to carry, and perform well with, almost anything you can stuff inside the fuselage. It's an excellent small-field airplane; stalling speed is 63 at full gross with flaps and gear down. Takeoff and climbout under limited conditions are just as good; I wouldn't hesitate flying an *Aztec* into and out of any field or strip that would take a *Tri-Pacer*.

O1Y was equipped a bit more elaborately than the standard \$52,990 *Aztec B* or even the \$58,460 Super Custom version. Radio included a Narco Mark 10, Mark V, DME and three-light marker; and a Motorola ADF-T-12. It also had the Altimatic autopilot (made for Piper by Mitchell). All told, O1Y's electronic equipment came to \$9,815, bringing the total value of this particular ship to \$62,805. This, incidentally, is almost a "bargain basement airliner" when compared with comparably equipped, competitive light twins.

My original plan was to fly O1Y Washington-Bermuda nonstop if winds permitted, or Washington-Norfolk-Bermuda if they didn't. But a nervous homebound wife quickly eliminated that plan so our two-day route was Washington-Cedar Key, Fla.-Ft. Lauderdale-Nassau-Great Exuma-Nassau-West Palm Beach-Vero Beach-Washington. The average pilot would never dream of making such a flight in two days. But once he orients his thinking to the performance and range capabilities of the *Aztec B* a whole new world of flying opens to him. The flight from Great Exuma to Washington took 07:22 flying time, including leisurely stops at Nassau and Vero Beach. Great Exuma is halfway down the Bahama island



Enlarged seating arrangements for six passengers and increased baggage space are found in the 1962 Aztec B. The longer nose on the popular Piper twin provides additional baggage space. The two baggage compartments can carry a total of 300 pounds of luggage and cargo

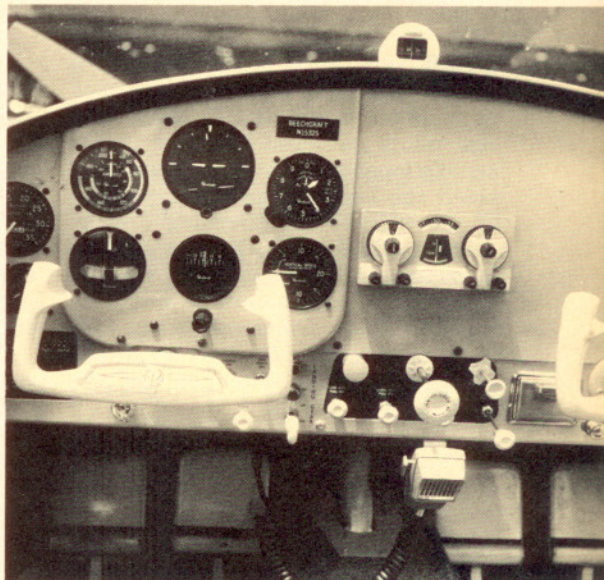
Photo by Anthony Linck



Cessna's brand new "205" is intended to be a comparatively low-cost (\$22,295) workhorse. It will carry six 170-pound persons, 65 gallons of gas and 117 pounds of baggage, all at the same time. It is powered by a single 260 h.p. fuel-injection Continental engine



Beech's first entry in the lower-cost field, the Musketeer (shown above), is priced in the \$13,000 bracket. PILOT editor finds new plane "very nicely laid out, roomy, quite comfortable and pleasingly simple." The four-place aircraft is powered by a 160 h.p. Lycoming engine. Beech engineers "designed out" many of the cockpit booby traps, found in some planes, when the Musketeer was on the drawing boards. The photo on the right shows the instrument panel and controls of N1532S, which was flown by the author. Pilot has unobstructed view of the key instruments and easy access to "Musketeer VHF Nav/Com Radio," which is in the center of the panel—just above the throttle. Airspeed indicator, artificial horizon and altimeter are in the top row of the raised panel directly in front of the pilot, in the lower row are (left to right): turn and bank, directional gyro and vertical speed indicator



chain, has an excellent airstrip, and is the home of Club Peace and Plenty, where Bill and I would have given anything to have stayed a week instead of one night. But the plane had to be back in Lock Haven the next day.

