What's Next??

In 1999, Bob Baringer's builder's hands got the itch to start another project after he had completed his Baby Great Lakes in 1977. The ultra light Kolb Firefly was interesting to him and so he checked it out at Sun 'n Fun in Lakeland, Florida, in April of 1999. He liked what he saw so he put in an order for the kit which was slow to arrive so he didn't get to get start on the project until January of 2000.

Even though this kit was not a 'fast build' one it did have a few sections already assembled like the wing ribs and the fuselage cage. He chose a Rotax 447 engine which at 40 hp gives him a cruise of 60 mph, stall at 28 mph, and a never exceed speed of 80 mph. His steel, aluminum, and fabric plane was completed in a year and a half in June, 2001. It's a single seat airplane with an enclosed canopy which pushed the wind back. He grinned and said, "It's not as cold to fly as was my Baby Great Lakes." The color scheme is red and white with E021RB on the side of the plane.

When asked about the avionics he laughed and said, "The same hand held radio that I used during the 1300 hours in my Baby Great Lakes – I didn't have to 'break it in' - just put new velcro on it"

He had no surprises during the building project and estimates the total cost of the project at $13,000. He flies it locally and has about 350 hours on it at the present time. His last comment was, "It's fun to fly!"

In addition to this project and the Baby Great Lakes, Bob has built a ½ scale uncovered model of a Primary Glider. He and Dale Johnson, as students at the first Midland High School (on Grove St.), belonged to a Glider Club at the school. They purchased this damaged glider and repaired it to flying condition and hauled it to the Midland Airport where it never got too far off the ground as it was towed by a car. The rule was 'to not lift' off but how can young boys resist the temptation to 'fly'? This ½ scale project now hangs in the hangar of our Aviation Education Center at the Barstow Airport.

We're all wondering what project will catch Bob;s eye next?