ELIXIR PREPARES PISTON-SINGLE FOR YEAR-END MAIDEN SORTIE

News / Events / Festivals, Manufacturer

French start-up manufacturer and Aero Friedrichshafendebutante Elixir Aircraft has begun assembly of its first two-seat piston-single, and plans to fly the all-composite aircraft in the fourth quarter of this year.

The company, based in La Rochelle, western France, recently secured the first tranche of investment which co-founder and chief executive Arthur Léopold-Léger hopes will be sufficient to fund the programme to first flight. “When the Elixir has flown, we will seek the next round of funding to take the programme through certification and help us build our industrial base,” he says.

The aircraft – which was launched in mid-2015 – consists of around eight large pieces, with the wing and fuselage each being single structures. “This is designed to make the aircraft safer, as there are fewer glued parts, and speed up the production process,” says Elixir co-founder and chief organisation officer Cyril Champenois.

Other key features of the Elixir are its emergency parachute system, manufactured by BRS, a

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bespoke Garmin G3X cockpit, and an “anti-exploding fuel tank, which runs from wingtip to wingtip,” says Champenois.

There will be a choice of Rotax engines: the 912iS is “ideal for the training market”, he says, while the 915iS turbo would be “for the owner-flyers”.

The aircraft is projected to have a cruise speed of between 140-170kt (260-315km/h), depending on altitude, a fuel burn of 14l/h, an empty weight of 265kg (580lb) and a payload of 280kg. “The Elixir will be priced at $150,000 – a fraction of the price of rival products such as the $700,000 Cessna TTx and $300,000 Piper Archer,” Champenois adds.

European certification and service entry are scheduled for 2017, and Elixir is now in the process of selecting its regional distributors. “The selection process is under way,” Léopold-Léger confirms. “We are looking for companies that will also provide aircraft support and maintenance.”

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