

I have the Jepp FlightDeck tablet in the King Air and the cMax Jepp charts in an Avidyne EX500 in the panel. We just went from Virginia to Baffin Island to Greenland at full gross weight (CenTex GWI to 10,350#) on every leg via Goose Bay (CYJR), Frobisher Bay (now Iqaluit, CYFB), Pangnirtung (CYXP, 3000 ft gravel), Sisimiut (BGSS, 2600 ft paved), Nuuk (BGGH, 3000 ft paved) and all approach charts and procedures were loaded in-panel to the navigators, MFD, and the FD/AP. Sweet.

Your Blackhawk 90 XP135A is one heck of an aircraft! My pal Mark (a UAL 767 captain) was along with his son; we did 270 knots across the Davis Straits in air conditioned comfort, getting into these really short places easily.

I am well aware that the -135 gearbox, power section, and the McCauley props—the whole engine—can safely deliver 750SHP, and that the only thing that Blackhawk never formally flight-checked was the Beech engine mounts (Ditto for the Colemill Baron conversion that I have a thousand hours in.) Am I really worried about the Beech engine mounts? Hardly. But I do save them for when, and if, I really need them. The plane really scoots with rated power and I have the goose if I really need it.

What I REALLY like are the big lungs. All the way up into the flight levels, I'm pushing the power levers up. "STUDLY" won't reach "Ain't got no' mo', boss" until about FL200. That's the upper "sweet cruise" level for the 550SHP King Airs, I'm told, but I have never flown one. My plane keeps accelerating. Our sweet spot is FL220-260. Honest cruise at 265-270 KTAS all day, every day, right up against the barber pole. I have seen 283 KTAS once, which is really pushing the Mach limit.

Above FL 270, the cabin gets too high for me; it pushes 9,000-10,000. So, what? ... we are RVSM-limited anyway.

So, thanks to all of you down in Waco. It's a truly great aircraft; no others its size that can do this trip as easily, so comfortably, and with the very real assurance that, wherever we go, there is likely to be a PT-6 trained mechanic somewhere nearby if we need one (we have not) ...