

# Express Press

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*The Loadmaster seating in the rear is fantastic. It took me no more than five minutes to extract the four place rear seating arrangement and put it in the pod.*

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## The Bar-B-Que Challenge

The debut of the *Loadmaster* is now history. Sun N' Fun was a great show for the *Express* and new builders have been added to the *Express* builder family. Within a few short hours after returning to Redmond, the pace was again increased with our move to new facilities. During this process, we took advantage of Pat Smith's offer and brought him down to Redmond to help in identifying and classifying the parts inventory as it was being moved. For those of you who don't know Pat Smith, he did all of the metal machine work for WTI.

After Pat and Barbara spent 3 days going over the inventory and drawings, we had a much better picture of what was current, what was obsolete and which drawings were the current drawings used in production at the time of shut-down. Although we had already progressed beyond this process, there were a few odds & ends which were indeterminable and Pats' presence helped confirm our direction.

On returning Pat and Barbara to Tacoma Narrows Airport in the *Loadmaster*, it was a somewhat eerie feeling to taxi past the old factory with the faded Wheeler logo still faintly exposed on the hangar wall.

Enough deja vu, this story starts with the need to purchase a gas barbecue. In Oregon, as in California, Washington and other states, there are discount stores called "warehouse stores" (Pace, Price Club, Costco, etc.) In the Central Oregon area there currently is no such place, although Costco is coming to Bend in August. Costco has the best price on gas bar-b-ques, but they are three hours away from Redmond so an all-day trip would need to be planned to save forty-five dollars. The forty-five dollar savings is certainly

not worth the cost of an airplane trip either, unless you happen to be traveling in that direction.

I decided to drop in at Flightcraft in Portland on my way back from Tacoma and see if a gas barbecue could fit in the *Express*. Mind you, many times I have made a supply run into Portland with my Twin Comanche, (soon to be former Twin Comanche), bought mucho supplies and semi-bulky items only to find I either had to leave packing boxes behind and/or the actual supplies themselves. I knew there was no way I was going to get that gas barbecue into the Twin Comanche.

When I could barely fit the barbecue into Flightcraft's van, I started to get that sickening feeling again that, like my appetite at times, my eyes were bigger than the cargo space of my airplane. The *Loadmaster* seating in the rear is fantastic. It took me no more than five minutes to extract the four-place rear seating arrangement and put it into the pod. It took forty-minutes to remove the front seat. This front seat arrangement has to be changed for instances just such as this. Joel Biggs down in Florida has modified his front seats so they hinge down and fold almost flat against the bottom of the seat. This is a great idea and we are incorporating it on the new demo.

At any rate, here I am upside down with my head down on the co-pilots floor trying to get to those seat attachment bolts and an elderly gentleman comes up to the side of the airplane and says, "Mighty fine looking airplane". I said "Thanks" and he asked if he could help in anyway. I told him I thought I had it under control, but thanks anyway. A few minutes went by and he was still standing by

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# Notes From Our Tech Director

The *Express Loadmaster* is a sterling example of the versatility of the basic *Express* Aircraft design. To create the *Loadmaster* we first considered the structural criteria and found a few areas needed attention (mostly landing gear). The next area investigated was the flight test criteria which is ongoing. at this time.

The heart of the *Loadmaster* is two basic items. The first major component of the *Loadmaster* is the 12 cubic feet cargo pod which is roughly 5' long, 3' wide, and 11 1/2" deep with a 39" long full depth door. The cargo pod is far more than just a place to cram baggage and cargo, it is a whole new way to adjust the weight and balance of the *Express*. The major portion of the cargo pod is at or forward of the aircraft center of gravity so most of the items placed in the cargo pod tend to shift the center of gravity forward. It is conceivable that the cargo pod loading could place the aircraft center of gravity well ahead of the acceptable forward C.G. limit, however, this allows the *Loadmaster* to be loaded aggressively in the aft cabin to bring the C.G. back within acceptable limits.

