



Press Release

Modern-day Lilienthal: Alban Geissler constructs wings for people without nerves

Up to 400 km/h with the globally unique flying system

Munich, 14 August 2006 – More than one hundred years ago, Otto Lilienthal ran down a hill with glider wings, achieving flying distances of up to 250 metres. Modern-day aviation visionaries like industrial designer Alban Geissler are able to think in completely different dimensions. Born in Cologne, he has developed a globally unique flying system with which humans can free-fly several kilometres while achieving speeds of up to 400 kilometres per hour. Like Lilienthal, Geissler also uses wings attached to the body. His aerodynamic aids, however, are made of a high-performance and light carbon fibre composite. They also have to be attached at great altitude when jumping from an aircraft. The parachute ensures a safe landing.

Geissler hit upon the idea of developing a modern wing for humans in 1991 while reading an aviation type manual. There he read that a 1 square metre wing of a Cessna generates enough lift to transport a 100 kilogram load. Geissler's conclusion: to equip a human being with the flying properties of a Cessna, it is necessary to have a wing with a surface area of one square metre and the aerodynamic characteristics of the Cessna wing. The vision would not go out of his mind. For two terms he studied aeronautics in Stuttgart and in Munich he completed a course of study in industrial design. In his thesis, he concentrated on his idea for wings and created models which he then tested in the wind channel. "Barbie's" friend "Ken" served as test pilot.

Having gained his degree as well as experience, Geissler decided to turn his vision into reality and create the wing. In search of support, he also turned to the research institutes of universities. "When I presented my idea to renowned professors, they only shook their heads", says Alban Geissler today. The experts did

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not believe his vision could be a success. However, Geissler persisted. In 1998, he constructed the prototype of his wing, which he called "Skyray". Two years later, he founded FREESKY GmbH in Munich and continued to develop the "Skyray".

The system has now developed to such a degree of maturity that Alban Geissler is even constructing a military version. The motivation for this was the fact that special units are increasingly being deployed to deal with crises (tourists held hostage etc.). Individual soldiers are often required to get to far-off locations quickly and incognito. This is possible with Geissler's new "Gryphon" wing system. Since 2004, the flight characteristics of the "Gryphon" have been steadily improved with the help of experienced skydivers. The test pilots have already completed more than 100 flights with it. If Lilienthal were here today, Geissler is quite sure he would be flying the wing.

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