

# MARGATE SHOW

*Not the best in its history, but still well-organized...*

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**M**ANY WOULD say that this year's Experimental Aircraft Association's fly-in and convention at Margate was a disappointing affair.

Certainly, it lacked the magic of previous years and, from a spectator's point of view, the drawcards of earlier shows were sadly lacking.

If anyone had any doubts as to the recent SA Defence Force budget cuts, these would have been dispelled at Margate — no limelight-stealing SAAF Museum warbirds, no Harvard aerobatic team and certainly no precision formation flying by the crack Silver Falcons. Add to this the non-appearance of the Chubb Team and there was really little left for the average, uninitiated man-in-the-street.

But this failed to deter the enthusiast for there was still plenty to see and the air show the EAA put on for the public, although lacking the drawcards, was nevertheless impressive.

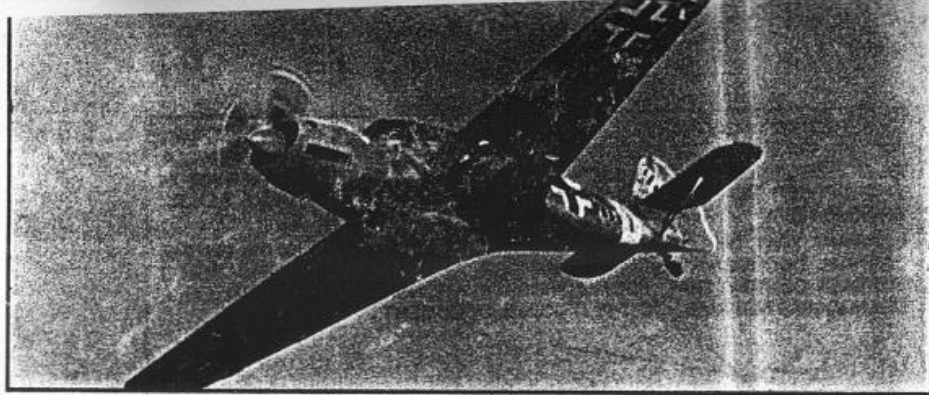
On the ground, there were the usual stalls offering everything from aircraft right down through avionics to the nuts and bolts. Peter Cellier's new Eagle 300 was on display as was the Celstar GA-1 aerobatic glider.

There may well have been 335 aircraft of all types present during the five-day show — slightly up on last year's weather-spoilt event but well down on earlier turnouts — but there was only a comparative handful of real grass-roots experimental homebuilts on display.

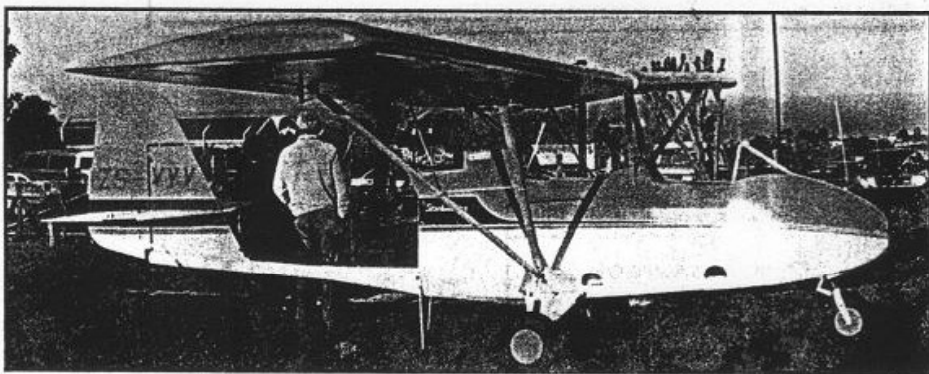
Among those present, however, were some interesting designs, the Oosthuizen Stockmaster attracting considerable attention. This is a two-seat, high wing "pusher" design powered by a Rotax 503 engine.

Rand KR2s were much in evidence and must surely rank as the most prolific of the homebuilt aircraft. It was interesting to see the various interpretations of the basic design.

The expected gaggle of Aircampers did not materialise at Margate and only two examples were on show. There were also examples of the



Above: Claus van der Walt's Nord 1002 in action. Below: One of the more unusual designs on display was the Oosthuizen Stockmaster. Bottom left: Bev Hall climbs from the cockpit of his Mustang after a demonstration flight at Margate.



Jodel, Long-Eze, Vari-Eze, Bede BD4, Turbulent, Teenie, VP-1 and Luton Beta.

Attracting a lot of interest was Bev Hall's scale Mustang P-51D making its first appearance at the Margate convention. It was adjudged the grand champion homebuilt and won the Ian Lewis Memorial trophy.

It shared the parking area with Claus van der Walt's Nord 1002 (the licence-built Messerschmidt Bf108) which is at last sporting a more convincing colour scheme. Its original sleek lines have been somewhat spoilt by its American engine installation and the pseudo Mf109 canopy. The crowds loved its simulated strafing displays complete with chattering machine-guns. It is a pity that it could not have been matched in a simulated dogfight with the scale Mustang.

Among the aircraft in this section were some superb Tiger Moths complemented by John English's DH Dragon Rapide from Port Elizabeth. Three Chipmunks and the Department of Transport's Beaver completed the de Havilland line-up.

Further vintage types on display included examples of the Piper J3 Cub, Aeronca Chief and Champion, Ercoupe, Cessna 140, Taylor-

craft BC-12D, Stinson Voyager, Auster J/1, PA-14 Family Cruiser and others.

The vintage aircraft which took many of the prizes was "Chalkie" Stobart's Fairchild F-24W-41A Argus Mk.1 which certainly is a superb piece of restoration work and proved to be a popular winner.

In the warbirds section, there were two Harvards on show, the Canadian Car & Foundry-built Mk.IVM belonging to Brian Zeederberg and still sporting its weathered *Forca Aerea de Mozambique* colours, and the pristine AT-6D rebuilt by South African Airways. This latter aircraft was the first winner of a new award — the Aero Skills Trophy for the best professionally rebuilt aircraft.

Long a bone of contention at the convention has been the entry of professionally-built aircraft in the amateur categories. With the introduction of the Aero Skills Trophy competition, however, these aircraft will have their own section and "the little guys" can at last compete on their own ground for the main trophies which, after all, is what the EAA is all about.

Another warbird which became the centrepiece in the static park was Stu Davidson's Stearman PT-17.

Displays by commercial aircraft dealers were much in evidence and included two new Mooney types not seen at a local display before. These were the Mooney M-20J "201SE" and the Mooney M-20/M-27 TLS.

In fact, virtually every Mooney version existing in South Africa today was to be seen at Margate this year — from the original wooden wing 1958 model Mk.20 through the pressurised M-22 Mustang to the latest models.

Not to be forgotten was the display by the South African Navion Club's demonstration team. Although just two year's old, this club is one of the most enthusiastic in the country and its aircraft are all in showroom condition. ■