Until recently, very few people realized that the *Express* cabin volume (usable) was perhaps the largest of all kit planes. Cabin volume can be both a blessing or a curse. The blessing is that the cabin may be large enough to haul large heavy loads, however, the average light aircraft becomes loaded to aft C.G. quickly when loaded. Certified aircraft have in the past utilized forward baggage compartments to allow forward loading of cargo/baggage to balance the potential of aft cabin loads. Cessna utilized forward mounted belly pods on various utility models (C-206, C-185, C-337 etc.).

The nearly 11' long cabin of the *Express* was a paradox that just begged for a belly pod to allow substantial aft cabin loading. Obviously the Cessna utility pod was not of sufficient contour to allow installation on the *Express* so we built a very streamlined pod that most people agree fits the *Express* very well. Flight tests confirm that the pod is indeed quite streamlined since the top speed of N540ED test *Express* is changed very little.

The second major component of the

*Loadmaster* is the sling seat system which allows six different aft cabin configurations. The sling seating consists of channel rails installed in the cabin sidewalls and bulkheads that accept tubes which the sling seats are mounted upon. The sling seats are similar to beach type sling chairs in that the seat and backs are of a canvas type material and the slings slide over the tubes similar to a curtain over a curtain rod. The seat tubes are situated in such a manner that one tube is slightly above one's shoulder and the other tube is just below one's knees when seated. Long rectangular pillow cushions are attached to the slings by velcro strips to provide added seat padding. The aft cabin sling seats may be installed in the following configurations:

1. **Club** - Two aft facing middle adult seats and two forward facing child rear seats.
2. **Couch** - One long (6') left side rear couch behind the pilot seat with two adult positions on the couch forward portion and two children seated on the aft section of the couch.
3. **Standard configuration seating** - Two aft cabin forward facing adult seats.
4. **Rear facing adult** - (Note: This seating allows extremely heavy persons to occupy the aft seats since the aft facing adult seats are nearly on the aircraft center of gravity, therefore the center of gravity moves aft very little.
5. **Cargo configuration** - Since the sling seats consist of only slings, pillows, and telescoping tubes these components can quickly be detached from the aircraft and the rear cabin may be utilized for bulky cargo. It is important to realize that the seats may be rolled up and stored in the belly pod so no seats are left behind.
6. **Bed** - The same components that make up the sling seating may be configured to allow a bed that is +6' long by +46" wide suitable for sleeping two adults in the aft cabin without removing the pilot or copilot seats!!!

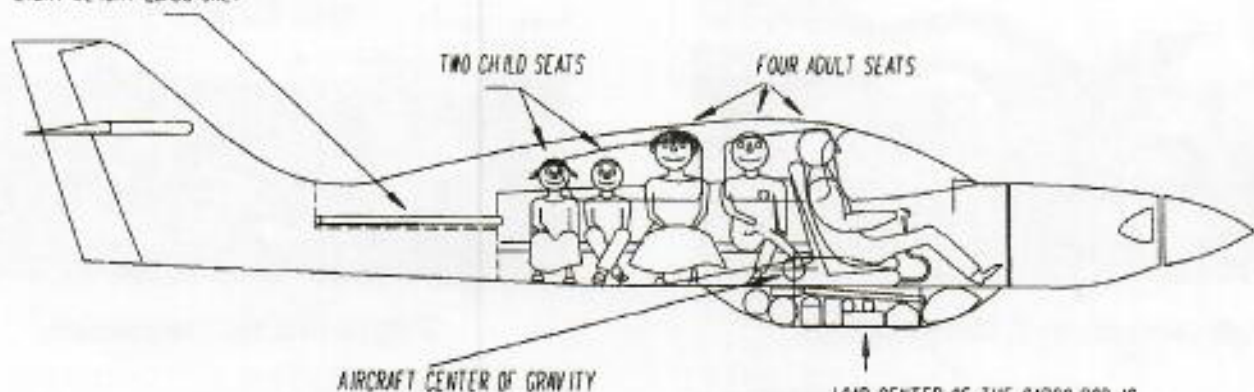
As a *Loadmaster* operator, you must realize that the large long cabin requires responsible loading by the pilot.

