



# From box to Bushcat in under three weeks

BY ERROL VAN RENSBURG

ERROL WANTED THE NEW BUSHCAT TO BE READY FOR HIM TO BE ABLE TO SHOW OFF AT AIRVENTURE AUSTRALIA IN NARROMINE IN OCTOBER. HE ALSO WANTED TO SHOW EVERYONE JUST HOW QUICKLY AND EASILY IT CAN BE PUT TOGETHER. HERE IS HOW HE DID BOTH.

## Start 17 August

The crates with the Bushcat kit arrived. Everything well packed and numbered. We've converted the packing crate to a sturdy work bench.



## Day 1:

Study the manual and getting to grips with the methodology. Unwrapped the parts and checked if it corresponds with the manual. All parts are numbered in Sections, which correspond to the drawing numbers, and really easy to follow. We spend about 6 hours building today, and basically Completed the fuselage frame.



## Day 2:

We've covered the vertical stabiliser, the ventral fin and the fuselage. The lacing and tightening of sails (cover) is a time consuming job, but went quite well. We've now spent a total of 12 hours to date and happy with the progress. All parts fit well; the manual is easy to follow.



## Day 3:

The main canopy fairing is now fitted, control stick is in, flap handle and rods fitted and seatbacks and harnesses all fitted. Main undercarriage gear leg on, wheels and tyres etc. all fitted. Lesson learned: follow the manual to the tee. It feels unreal that this aircraft is already on its wheels in only three days! Total of 20 hours, two people.

## Day 4:

We've only built half a day. This is Kit-build 101. We were able to fit the arm-rests and throttle controls/cables, the firewall pre-fitment and the cables for the chokes. We are now at about 24 hours total time into the build. The manual is easy to follow.





### Day 5:

We fitted the firewall. The gluing of the fire blanket took some time, but if you are careful you can have a good finish. We also completed the pre-fit of the floors and the centre console.



### Day 6:

Finished off the installation of the floor and seat bottoms. Started on the wings and needed quite a bit of intense scrutineering of the drawings and instructions. With the left and right wing frame identical and mirror images, you need to be very careful not to bolt the parts the wrong way around.



### Day 7:

Finished both wings, fitted the struts and wings.



### Day 8:

We completed the flaps, ailerons and wingtips. We also fitted the wingtip lights, lenses, jury struts and started on covering the horizontal stabiliser.



### Day 9:

Most of today was spend covering the empennage parts and installing horizontal stabiliser, elevator and fitting cross bracing of cables etc.



### Day 10:

We have now spent two weeks building the Bushcat from scratch... and the airframe is done. Wings on, all control surfaces finished, control cables connected and airframe is now ready for engine fitment. Instrument panel was laser cut by 3 Metals in Yatala. This kit is perfect, very quick and easy to build.



### Day 11:

The engine, plus the subframe, was installed on to the main frame by means of the engine mounts.



### Day 12:

Today we did the carbie heater kit, oil reservoir, regulator, exhaust and fitted the engine cowls. All the cables, pipes etc. from the cockpit are perfectly lined up with the engine or carbie. No guesswork.





### Day 13:

We finished off the cowl and completed the total firewall forward in about eight hours. The instrument panel is now cut to size, carbon look vinyl applied.



### Day 14:

Fitted the propeller, fuel tanks and switches. Instruments, as well as radio and intercom.



### Day 15:

Finished the wiring and completed the engine installation.



### Day 16:

Installed the windshield, doors and finalised all the wiring to switches.

### Day 17:

Completed the instrument panel markings and cleaned up wiring looms. Weight and balance done, starting paperwork, taxi runs and, in a couple of days, test flights.



### September 20 Done A quality aircraft built in under 20 days.

