Team Rocket Newsletter 1-29-2025 View in browser

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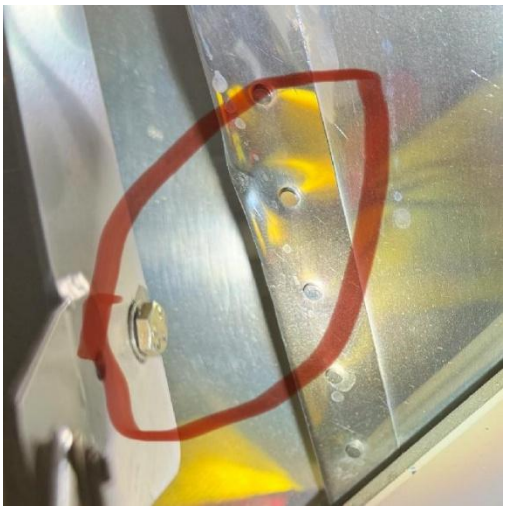


A 12 cent screw could wreck your day

This is a new story, but it relates to a 30+ year old, well-known, problem that has been the subject of repeated (Van's) newsletter articles, forum discussions, and a service bulletin.

Recently, a Rocket pilot, who was not the original builder, escaped a potentially disastrous situation. He was able to land safely on his 3rd attempt.

As you can see in the photos of the rudder pedal and firewall area above, the AN3 bolt that was used to attach the rudder pedal impacted the firewall. This resulted in a very respectable dent in the firewall footwell when the pilot stomped HARD on the pedal when it became jammed.

That AN3 bolt should be a low profile AN525 screw, or other fastener that presents a minimal chance of catching the edge of the firewall footwell box. If your aircraft has AN3 bolts in this area, change them immediately.

This area has been the subject of at least 2 service bulletins, yet problems persist due to the difficulty in disseminating knowledge to the masses. Please tell your friends!

The other service bulletin? Well, it seems that using cotter pins and castle nuts on bolts (or screws) that are subject to rotation is the rule, unless said bolt (or screw) is near the pilot's shoes. There have been instances where the pilot's shoes have somehow kicked and rubbed on the cotter pins installed on rudder pedal hardware... and knocked them out!! Obviously, this could lead to a loss of directional control on the ground. The fix here is to use safety wire instead of cotter pins. See Van's SB 96-12-1

While you're viewing that Van's SB, you might as well browse all of the other RV-4 SB's. They are virtually all applicable to the Rockets as well. Here's the link: RV-4 service bulletins. And, of course, we do have a listing of our own service bulletins here: Team Rocket service bulletins.

One last thought. There are an infinite number of things that can go wrong with your aircraft. Always do a real condition inspection, every year, and always be watchful during your aircraft's routine maintenance. Don't let something you neglected on the ground bite you in the ass in the air.

Ray Ward's new Kitfox

Longtime readers of this newsletter will recall that Ray Ward finished and flew his F4 Raider back in 2018. Being a restless and speedy builder, Ray just flew his new Kitfox.

And I'm still plodding along on my F4, although progress is being made!

Speaking of making progress... late last week found me at the big Ward water jet with an $800 steel plate (Gasp!), getting ready to jet out some of the critical spar splice plates for the new F-wing. You'll notice that these are no longer the same splice plates as we've used on the previous RV-4s, HR2s, F1s, and F4s. Though identical in function, they differ in alloy, length, height, and number of bolt holes.

We roughed these out on the jet, then took them back to our shop for final drilling and reaming, and clean up. Anyone who has used a water jet can appreciate the nice parts that can be made, but also knows that they do require some post-jet work to remove the kerf left behind.

Paul Dye

Kitplanes editor at large

I've mentioned that Paul Dye, editor at large for KITPLANES, is building on of Mark Frederick's original quick build kits. I've also mentioned that everyone should subscribe to KITPLANES magazine. I can't even keep up with the torrent of F1 related articles that Paul is writing. Rather than offering a synopsis of these articles, here's a link that should allow you to access them yourself (with a subscription, of course):
Paul Dye articles

F1 Rocket info

Kitplanes magazine maintains a buyer's guide. It is a convenient way to view the aircraft's specs.