I flew O1Y lightly loaded, heavily loaded, and in one leg, somewhat overloaded (because of 350 pounds of fresh grapefruit). Though we were only overloaded for 11 minutes (the time it took to burn off enough fuel to bring O1Y down to its normal 4,800 lbs. gross), I managed to get a cruising speed check at that weight. At 8,000 feet, true airspeed was 180 m.p.h. at 61% power, loaded pretty much to the maximum rearward C.G. Other cruising speed checks at less than gross weight included one of 180 m.p.h. at 59% power at 8,000 feet, and another of 185 under the same condi-

tions. At those power settings total fuel consumption averaged 23.5 g.p.h., which gave us a maximum range on the plane's 144 gallons of 06:08, or just over 1,000 miles nonstop. Combine with this the fact that the Aztec is a twin with excellent single-engine performance and therefore almost eliminates most of the superstitions about overwater flying, and you then can understand the global possibilities of this type of plane. Aztecs with an extra 100 gallons or so have been crossing the Atlantic with ease ever since the original model went into production.

The cabin of the Aztec B even exceeds the usual "comforts of home" cliché. Soundproofing is excellent, the seats are luxurious and complete with reclining backs, the autopilot does all the work—it's so pleasant I sup-

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Three Planes

(Continued from page 33)

pose some safety experts might even call it dangerous for that reason alone. Bill and I flew solid IFR for some time out of Washington, yet we arrived on the remote little strip at Cedar Key, Fla., in the early afternoon completely comfortable and relaxed, with plenty of time to wander around the tiny little fishing village before settling down in the wonderfully simple Island Hotel to a dinner made up of Bessie Gibbs' wonderful recipes. She owns the place, and will drive out and pick up pilots if they'll just buzz the town a couple of times.

Flying through the Bahamas we wanted to see as much of the beautiful scenery as possible, so we flew everywhere in the islands just a few feet off the water, and direct from one point to another. This added up to quite a bit of overwater flying, but that's what cut the distance from Great Exuma to Washington down to 1,313 miles.

Ground speed average for the 16:46 flying time was 178 m.p.h. at between 58% and 62% power. Several rate-of-climb checks at the normal indicated airspeed of 112 worked out to more than 1,500 f.p.m. at sea level.

Beech Musketeer. This is an airplane many people have been waiting for, for a variety of reasons. It's Beech's first entry into the so-called low-cost market,

and many in the industry are interested to see if Beech is able to modify its hitherto blue-ribbon, "money-is-no-object" attitude to include the little man in general aviation, to whom \$13,000-odd is just as important and formidable as is the \$183,000 average a corporation pays for one of Beech's equipped *Queen Airls*, or the \$30,000-plus they would pay for a single-engine *Bonanza*.

Piper and Cessna are naturally quite interested in how Beech does in this new (for Beech) market with the *Musketeer*. So are fixed-base operators, who buy quite a few such airplanes for instruction, charter and rental. And so are the customers themselves, a substantial percentage of whom now have the financial capability to buy a new Beech airplane for the first time.

I spent most of one day flying *Musketeer* N1532S, the first production airplane off the line. Actually, it had just been certificated a few hours before I got it. But even for a handmade job, with the usual loose fittings and sticking controls that go with such a new venture, the *Musketeer* was a pleasure to fly.

Probably the first thing everybody notices immediately is the close resemblance to the Piper *Cherokee*. And it resembles the *Cherokee* in a number of technical ways: the full-floating elevator is on both ships, the wing structures resemble each other in some details (like the integral leading-edge fuel tanks), mechanical flaps, the corrugated ailerons and flaps. Stand them side by side and they bear a striking resemblance to each other. One wag nicknamed the new Beech the *Charioteer*—half *Cherokee* and half *Musketeer*. While some would like to believe that Beech copied the *Cherokee*, it's not wholly true. The similarity of the designs stems largely from the rigid requirements both companies laid down for a low-cost, modern, four-place plane: competitive price, low-wing, all-metal, fixed gear, simple construction both for

