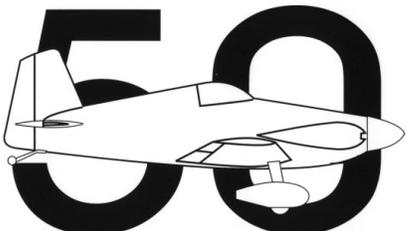


1948  1998

**Midget Mustang**  
*50 Years of Design Excellence*

In 1948, Piper Chief Design Engineer David Long flew his new midget racer named P-Shooter from Lockhaven, PA to Cleveland for the Goodyear National Air Races. This was the beginning of a classic sportplane design that has proven to be perhaps the most successful, admired, and enduring designs ever. Close to 400 examples have been built over the last 50 years and it is still much in demand today because of its good looks, good handling characteristics, and fighter like performance.



It became known as the Midget Mustang in 1949 after the prototype received a new canopy, wheel pants, and a few other refinements. Designed around the Goodyear Midget Racing specifications it has a wing area of 69 sq. ft. , a racing empty weight close to 550lbs using the 190 cu. in. Continental engine (C-85), and a structure that can take a 6g pull up at 175mph and speeds of up to 260mph.



From the beginning Dave Long intended to produce the airplane as a sport plane that could be used for racing, aerobatics, or cross country flights. The prototype placed well in many races, taking 4<sup>th</sup> at the Continental Trophy Races at Miami in 1949, but the design was too large to beat some of the other smaller formula one racers. A second production prototype N10N was built after Long sold his original Mustang to pylon racer Luther Johnson in 1949. This aircraft had the gear moved from the engine



mount to the wings and had a few other small improvements to make it a better sport plane. Long made a deal with Schweizer Aircraft to produce the certified airplane and hoped to market it for under \$5000. The anticipated post war aviation boom never materialized, however, canceling the project. Long was busy at Piper trying to save the company from bankruptcy and production of the Midget Mustang was never started.



In June of 1950 while on his way from Lockhaven to races in Greenville, SC the engine in Long's production prototype blew and Long was killed while trying to bail out from 200 feet. A third partially completed Midget Mustang racer by Long was finished in 1950 by Curtis Pitts. This plane, racer #9 called "Mammy", was flown quite extensively by a large number of racing pilots who got their start with this plane.



A few other Midgets were built by individuals until Dr. Francis A Torrey of Chicago acquired the wreckage of N10N, tooling, and design rights for the Midget Mustang. In 1954, San Antonio Aviation under license from Dr. Torrey built a modified Midget Mustang as a prototype for the Palomino, a certificated airplane that they planned on producing. The design was further modified by stretch-



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ing it into a tandem two seater and used a 155hp Franklin engine, but it never entered production. More recently another company tried to bring a modified Palomino back as the Omega II.

In 1958 Robert Bushby purchased the design rights, tooling, and remains of the production prototype N10N. He used the tailsection, wings, and other parts to build another Midget Mustang. After modifying the design to incorporate the new 2024-T3 aluminum alloy and changing some of the construction methods, Bushby began to sell plans. In 1966 Bushby produced the very successful two place Mustang II aircraft that is based on the Midget Mustang.

As sport aviation grew and with the birth of the EAA the popularity of the design increased. During the late 60's and 70's the Midget Mustang was perhaps the premier homebuilt design. Along with the many awards won by Midget Mustangs there have also been 4 EAA National Grand Champions. Lloyd Butler built the first in 1973, a beautiful all metal polished Midget Mustang with retractable gear and folding wings. Bill Johns of Osawatomie, KS won Oshkosh Grand Champion in 1978 and his building partner Larry Haas won with his Midget Mustang in 1985. Bruce Whittig of Boise, ID won with a Lycoming IO-320 powered Midget Mustang in 1983. It is about as exotic as they get with a retractable com antennae and gold plated valve covers.



In March of 1992 Chris Tieman acquired the design rights for both the Midget Mustang and Mustang II aircraft. Mustang Aeronautics is now offering complete assembly kits for both designs. Further refinements have been made to simplify the building process and strengthen the design to better handle the higher weights from larger engines and more cross country equipment.



Original at Oshkosh in 1993

The Midget Mustang has been proven to be a very rugged design that has stood the test of time very well. Dave Long's original airplane built in 1948 is still airworthy today and is located in Frostproof, FL. The excellent flying qualities, good handling characteristics, and economy of the Midget Mustang have made it a design that will continue to be popular well past it's 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

