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## SWT AVIATION

THE SOUTHEAST SOURCE FOR THE CUBCRAFTERS EXPERIENCE

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**CARBON CUB<sup>SS</sup>**  
LIGHT SPORT



# SWT Aviation

The Southeast source for the CubCrafters experience

Flying into the CubCrafters Experience event in Yakima, Washington, this past September, SWT Aviation owner Chip Allen was about to add another adventure to his long list of up-close and personal aviation experiences.



Following a day of meetings with the CubCrafters management team, Chip, along with John Moreland, his Florida sales representative, and Ralph Rogers, the Montana CubCrafters dealer, took the opportunity to do a little Northwest flying. They arranged for three factory airplanes to tour the “high country” southwest of Yakima. Over the next three hours, they enjoyed flying the winding Yakima River, viewing the serenity of mountain leaves changing for fall, landing on grass airstrips and watching herds of wild horses running in the shadows of the airplanes. To all of them, it was just another day in the life of several fortunate pilots flying CubCrafters’ incredible aircraft.

“I’ve always loved taildraggers,” Allen says. “Flying them challenges you to be a better pilot and really polishes your ‘stick and rudder’ skills. But the most exciting part is the access you have to so many different places—grass strips, pastures, and the “back country”—that are not available to the average tricycle-gear crowd. Witnessing these places from an altitude of a few hundred feet only increases ones appreciation for this type of flying, as long as you’re not in a hurry.”

Chip started flying in 1967 in a 1946 Piper J3-C65 and has maintained his involvement in aviation ever since. After a short career as a professional pilot, and 27 years in environmental equipment sales, Chip purchased a Beechcraft Baron and incorporated SWT Aviation Inc. as an aircraft appraisal business. In 2005, after selling his 1939 J-3, he got the itch to go to EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, to check out the “low and slow” aircraft market.

On that trip he discovered CubCrafters: a taildragger manufacturer, which at that point in the company’s history had recently been awarded its FAA Part 23 Production Certificate for the TOP CUB, a stronger, safer and easier to fly Cub than its predecessors. Jim Richmond, President and Founder of CubCrafters started the business in 1980 as a restorer and rebuilder of Piper Cubs. Today, it has evolved into a state-of-the-art aircraft manufacturer occupying a 40,000 square-foot facility and building three distinct products: the TOP CUB, the LSA Sport Cub S2 with a Continental O-200A engine and the Carbon Cub SS with its CC340, 180-horsepower engine.



“The fit and finish, and the general quality of the CubCrafters product is beyond anything else in the taildragger market,” Allen says. “After spending time getting to know more about the company, its owner and employees, I discovered a deep-seated demand for perfection in the CubCrafters organization that is really refreshing. It’s easy to get excited when you know that everyone from the CEO to the janitor is dedicated to producing that perfect product. It’s about the quality more than anything.”

When he returned from Oshkosh that year, Allen was the newly appointed factory-direct salesman for the growing company, a position he held until last year when CubCrafters changed its marketing focus to a dealer-model. At that time, SWT Aviation became the CubCrafters Certified Sales Center for the Southeast. While still managing a regular, full-time job, Chip continues to preach the tenets of the low-speed, low-altitude aircraft experience, and selling CubCrafters’ special aircraft has only enriched his enthusiasm for tail-wheel flying.

“I still fly at least three or four times a week—about 250 hours a year,” Allen says. “Probably 75 to 100 hours of that are in CubCrafters airplanes. A step out of the Baron into the Carbon Cub is just a step into another world of flying. Ask any taildragger pilot and he’ll tell you that the takeoff is all about the airplane and the landing is all about the pilot. Flying the 180 HP CubCrafters Carbon Cub SS is a lot like that. You begin the take-off roll and the airplane is in the air before the throttle is fully open.



The takeoff performance is phenomenal, but it lands just like any other taildragger.”

The FAA Light Sport Rules (LSA) implemented in 2004, have created an entirely new category of aircraft and pilot certification, the Light Sport Pilot. The freedom to fly with only a valid driver’s license in lieu of an FAA Medical Certificate has opened up the skies to many enthusiasts who might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience these great airplanes.