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*The cargo pod is far more than just a place to cram baggage and cargo, it is a whole new way to adjust the weight and balance of the Express.*

# The Express **LOADMASTER 3200**

SKI / FISHING ROD SHELF  
LIGHT WEIGHT LOADS ONLY



TWO CHILD SEATS

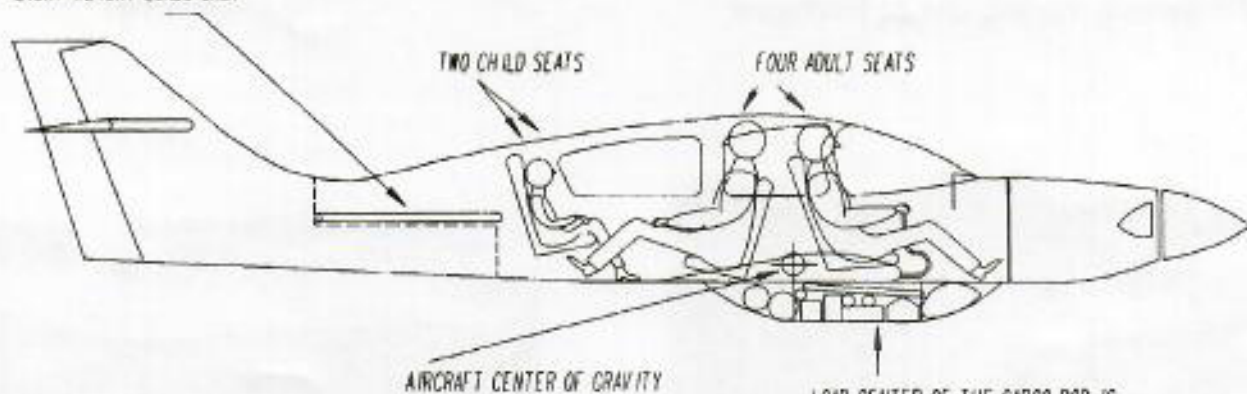
FOUR ADULT SEATS

AIRCRAFT CENTER OF GRAVITY

LOAD CENTER OF THE CARGO POD IS  
WELL AHEAD OF THE AIRCRAFT CENTER  
OF GRAVITY THEREBY ALLOWING CARGO  
POD LOADS TO BALANCE AFT CABIN LOADS.

## **6-Place Couch Seating**

SKI / FISHING ROD SHELF  
LIGHT WEIGHT LOADS ONLY



TWO CHILD SEATS

FOUR ADULT SEATS

AIRCRAFT CENTER OF GRAVITY

LOAD CENTER OF THE CARGO POD IS  
WELL AHEAD OF THE AIRCRAFT CENTER  
OF GRAVITY THEREBY ALLOWING CARGO  
POD LOADS TO BALANCE AFT CABIN LOADS.

## **4 + 2 Club Seating**



**Ufe Gertsman & Martin Jennett**



**This Needs No Introduction**



**Ed Bernard Taxiing Out At Redmond**



**The Loadmaster**



**The Express Line-up**



**The Lenn Brothers**

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## Sun N' Fun Recap

Thanks to the help of *Express* volunteer builders, Sun N' Fun was a very successful show for EDI. Since returning from Florida, we have received numerous orders from both existing builders and new builders. Russ and Joyce Porterfield flew down with Jim Warner, and Ed Bernard and Bob Hockett flew down together in Ed's Masterpiece. Joyce teamed-up with Carol (Mike McDaniels much better-half) to gussy-up the booth and make everything run smoothly. Ufe and Jutta Gerstmann flew their recently completed and painted *Express* down from North Carolina to be joined later by Martin Jennett, their partner. The Lind brothers brought their recently completed *Express* down from West Virginia to make it "five on the line" at Sun N' Fun. Heartfelt thanks to the efforts put forth by these builders. The expressions on the faces of the Sun N' Fun visitors were great to observe when they looked out to see all those *Express* airplanes lined up and looking fantastic.

