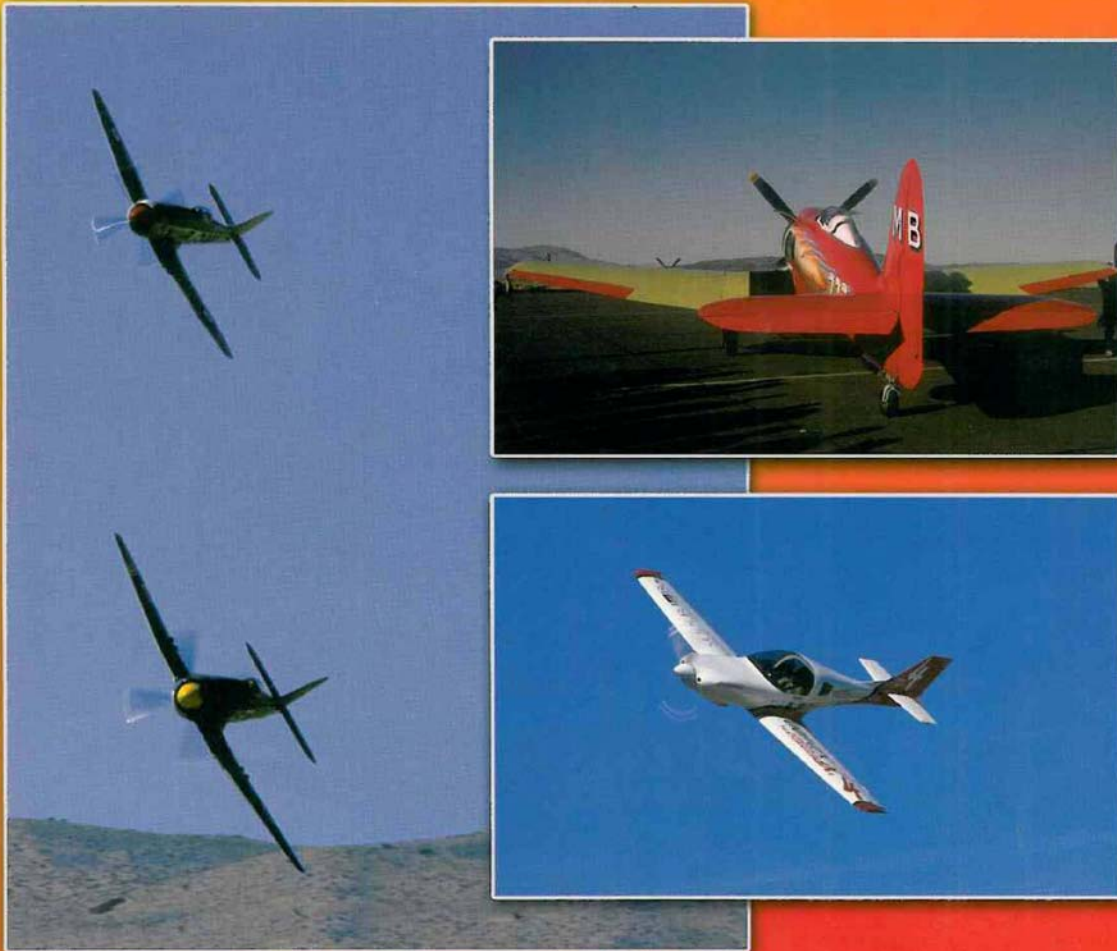


AIR RACING **Over Reno**

The World's Fastest Motorsport



Foreword by Walt Boyne
former Director, National Air & Space Museum

Philip Handleman



From every angle, the North American T-6 Texan is a beauty. Its curvaceous lines made it a classic from the day it first rolled out of the factory. Almost from the rebirth of air racing at Reno, there has been a racing class comprised of the World War II advanced trainers. The first T-6 class race at Reno occurred in 1968. Race number 12, Thumper, occupies a parking space in the pit area of the Reno Stead Airport.



The Jet class is limited to the Aero Vodochody L-39 Albatros, a trainer/light attack aircraft developed and produced in what is now the Czech Republic. This all-red model is nicknamed Pip Squeak and was flown to victory by former Rare Bear pilot John Penney in 2006 with an average speed of 470.195 mph, a new record for the class.





Coming at you! The batch of T-6s builds speed between pylons. Approaching the course markers, the aircraft must begin transitioning into a bank and turn. The steeper the bank, the heavier the g-load and generally speaking, the greater the drag and the slower the turn. The most successful race pilots make the smoothest turns. It is an art learned and refined over time in the company of peers.



At a distance, it is a majestic sight as T-6s seem to float in a graceful dance around a pylon at staggered heights, yet up close it turns into a frenzied dogfight.

Dennis Buehn's T-6D, race 43, Midnight Miss III, is notable for its striking paint scheme – a two-tone red and white with a partial checkerboard wrapped around the cowling. In 2006 Buehn captured second place in the T-6 Gold race with an average speed of 222.926 mph.



In 2006 Tom Martin of Melissa, Texas, flew race 12, Thumper. That year, Martin came in fifth place in the T-6 Bronze race with an average speed of 203.360 mph.