

Sequoia Aircraft Corporation 900 West Franklin Street
Richmond, Virginia 23220
804/353-1713

November 21, 1980

Dear Falco Builders:

It is my sad duty to inform you of the death of Bob Esau. Bob died on the night of November 13 in an automobile accident. For some reason, he went off the curb, which was about 4 inches high, and when he tried to get back on the road, his car flipped over, rolled several times, Bob was thrown from the car and died instantly.

Bob had his own insurance and real estate agency when he decided to build the Falco. He was 51, and he had earlier built numerous boats, clocks, furniture, etc, as well as completing a BD-4 project that he bought partially-completed. He was at the point in life when he came to the realization that he was not enjoying what he was doing, sold the agency and started on his Falco, with the intent of building custom Falcos for others once his airplane was finished. He wanted desperately to be the first to fly a homebuilt Falco. He began construction in September 1979 and by the Spring of 1980 had gotten to the point in construction where he was going faster than I could with the kits. He lost a couple of months before Oshkosh and was a little discouraged by the delays, but he went home from Oshkosh completely renewed in his enthusiasm after talking to the many Falco owners that came there. I last talked to Bob several hours before his death, and at that time he had the engine mount on the airplane and was fitting the nose gear to it. There were only a couple of pieces of plywood that had to be glued on to complete the woodwork, and we were almost ready to ship his the main landing gear and the canopy.

I have been contacted by Bob's friend and partner, Jim Jones, who has asked me to help in finding someone to complete the airplane. I know that Bob, more than anyone, would have wanted to see the airplane completed and flown. The Falco is located at Prosser's Hangar, Lower Lake, California, and any of you who might be interested in purchasing the airplane should get in touch with me. Bob had purchased an IO-320-B engine with a constant-speed propeller and had one of our conical engine mounts modified to a type II dynafocal mount for the engine. It may be that the engine, prop and engine mount will be sold separately, so if you are interested in this only, get in touch with me.

I only learned of Bob's death yesterday afternoon, so I will ask you to please pardon this brief and inelegant letter. Bob had come to be a friend for many of us, and we will all miss him. I find it particularly sad knowing how badly he wanted to fly his Falco. If you would like to write his family, I would suggest you write to them at his address in Lower Lake.

I will keep the builder news of this letter brief. We have an article coming out on the Falco kits in the January issue of Sport Aviation, as well as a new ad for the kits. I had planned to send a copy of the ad with this letter and it may still arrive in time to do so. If there was ever a photo of the Falco worthy of framing, this is it.

There has been a slight delay in the trim tab control kit due to some problems with the manufacturer of the cable. They lost our order due to an in-house mixup, but now promise delivery of the cables in the middle of December. We are now completing the main landing gear legs, and delivery of those parts will be soon, I hope, but I have come to expect delays on everything. There will be a change in P/N 825 and in the way it is attached to the elevator control arm. We will have the new parts out shortly as well as the new installation drawing. We will also have a change in the rudder cable pulleys that mount on the aft face of fuselage frame No. 3 and the forward wing spar. Originally, the pulleys were custom-made and they fit between the control stick torque tube and the control stick connecting link. The standard AN pulleys are a little too large, and I think we will be mounting them on the forward face of the fuselage frame, but I want check to work out any interference problems with P/N 717 on the right side first. I would suggest, then, that you hold up on installing this part until I can get you more information.

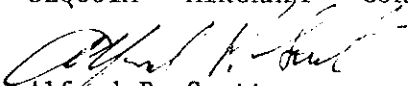
We have a problem with our windshield for the Falco. The original Falcos had a flat-wrap windshield, and we made the mold for the windshield with a slight curvature (similar to the one on I-ALCO -- see our new ad). For some strange reason, the plexiglass is "bunching" in the windshield giving less-than-perfect optics. We are considering going back to the old flat-wrap windshield and the suggestion has been made by many that we adopt the Nustrini-type windshield as the standard. I would appreciate your comments on this.

Many thanks to those of you who have sent in your questionnaire. Your comments have been extremely helpful, and I am sorry that I have not had the time to respond to each personally. There are still many of you who have not sent in the form, and I would greatly appreciate your cooperation.

One thing I would like to have from those of you who are building the Falco is sketches and descriptions, if not plans, for your various jigs. I have a drawing from George Neuman for a very simple fuselage jig that he built in one night. It is an elegantly simple design and others have been doing the same sort of work. If you will let me have your sketches, I will put them all together in the construction manual.

With all best wishes.

Sincerely,
SEQUOIA AIRCRAFT CORPORATION



Alfred P. Scott
President