Mitsubishi sponsors Zlin aerobatics

KEMBLE

Vic Norman has been sponsored by Colt Cars in his Zlin 50L for this year’s UK airshow season. Norman, who is based at Kemble, Glos, also flies a Stampe and was sponsored by Lonsdale Cars last year. The aircraft has been repainted in Colt’s Mitsubishi Cars marketing colours.

Norman already has 70 airshow bookings and will appear at the International Air Tattoo at Fairford in July.

Kittinger wins Gordon Bennett

PALM SPRINGS

Veteran balloonist Joe Kittinger has won the international Gordon Bennett balloon race for the third consecutive year. He beat competitors from five other countries to win the long-distance winner-take-all event, writes Norman Lynn.

Front runner was California Grape, flown by Austrian Airlines pilot Josef Starkbaum, who managed to cover some 202 miles before coming down at Lathrop Wells, Nevada. Other contestants came from West Germany, Japan, France, and Switzerland.

Kittinger managed to clock up more than 1,000 miles in last year’s event when he landed in Hobart, Oklahoma. This year he was less fortunate, coming down after some 280 miles at Gunderson, Nevada. He overflew the 3,000,000-acre Las Vegas bombing and gunnery range, which is prohibited to civilian flight. The flight, in his balloon Rosie O’Grady, lasted some 49hr 47min.

Florida-based Kittinger made the first solo balloon crossing of the Atlantic in 1984 when he flew 3,544 miles from the USA to Italy. He holds the world record for 1,000m³ balloons with a 2,000-mile flight from Las Vegas to New York two years ago.

Getting it taped

LONDON

David Hoy, CFI of the Denham Flying School, and Peter Mansfield, a pilot with Air UK, have issued a set of six one-hour cassettes to cover the UK PPL syllabus, Air Law, Meteorology, Navigation, Airframes and Engines, and the Radio-telephony test.

The cassettes are designed as a memory jogger, rather than to replace text books and “long” briefings, and are useful to the busy student who needs to be reminded of sections of the books that need to be read again.

The set of six cost £34.00 (inc VAT). Enquiries to: Airtape (Publications) Ltd, 38 Lullington Garth, Woodside Park, Finchley, London N12 7AP; tel 01-445 8232.

Shoulder harnesses are best

WASHINGTON D.C.

The most effective method of reducing fatal and serious injuries in general-aviation accidents is the use of shoulder harnesses, says the US National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

Perhaps 20 per cent of fatalities could be avoided if all aircraft occupants were to wear shoulder harnesses, while only about 2 per cent of fatalities could be prevented if energy-absorbing seats were available, the NTSB concludes in its report on the crashworthiness of GA aircraft.

Energy-absorbing seats cannot be expected to prevent many fatalities, says the NTSB. Their main value is that they can prevent spinal injuries, but these injuries are rarely fatal except when they prevent the victim from getting out of the aircraft.

NTSB says that 27 per cent of all seats in survivable accidents undergo some type of failure.

More significantly, 88 per cent of the serious injuries could be avoided if people wore shoulder harnesses.

Partenavia launches light aircraft

NAPLES

Italy has joined the very-light-aircraft competition. Partenavia has launched the P.86 Mosquito, and a prototype is expected to be ready by the end of this year.

The machine is aimed at the basic economical trainer market and features two side-by-side seats, high wing, and metal composite structure. Power is provided by a 75 h.p. engine.

Flight understands that the aircraft is about 22ft 4in long, 9ft 3in high, and has a wingspan of 32ft 6in. Empty weight is expected to come out at about 815lb. Performance criteria include a 120 m.p.h. cruise speed, 13,000ft ceiling, and 440-mile range.

Stefan Karwowski

Air display enthusiasts will be saddened by the death of Stefan Karwowski on April 29, following a flying accident two days earlier near Wanaka, New Zealand. He had been practising aerobatics some five miles from the airfield when his borrowed Pitts was seen to enter a spin from approximately 3,000ft. Recovery was effected too late to avoid impact with the ground.

Karwowski’s flying career started with the RNZAF in 1963, and continued with the RAF on Jet Provosts, Gnats, and Hunters. On leaving the RAF he spent three years with the Republic of Singapore Air Force and then flew for the Sultan of Oman’s Air Force, seeing combat in the Dohfar War, during which he was awarded the Sultan’s Bravery Medal for his many ground attack sorties against heavy opposition.

In 1979 he spent a year with the Carling Aerobatic Team in Canada and the USA, led by the late Manx Kelly. He will be best remembered for his polished flying displays in Hunter G-HUNT, Gnat G-GNAT, and Stephen Gray’s Beardcat.

Karwowski came from a family of active Service pilots, his grandfather and father having flown in the RFC and RAF respectively. He was dedicated to aviation, and his responsible attitude to display flying was exciting to watch but never reckless.

A memorial service will be held on June 18 at St Clement’s, Strand, London. Enquiries to Graham Horder on 01-788 8283.

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