



Clinton Kraidy's MIG25

THOSE WHO attended the Pearl Harbour commemoration day at Ardmore recently were treated to an impressive flying display by Clinton Kraidy with his large MIG 25 Foxbat.

A well-executed model flight is great to watch. With Clinton flying his MIG25 it is more impressive when you consider that this 19 year old actually designed and built the massive 2.8m wingspan twin jet turbine model himself!

Clinton has been flying radio controlled models for about 9 years. As a 10 year old, he started flying basic 2 channel gliders from Mt Wellington under the tuition of his dad, Daroish. He then graduated to 4 channel powered gliders off Bastion Point. Learning to fly on the old type analogue transmitters, there was no buddy system as a student pilot. Daroish would stand behind Clinton and take over the controls if he got into difficulty. Clinton is now a well accomplished model pilot, flying with confidence and a very high level of skill.

Needing a project for his school NCEA Level 3 Technical class in February 2010, Clinton chose to design and build a large twin turbine model aircraft. A build of this size and type would be daunting for a well experienced modeler but that didn't faze Clinton. Initially the intention was to build a 5m long version but this would prove too big for the engine thrust capacity. Further calculations showed that the 1:5.2m scale version would be more practical and 4m became the chosen length.

There were no plans available for a MIG25 model of this size. Apart from a series of photos, and based around a 1:72 scale static model, the whole project was designed by Clinton from the ground up. The challenge was then to build it to scale as much as possible. This was largely achieved, though due to practical restrictions the landing gear and wing thickness are not to exact scale. However these factors do not detract from the sleek lines of the aircraft. Clinton estimates he spent around 300 hours building the model over a period of 11 months. This included building moulds to form the fibreglass fuselage.

The maiden flight was made at Tokoroa in February 2011 and proved the success of the design and build. The centre of gravity was spot on and minimal trim alteration was required to achieve stable flight. Clinton says he was very pleased with how well it flew as there were no nasty surprises at all. The aircraft is very easy to fly, being responsive on the elevator with aileron rolls quite slow.

Surprisingly for a jet, Clinton stated it actually has the characteristics of a trainer. The landing speed is a respectable

Contributed by Janice Angus

70km per hour. That is not to say it isn't a speedy beast. When the turbines are wound up this jet has been clocked at 220km per hour with its' onboard telemetry system. It is powered by two ATJ 170 turbines, each generating around 17kg of thrust.

Clinton is the only one who has flown the model. Being such a large aircraft, both in size and weight (42Kg) he needed to become certified as the sole pilot to operate this "pilot less aircraft" through the CAA.

The MIG is still a 'work in progress' with the final finishing and detail to be completed. Clinton has thoroughly enjoyed all aspects of the design and build of this aircraft. He relishes the sense of achievement and challenge of putting together such a large model and particularly the power of jet turbine engines. Already, he is looking towards his next big build project, a 4m Arado 234 twin jet turbine bomber. This aircraft was the first operational jet-powered German built bomber but saw only limited service in the closing stages of WW II. Clinton is intending to produce a rugged model that will be suitable for flying at a wide range of model flying sites.

The MIG, being such a large model, is limited to flying at selected model flying sites, with long sealed runways. He regularly travels down to Tokoroa for their jet flying days and Springhill, just out of Wellsford, is another great large jet flying site.

If you get the opportunity to see Clinton flying his MIG 25 Foxbat you will be amazed. The sheer size of the model dwarfs most other jet turbines that are regularly seen on the model flying circuit. The fact it is flown with such expertise and skill by such a young pilot is all the more impressive.

It is great to see such a young man with a passion for the sport of model flying. And as to be expected, he got excellent NCEA marks for the project.



Taxiing at Ardmore.



At Tokoroa. Compare the size to the smaller jets parked behind.

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