

# Remember when you were a kid and you saw the P-51 Mustang for the first time?



David McCartney

Or when you first went to an airshow and saw an Extra 300? How about the first time you saw the cockpit of an F-16 Eagle? You remember unique and inspiring things about each of these remarkable machines - the strong undertones of the World War II fighter - and you think, "This is American." What about the smoothness and graceful lines of the Extra 300? How from spinner to rudder, words of praise and accolade come quickly to mind (sexy). Well ladies and gentlemen, let me invert your world and bring back all these thoughts and emotions with a relatively new aircraft that, chances are, you've seen before.

It's called the MySky MS-ONE and I recently had the unique pleasure of flying one of these remarkable machines with the MySky's company test pilot, aerodynamicist, and history buff, Tim Plunkett. When I first approached the MS-ONE, sitting in one of the MySky hangars at the Spruce Creek Fly-In, I was immediately intrigued by the design. I couldn't quite place my finger on what this airplane reminded me of. It had a tandem cockpit with a bubble canopy that blended rather cautiously into the empennage. Ok, cool, I like that. Kind of reminds me of an Extra 300L. Now what's going on everywhere else? Two air intakes horizontally opposed on either side of the spinner with a lean and mean fuselage which ends in a tail design that the folks at Reno would be happy to have. So

now I'm having feelings towards the Nemesis NXT, a remarkable, championship air racer. I continue to walk around, entranced by the design and aura the aircraft gives off. Now here is something that, to this very day, still gives me the "heebie jeebies": when I looked at the airplane -- I saw a P-51! That's right, a World War II fighting ace. I like to think I have a large and ornate vocabulary, but I cannot find the words to describe this intuition. Perhaps it is the way the cowling and fuselage are blended or the way the air intakes have a certain angle or maybe it's the... just look at the pictures. Whatever it is, it's there. Trust me.

Under the canopy? Well for starters, two seats and a beautiful, two-tone leather interior that would make BMW or Porsche blush. I plopped down into the interior and put my right hand on the joystick and my left hand on the throttle. Woah. I've been in some cool planes in my aviation career and many of them have impressed me with their layouts or cockpit comforts, but never have I sat down in a cockpit and felt as if I was truly in a fighter jet. I reached between my legs and expect to feel an ejection handle. Tim Plunkett did an exquisite job of showing me around the panel; within 10 minutes of briefing I was able to start the airplane, make full use of the MGL Avionics suite including the Flight Information Center and the MGL "Enigma" EFIS. Also available is a Flight Automation System which will provide a 2-axis

autopilot. Start up and taxi were non-eventful in the aircraft and it reminded much of my early training days in a Cessna 152. Except for one thing: the push button start. Now that was cool.

We scurried down to then end of runway 5 and performed a basic run-up and positioned. I advanced my left hand to full afterburner (making use of all 3300 RPM @ 120HP) and we were off the ground climbing at 1000 FPM. Having never flown a true "side-stick" aircraft, I was instantly comfortable within less than 60 seconds. Everything was so intuitive and the airplane did exactly what I wanted. Not to mention just allowing my arm to rest and my hand to control the stick, I felt a little more in control versus a conventional stick between the legs. We climbed out of the "Creek" and proceeded south along the Atlantic coast.

The first thing I noticed right from the start was the outstanding visibility from the large bubble canopy. We were successful in spotting almost every target that Daytona approach advised us of and usually without having to look around a wing strut or some other structural impedance. And the canopy, which is coated in a UV protective film, cut off most of the glare from the ocean.

We did some basic flight maneuvers to further adjust myself to the MS-ONE and it wasn't long before I was completely comfortable with all the flight characteristics which were more benign than your typical, high-wing trainer. Tim next suggested that we begin trying a few more-intense maneuvers, such as stalls and wingovers. I remember the first couple times I was really introduced to a stall during my early flight training and



remember remaining somewhat fearful of the whole feeling. It wasn't until I started training for aerobatic competitions and recovering from all my self-induced tumbles and spins that I realized a stall is nothing to fear given the correct altitude. We dumped all the flaps and pitched up to lose some speed. We continued to climb and I continued to apply backpressure on the stick. I felt a little bump and continued to apply

I missed the stall. It was truly a non-event. The aircraft I flew in my demo flight wasn't equipped with a stall warning horn, but each production aircraft will be equipped with an early warning device to indicate an approaching stall. Steep turns were a thrill also. They were not only fun to do, but the backpressure on the stick was minimal. Tim demonstrated one and had me look at what he was doing with the stick. He had just one finger on the stick pulling back and we were banked at 60 degrees, constant rate turn losing ZERO feet per minute.

As night was approaching we set course back to 7FL6 and I was given the run down on landing. I entered our downwind from mid-field and brought the engine to idle. Two click of trim on the joystick switch for trim and we were slowing down to 80 knots. At 80 knots dumped full flaps (the switch is also located on the joystick) and trimmed completely nose up. I turned base to final and Tim gave me some words of wisdom, "Just keep it pointed at the runway. Everything else will happen naturally."

I thought to myself, "Oh, yeah right, geesh... I'll have to flare and I really doubt the airplane is gonna slow to 65 without some sort of pitch control."

Luckily I didn't open my mouth because what happened next was exactly opposite of my thoughts. I kept the MSONE pointed at the runway and she slowed to 65 knots and remained square on approach until we got into the time to flare; at which time she flared herself. I did exactly what Tim said and the plane performed exactly how he said it would.

The aircraft was really something remarkable, not only to look at, but also to fly. As the design and engineering is way beyond my level of comprehension, I will not attempt to delve into why or how the airplane flies like it does. It just does. Feel free to ask the staff aerodynamicists, Tim, what makes the airplane do such great things. I can assure you, however, that the airplane is truly going to be a game-changer for the entire market. This airplane - with its simple handling characteristics, subtle responses to stalls and ease of landing - will make any flight training center a great training aircraft. And, with its great ramp appeal, anybody new or just coming back to aviation would be delighted to learn to fly in such a cool machine. And did I mention a fuel flow of 4.5 gallons per hour (that's MOGAS or AVGAS, your choice). I think the \$100 hamburger just got a little bit cheaper than before.

OH! I forgot to mention. It meets all LSA requirements. I guess someone finally managed to put the sport in sport aviation. ■ D.M.



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MySky Aircraft Inc.

210 Cessna Blvd Ste 10  
Port Orange, Florida 32128

www.mysky.aero | info@mysky.aero