

General Aviation News

By Rod Simpson

• **Aero Service Company** is a new Polish organisation which has designed three microlight aircraft - the Puma, Panda and Raptor. Construction of prototypes of the low-wing retractable-gear Puma and the Panda, which is a high-wing aircraft with fixed gear and a T-tail, is in progress with first flights expected later in 2010. The Raptor, which will come later is a side-by-side low wing aircraft with a T-tail - and all three designs will be Rotax powered.

• **Cessna** is experimenting with electric engine power and collaborating with Bye Energy, Inc., to design and develop a suitable engine for a Cessna 172. The proof-of-concept aircraft is expected to fly later this year.

• **Cirrus** has announced the new SR22T which has a twin-turbocharged Continental TSIO-550-K engine, a modified engine cowling and lighter-weight nose gear.

• The great light aircraft designer, **Stelio Frati** died on 14th May, 2010 at the age of 91. He is best known for the F.8 Falco which was built by Aviamilano, Aeromere and Laverda, and for the SF.260 built by SIAI-Marchetti for many air arms.

• **CSA** (Czech Sport Aircraft) showed the prototype SportTourer at the Prague-Příbram Aero Expo in May. This high-wing side-by-side two seater is the relaunched version of the Parrot prototype which was written off in the United States two years ago.

• **Gulfstream** is now flying four G.650



There is new hope for the Kestrel, seen here at Farnborough in 2008.

development aircraft including the third development machine (N653GD, c/n 6003) and first production example (N650GD, c/n 6004) which first flew on 6th June, 2010. The third G.250, 4X-WBJ flew on 28th June at Tel Aviv.

• **Hawker Beechcraft** is rumoured to be considering a move away from Wichita to a new location, possibly in Baton Rouge, Louisiana or in Mississippi. The company has already moved production of electrical harnesses to Mexico.

• **Honda Aircraft Co.** is intending to fly the first conforming HondaJet later this year, following its first power-on tests, and they have also mated the fuselage and wing of the first static test aircraft at the factory in Greensboro, North Carolina.

• **IndUS Aviation**, which produces the T-211 Thorpedo two-seat LSA, is moving production from Dallas to China. The Thorpedo will be built in a new factory at the LuYangHu Aviation Development in Weinan Municipality, Shaanxi Province. Sales of the Thorpedo in the USA have slowed to a trickle but the Chinese market is considered promising and production is planned for eight to 10 monthly.

• The future of the Farnborough Aircraft Kestrel seems more certain after the formation of **Kestrel Aircraft** which is led by Alan Klapmeier, founder of Cirrus Aircraft. Kestrel Aircraft is to be located at Brunswick Landing, Maine and the company hopes to achieve FAA and EASA certification in 2013. The prototype Kestrel, N352F which first flew on 29th July, 2006 at Bend, Oregon, has been repainted and is now based in Maine.

• **Piper's** owners, Imprimis announced the unexpected and immediate departure of Piper's Chief Executive, Kevin Gould. Geoffrey Berger, Managing Director of the Imprimis Brunei operations will serve as interim CEO of Piper Aircraft.

• The **Skyleader** GP-One (pictured on Page 71 of the Summer Aviation World) made its first flight on 26th May and was exhibited at the Aero Expo show at Příbram.

• **Tecnam's** latest design is the P.2010 which closely resembles the P.2008 but has a carbon fibre fuselage, metal wings and an all-moving tailplane. It will be powered by a 180hp Lycoming IO-360-M1A engine.



Above: The CSA SportTourer. Seen on the right is Aero Service Co's Puma; below, the Panda; and below right, the Raptor.

