

**TOUGHER  
THAN A  
TORNADO**



**AOPA 2012  
SWEEPSTAKES**



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**T**he AOPA 2012 Sweepstakes “Tougher Than a Tornado” Husky turns one year old this month. But instead of a birthday cake and a party, your sweepstakes airplane got its first annual inspection.

The inspection was performed at Landmark Aviation at Frederick Municipal Airport, AOPA’s home base in Maryland, and the airplane came through with flying colors. Total bill for replacement parts: \$20. Best of all, Kevin Holloway, the A&P mechanic (and commercial pilot) who did the work, says the young Aviat Husky—with just 130 hours total time on the Hobbs meter—is a vigorous pup.

“It’s a strong, well-built, capable airplane—and I can’t find any flaws or defects,” he said. “I know the fabric on

## Tornado Husky’s first annual inspection

**BY DAVE HIRSCHMAN**

the fuselage was punctured during the tornado, but I honestly can’t find any patches. And I’ve run my hands over every inch of the airplane.”

In truth, I had a hard time finding the fuselage patch, too, and wouldn’t have been able to locate it if I didn’t already know where to look. (It’s on the left side of the fuselage under the number 4 decal in the N number, N40WY.)

Still, Holloway did find some improvements that will make the Tor-

nado Husky even better during the rapidly approaching flying season. The tension on the aileron cables has been tightened to the proper specifications; the magnetos were retimed for optimal performance; scat tubes in the engine compartment were repositioned to avoid chafing; and engine rocker covers were tightened to halt oil leaks.

Speaking of the engine, the compression check on the 180-horsepower Lycoming O-360 showed the cylinders are in terrific shape, and ranged from 76 to 78 (over 80) psi. Those compressions might have been even higher with a warm engine, but this particular compression test was done on a stone-cold winter day when the engine felt like an ice cube.

The pads on the Cleveland double-puck brakes showed normal wear with no need for replacement yet. And the Alaskan Bushwheels have plenty of life left in them—and we intend to preserve that life by landing the Tornado Husky on turf surfaces and avoiding concrete wherever possible.

The only speed bumps on the annual inspection had to do with paperwork, not the airplane itself. Optional equipment on the Tornado Husky includes vortex generators, a three-blade MT propeller, a VFR instrument panel built around the Garmin 696, and heel wells for the pilot's feet. All of the modifications were dutifully entered in the airframe logbook, but Landmark wanted to see Form 337 field approvals, too. That opened an ongoing and lively debate within maintenance circles about exactly what paperwork is required for factory-installed options.

Fortunately, the folks at Landmark were able to straighten it out without too much gnashing of teeth.

The Tornado Husky's 29-inch tires presented some complications during

the annual inspection because they raise the airplane's jack points too high for regular floor jacks to reach. Holloway ended up using an engine hoist to raise the tires off the ground and service the wheel bearings. The tailwheel presented similar consternation, but it was easily solved. He simply lifted the tail, using the handles on the rear portion of the fuselage, while a coworker slid a stand and wood blocks underneath.

Holloway has been an A&P since 1992 and a certificated pilot since 1998. He flew professionally for an aerial survey company for 10 years before the firm moved to South Dakota three years ago, and he elected to stay in Maryland for family reasons. He owns and flies a Cessna 140, so he's proficient in tail-wheel airplanes.

I invited Holloway to stand (or sit) behind his work by coming along on the

first post-annual flight, and he agreed without hesitation. Holloway flew from the front seat of the Tornado Husky, and marveled at the airplane's tremendous short-field performance and fine handling qualities.

The Tornado Husky is as close to perfect after the inspection as any young airplane can be. "It looks as good on the inside as it does on the outside," Holloway said of the Tornado Husky. "And it flies every bit as good as it looks."

**AOPA**

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**The Tornado Husky's first annual inspection showed the young airplane is in top mechanical condition and ready for adventure. Pilot/mechanic Kevin Holloway (left and below) performed the inspection and came along on a post-maintenance flight.**

