

# UTH Rotor News

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## Robinson Ties its Future to the R66

The second Robinson R66 made its first flight on February 18 and a third is under construction at the company's headquarters in nearby Torrance, Calif. All Heli-Expo'09 attendees are invited to the Robinson factory on Tuesday for facility tours beginning at noon followed by a preview of the R66 at 3 p.m.

The Robinson open house is an unusual move for a company cultured in underplaying its achievements. It highlights just how important the Rolls-Royce RR300 turbine-powered R66 is to the company's future. Company founder Frank Robinson is characteristically blunt about it. "The only thing that we can count on to save this company," he said, "is to get that R66 on the market as soon as possible, and at that point we can stop having layoffs."

As customers continue to grapple with tight credit, Robinson (Booth No. 2718) has seen its average weekly output fall from 17 helicopters to 12. That number could go lower. While in 2008 it delivered a record 893 helicopters, last month there were signs that 2009 output would be severely reduced. Robinson delivered 48 helicopters in January and began laying off workers at the rate of 50 per month beginning last November, the maximum rate allowed by law without having to provide workers with 60-days' statutory notice. Frank Robinson hinted that more layoffs likely are in the offing and said new helicopter orders have basically "collapsed" in the wake of what he calls a "global depression."

Robinson exports nearly 70 percent of its total production, and demand for the company's helicopters in key emerging markets such as Russia "has just gotten crushed," said company vice president Kurt Robinson.

For privately held Robinson, the challenge is to ride out the storm long enough to bring the R66 to market and to retain a sufficient skilled workforce so "we have the experienced people we need when the 66 goes full-bore," said Frank Robinson. That is likely to happen in 2011 after a gradual production ramp-up and controlled deliveries in 2010. Certification is anticipated late this year or early next. Frank Robinson predicted that the R66 likely will eventually become the biggest sales component of the company "in terms of dollars," but that the piston-powered R44 will continue to sell more units annually.

"Demand for the R44 will always be there," Robinson said. "It has more appeal to private individuals because of initial and operating costs." A typically equipped R44 Raven II costs \$455,000. While the price of the R66 has yet to be determined, it is widely expected to be just under \$1 million.

As Robinson continues to work toward certification of the R66, it is curtailing payroll and other expenses. Plans for a major plant expansion and double-deck employee parking garage, for example, have been temporarily shelved. The R66 will be produced on a new production line parallel to that of the R44 in the company's existing factory.

Meanwhile, the company is not waiting for the R66 to increase its revenue-per-unit

and the traditional "six-pack" steam gauges instead of an integrated glass cockpit display. Frank Robinson said it should be fairly easy for a pilot to transition from the R44 to the R66.

"Of course, there is a big power difference, but other than that, [the R66] is a hair smoother and a hair quieter, but it is nothing earthshaking." The R66's main rotor chord is slightly wider than the R44's, but the diameter is the same. Its fuel system meets new and



ratio. The push is on to sell more R44s with high-dollar, factory-installed options packages directed at the electronic news-gathering (ENG) and law enforcement markets. Those packages can easily propel the price of a new R44 past \$700,000. Kurt Robinson said he sees a down economy as the impetus to boost sales in those sectors with the R44 now, and perhaps the R66 later.

On Monday, Robinson will deliver its 60th ENG helicopter. Kurt Robinson called ENG "the one market that is not slowing down."

"We are literally putting out these packages at half the cost of a turbine platform," he said, and a growing number of television stations are beginning to grasp the economics. Similar inroads are being made with law enforcement agencies that once eschewed anything other than turbine power. "That stopped about four or five years ago," Kurt Robinson said,

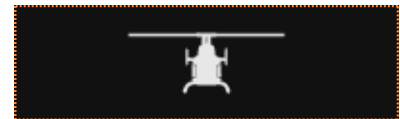
until, due to budget constraints on new or existing programs "people realized they were either going to lose their programs or could keep flying with our product."

On the R66, Robinson worked hard to carry over popular characteristics of the R44. Chief among them, said Frank Robinson, is "simplicity." That means hydro-pneumatic engine controls as opposed to Faded,

more stringent crashworthiness standards.

The luggage hold is big enough for golf clubs. There is one extra seat in back, the pilot seats are wider and legroom is capacious, and the overall cabin is eight inches wider. Empty weight is 1,270 pounds and the useful load comes in at 1,300 pounds, 300 pounds more than an R44. However, due to the RR300's 23-gph fuel burn, the R66 has 75-gallon fuel tanks, while the 44, which burns 15 gph, has 47-gallon tanks. Initially, all major R66 components, including the engine, will have a TBO of 2,000 hours, although that is likely to be extended over time to perhaps 2,200 hours. Over the last year R66 S/N 1 has accumulated 70 hours on the airframe and 25 hours on a certified RR300 engine. Frank Robinson said S/N 2, N266RH, which first flew last week and is outfitted with a complete finished interior, is very close, if not identical, to the eventual production R66. He said he sees the R66's market appeal mirroring those of Robinson models that came before it. "It's a better helicopter for less

