

# BEECHCRAFT OF THE MONTH

N313W

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## 1981 V35B BABY DOLL

Like many with a passion for aviation, my addiction began as one of my earliest memories: I was a 3-year-old tyke sitting on my father's lap, tiny hands clasped on the yoke of a 1959 Bonanza V-tail when our family was flying from Nashville, Tennessee, to Florida. My mother was sitting copilot and my brothers were strapped in the back—one of the few moments as the youngest of three brothers that I had an advantage because the cg envelope of the Bonanza precluded me from riding in the back. There I was, holding straight and level, with my father providing a gentle nudge on the yoke and a light touch on the rudders for his baby-boy future aviator, sealing forever my love affair with the Bonanza.

I had owned a Debonair for six years, but business and my marriage took a turn for the worse and I sold her

(the Debonair). In the winter of 2005, in a second marriage and with a bit of luck, it rained like Seattle here in Los Angeles and my waterproofing business took off like a Harrier jet. Of course, with two nickels in my pocket I was immediately on the Internet, browsing every possible site looking for a V-tail Bonanza.

My quest was to find the latest model of the V35B available, a plane that had been coddled like my Debonair but with zero corrosion or damage history. I did find a beautiful airplane, completed a full restoration of the panel, stroked the IO-520 into a fire-breathing 550, then crashed my *Baby Doll* into a cornfield on my first

trip to Oshkosh. (See my article, "Going Too Green," in the December 2007 *ABS Magazine*.)

However, being honest about it, owning an airplane is a series of ecstatic moments punctuated by disappointments of mechanical squawks and unexpected expenses. Crashing an airplane falls squarely in the category of the latter. In spite of my knowledge of the personal costs, having the good fortune to walk away after totaling my V-tail in the corn presented an excellent opportunity to make this airplane better-than-new.

Once I made the decision to completely restore nearly every rivet on the twisted hulk of my second Beechcraft, it was like having another beer on a hot day—and each upgrade expense seemed easier to swallow. My business was doing well and though my wife continued to question my sanity in spending good money after bad, I stuck to my strategy of repeating confusing information along with bringing home



Kelly McBride with the finally restored 'again' N313W.



The panel upgrade with the Garmin 530W and annunciator, GMX200 MFD and AuRACLE CRM2100 engine monitor. I was going to wait for the G600 glass but opted for the standard "six-pack" with the Sandel SN3500 EHSI due to its more familiar representation to pilots trained on the "steam gauges." To the greatest degree possible, redundancy was built in with both pressure and electric artificial horizons, dual HSI—one air-driven, one electric—with the Sandel SG102 solid state electric AHRS.

#### EQUIPMENT LIST

Interior by Aviation Design w/ Irish burl elm accents & custom cabinetry.

Exterior paint by Arizona Aeropainting & Scheme Designers

Garmin 340 audio panel

Garmin GMX200 Multi-Function Display with GDL69A Satellite Weather & XM radio

Garmin 530W GPS with remote Mid-Continent annunciator

Garmin SL30 nav/com w/ glideslope

King KRA10 radar altimeter

Xerion AuRACLE CRM2100 engine monitor

Insight TAS1000 Air Data Computer & Windicator

Mid-Continent 594PAD3 altimeter with bootstrapped barometric pressure

Mid-Continent Lifesaver 4300-411 electric artificial horizon w/ battery backup

Sandel SN3500 EHSI & SG102 solid-state attitude heading reference system

Century NSD360A HSI w/ glideslope on Nav #2

Century 41 autopilot

King KT76C transponder and KN63 DME

3M Stormscope WX-10A

Precise Flight speed brakes

Osborne tip tanks w/ dual fuel gauge  
Whelen LED beacon

#### ENGINE

Eagle Engines "Stratos G-Force 550"  
Screaming Eagle Modification IO-550-B-EE

Tornado Alley "Whirlwind II" Turbonormalizer

Skytec Lightweight Starter, Concorde AGM battery

Designer prop by American Propeller

Special thanks for helping me get *Baby Doll* out of the cornfield and back in the sky to Dick Kuck, Rick Lucia, Jason Bowen & crew at Cruiseair Aviation, Ramona, California; Kerry Dawes & James Dean at American Propeller & Eagle Engines, Redding, California; Steve Thomas, Dave Allen & crew at Emery Air & Poplar Grove Airmotive.

chocolates and flowers when I spent a bunch of money on the turbonormalizer and speed brakes.

The final result is impressive, mostly to me. Most people would never understand why I would spend innumerable hours researching the need for slaving amps and filter capacitors so that my fancy new MFD, air data computer, EHSI, solid-state AHRS and bootstrapped altimeter could communicate with each other (and more important, the autopilot).

Yes, the hotshots who can buy a new plastic plane full of glass might be

feeling "rico suave" in their Cirrae and Cessna 400s, but they don't have their father's ghost riding shotgun, his deep voice echoing in their mind, barking out flight instructions: "Fly the airplane!"

This is the payoff when restoring a Bonanza—or any plane, for that matter. It's a process of investment where the reward is mankind's greatest accomplishment, where a mere mortal is lifted into the sky by his sheet-metal steed, to soar in ecstasy with the spirits of the wind, bonded together as one.

If you come to Oshkosh, you will witness my unbridled passion for an

inanimate object that is completely misunderstood by the less-privileged masses. You will see the reason this hard-working American is pledged to pouring his heart, soul and fortune into the longest-running love story of private aviation, the Bonanza. This is the gift Walter Beech gave to the world, and I am a lucky guy to own one and be able to share that brotherhood with the other knowing few in the American Bonanza Society.

I hope to see you at the ABS tent at Oshkosh and/or the ABS Convention in Salt Lake City.

