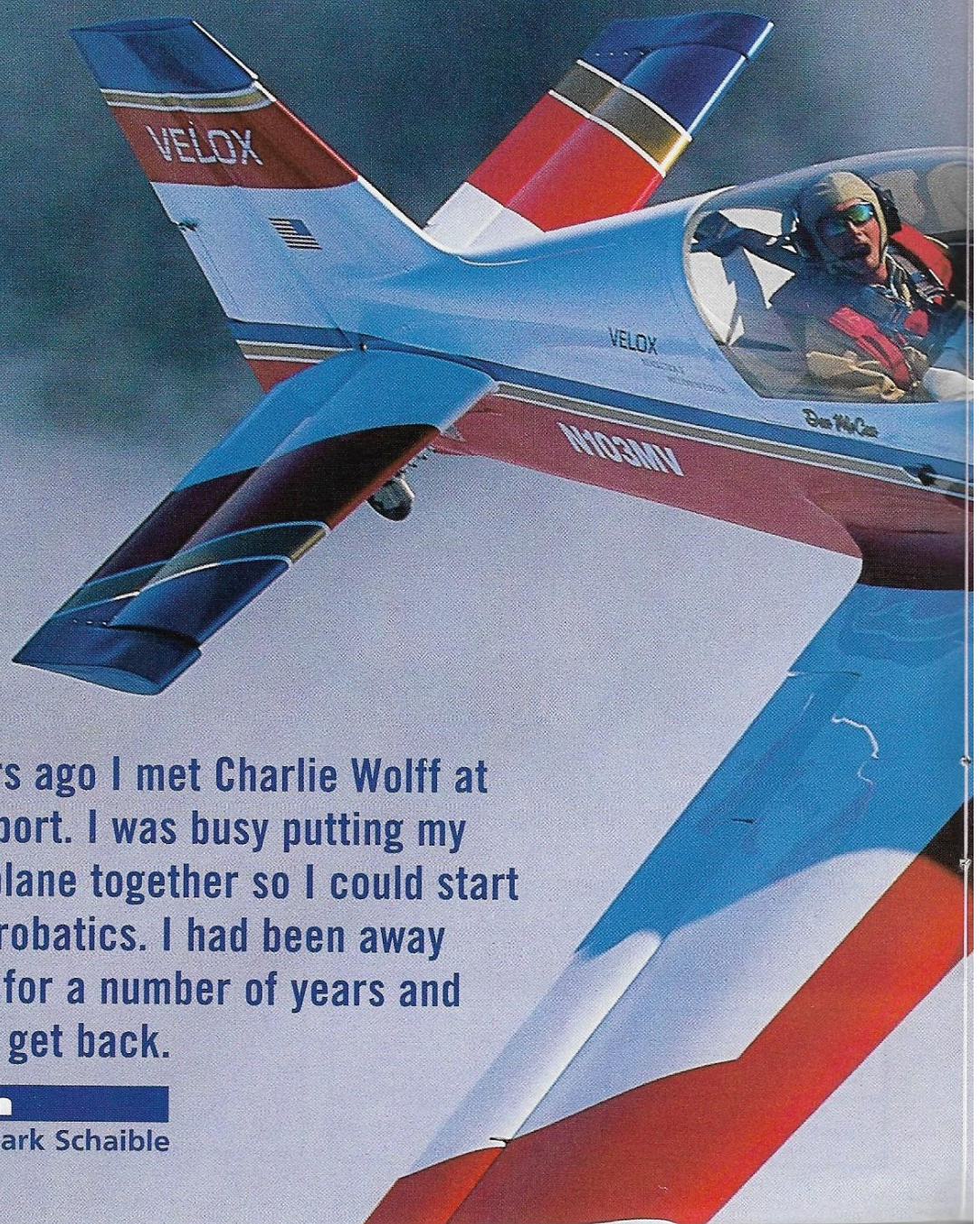


LOVE AT FIRST FLIGHT

THE VELOX R



About five years ago I met Charlie Wolff at Indiantown Airport. I was busy putting my Snargasher biplane together so I could start doing some aerobatics. I had been away from the sport for a number of years and was anxious to get back.

