



## *Zidziunas Receives First A & P Certification Issued to a Light Sport Repairman with a Maintenance Rating*

by Carol Carpenter

On February 27, 2009, exactly 30 months after earning his Light Sport Repairman Certificate with a Maintenance Rating (LSRM), Mike Zidziunas took advantage of the little known benefit of the light sport rule and became the nation's first LSRM to earn his FAA Airframe and Powerplant Mechanic certificate (A & P). The A & P Certification authorizes the holder to work on U.S. standard category airplanes, such as Cessnas and Pipers and to complete the condition inspection on amateur built aircraft.

"This is an incredible opportunity," Mike comments. "I could

not afford the time or money to devote to A & P school and with the dream of my own aviation business, I certainly did

*Mike, owner of Mike Z Sport Aviation Service located in Plant City, Florida, is a one-man prototype for how LSRMs are finding their way into the mainstream.*

not want to work under the supervision of an A & P for 30 months." Mike, owner of Mike Z Sport Aviation Service located in Plant City, Florida, is a one-man prototype for how LSRMs are finding their way

into the mainstream. Now that the light-sport rule is in place and there's no shortage of opportunity, LSRMs across the country are taking notice.

The new light sport rule allows the LSRM to apply for authorization to take the A&P written and practical exams after working in the field for 30 + months under his or her own supervision. Additionally, an individual can earn the LSRM certificate quickly- in just three weeks. This is incredible when you compare that to the 1900 hour requirement for an Airframe and Powerplant mechanic school. This

powerful three week course is what entrepreneurship is all about: success.

After Mike reached the 30 month mark, he contacted his local FAA Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) to apply for the approval to take the written and practical exams. "The application process was simple. An FAA inspector validated the date of issue on my Repairman Maintenance certificate and looked over my paperwork. In short order I had my letter of approval to take the A&P written and practical exam," explains Mike.

With the approval in hand, the next step was to prepare for the written and practical exams. A LSRM may purchase the A & P written and practical exam study guides with the list of FAA test questions and support material to study at home. Study material is available in good old fashion books, in CDs or software that can be down-

loaded - even in MP3 format. Some community colleges offer test prep programs as well, but Mike chose to enroll in the National Aviation Academy in Clearwater, Florida. The course was 2 weeks of very intensive test preparation. There are many such schools throughout the United States that offer similar programs.

Mike, a sport pilot instructor, realized early on that light sport was going to be the future of aviation so he earned his LSRM in August of 2006. "I was not prepared, however, for the incredible opportunities the certificate would offer." Mike is taking full advantage of those opportunities. He has opened a Rotax Service Center and he works with manufacturers assembling SLSA aircraft. Maintenance is Mike's primary focus and he will now be able to include amateur-built aircraft inspections to the list of services he offers.

Here's Mike's take: "I was able to set up my business based on the LSRM training. This course was the foundation to everything else - becoming a Rotax service center as well as an A & P. Now with the A & P certification, I will be able to supervise which will allow me to service more customers. Additionally, since there are so many amateur built aircraft that must be inspected by an A & P and most do not want to inspect this type of aircraft, especially those with a Rotax engine, there is a huge demand for this service."

But Mike's achievement is even more striking than "first LSRM to add the A & P Option." Mike has built up a full service LSA facility at the Plant City Airport. Mike offers flight training, aircraft rental, and a full service maintenance shop. In this light, Mike's achievement is even more remarkable.

The big news is that his operation which had been based







**Mike Zidziunas on right with his instructor Tony McCombs**

solely on LSA is so active, Mike has hired help. "Now, with the A & P certification, I will be able to supervise which will allow me to service more customers," Mike adds. Mike's maintenance rates at \$60.00 an hour—are at the low end of the scale inhabited by conventional aviation maintenance facilities.

With the LSRM certificate, an individual like Mike can start a new career or a home based, low-cost business that is rewarding not just financially, but personally. The LSRM allows you to perform the maintenance, the condition, and the 100 hour inspections (required on aircraft used for

hire) on Special Light Sport Aircraft and Experimental Light Sport Aircraft and to charge for your services. The job opportunities for the repairman with a maintenance rating are wide-ranging. Light sport manufacturers and dealers in the light sport industry will all require a LSRM to perform maintenance on their aircraft after they are certified. Additionally, flight schools need LSRMs for the required 100 hour inspections. Not to mention the opportunities for new light sport maintenance facilities.

After earning your LSRM the sky is truly NOT the limit in this ever-expanding, high de-

mand, hands-on exciting field. Rainbow Aviation Services, the sole provider of the LSRM training, states there are currently more jobs available than graduates to fill them! A career as an Aviation Mechanic is in high demand and can take you on many paths in your life. For more information visit:

**[www.rainbowaviation.com](http://www.rainbowaviation.com)**  
or call  
Rainbow Aviation Services  
at **530/824-0644**