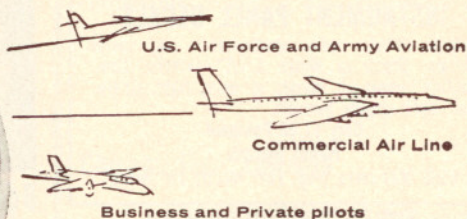
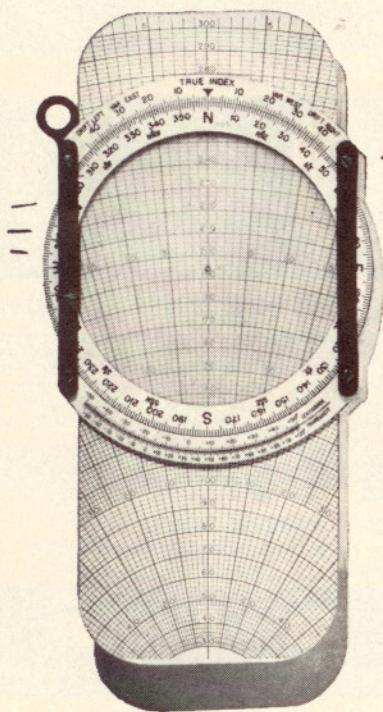
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Piper Aztec B—PA-23-250 Specifications and Performance

Specifications	
H.p. and r.p.m.	250 at 2575
Gross weight (lbs.)	4,800
Empty weight (Autoflite, lbs.)	2,990
Useful load (Autoflite, lbs.)	1,810
Wing span (ft.)	37
Length (ft.)	30.1
Height (ft.)	10.3
Power loading (lbs./h.p.)	9.6
Wing loading (lbs./sq.ft.)	23.5
Fuel capacity (gals.)	144
Performance	
Top speed (m.p.h.)	215
Cruise speed	
(65% power at 10,000 ft.—m.p.h.)	200
Stalling speed (m.p.h.)	62
Rate of Climb (ft./min.)	1,650
Absolute Ceiling (ft.)	23,750
Service Ceiling (ft.)	22,500
Single-engine service ceiling (ft.)	7,500
Fuel Consumption (gph at 65% power)	24
Cruising Range	
(max. at 65% power at 10,000 ft.)	1,200
Cruising Range	
(max. at 45% power at 10,000 ft.)	1,400

Performance and Specifications of Three Cessna Aircraft

The new Cessna 205 is compared with two of its "stablemates"

	Model 205	Model 210	Model 185
Gross weight (lbs.)	3,300	3,000	3,200
Empty weight (lbs.)	1,730 (6 passenger version)	1,750 (4-place)	1,520 (4-place)
Useful load (lbs.)	1,570	1,250	1,680
Speed (best power mixture):			
Maximum speed (m.p.h.)	173	198	176
Cruise, 75% power (m.p.h.)	163 (6,500 ft.)	189 (7,000 ft.)	167 (7,000 ft.)
Range normal lean mixture):			
Cruise, 75% power, no reserve	730 mi. at 6,500 ft.) 4.5 hrs., 63.5 gals.	845 mi. at 7,000 ft. 4.5 hrs., 63.5 gals.	730 mi. at 7,000 ft. 4.4 hrs., 62 gals.
	162 m.p.h. 920 mi. at 6,500 ft. 5.7 hrs., 80 gals.	188 m.p.h. 1,065 mi. at 7,000 ft. 5.7 hrs., 80 gals.	166 m.p.h. 945 mi. at 7,000 ft. 5.7 hrs., 81 gals.
Optimum range at 10,000 ft., no reserve	162 m.p.h. 1,015 mi. 8.9 hrs., 63.5 gals.	188 m.p.h. 1,215 mi. 8.9 hrs., 63.5 gals.	166 m.p.h. 945 mi. 7.1 hrs., 62 gals.
	114 m.p.h. 1,275 mi. 11.2 hrs., 80 gals.	137 m.p.h. 1,530 mi. 11.2 hrs., 80 gals.	133 m.p.h. 1,235 mi. 9.3 hrs., 81 gals.
Rate of climb	114 m.p.h. 965 f.p.m.	137 m.p.h. 1,270 f.p.m.	133 m.p.h. 1,000 f.p.m.
Service ceiling	36,100 ft.	20,300 ft.	17,300 ft.
Wing loading (lbs. per sq. ft.)	18.8	17.1	18.4
Power loading (lbs./h.p.)	12.7	11.5	12.3
Fuel capacity, total gallons:			
Standard tanks	65	65	65
Optional long-range tanks	84	84	84
Oil capacity (qts.)	12	12	12
Propeller (constant speed)	82 in.	82 in.	88 in.
Power:			
Continental fuel-injection engine, 260 rated h.p. at 2,625 r.p.m.	10-470-S	10-470-S	10-470-F