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**APRIL BIRTHDAYS!!**

Chris Sasser-4/2  
 Robbie Hansen- 4/11  
 Trent Behunin- 4/12  
 Steve Wilson-4/20  
 Joe Brown-4/26  
 Brice Wilson-4/26

**Open House!**  
 April 1, 2009 in our  
 Idaho Falls Office!

**Open House April 8,  
 2009 in our Spanish  
 Fork Office!**



## U77 SPOTLIGHT: RICK MANNING

### Congratulations! Check Rides, Solos, and New Employees

Kade Gourley- Director of Operations U42

Jake Allred- Instrument

Scott Banning- CFII

Ryan Parson- Instrument

Gabe Henrie- CFI

Blaine Jemmett-

Instrument

Derek Quirt- Commercial



Rick Manning started his training in our Spanish Fork office January 14, 2008. Rick's favorite maneuver to perform in a helicopter is a hovering auto. Rick is most proud of all of his ratings that he has received. Rick's dream job would be flying in the movies. Rick's most nerve racking experience was " My stage 3 with Petee for my instrument rating." Rick's favorite experience while flying so far has been " Landing on the side of the freeway to make sure no one

was in a wrecked car. When Rick wanted to learn to fly helicopters because " Cory needed an extra student to help pay bills" When Rick is not flying you can find him watching his favorite sport Super Cross, or his favorite TV show Family Guy, because he loves to laugh! Rick's favorite movie is Nitro Circuit " I could watch riding movies all day" Rick's favorite magazine is a tie between the POH and the FAR/AIM " It's a love hate thing" Rick Says. Rick enjoys all types of music and his favorite food is sushi. Rick's least favorite food are plastic foods " why would you make things look like food but you cant eat it ?" Rick's favorite smells are " things

That smell good, and coincidently his least favorite smells are " things that smell bad" His older brother Cory is his hero, " I look up to him, he keeps me motivated" If Rick could meet one person it would be Ezra Losk- a retired Motocross Racer.

*To me flying is.... THE BEST THING EVER!!*

" I would love to get riding tips from him" Rick enjoys extreme sports like snowboarding, and wakeboarding. Rick is a glass half full kind of person. We are so glad to have Rick as part of our Utah Helicopter team. " Go Big or Go Home!!"

### Hillsboro Aviation Announces Grand/Sagem Glass Upgrade for the R44

Hillsboro Aviation as a Robinson Sales and Service Center is pleased to announce the R44 Grand/Sagem glass cockpit upgrade for R44 helicopters. The dual screen system provides better instrumentation reliability and safer operation by enhanced situational awareness, as well

as higher resale value. The system integrates Primary Flight instruments, Engine instruments, and various Multifunction display capabilities. Hillsboro Aviation is looking forward to offering this system to its customers as a state of the art upgrade for Robinson Helicopters



The exhilaration of flying is too keen, the pleasure too great, for it to be neglected as a sport--Orville Wright



## Petee Pops Off

*A message from Brian "Petee" Peterson  
Utah Helicopter Chief Flight Instructor & Owner/Operator*

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Ryan Hudman came to Utah Helicopter from PHI in April 2007.

Since that time Ryan has helped Utah Helicopter in its growing success of turning ordinary students into the highest quality pilots.

Utah Helicopter would like to thank Ryan for his commitment, hard work, time and dedication during his employment.

From everyone at Utah Helicopter we would like to wish Ryan the best of success in his new career with Maverick Helicopters.

**Setting the standard  
for performance and  
Quality one pilot at  
a time**



## Cory's Corner

*A Message from Cory Manning Spanish Fork Director of Operations*



I believe everyone can benefit from setting goals, this will create an objective for both the student and the instructor which will assist in the development for the criteria necessary to reach those goals. The goals I have in mind are setting up deadlines for knowledge tests, practical tests, and the ultimate completion of your helicopter training.

If you are my student and I know your goal is to complete your Private pilot rating in three months I now know what your goal is so I can assist you in the criteria necessary to fulfill that objective by letting you know what kind of commitment it will take to reach that deadline.

You now know what it will take to reach that goal, and be more aware if you are on track during your training or if you are falling behind, and you'll be able to see your progress or the lack there of. If you know where you're at in your training since you have a reference point (your deadline) you can see how effectively you are spending your money, if you don't know where you're at in your training then you might feel that your just coming in for ground every so often and spending money with no clear idea of completion, and that can be very frustrating.

If you make commitments and you dig in to reach your goals your instructor will work with you to complete your objective, because this school is set up to work around student schedules and at the pace of a particular individual, we will not push or pull you very hard so that you will always feel like we are catering to your specific needs. If however you set goals with your instructors then they will push you so that your objectives are fulfilled, without worry of pushing you too hard. If you don't set goals your deadlines are nowhere in sight and your training could get sloppy seeing how there is no way to place any structure around a non existent objective, and this training is way too expensive to allow that to happen.

Keep up the hard work and pushing forward, and make your helicopter dreams a reality. I want to make this training more effective for everyone, so I am passing to you some advise to assist in making this training as beneficial as possible.

I've never known an industry that can get into people's blood the way aviation does. – Robert Six