

1940 Piper J5A Cub Cruiser NC33295

Owner's Notes

General J5 info:

It left the Factory December 10th, 1940. J5s were built in 1940 and 1941. They were built as the J5A with a Continental A-75 engine; the J5B with an early geared Lycoming engine as seen in the movie "They Were Expendable" with John Wayne, and the J5C with a Lycoming O-235 and a starter and an electrical system. It is like a roomy, comfortable J3 Cub, but without the J3 style door. It has a wider fuselage than the J3 and the aileron cables go through the wing instead of up the struts. It was the "deluxe" version of the Cub line in 1940 and only stopped production as a result of WWII. The Army used them as the L4F, and the Navy had a version of the J5C that they called the HE1. After the war, Piper built the PA-12 which is the evolution of the J5C. It has a door like a Champ and a lower angle of incidence than the J3 giving it a faster cruiser speed. I normally cruise at around 90 mph, but I can get 100 mph flat out at 1000 feet msl on a cold day. It has retractable foot rests for the back-seat passengers if they don't want to rest their feet on the rudder pedals. It has heel brakes.

NC33295 Airframe:

The airplane has no starter and no electrical system. It has a handheld Icom radio with an external antenna. It has a battery-operated intercom. I have the airframe logs all the way back to December 10th, 1940 when it rolled out of the factory.

It left the factory with a one gallon header tank and an 18 gallon fuel tank in the right wing. A few serial numbers later Piper began installing a 7 gallon header tank and the standard 18 gallon wing tank. The person I bought it from restored the airplane and installed the later model fuel system per the piper TC. This airplane now has 25 gallons total. I have added sealed PA-12 lift struts from Univair to comply with the AD, Grove disc brakes on the original Cub wheels with unique custom-made J5 hubcaps, a new heavy duty jackscrew for the horizontal stabilizer, new EBC 406 ELT, new old style Cub instruments, new custom made CHT gage that looks like old Cub style instruments and shoulder harnesses for front and rear seats. This airplane can be soloed from front or rear seat.

I added a helper spring for the elevator which was a factory option when it was produced. All work is documented and done by A&Ps. Empty weight is 821lbs and gross weight is 1450lbs.

Total time airframe: 5094

Engine:

Engine is C85-8 "Stroker". It has no accessory section other than cam gear and Tachometer drive gear. Total time on engine is unknown, but 406 hours since major overhaul in 2014 with all new parts and new O-200 crankshaft and pistons installed. New Titan ECI nickel coated cylinders, chrome valve covers, new (old stock) C-85 camshaft were installed. It is a C85 that performs like a brand new C-90, but with the parts availability of a C-85 and O-200. I have engine logs only back to early 2000s. All engine logs are complete since the last two overhauls. At the last annual, it was noticed that some of the pushtube rubber seals had cracked and were leaking oil. All cylinders were removed in order to replace those seals with new ones. New rings were installed on the pistons at the same time.

History:

It left the factory on December 10th, 1940. It was a civilian J5A. It went to Michigan and spent most of its life there. During WWII, it was commandeered by the military and used in the Army Courier service and then the Civil Air Patrol doing search and rescue. It flew for 1.5 hours on December 7th, 1941 over Detroit. During the war, it was being taxied at night on an Army base and they ran it into a concrete block. They replaced the prop and flew it back to their base and then removed and overhauled the engine. That is well documented. It flew in the civilian world again after the war. I don't think it was ever in a large flight school, but I do know that some folks have learned to fly in it. It was disassembled in 1969 for restoration. I think it was nosed over about that time too, but it isn't well documented.

It was stored in pieces in the back of a hangar until 1994. The gentleman whom I bought it from had soloed a different J5 in 1944 and wanted his grandson to have the same experience. He bought the pieces in 1994 when his grandson was born and began to restore it. It took him until 2007 to finish the project. He got the engine from an A&P school without logbooks. He had a local mechanic overhaul it and began the logbooks from then. The cowling was made new at that time, but the boot cowl is original. The boot cowl is still dimpled from, I believe, the nose-over event in 1969, and I think that is also why the cowling was replaced during the restoration. It is not well documented. In 2007 he offered it to his then teenaged grandson and for whatever reason it didn't work out.

In 2008 he sold it to me. I flew it out to California from its home in Pontiac, Michigan. I have loved it dearly ever since. It is not a museum piece, it is a flyer and I have over 900 hours in it since then. I have taken it to the Cub Fly-In in Lompoc many times, Oshkosh in 2012, and Hood River Fly-In several times. In 2017 it won "Best Antique" at the Hood River Fly-In. I have fixed it up the way I wanted it and never had any intention of selling it. I have even used it to fly for

the U.S. Coast Guard through the Coast Guard Auxiliary. I have patrolled the California Coast and the Sacramento River Delta. I have flown it all over Idaho, Oregon, Washington, California, as well as all the states between California and Oshkosh. It has always been hangered since I have owned it. It breaks my heart to sell it, but I just bought another airplane and I only have one hangar. It is just basic, simple, stick and rudder fun at 6 gph. It is a true piece of history.

Damage History:

It ran into a concrete block at night during WWII. Engine and prop were replaced. In 1969 I think it went up on its nose and caused damage to the engine, cowling and boot cowl. The cowling and engine have been replaced and the boot cowl still has the dimples in it. I don't know much about this as it unfortunately was not well documented. I has had no damage history since I have owned it.