Musketeer Compared With Two Competitors

The following table compares the Musketeer with two competitive planes, the Cessna Skyhawk and the Piper Super Custom Cherokee. The basic prices of these planes are: Beech Musketeer, \$13,300; Cessna Skyhawk, \$11,590; Piper Super Custom Cherokee, \$13,190. Beech estimates that if all three planes were equipped comparably, the prices would be: Beech Musketeer, \$13,915; Cessna Skyhawk, \$13,612; Piper Super Custom Cherokee, \$13,700.

	Beech Musketeer	Cessna Skyhawk	Piper Cherokee Super Custom 160 h.p.
Gross weight (lbs.)	2,300 lbs.	2,250	2,200
Useful load (lbs.)	1,000 (standard equipment)	863	1,005 (standard equip.) 965 (with Auto-Flite)
Speed:			
Maximum	144 m.p.h. (2,700 r.p.m.)	140 m.p.h.	138 m.p.h.
Cruise, 75% power	135 m.p.h.	132 m.p.h. (7,000 ft.)	132 m.p.h.
Range (Cruise, 75% power; 7,000 ft.; no reserve)	582 mi.	540 mi.	528 mi.
Rate of climb	710 f.p.m. (gross weight)	700 f.p.m.	680 f.p.m.
Service ceiling	13,500 ft.	14,550 ft.	15,000 ft.
Wing loading (lbs. per sq. ft.)	15.86 (gross weight)	12.9	13.8
Fuel capacity (gals.)	60 (usable, 58.8) 40 (usable, 38.8)	42	36 (standard) 50 (with reserve)
Oil capacity (qts.)	8 (6 usable)	8	8
Propeller	Fixed pitch	Fixed pitch; 76 in.	Fixed pitch; 74 in.
Power	Lycoming O-320-B, 160 h.p., 4 cylinder	Continental O-300-D, 145 h.p. at 2,700 r.p.m.	Lycoming O-320-B2B, 160 h.p. at 2,700 r.p.m.

low manufacturing cost and ease of maintenance, and a cruising speed somewhere around 130-140 (which dictated the engine almost to the very model both use: the 160 h.p. four-cylinder Lycoming).

The *Musketeer* is very nicely laid out, roomy, quite comfortable, and pleasingly simple. All-around visibility is in keeping with most other Beech models; its outstanding. The *Musketeer* is so simple to fly that I would guess it would be safe to turn any private pilot loose in it alone, after showing him where the fuel valve is, how the throttle and flap work, the approximate indicated airspeeds to use for takeoff and climb and approach and landing, and the power setting to be used for cruise. That's just about what I did. One or two questions, and I just taxied out and took off. A number of circuits around the pattern, to get used to the feel of the ship in all phases of flight, and I was flying the *Musketeer* with all the ease and relaxation one would get from having flown it for hundreds of hours.

This simplicity itself is a tribute to the Beech engineers. They've obviously designed-out a considerable number of the built-in booby traps that all too often are found in contemporary general aviation airplanes. Of course, when a pilot falls victim to a peculiarly placed control or an obviously ill-conceived knob or switch, the resulting accident is attributed to pilot error. There certainly will be pilot-error accidents in the *Musketeer*, but there should be noticeably fewer of them than are found with other types on the market.

