

First Customer-Built SubSonex Jet Flies

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Redge Greenberg in the cockpit of SubSonex JSX-2.

Redge Greenberg, a pilot from Durango, Colorado, is one of the few people in the world ever to have built his own jet in his garage after completing the first customer-assembled SubSonex, serial number JSX0003.

"I flew the SubSonex this morning, for about 35 minutes...all went well," Redge wrote to inform kit manufacturer Sonex Aircraft in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, on October 15.

Redge took delivery of his ultra-quick-build kit last February and worked through the spring, summer and early fall to prepare the single-engine jet for its first flight.

The ultra-quick-build kit does not fall under the FAA's 51 percent rule for homebuilts, meaning there's surprisingly little work for the customer to do on his own besides installing the engine and fuel system, bolting on the landing gear, installing the avionics and BRS parachute, fitting the interior and adding a fresh coat of paint.

"I hold commercial glider, helicopter and single-engine land licenses, accumulating 4,500-plus hours in numerous aircraft," Greenberg said, "but I never got the chance to fly a jet. I first saw the prototype of the SubSonex at Oshkosh, and followed the development for over a year. When Sonex offered the jet as a kit, I was first in line. Like my Van's RV8, the SubSonex is aerobatic, but the Sonex company also included a ballistic parachute for extra safety."

With two single-seat SubSonex JSX-2 factory prototype aircraft now flying, Redge's SubSonex makes number three in the worldwide fleet. Six more customer kits currently are under construction.

Price for the ultra-quick-build SubSonex kit is \$135,000, which includes the PBS TJ-100 turbojet engine. Greenberg also bought a trailer for his SubSonex, which sells for \$7,000.