

AutoGyro Cavalon debuts in Germany and USA

AutoGyro Europe, makers of the MTO Sport and Calidus autogyros, recently unveiled their new Cavalon Cloud gyro at Aero 2011 in Germany. The Cavalon, which also debuted in the United States at Oshkosh this year, is a fully enclosed two place aircraft with side by side seating.

The German company which began operations in 1999, has now delivered more than 1000 gyros and in line with an increasing popularity of the sport, is currently manufacturing at the rate of 10 per week from their factory in Hildesheim. All of the Aurogyro Europe range are produced and delivered ready to fly, except for in the United States which is initially being served with a kit version due to ASTM standards requirements for light-sport aircraft not currently allowing for ready-to-fly autogyros.

Gyrate Limited at Tauranga are the New Zealand distributors for AutoGyro Europe, being one of 34 distributors worldwide. Many aviation enthusiasts here will be familiar with the aircraft, having seen Tony Unwin from Gyrate displaying their capability at events around the country, most recently at Flair during October. Tony says that even in the present economic climate, there is strong interest in the gyro movement, particularly now that fully enclosed cross country machines are available brand new and ready to fly.

In August, Tony visited the AutoGyro Europe factory during an open day for staff, family and friends. While there he was able to see and fly the new Cavalon Cloud. He says that regrettably the queue to fly the aircraft was very long so there was no opportunity to really put it through its paces, so this will have to wait until the first of type arrives in New Zealand in the not too distant future. KiwiFlyer will look forward to a turn at the controls too.

Tony comments on his experience as follows: "My first impression was that this is a superbly made aircraft designed with good ergonomics and attention to detail. The doors which are held in place by quick release hinges, raise themselves on gas struts, the rake of the seat back is easily adjustable as are the rudder pedals so the pilots can relax in whichever position they

find most comfortable. The aircraft is spacious!! There is plenty of headroom for the tall, there is width for the wide and there is space for his and hers weekend bags behind the seats. There is also a large area behind the pilot's head but clearly anything located there would

need to be well restrained. Start up and taxi are straight forward with a smooth quiet ride and a small turning circle. This particular aircraft had a 'Fly Map LS' display which clearly showed glass cockpit flight and engine instruments together with moving map position data. The engine and rotor rpm gauges were depicted in easy read analogue (old fashioned) format clearly colour coded for their operating ranges.

Take-off involved line-up with the rotors still braked and then, with the brake released and the pre-rotator engaged, the friction clutch drove the rotor to 250rpm in a flash. The wheel brake is then released, the stick brought fully aft and full power applied. This aircraft

had the 100hp Rotax 912S engine and it moved forward smoothly with no significant yaw to the point where the nose lifted and the aircraft left the ground in one movement. This feature is due in part to a redistribution of weight which has made the nose wheel significantly heavier than on previous models. I need more time to make valid comment but my instinct is to be



The new Cavalon Cloud offers a finish and attention to detail beyond anything normally expected of recreational aircraft.

concerned about rough field operation.

Once airborne the comfort is emphasised again with no perceivable cabin or stick vibration, impressive! AutoGyro have introduced a taller rotorhead assembly together with a new hub-bar and modified rotorblades. This combined with the nylon bushes in the mast assembly has removed what gyronauts have thought of as standard issue airframe resonance.

In short the feeling is very like a well made fixed wing LSA aircraft but with the gyro benefits of weather tolerance, incredible manoeuvrability, no stall or spin issues and forced landings to walk away from. How good can it get?"

NZ gyro enthusiasts can look forward to seeing a Cavalon Cloud in our skies in 2012. Contact Tony Unwin for more information on 0800 FLY-A-GYRO or visit www.gyrate.co.nz



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