With 40 gallons in its 60-gallon tanks and two of us in the plane, I made several climbs from takeoff at the recommended indicated airspeed of 85. Surface temperature at Wichita was 80°. We averaged 633 f.p.m. for 2,000 feet. In the total of 0410 I flew 32S, I made a number of cruising speed checks, both locally and between Wichita and Oklahoma City. They averaged within a couple of m.p.h. of what the engineers have computed for its performance. Here's a table I made over a measured two-mile course near the Beech factory. Note that two runs were made at each altitude and at each power setting. The 2,450 r.p.m. setting is cruise, 2,700 is full throttle. All speeds and distances are statute.

Alt. (MSL)	IAS	OAT	RPM	Min/Sec	GS	2-leg av.
3,500	123	69	2,450	0100	120	—
3,500	123	69	2,450	0057	126	123
3,500	138	69	2,700	0053	136	—
3,500	138	69	2,700	0050	144	139
1,500	125	80	2,450	0100	120	—
1,500	125	80	2,450	0057	126	123
1,500	140	80	2,700	0052	138	—
1,500	140	80	2,700	0050	144	141

The *Musketeer* cabin is quite roomy and should be comfortable for four people. The ventilation and soundproofing are satisfactory. There are dual controls, including two sets of toe brakes. The flap handle lies flat on the floor between the front seats, and pulls up to 15° and 30° positions. The instru-

Profile Of Two Planes

Two planes that bear a marked resemblance to one another are Beech's Musketeer and Piper's Cherokee, as you can see from the photos below

THE CHEROKEE



THE MUSKETEER



ment panel is unusually roomy and efficient. Basic flight instruments are in a separate easily removed panel directly in front of the pilot; there's plenty of room for a number of additional instruments. Switches and engine instruments are mostly concentrated along the bottom edge of the panel. The six-instrument cluster, like that in the center of the *Bonanza* and *Debonair* panels, is in the lower left-hand corner of the panel. The ignition switch (key-operated), master switch, fuel boost pump, carburetor heat, mixture control, cabin heat and circuit breakers are spread across the panel bottom. There's also a "gimmick" switch for use in student training of those expecting to advance to retractable-gear airplanes. It's an electric gear switch, complete with up and down lights. One was suggested labeling the green light "gear down and welded."

The throttle is in the center of the panel, on the bottom edge. It slides in and out and can be locked in any position just by turning it hard to the right.

Flight characteristics of the *Musketeer* are just as good as the rest of the ship. Stability in level flight is excellent, and maneuverability is quick and positive. The stall characteristics are so gentle it's almost fun to practice stalls. There's only a slight buffeting, which comes well after the stall-warning horn first blows. Then the ship just seems to sit in midair, in a slightly nose-up attitude, bobbing its nose gently a little below and above the horizon. It's like the *Ercoupe*; you could probably use its stall to lose altitude at minimum speed, then when you get low enough, just

push the nose forward a little and resume gliding speed.

One of the most interesting features of the *Musketeer* is the radio, which is standard equipment. Beech refers to it in all literature as the "Beechcraft Musketeer VHF Nav/Comm Radio." Actually, as AOPA has already reported, this interesting new set was designed by King Radio, and is being manufactured for Beech by them. King has just introduced their own version of this set, calling it the "Director" or model KX-150. It's an ingenious, compact and very useful little set. It's completely crystal-controlled, with separate navigation and communications units in the one set. The 90-channel transmitter puts out five watts. The omni needle is in the center. The whole thing—power supply and all—is in the one box in the instrument panel, and weighs about eight pounds.

Maximum fuel capacity of the *Musketeer* is 60 gallons. With that fuel the *Musketeer* can carry three people, 115 pounds of baggage, and fly 873 miles at 65% power at 10,000 feet, and still have 45 minutes reserve fuel. The tanks have visual measurements for filling to 20 gallons each, for a total of 40 gallons, which would be used as normal fuel load with four people and 65 pounds of baggage.

