

## John McCulloch Flies “Little Butch” After Rebuild in 1966

The following first appeared in the April 1966 Monocoupe Club Newsletter and provides John McCulloch’s notes regarding his first sensations while flying his newly rebuilt clipwing Monocoupe N36Y. I have added several pictures from various internet sources.



**March 5, 1966** The big day is here at last! She's not quite

finished, a few fairings, the wheel pants, a little paint touch up, but she's ready for a test hop. Pull the wheels to check the bearings and adjust the brakes. Push her out of the hangar and over to the gas pumps. Man, that red and white sun burst is sure pretty. Gassed and oil checked, we leave part of the cowl off for a final check. Starter cable plugged in, we turn her thru, flip the switch, and listen to that lovely sound. Let her warm up for a minute and then taxi her around into the wind. Those brakes are not too good. Run her up to check the oil pressure. At 1500 rpm she starts moving. Man on

each wing and I can get 1850, enough to set the pressure to 90 psi. We shut her down and button up the cowl. The word is out that we're going to have a go today. Quite a few onlookers. Crank her up again and taxi out. Wind up to 30 knots, coming up the runway. Stop for a final run up. What the hell, the right brake went to the floor, she starts to swing into the wind. Shut her down and coast off the taxiway. Get out and look. Sure enough,



the right brake cable is in two. A lousy splice hidden inside the gear strut. Damn. I thought we had found all the lousy workmanship done on this bird and there was plenty. She has already run a couple thousand over what I had anticipated. First the bent crankshaft, so we majored the engine. Then the tail feathers look a little out of line, so we completely rebuilt the rear end. A new firewall, new sheet metal around the cowl, completely rework the cowl, the fairings, open the wing, check and rework it. New prop, new paint, new radio. It is in the best shape it has been in for over 15 years. It should be. I darn near blew the whole thing because of a lousy splice. Well, we stick the rear end up on a truck and haul her back to the hangar. After new cables are installed and a little touching up, we'll try again.

**March 8, 1966** Someone ran off with the starter cable. So a friend hops in and I prop her. Fires up the first turn, just like a sewing machine. Climb in and taxi out, quick run-up, and airborne. Just like that. Of course I did wander a little bit on the runway. And the throttle wasn't all the way forward but with power like that, who needs it?? Now at 100 mph the engine is turning up way too fast. Pull that throttle back. Now, no power to climb. I knew that prop wasn't going to be pitched right for this bird, but this is ridiculous. Manage to get up to 3000 feet and try a few stalls. Power off, down to 65 and over she goes. Power on, I don't believe she'd ever quit. Just hang on the prop. She is no fun to fly like this, might as well take her back in. Back in the pattern behind a Cherokee. Is he going to land or is he going around? So busy watching him, the runway is there before I know it. She hits wheels first. Start to make a wheel landing, think better of it and go around. On final again, everything looks good. Airspeed just dropping to 98 mph as the end of the runway goes by. Hold her off. Hold her off and there, we're rolling. Hardly felt it touch. Wonder how long it will be before I make another like that? And she rolls out straight ahead. Taxi in, shut her down. Look real nonchalant getting out. How can you look nonchalant getting out of this? You have to be a contortionist. Stroll around telling everybody how it was. Really nothing you know. Damn its a good feeling. But then when you see that the cowl moved forward and was

hitting the prop, you don't feel so good anymore. It that had been that Aeromatic you wanted, that would have been all she wrote.



**March 9, 1966** Propeller service did a quick job on the prop. Finished out the nicks and changed the pitch 6 degrees. The cowl is bolted to the engine. Radios installed, but

working lousy. Pour the coal to her and this is more like it. She's a different bird. Climbing at 120 mph and 2000 rpm. Scoot right up to 7000 feet, above the clouds. Level off, 1950 rpm, 140 IAS and hands off flight. Rigging is perfect, need one or two more degrees change on the prop. A few stalls, left, right, straight ahead. Most honest stalls you will ever see. Wing just drops, pop stick, touch of power, flying again. Nose down, 180 IAS, what'll I do with it? Back on the stick, up and over, little sloppy on top. No wonder, I left the throttle back. Try another, little power going up, down the other side and right thru the prop wash, 180 again. Now, nose just above the horizon, stick over to the left, and the world turns 360 degrees before you can blink. One to the right.



The roll is fantastic. That is me yelling from sheer joy. That's enough for now. Back down into the traffic pattern. Little high and too fast. Hold her off. Just floating (like a T-craft??) into the intersection. Another grease job, don't pinch me, I might wake up. I couldn't have rolled more than 400 feet. Back to the ramp and get out feeling like King Kong. She may be worth it after all.

This has to be the MOST light airplane ever built. It is so solid, it feels as though it were made from a blick of steel. It is much easier to fly than the D-145, almost like a J-3 Cub, just faster. It seems to say tell me what you want and we'll do it.

