



GOING FOR



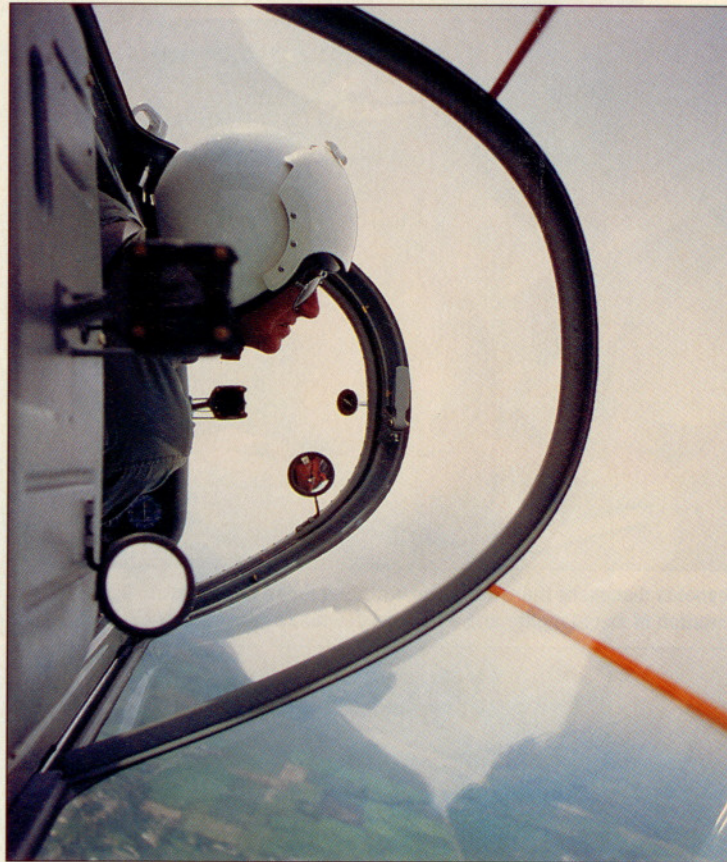
THE GOLD

*In preparation for the
Oshkosh ordeal*

BY MARC E. COOK

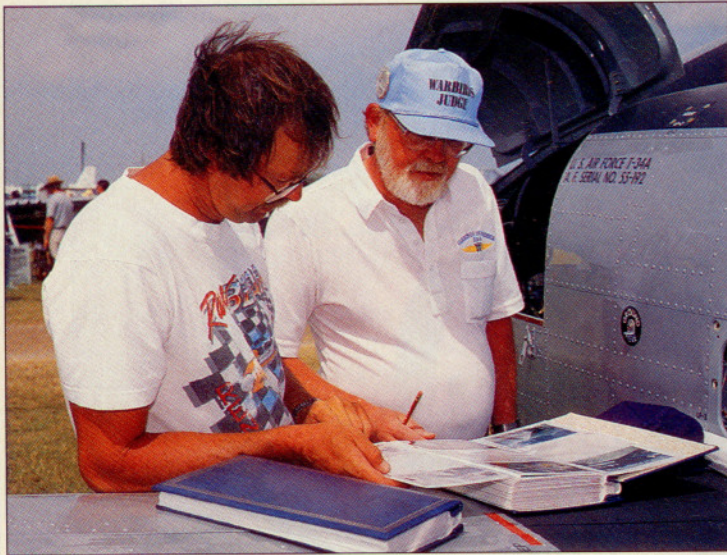
TO the nearly one million spectators who flock to Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh each summer, the scores of perfectly restored (or nearly so) classic civilian and military aircraft must seem absolutely dazzling. But the lustrous shine of a paint job or the painstaking authenticity represent just the most obvious manifestations of the restorer's art. There is, obviously, more under the skin—the blood

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE FIZER

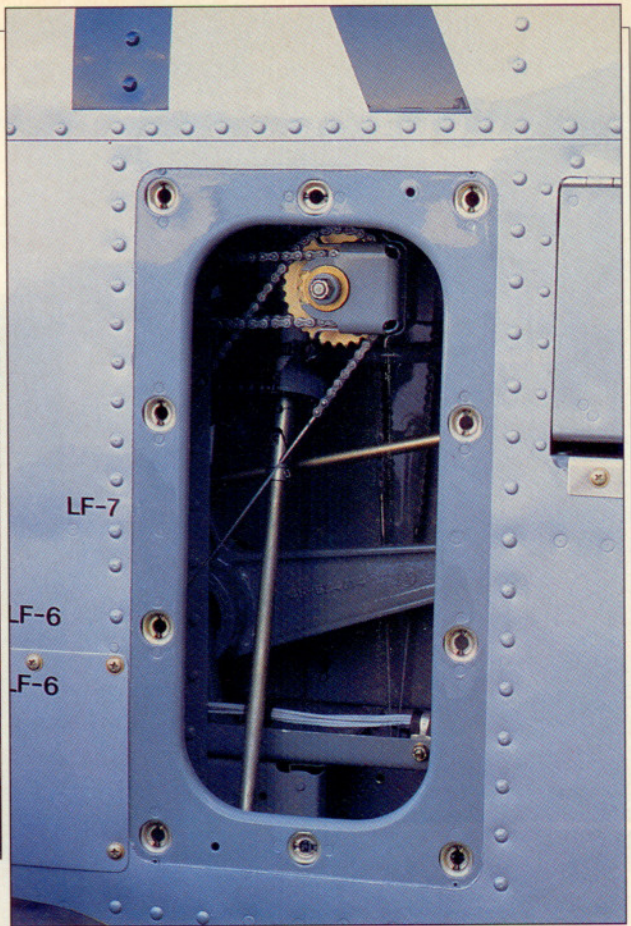


Pilot Gareth Gilson, also the coordinator of the restoration in its later days, displays the T-34 for the Oshkosh crowd. In the cockpit, the details matter—original instruments with modern pieces intruding only where absolutely necessary.





Terry Reynolds discusses the restoration with EAA judge Gus Dundon. Documentation of sweat equity and elbow grease makes the difference.



Nothing is overlooked, no room for fudging. If you thought your mechanic was a stickler at annual time, chances are he's a real pushover compared to the EAA judges, who have the unenviable task of winnowing a great gathering of beautiful airplanes into a handful of prize winners.



Michael Schloss, EAA-Warbirds Judging & Awards chairman, takes his look-see of the T-34. Achieving a high judge's score with a T-34 takes extra effort because all warbirds are graded with a difficulty scale thrown in, and the Mentor lies at the low end of the range.



Opened up for inspection, EAA judge Glenn Goldman checks the airplane for accuracy, authenticity, and quality of workmanship. A combination of all these elements is crucial for an airplane to place well.



History in the making: For the first time ever, a T-34 wins Oshkosh Grand Champion—Warbirds. The men responsible (left to right): Wichita Air Service's Tom Neill, Fred Bruns, Bob Baines, and Terry Reynolds; T-34 partners Norm Cash and Marvin Autrey; pilot and spearheader Gareth Gilson.

YOU ARE INVITED TO LOOK AS MUCH AS YOU LIKE BUT please DO NOT TOUCH THIS AIRCRAFT!

JUDGE ME PLEASE EAA

EAA
the sport aviation association



A banner year for Wichita Air Service, as Tom Wood's F-86 wins the Best Jet prize at Oshkosh 1993. Wood's Sabre came in for, as Reynolds put it, "paint and polish" and left with a new canopy, reworked landing gear, and detail fixes too numerous to list here.