Thanks to all of the builders who stopped by to lend moral support and talk about the *Express*. Thanks to Jim, Russ, Ed, Bob, and Ufe for standing-up in that Florida sun to answer all the questions when people came by to view the airplanes.

How many *Express* planes can we assemble for Oshkosh??? I know of at least one more, Hardy Huber. Are there any more out there that we can add to the list?

We have included some photos from Sun N' Fun of the *Express* airplanes that were there. If you want to see the color prints, you'll have to come to Redmond. Don't forget, you are always welcome and we really like to have builders come and check us out.

## Art Gallery

Soon we will have an 8" X 10" photo of every completed *Express* aircraft, framed and hanging on our office walls. Besides our Demo Aircraft, there will be four, which as far as we know is more than any other kitplane manufacturer (of 4-place airplanes) has on their walls.

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## Headliners

If you haven't already seen the June issue of *Kitplanes* magazine, you had better get yourself a copy. The cover story features Jim Wamers beautiful *Express*. Congratulations, Jim, for a well deserved article! Further, the issue also has a lengthy article on Denise Waters' "building experience". The article gave Denise great coverage and certainly did not hurt us a bit. You would not believe the calls and requests for information that we have received from women since the article on Denise appeared. Thank you Dence and Dick and Jane.

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## New Video

Tell your friends and neighbors, EDI finally has its own video representing the *Loadmaster 3200*. We have some great shots over the Cascade mountain range, Smith Rocks and the Sisters Airport. What a picturesque airport! If you ever come up to see us, the little town of Sisters is a "must see". We even have one of our Aussie Builders in the Video (Peter Novakovic and his wife), they happened by during filming.

*You would not believe the calls and requests for information that we have received from women since the article on Denise appeared.*

*EDI finally has its own video presenting the Loadmaster 3200.*

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## Options Catalog Update

The promised options catalog is nearing completion. Here are some more items to whet your appetite until it is released.

LANDING LIGHTS WITH PULSE	\$ 495.00
SPEED BRAKES (ELECTRIC)	\$2495.00
CARGO POD	\$1300.00
LOADMASTER OPTION (INCLUDES POD & SEATING)	\$2950.00

## Tech Talk

(Continued From Page 2)

The long aft cabin must be considered when loading people or cargo aft of the wing carry thru structure - prepare a weight and balance.

Conversely, the belly pod makes it somewhat easy for a pilot to abuse the forward center of gravity if only two people occupy the front seats and cargo is carried in the cargo pod without aft cabin loads - prepare a weight and balance.

Many kit planes are very sensitive to center of gravity positions even with very small cabins. However, almost the opposite is true of the *Loadmaster*. The *Loadmaster* has a substantial C.G. range. However, the almost 11' long cabin may be subject to much abuse when heavy items are loaded into the aft cabin, so the responsible *Loadmaster* pilot will load the forward portion of the pod to bring the balance back to within acceptable C.G. limits.

Recently, one of our factory pilots flew the *Loadmaster* in a condition well forward of the C.G. limit and the aircraft is quite nose heavy, so remember, all aircraft should be flown within center of gravity limits so - prepare a weight and balance!!!

Happy Building and Flying!!!

## Bar-B-Que

(Continued From Page 1)

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the airplane, looking over at the Flightcraft van and its contents. "You going to get that gas bar-b-que into your plane", he asks. "O yeah", I tried to say confidently.

The dimensions of that bar-b-que (boxed and in disassembled form), were 32 inches high, 23 inches wide, and 38 inches long. The boxed bar-b-que weighed 165 pounds. To the astonishment of all the onlookers (and myself as well), I was able to place that bar-b-que in the cabin, with the help of some Flightcraft personnel.

Again I say, "What an airplane". Try to do that with any of the other kits on the market, to say nothing about most of the certified planes around. Do you think a two-door Ariga could do that? Fat chance!

**Coming Next Month  
EDI's Plans For  
Oshkosh**

*Express Design, Inc.*

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