

John Roake Reports on

A JANUARY UPDATE and INTERVIEW WITH



SCHEMP-P-HIRTH Flugzeugbau

With power aircraft manufacturers reducing production and Piper laying off hundreds of employees (and a factory close for three weeks), I felt it was time we brought our readers up to date on the sailplane manufacturer's position in the current economic downturn. Who better to approach than Tilo Holighaus, of Schempp-Hirth.

Tilo is getting mixed views on the immediate future of his manufacturing enterprise and wrote me that it is difficult to define in a few words their current position. It seems to be changing on the hour, "every day."

"I would currently estimate that the recession is only partly affecting us" responded Tilo to some of my questions. "We are aware of the insecurity that is prevailing in the sport. Some of our customers are using the current economic situation as an "excuse" to delay their order - but even so, that is only a

very small number.

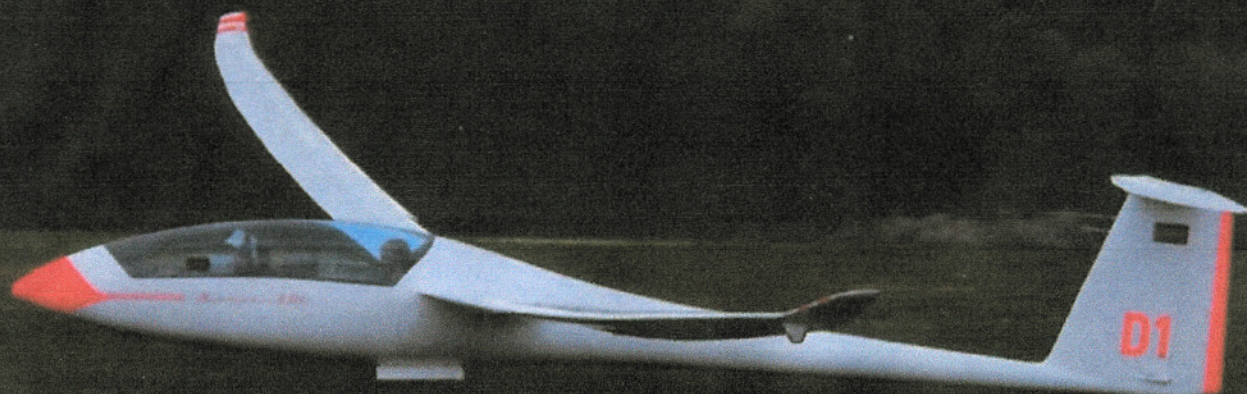
"In contrast - there are also some positive signals - for example the increase of the US-Euro exchange rate. Fortunately there are quite a number of prospective buyers who - especially now - are prepared to invest in real value, rather than in fickle stocks and

bonds. I really feel investing in a glider is one of the safest investments available. The value of a Schempp-Hirth sailplane has almost always been retained (and sometimes even risen!). And what's more - tell me of something else that you can actually have fun with your investment".

"The company's reaction to the current downturn has been to create a policy of "thinking forward". In the past twelve months, in fact, dating back several years, we have been extremely innovative. We have created some niche markets for ourselves and been able to increase our product range, fulfilling as many as possible of our customer's requests which in turn sets up particular trends.

"For example our new (almost automatic) turbo control unit <http://www.schempp-hirth.com/index.php?id=126&L=1&tx_ttnews%5btt_news%5d=193&tx_ttnews%5bbackPid%5d=89&cHash=97256b49

The New Nimbus 4 - (Nimbus 4- DL)



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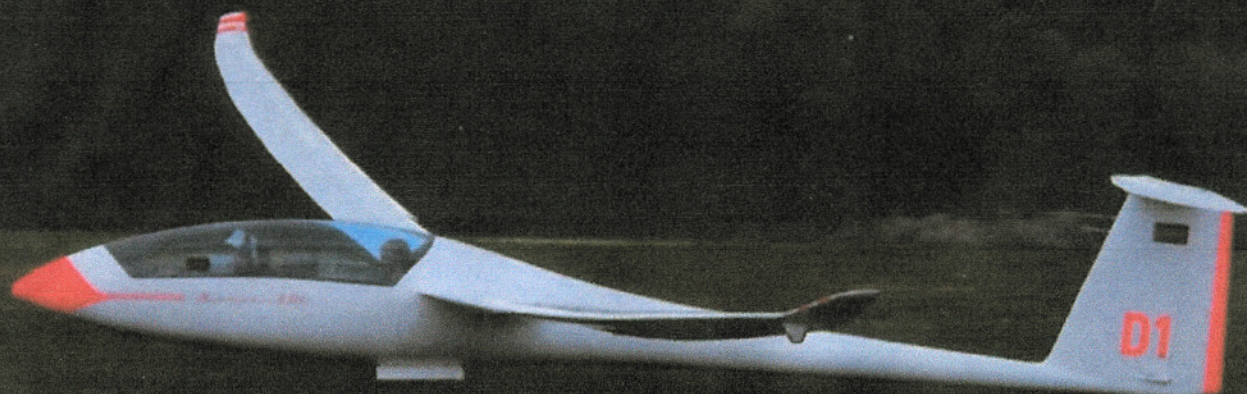
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The New Nimbus 4 - (Nimbus 4- DL)