Alan Bush

Photography by Mark Schaible

EV II



Charlie introduced himself and told me about the all carbon fiber/Kevlar Velox kit monoplane he had designed and built. I had heard about the project and was more than a little interested. Over the next several years, I watched with interest as the design was constantly improving.

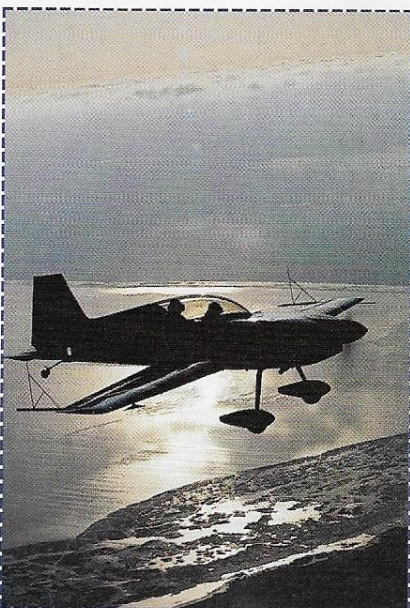
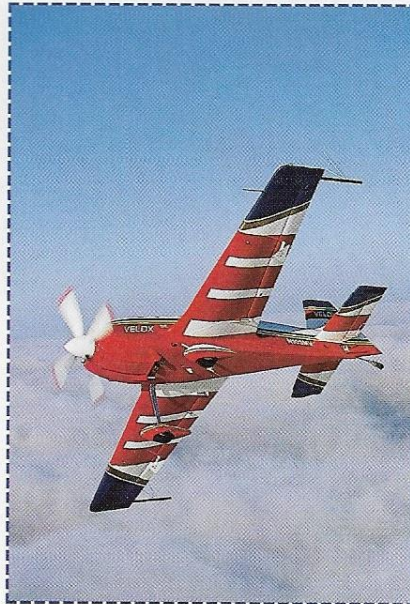
Charlie's newest design, the two-seat Velox Rev II, was parked next to me at a contest in 1999. For the next several days I watched Len Fox fly it. Len put on several demos, and the plane's looks and performance were overwhelming. Every time I walked to my biplane I caught myself looking at the new Velox. Charlie and I hit it off right away, and before long he offered to let me test-fly it. The next weekend Sergei Boriak flew an air show at Stuart, Florida, and after the show I finally got my chance. I took a quick hop out over the ocean to perform some aerobatics. It was love at first flight.

I have never flown anything that was so easy to get used to. I have flown just about every monoplane, including Extras, CAPs, and Sukhois, and believe me this thing is a joy. I nailed the very first snap. It's the first monoplane that snapped like a Pitts. In every other monoplane I have flown, you have to learn special techniques. After several weeks of flying the airplane I felt I could fly it in an Unlimited competition. Charlie offered and I accepted a chance to fly the plane in Arizona at the IAC Championships of The Americas (CoTA).

Since I had been away from Unlimited competition for more than 10 years and the CoTA was only a couple of months away, I would have to work hard to get ready. Being an airline pilot helps with being able to plan my time to practice. Fortunately it would be during the winter months, which is the best time of the year for aerobatics in south Florida. After practicing three flights a day two to three times a week for several months, I felt I was ready. All I needed was a little critiquing, and off I would go on a 4,000-mile round trip. Ken Truesdell, a local aerobatic pilot and IAC judge, furnished the help.

I planned to leave a little early to get some practice at CoTA since I had never flown in a marked box with the Velox. The plan was to fuel the airplane and check it out the night before departing for Arizona and then to leave at 6 a.m. the next morning. Charlie and I arrived at the airport at 5:30 a.m., but because of ground fog, I could not leave until 9:15 a.m. This was to be the first long-distance cross-country for the airplane, so I kept my legs to about two hours. At more than 200 mph, it really ate up the real estate.

I made it from south Florida to west Texas with plenty of daylight left. If I could have departed one hour earlier, I could have made it all the way in one day! I woke up the next morning and completed a two-hour leg to Chandler, Arizona, the



site of the CoTA. I signed up for box time and went to register for the contest. Being away from competition left me not knowing very many people. I talked to Charlie on the phone and told him I felt like an outsider. He told me he knew almost all of the Unlimited guys and to just wait, they would warm up. Boy was he right. By the end of the week I had made a lot of new friends and felt right at home. Everyone was interested in the Velox. As the contest went on and they got to see it fly, the interest grew.

