

## Exterior Painting of my RV-12

(By Marty Santic)

Well, after flying the RV-12 for 20 hours, it was time to start thinking of painting the exterior. As I have trouble with the rattle can, this project was not for me! Thus, I started looking for a paint scheme and a paint shop. The paint scheme I ended up with was one that was applied to N110LV, an RV-10 based in Midlothian, TX. Thought I could modify the scheme just a bit to fit the lines on the RV-12.

Then the fun started. With a paint scheme in hand, it was time to start looking for a paint shop. Had a half dozen candidates and ended up choosing EuroAir Aviation in Reedsburg WI.

I found out about EuroAir via my internet searches. EuroAir, [www.euroairaviation.com](http://www.euroairaviation.com) has an extensive website. Their prices are listed on their website and are pretty reasonable compared to other shops in the area. In fact, their estimate was on the order of \$2000-\$3000 less than the prices I was quoted from the other shops. On the website, there are pictures of numerous past projects, I looked up a couple of the RVs and, through the miracle of the internet, got in touch with the owners. One was the President of the EAA Chapter in Milwaukee, WI. (Paul Poberezny's old chapter!) Jeff Point had his RV-6 painted at EuroAir and had good things to say about both the quality of the work and the experience with the shop.

As Jeff pointed out, the proprietor of the shop is Denis Stefanek. Denis is a Czech Republic native, and he speaks with the requisite thick accent. During my first phone conversation, Denis impressed me with his down-to-earth, no BS style. He may not win any salesmanship awards, but he is right to the point, and I for one like dealing with people like that. Especially when large sums of my money are involved.



Denis, In Front of His Shop in Reedsburg, WI



My Paint Scheme on an RV-10

After the initial round of phone calls, John Bender, a fellow RV-12 builder and I drove up to Reedsburg in mid-January to take a look at the shop and also speak to the owner. During this first visit, we met Denis and some of his help, got to talk in person and size him up and, most importantly, got to see a couple of examples of his work via his extensive photo collection. This was the kind of paint job I was looking for. I agree with Jeff, a good paint job can make a bad airplane look good, but a bad paint job can make a masterpiece look like a mistake. Well, at that first meeting, I was impressed enough to sign a contract and pay the \$500 deposit. We were impressed with his shop and the manner in which he spoke about the painting process he uses, and the care he takes to ensure the customer is satisfied. Denis uses Sherwin Williams Jet-Glo and Acry-Glo paints.

Prior to this initial meeting with Denis, I had prepared a checklist of items. This listing detailed many items I desired to see in the final product. Everything from final fiberglass refinish to pinhole filling, etc. Nothing on the list surprised Denis, in fact, had I not prepared the listing, I am relatively confident he would have completed the items as a course of normal business.

Denis wanted me to bring the RV-12 to him as soon as possible as he had an opening in his schedule in January. BUT, this glorious Iowa winter weather was not cooperative. Snow and low visibilities prevailed for the next two weeks.

Fast forward to Friday, January 29. When I arrived at the hangar to preheat the engine, the temperature was about 3 degF. But the sun was shining and the visibility was unlimited. A glorious day to fly!! It was so cold, I had to warm the milkhouse preheater because the fan would NOT spin initially. BUT after 3-4 hours of preheating, the engine compartment was

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up to 75 degF and it was time to go. Bundled in thermal underwear and two additional layers, the trip was uneventful. With the outside temperature at 5 degF, the heater in the RV-12 could only muster cool air. I'd have a hard time calling it warm! But it was comfortable enough to fly to Reedsburg without having to use gloves. Trip time was just over an hour.

Reedsburg really has a nice airport. Two very nice runways. Strange, though, it is really in the middle of the town. Not outside the town, not on the edge of the town, but, in the middle. Many eating establishments are within walking distance if you park near the FBO. I would say this is a good trip from Davenport for that \$100 hamburger. More on that later.

The paint process really started on February 2 with disassembly.

Getting anxious, I called Denis on February 5 for a progress report. Denis indicated he would put progress pictures on his website in a day or so. He tells me that the corrosion treatment process he uses is complete, finishing of the fiberglass layups is complete, pinholes in the cowling and other gel coated components are filled and the plane is ready for primer.

On February 6 Denis posted some progress pictures on his website. The white basecoat was complete. Drove up again on February 10, met Larry Geiger, a fellow RV-12 builder, who was still trying to select a paint shop.

On February 17, I again drove up to Reedsburg with John Bender. Was told the RV-12 paint was just about complete. Anxious again, I wanted to view the nearly completed project and suggest anything else I would want prior to taking delivery. After our inspection, I was MORE than satisfied. If you look VERY closely, yea, you can see a few flaws. BUT, this paint job is VERY GOOD. Had three items that Denis said he would take care of. The plane should be ready for the flight back to Davenport in a few days. All I can say is Denis is a joy to deal with and is receptive to the customer. You do not find such in this day and age! You will have a hard time beating his prices. And it comes with a no questions asked 1 year guarantee, even if I induce a bit of hangar rash. Want to thank the owner of N110LV, Alex Dedominicis for the paint scheme inspiration.

[Click here to see a bunch more pictures of my RV-12 on the EuroAir Aviation website.](#)