The aircraft CubCrafters offers have many advantages and provide a different, more intimate flight experience than others. Some refer to flying Cubs as the purest form of powered flight, but to fully understand what CubCrafters’ products bring to the marketplace, one must first acknowledge how technologically advanced, yet incredibly simple and fun these machines are.

The Sport Cub S2 is the airplane that put CubCrafters in the LSA arena. With its 100-horsepower engine, it’s responsive, light on the controls and just a joy to fly. The standard solid yellow paint scheme with vintage black lightning bolt—other paint schemes are available—inspires the sense of nostalgia instilled by the Cubs of the late-1930’s and early-1940’s, but it’s the technological advancements of this airplane that set it apart. With 50 percent fewer parts than a Super Cub and extensive use of carbon fiber and machined aluminum parts, this is the most advanced airplane to ever carry the “Cub” moniker.

If the Sport Cub S2 pays homage to the legacy of the original iconic airplane, then the Carbon Cub SS takes the classic and launch-





es it into the 21st century. This airplane has truly become the flagship of the CubCrafters LSA fleet. Powered by a four-cylinder, 340 cubic inch, 180-horsepower engine, its take-off run can be measured in lengths of the fuselage. The clean-sheet design of the Carbon Cub SS enables CubCrafters to provide a wider cockpit, larger windows and bigger tires, but it's just as exciting to fly as ever.

This Cub is the next evolution of aircraft in the low and slow marketplace. It takes almost every facet of the famous vintage aircraft and improves upon it in some way to make the aircraft more efficient, lighter and more exhilarating than any other LSA on the market. This is the airplane you want to own for the simple joy of flying. Cruise low over freshly mown fields, open the windows and hang your elbow out, follow the curves of a river or land on a sandbar for a picnic; it's all available to an owner of a Sport Cub S2 or Carbon Cub SS.

In addition, both of these aircraft are fully compliant with the two-place, LSA certification requirements. The use of modern materials has resulted in a class-leading empty weight that easily comes in under the ASTM Standard limitations.

Both aircraft fly the way their forerunners flew: gentle, reliable, steep with turns, fast with takeoffs and climbs, and slow yet steady in flight. "Both are an absolute thrill to fly," Allen says. "You can put them down just about anywhere: on a runway, in a river bed or even in a cow pasture. They fly nicely at 35 mph and are just a lot of fun! If you're looking for a get-there-fast, cross-country machine, then this is probably not going to be your next airplane. But if you're thinking

about a fun airplane that will polish up your flying skills, then put some big tires on and start exploring, your search has ended."

With the ability to take-off and land in relatively short distances, exceptional climb performance, and with acceptable cross-country speed and economy, the Carbon Cub can get you from point A to point B in a timely manner with a smooth, fun flight experience. Moreover, economic advantages also factor into making this Cub one of the vastly superior LSA models on the market today. As with all LSAs, aircraft ownership is more affordable than it has been in recent years.

"It's an inexpensive airplane to own and operate, and being an LSA is just the icing on the cake," Allen says. "It burns six gallons of fuel an hour, the annual condition inspection runs about \$500 and it's a very easy airplane to maintain." Allen says that most mechanics who've worked on Cessna 150s or 172s would be able to handle any maintenance required on these Cubs.

Although Chip still has his "real" job, he eventually wants to make SWT Aviation his full-time pursuit. Through his partnership with CubCrafters, he has met some amazing people: one client in Tennessee, an older gentleman, who keeps his Sport Cub on a 1,000-foot strip on his property; another who landed the Cub's massive, almost bush-plane-like tires on a Florida beach just to take a few pictures. However, it's the personal experience of flying that still gets to him.

"I'd love to fly these CubCrafters aircraft every day, all year!" Allen says. "They keep your skills sharp, they're fun to fly and I highly recommend that pilots who have not given tail-wheel flying a try to just do it. It really is a blast!"

CubCrafters: The word alone inspires visions of excitement, adventure, "off-roading" and just about more fun than a man can stand. +

*For more information, visit [www.swtaviation.com](http://www.swtaviation.com) or [www.cubcrafters.com](http://www.cubcrafters.com).*

