

## Two Students Become FAA Licensed Glider-Trike I



Barry Palmatier's Raptor trike, N227BP, at the Otay Mesa Airfield near San Diego.



Student Barry Palmatier (left) and flight examiner Galen Fisher preflight the Air Creation trike used in Barry's flight check.



A Sabre trike in flight over farm land.

On July 16 trike pilot Barry Palmatier became the first person in aviation history to obtain his FAA Private Pilot Glider certificate. Barry received his type of flying machine called a "glider-trike" motorglider.

A "trike" is a large, engine-powered hang glider. A flex wing is mounted on a tricycle landing gear. The engine, landing gear, fuel tank, instruments, and optional parachute. It is a type of flying machine called a "glider-trike" motorglider. The wing can be removed, rolled up, and carried on top of a vehicle, just like a trailer.

Except for the United States, trikes are the most popular form of personal recreation. They are more popular in the US, but are mostly flown as ultralights in rural areas.

The 1997 movie, "Fly Away Home," featured a trike which was used to guide groundhogs in the southern United States.

Recently several trikes have been placed in the Experimental category in the FAA's list of aircraft. Once an aircraft is put into the Experimental category, it is not subject to the weight, fuel, and speed restrictions that apply to other aircraft.

Although an FAA pilot's license is not required to fly an ultralight, a license is required to fly an experimental trike.

After months of negotiating with the FAA, it was determined that a glider pilot's license is required to fly an experimental trike. Since a trike is basically a large hang glider, it was logical to call it a "motorglider," (or "self-launched glider," as the FAA refers to it).

Thus was born what is now known as the "glider-trike program." This was a change in the motorglider experimental category, producing a glider-trike flight instructor. The FAA was also required to create the appropriate logbook endorsements for commercial training in experimental aircraft.

The first person to take a flight examination in a glider-trike was John Ballantyne.

John already had a Private Pilot Glider license, which he received while flying a glider in 2000. John took the first flight check in a glider-trike to obtain his Commercial Pilot License.

Now Barry Palmatier (pronounced "Palm-ah-teer") has followed in John's footsteps to a new level. John Ballantyne already had a pilot's license before he took his flight check. Barry did not have any FAA license. So, Barry became the first person to receive his FAA license in the trike.

The flight exam (called a "practical test" by the FAA) was administered by Gary Ballantyne. The testing took place at Torrance Airport in southern California. Barry used a "Fun 18" experimental glider-trike. The trike is especially equipped with dual engines.

Because Barry was to receive a glider pilot's license, he was tested on traditional glider items such as soaring techniques and glider cross-country flying skills.

The flight test was conducted in accordance with the Practical Test Standards for gliders. The exam consisted of shallow and steep turns, stalls, simulated engine failures, and questions on pilot privileges and limitations, airspace rules, radio communications, and aeronautics.



Except for the United States, trikes are the most widely flown personal recreation aircraft throughout the world.



Barry Palmetier flies over southern California in his Raptor trike.



This beautiful Air Creation Clipper trike is made especially for touring the countryside.



There are no kingposts or lift lines on the strut-braced North Wing Maverick trike.

The practical test was monitored by the Long Beach Flight Standards District Gary Lackey.

The following day, on July 17, 2001, Chris Haarhoff (which rhymes with "soa Barry Palmetier did not have a pilot's license, he did have about five hours or never flown any aircraft with an elevator and rudder; neither a glider nor an e receive all of his training in a trike, and to take his FAA practical test in a trike

Chris took his exam in his own Aerotrike Cobra, which is manufactured in his the Cobra is a four-cycle, four-cylinder Rotax 912. This 80 hp engine is the s trainer. The maximum weight of the Cobra is nearly 1000 pounds, and the to

Both Chris and Barry were thrilled to receive their pilot's licenses and to be a Frank Oyama, John Kemmeries, Mike Jacober, and Lanse Welch will also be

For more information on the glider-trike project you may e-mail Barry Palmet at [explodi@aol.com](mailto:explodi@aol.com), or glider-trike flight instructor Jon Thornburgh at [JonTh@800-971-8710](mailto:JonTh@800-971-8710).

Additional information may be obtained at the following sources:

"The New Glider-Trike: The Best Deal in Aviation," published in [UltraFlight V Magazine](#), 2167 14th Circle North, St. Petersburg, FL 33713. Telephone: 801

"The Experimental Glider-Trike Program," [UltraFlight Magazine](#), February 2001

"The Difference Between An Experimental Trike and An Experimental Glider"

"New Category: Glider-Trike," at Aero-News Network (ANN), a daily Internet <http://web.archive.org/web/20040730164306/http://web.archive.org/web/2000/news.net/news/archive2000/0700news/073000a.htm>

"Glider-Trike Instructor Ranks Grow Some More," Aero-News Network at <http://news.net/news/archive2000/1200news/120500a.htm>

There is a web site dedicated to the experimental glider-trike project at <http://www.ultraflight.com/thornburgh/>

Archives of previous articles written by Jon Thornburgh are available at <http://web.archive.org/web/20040730164306/http://web.archive.org/web/2000/news.net/news/archive2000/0700news/073000a.htm>

About the author: Jon Thornburgh is an FAA and ultralight flight instructor. He is also a member of the Aero-News Network.



The bare-essentials trike can easily be assembled from the manufacturer's kit.