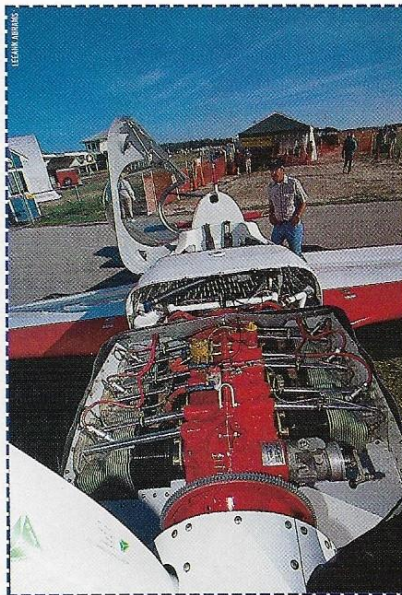
After the contest was over, the real fun started. Everyone who has ever flown aerobatics knows the feeling of looking at the weather and seeing no way home. For the next several days, I flew only as far as the weather would allow. I did get to see spectacular scenery in Arizona while flying the first day. After that, it was wake up and fly to the front, spend the night, and repeat. Even this turned out to be a lot of fun, as everywhere I stopped people would ask about the Velox. Several times a day while waiting for the weather I would look out the window of the FBO and think to myself, "What a neat-looking airplane that flies as good as it looks." It ended up taking me three days to get home, but I always felt safe and never pushed the weather.

Since then, I have been flying the Velox every time I get a chance. After flying it one day, I decided to try the biplane just for kicks. I have never felt so lost. Once in the air I felt I could not see anything. I tried to do some aerobatics, and boy did I stink! I have been flying small biplanes for over 25 years, and for the first time I was actually concerned about landing the thing. I landed, taxied to the hangar, got out, and called Charlie. I told him that we could start using parts off my biplane, as I would never fly it again after flying the Velox. During the next several months we started using some of my biplane parts, and now the Velox has my engine, prop, spinner, and governor. I guess you can say I own part of the air-

plane by osmosis. Pretty clever, don't you think?

Since CoTA, Len Fox, Nicolay Timofeev, and Sergei Boriak have given Charlie some help in aileron/spade design and setup. Charlie redesigned the ailerons, modified them, and fabricated new spades. Len Fox flew the airplane and helped set up the ailerons/spades, and the result was fantastic. I was away on a trip while Len and Charlie did the setup. Charlie called me and said, "Just wait until you see how the plane flies now!" When I got home from my trip, I went to the airport thinking that it couldn't be any better, but boy was I surprised. I guess when you are willing to listen to the pros there is no end in sight to the improvements. One of the things world-class pilots like about Charlie is his willingness to listen and take their advice.

The controls are very well balanced, and the roll rate is even faster due to the changes. I honestly feel that this is the easiest



Unlimited-class monoplane to transition into, and it has the ability to win at any level of competition. Its light weight and six-cylinder Lycoming engine give it the highest power-to-weight ratio of any of the current Unlimited planes. The airplane I am flying is the prototype fuselage for the two-seat Velox. We are currently using a stock 260-hp IO-540. Len Fox has flown the two-seat Velox equipped with a Monty Barrett engine. And it performs even better than my airplane. ✈

Velox Rev II Specs

Unlimited aerobatic monoplane
(available in kit form)

Construction:	Carbon fiber/Kevlar
Seating:	Two seats reclined 37 degrees
Empty weight:	Under 1,200 pounds
Wingspan:	24 feet, 6 inches
Length:	21 feet, 6 inches
Engine:	Lycoming IO-540, from 235 hp to 360 hp
Rate of climb:	Over 3,000 feet/minute with 260 hp
Roll rate:	In excess of 400 degrees/second

For more info:
<http://www.veloxrev.net>

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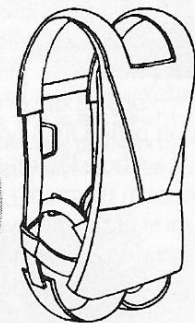
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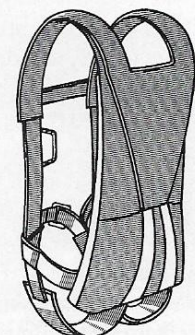
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