

Jan. 23, 2019 - Sebring Regional and the Light Sport Aircraft Expo

These days I seem to be able to go to only a handful of aviation themed shows each year. However one that I have faithfully attended, ever since I built my Highlander in 2007, is the every January event at the nearby Sebring Regional airport. It is the closest show devoted solely to the Light Sport home built Experimental type aircraft and it gives me a chance to interact directly with the principals of the Just Aircraft company, which produced my particular airplane. I was pleased to learn that the company has recently exceeded the 750 unit mark, and that they continue to manufacturer about 2 kits per week. For a small specialty aircraft company, this is no mean feat. Many have long ago closed their doors before coming even close to this number. Here is a photo of me with their latest offering, a lengthened (by 18") version of their popular Super-STOL bush type airplane favored by the more adventurous pilots amongst us who enjoying landing on graveled river sand bars or in hilly back mountain cut outs.



In the past I have both flown and driven over to nearby Sebring airport for this show. Today, due to some very strong and gusting winds I decided to make the hour and a half drive from my house. Upon arrival I was glad that I did so. As you can see in this photo of

some of the auto-gyros on the flight line, the wind socks visible in the background are streaming straight out with 20 MPH winds, gusting to 25. As a result there were very few attendees for this, the first day of the show, and even fewer aircraft in the traffic pattern. In fact, during the entire 5 hours that I was there I saw only a handful of landing aircraft... one of which was a 3/4 scale replica of the WWII P-51 Mustang fighter plane seen immediately above and to the right.



And the forecast weather is not at all that favorable either, with heavy rain and winds expected tomorrow, and a blustery and cold (temps in the mid 50's) Friday. I am saddened to say that the days for this particular show are probably numbered with too many other competing venues, including the very well attended **Sun n' Fun** which takes place in 3 months at Lakeland, Florida. But then, so numbered, I guess, are the remaining years that I expect to be able to continue with my flying.