Kitplanes buyers guide - F1 Rocket

F4 Raider info

Another very fine aircraft! Every pilot should own one.

Kitplanes buyers guide - F4 Raider

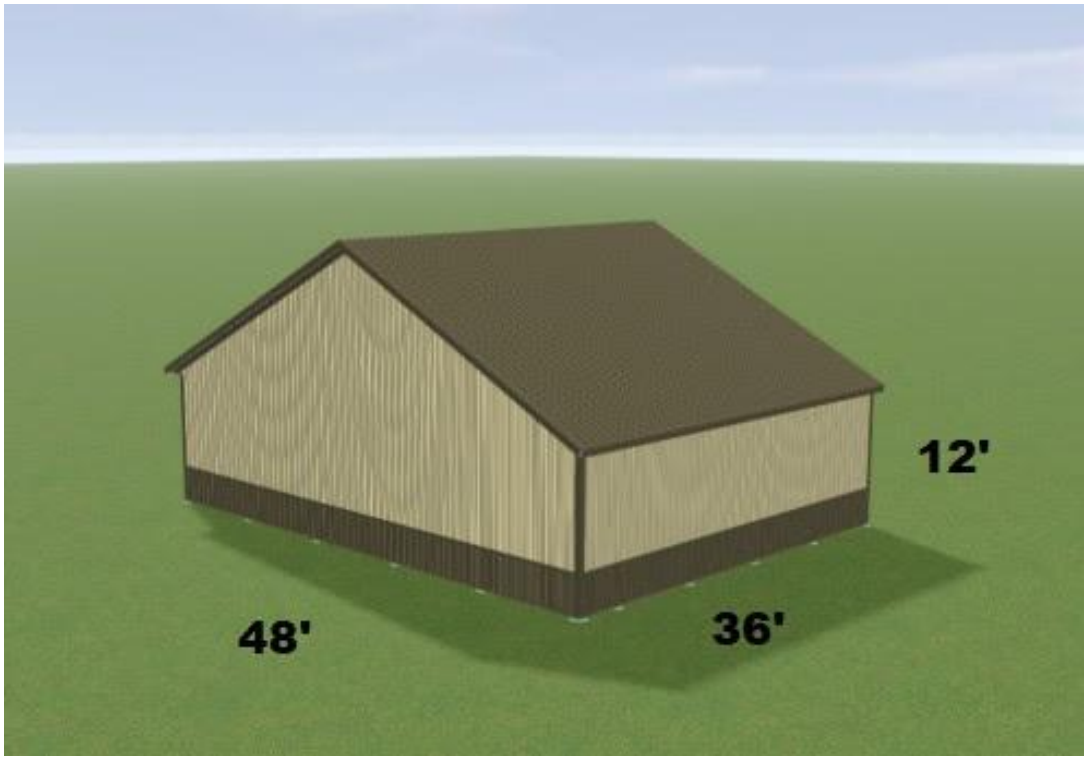
Trivia: How did the F4 Raider get its name?

The "F4" portion of the name is easy. The Raider uses a 4 cylinder engine, and can use an RV-4 wing and/or tail. Calling it an F4 made sense to us.

But where did "Raider" come from? Well, my wife's maiden name is "Roeder" which is pronounced "Raider." That's a good enough reason, but there is more.

In the photo above, my wife's uncle, waist gunner S/Sgt. Irvin Roeder, back row, second from the left, is shown with his crewmates. Nine of these airmen were lost over Germany on March 8, 1944.