Beech has just launched a nationwide *Musketeer* demonstration tour with three ships. The tour will run through October 11-14, when it will end at AOPA's Plantation Party at Miami Beach. The three ships are being flown by Mike Gordon (AOPA 112116), manager of *Musketeer* sales; Joyce Case;

and Gene Nora Stumbough (AOPA 113662). Both girls are with the Beech marketing division. The tour will cover 90 days, visit 43 cities, and in addition to AOPA's Plantation Party, will visit the annual conventions of the International Flying Farmers, Seattle, and the Flying Physicians Association, Jekyll Island, Ga. Of course, the tour is being called "The Three You-Know-Whats."

In the *Musketeer*, Beech sees the means for broadening the base of their dealer-distributor organization. There will be *Musketeer* dealers at small airports who don't sell any other Beech

products. And the *Musketeer*, in addition to competing largely with the *Cherokee* and Cessna *Skyhawk* (172), also is expected to attract many new owners into the Beech family, upgrading themselves to other Beech models.

Cessna 205. Take a 210 and remove the retractable gear. Where the main gear tucked up into the rear of the fuselage, you add a door and two seats, and extend the fuselage a little. Where the nose wheel retracted, you fair in the bottom side of the nose cowling, and use that space to install radios, etc. Attach the standard Cessna fixed-landing gear

to this and you have a 205. Most everything else is the same as the 210.

The 205 is another excellent example of how engineers can keep making money for a company with one basic design. Which is a good idea, as long as the public will buy it, because the plane's ultimate price reflects the fact that high engineering costs—always tied to a brand-new design—need not be included in an airplane like this. The 205 is clearly and deeply related to every other current Cessna model except the twins.

The 205 is intended to be a comparatively low-cost (\$22,295) workhorse. It will carry six 170-pound people, 65 gallons of fuel and 117 pounds of baggage—all at the same time. With that load at 75% power at 6,500 ft. it has a maximum range of 730 miles at 162 m.p.h. At that power, its 260-h.p. fuel-injection Continental burns 14.5 g.p.h., which should make this a very economical airplane for air taxi, charter, cargo, and just about anything a busy operator might do in a typical day. And for the individual owner who wants a good big four-place airplane, the 205 will deliver that same performance with four people plus 457 pounds of baggage or cargo. There are optional long-range tanks available, bringing the maximum range at 75% power and 162 m.p.h. to 920 miles. With that extra fuel, the 205 will still carry four people plus 347 pounds of baggage, or six people with only 7 pounds left over. All of which makes for quite a flexible piece of low-cost transportation.

Cessna took somewhat the same tack with the 185, which is a tail-wheel-gear six-place version of the old 180, and it seems to have been a wise move. They've sold quite a few 185's, both as workhorses here in the U. S., and as bush planes around the world. Until the advent of the 185 the only real workhorse of this type was the very expensive DeHavilland *Beaver*, made in Canada. Now Cessna has found there is a demand for the same basic concept, but in a tricycle-gear airplane. Hence the 205.

With only two of us in the first production 205 (N1801Z), it performed especially well. Though the day was quite warm, it climbed well over 1,000 f.p.m. Cruising speed proved to be quite close to the 162 claimed for it at 6,500 ft. and 75% power. Top speed at sea level is 173. Stall with full flaps (40°) is just under 60 m.p.h.

The 205 is very stable in level flight; Cessna engineers attribute much of this to the now-famous bent-down wing tips. Once you get used to the "housekeeping" in the cockpit, the 205 is quite simple to fly. The controllable prop is easily operated, and the fuel-injection instrument makes every pilot a power-setting expert. The flaps are electrically operated. But aside from that there's just the usual business of switching tanks and operating the radios.

Matter of fact, the most unusual thing about the 205 that impressed me was the surprise when I looked over my shoulder and studied all that room and the four vacant seats behind me, all on 260 h.p.

END

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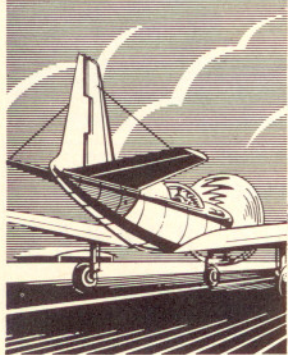
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