

Pilot and entrepreneur

Young man
makes mark
in aviation field
and he's only
eighteen
years old

By JUDIE RANCOURT

NEIGHBORS FEATURE CORRESPONDENT

Founder and President of Xtreme Aviation pilot supplies sales company. Home-schooled high school senior. Private pilot with instrument and commercial ratings, both single- and multi-engine, all added within a few months, at the minimum age. What do all these diverse characteristics have in common?

Amazingly, they are all the accomplishments of one young dynamo, Jordan Wirsz. Now just 18, he is an excellent student, holds down a job at Ocala Aviation Services, Inc. at Ocala International Airport, does some free-lance commercial flying, and runs his innovative aviation sales business. And he's a really nice guy besides!

Wirsz says it all started when he was four. That's when "I figured out what an airplane and a helicopter were. I begged my mother, time after time, to take me to fly. Finally, she gave in, and took me to the local airport at Redlands, Calif. I watched the airplanes with an ever-widening grin that still grows today. I talked to pilots, made airplane noises and spread my arms just like most other kids." He finally got his first ride, in the back seat of a



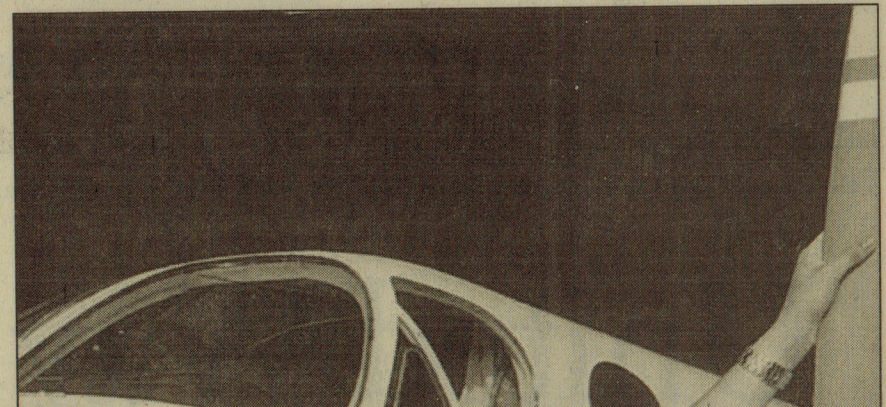
JUDIE RANCOURT/SPECIAL TO STAR-BANNER

Jordan Wirsz is shown here with his first airplane, a Cessna 150-leaseback to Ocala Aviation Services, Inc.

earned his license at 17, both the minimum ages, both here in Ocala.

He moved here when he was 16, working part-time first at Wal-Mart, then Piedmont-Hawthorne as a line professional, now Ocala Aviation Services, when not being a high school student. He started his aviation products sales business when he was 17, although he'd already bought and sold a helicopter at 14!

What's next? He's working on his Certified Flight Instructor rating, to be followed with instrument and multi-engine instructor upgrades, all

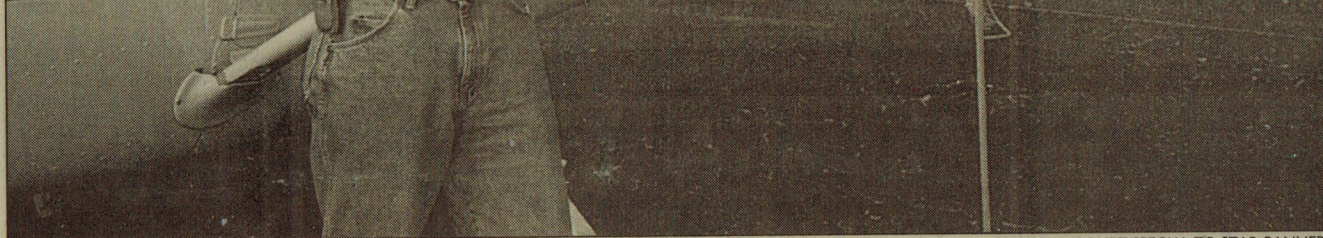


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He continued to go to the airport as often as his mother would take him, "usually when she got too tired of me asking to go, so she gave in." His first flying lesson was when he was 10 or 11, but he didn't get into serious training until he was 15, when he was a more appropriate age for receiving a license. Throughout his training, both of his parents were very supportive of his passion. He soloed at 16, then



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What's next? He's working on his Certified Flight Instructor rating, to be followed with instrument and multi-engine instructor upgrades, all aiming him closer to reaching his goals. He plans to head next for a four-year degree in business "because I love flying but I'll need to be able to feed my family." And his dream? He'd love to be a professional airshow aerobatic pilot. He's already had some time in several aerobatic planes including a Pitts, a Giles, and an Xtra 300L. He's even helped out world aerobatic champion Patty Wagstaff as part of her airshow ground crew, so once again he's off to a flying start!



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in your Star-Banner, every Wednesday