Tilo Holighaus, Schempp-Hirth Managing Director admiring a model of a Schempp-Hirth Duo-Discus 2 etc.
Photo: Bernd Weber

0e> for the single and double seaters is proving a very acceptable new feature. This is

“Can I remind you that we have a completely new “A” fuselage, for our Ventus-2cx called the Ventus-2cxa <<http://www.schempp-hirth.com/index.php?id=ventus-2cxt2&L=1>> .

“And we are currently developing the installation of a jet engine in the extremely small Ventus fuselage with the goal of getting it certified in early 2009.

we have made the Nimbus-4D'L' (4DTL/4DML) <http://www.schempp-hirth.com/fileadmin/Pdfs/N4DL_einleger608_BW-22web.pdf> This means we have reworked our successful Nimbus-4D (holder of probably the most current World records) by using the same cockpit-ideas that were developed for our Duo-Discus-xL. We are surprised at the response we have had to the new Duo - there are a large number of pilots who love the idea of having more space, more comfort and more safety in an open class two seater. The tallest of pilots now have the chance to fly an open class glider in comfort.

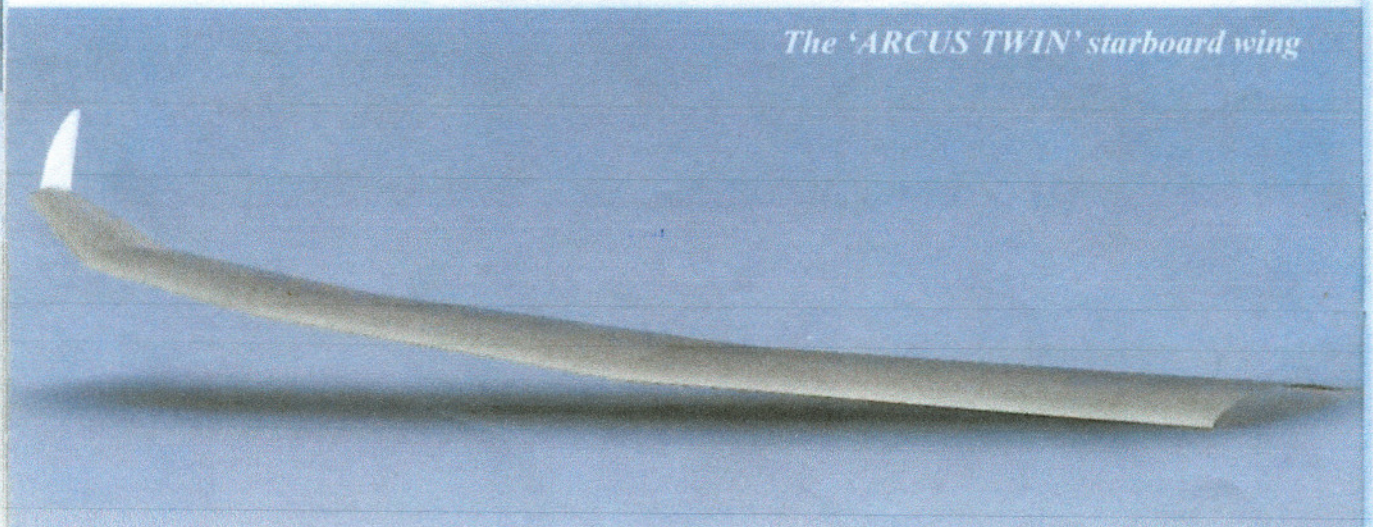
a big advantage for a club operation - and a safety feature for the pilot who flies his glider infrequently.

“In addition and adding to our policy of safety first, - we now able to offer the on-board rescue systems for all of our single seaters <http://www.schempp-hirth.com/index.php?id=126&L=1&tx_ttnews%5bttn_news%5d=193&tx_ttnews%5bbackPid%5d=89&cHash=97256b490e> (system Streifeneder), even our 18m gliders. We have certified NOAH.

“We have also developed a hand controlled rudder operation <http://www.schempp-hirth.com/index.php?id=126&L=1&tx_ttnews%5bpointer%5d=1&tx_ttnews%5bttn_news%5d=74&tx_ttnews%5bbackPid%5d=89&cHash=2380ac515b> for handicapped people, both for our Duo-Discus-xL/xLT and also for our Discus-2c/cT (this also includes the Turbo-versions).