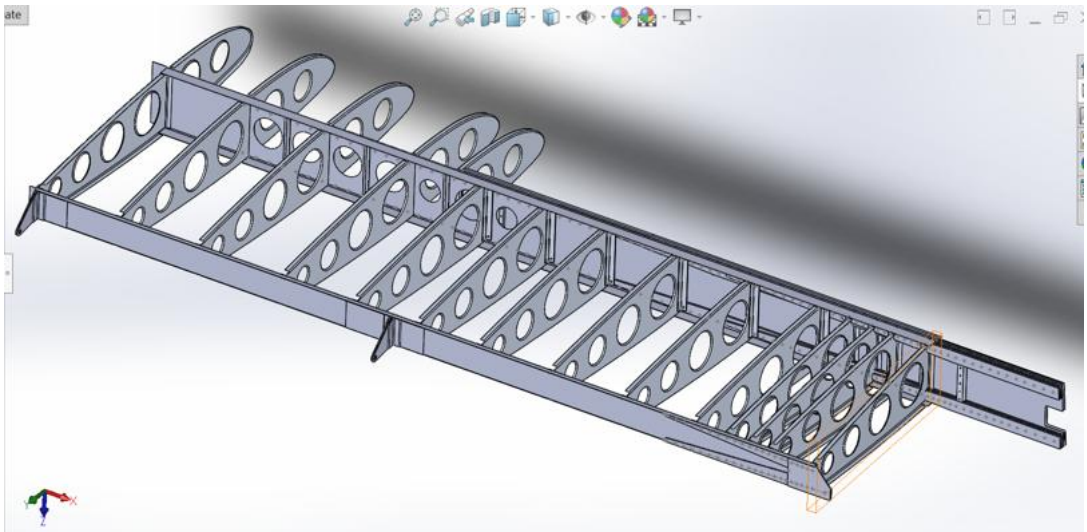
We chose the name "Raider" as a way to honor and remember S/Sgt. Irvin Roeder and others who gave their lives so that others could be free.



Shop addition... again.

Sigh. Every time that we think we've got plenty of shop space... we don't. So we're adding on another 1728 sq ft in the next few weeks. This should give us plenty of room for new wing production. Fingers crossed.

I keep telling myself that this continuing game of "whack-a-mole" is almost over. Dang moles. But we're winning. Slowly.



Sport wing and tail kits for sale

F1 Rocket Sport wing partial kit and complete Mk3 tail kit

This is a one time only item. When it's gone, it's gone. These parts are NOS and untouched. Probably not even dusty because they've been in the sealed boxes since January 2022.

The Sport wing partial kit consists of:

• F-004 fuselage bulkhead set for the Phlogiston spar, with splice plates

• Phlogiston rear spar set

• Phlogiston main spar set

• Sport wing ribs - large tanks - Sport wing rib set - 55 gallon tank option - includes

additional tank ribs, 54 ribs total (*note: 42 gallon tanks are standard)

• Sport wing leading edge skins - Sport wing leading edge skins for 55 gallon fuel tanks

These are the primary components of the Sport wing. You'll need flaps, ailerons, main skins, and various other small parts, but the primary structure is there.

The Mk 3 tail kit includes:

• Everything needed to produce the current version Mk3 empennage

The buyer will be assigned a builder number.

Price $17,500 Contact Vince at vince@f1aircraft.com

F1 Evo project for sale

From the seller, John O'Keefe:

Due to changes in my life, I need to consider selling my F1 EVO.

I purchased S/N 166 in 2016 from the original builder. The aircraft was approximately 75% complete. I decided to remake the empennage with an RV-8 empennage kit modified per Mark Frederick with additional stiffeners.

Power is supplied by a Lycoming, IO-540 – C4B5 with high compression pistons built by Western Skyways. The propeller is a new Hartzell model DHC–11124R.

The included Blue Mountain avionics and auto pilot will need to be replaced. Otherwise, rigging and assembly of the tail, redoing the avionics, finishing fiberglass parts, interior and paint are the main projects for the new owner.

I am asking $110,000 for the project.

To see more photos: F1 Evo project

Thanks,

John O'Keefe

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