“Your are certainly aware of all the modifications we have made to our Duo-Discus-xL <<http://www.schempp-hirth.com/index.php?id=62&L=1>> There was a tremendous amount of new design work involved, not to mention putting those designs into practice in manufacturing. But it has been very successful - people love the new possibilities this highly reworked glider gen-

The 'ARCUS TWIN' starboard wing



erates. Of course we can't expect the same continuing demand for this glider. There are simply too many Duos flying already - we expect to deliver number 600 in a matter of weeks.

"The real bad news is that unfortunately we cannot hold our old prices. Wage increases in Germany in 2008 have risen much more than any other year. Likewise material costs have "exploded". We believe we have acted very responsibly in adjusting our sailplane prices and absorbing some of 2008's devastating increases. Schempp-Hirth as always remains very competitive.

"New products: YES!!! We are working on a completely new project! It will be called 'Arcus' - a 20m flapped two-seater. This will be a very nice and "handy" alternative to the large and heavy open class two-seaters. It will appeal to the growing world-wide 20m two-seater contest community. We will offer it as a glider, a Turbo-version but also as a self launcher. A novelty here, too: beside the existing well operating Solo-2625-2 version we will also offer an electric version installed by Lange Aviation.

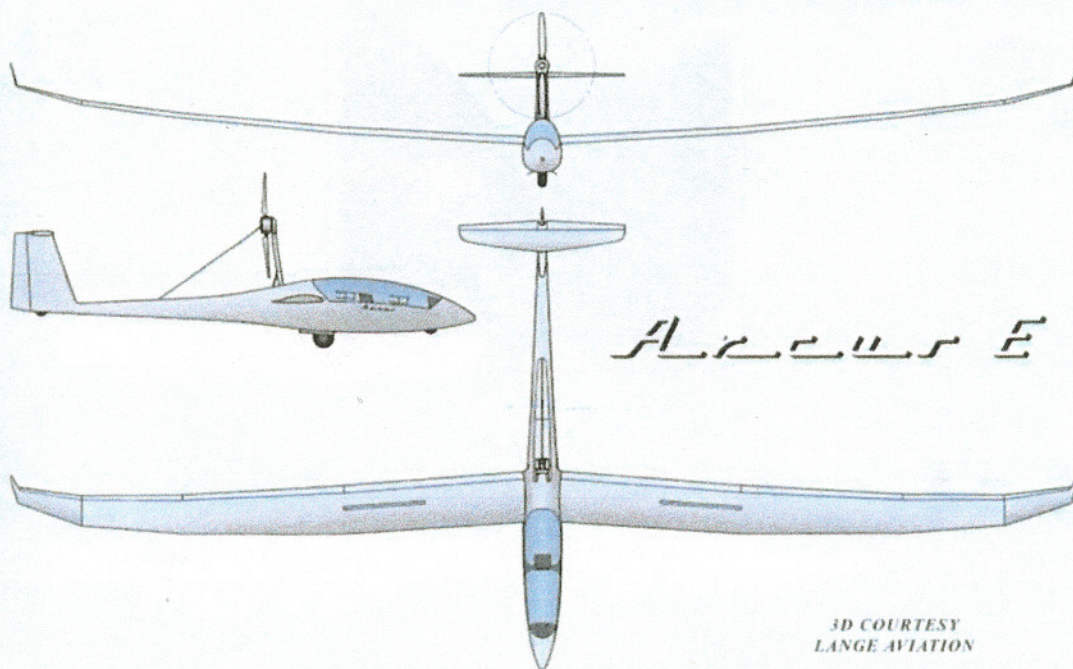
"We are trying to get the 'Arcus' in the air during 2009 - and that possibility looks promising".

SCHEMPH-HIRTH ARCUS

TECHNICAL DATA

	<i>Arcus E</i>	<i>Arcus E - Option battery plus</i>
<i>Wing Span</i>	20 m	20 m
<i>Wing Area</i>	15,6 m ²	15,6 m ²
<i>Aspect Ratio</i>	25.6	25.6
<i>Fuselage Length</i>	8,73 m	8,73 m
<i>Weights</i>		
<i>Empty Weight</i>	590 kg	620 kg
<i>Maximum Weight</i>	800 kg	800 kg
<i>Min. Wing Loading</i>	42.3 kg/m ²	44.2 kg/m ²
<i>Max. Wing Loading</i>	51,3 kg/m ²	51,3 kg/m ²
<i>Motordata</i>		
<i>Motor</i>	<i>DC/DC brushless</i>	<i>DC/DC brushless</i>
<i>Power</i>	42 kW /57hp	42 kW/57hp
<i>Revolutions</i>	1500 rev/min	1500 rev/m
<i>Max Revolutions</i>	1700 rev/min	1700 rev/mi

All values are based upon preliminary construction assumptions, and are subject to change without notice.



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