

Fairchild PT-26 M-62A-3



Fairchild PT History:

The Fairchild M-62 monoplane was specifically designed to meet highly individualized requirements for a service-type trainer; high on the list of its many attributes was a strength factor of 10 to withstand all manner of abuse and misuse. The design also benefitted by use of the 6 cyl. "Ranger" engine (also mfgd. by Fairchild) which provided sleek lines and good streamlining, excellent visibility, and trouble-free service under the most exacting conditions that prevailed in a primary training program. The M-62 design was submitted to the Air Corps in 1938.

As the improved M-62A (PT-19A) with a "Ranger" engine of 200 h.p. was introduced, production requirements could not be met by Fairchild alone, so other manufacturers were awarded contracts to help build the trainer; Fairchild built over 3000 in 1941 with "Aeronca" and others building about 500-600 more. By late 1941 a version of the M-62 was developed using the 220 h.p. Continental radial engine as the PT-23. A PT-19A with a winter enclosure became the PT-26 and many were used in Canada where they appreciated the protection from chilling winds. The Fairchild M-62 trainer was known under various unofficial names, but probably best known as the "Cornell." More than 5000 of the M-62 type were finally built in all, and after the war they were being bought up in droves as war surplus. Until they began aging, and rotting apart from neglect, the M-62 was one of the most popular sport planes in the country.

The lean and trim Fairchild M-62 ("Cornell") trainer series were low-winged monoplanes with open cockpit seating for 2 in tandem. Some very good engineering went into this airplane and it turned out to be the finest low-winged primary trainer of the World War II period, and also the most numerous. The bulk of deliveries went to the U.S. Army Air Corps (USAAC) who loaned them out to designated schools. Export deliveries were also quite frequent. The M-62 was variously powered with 175-200 h.p. "Ranger" engines, the 165-175 h.p. "Warner" engines, and the 220 h.p. Continental engine, but all were generally known to the trade as the "Cornell"; the Canadian version had a sliding canopy enclosure to fend off the bitter cold. In any version the "Cornell" was a tough airplane designed for a tough job; it had strength to meet all forms of violent abuse that fledgling pilots seem able to invent. As powered with any of the 3 different engines the "Cornell" always delivered above-average performance, and tutored the student well in high-performance flying. The airplane had a heavy feel like a bigger ship, but was nimble enough to perform a complete rundown of simple aerobatics; the controls had a nice velvety feel. Because of the thoughtful wing design the M-62 was a pussy cat in a "stall" while spin-recovery was gentle and easy; the soft purr of the "Ranger" had a calming effect too. This trainer thoroly enjoyed flying and was good-natured to a point, but even then it would never get vicious. The "Cornell" type probably trained nearly a million pilots from all walks of life, and had an enviable service record in places of subzero weather to the steaming tropics. On a listing of low-winged, military-type primary trainers it would have to be well on top as one of the all-time best, and those who learned to fly in the "Cornell" will support that. The type certificate for the M-62 series was first issued 4-3-40 and amended at different times to include the subsequent versions and variations. Manufactured by the Fairchild Aircraft Corporation, who was the prime supplier.

Details on this aircraft:

N79185 was **RCAF 10679** built by Fleet of Canada with **c/n FC180** as a **Cornell II**. Brought on charge with No. 4 Training Command at Calgary on 20 April 1943, then assigned to No. 5 Elementary Flying Training School at De Winton, Alberta, on 11 May 1943. Part of the BCATP (British Commonwealth Air Training Plan). It was transferred to No. 2 Air Command on 1 December 1945, having been in storage with No. 202 Reserve Equipment Maintenance Satellite at Mossbank,

Saskatchewan. By 8 April 1946 it was listed with No. 2 Reserve Equipment Maintenance Unit, still at Mossbank, "pending disposal." It was reclassified as "Lend Lease" on 22 November 1946, at the Foreign Liquidation Commission, Fargo, ND. It had been "struck off charge" on 8 November 1946. **N63568 (c/n T43-4499)** was a Model M62A-3 ordered by the Army Air Force on 1 December 1943 under AAF Contract AC-41303, as **AAF 44-19387**, in block AAF 44-19288 to 44-19557 (270 aircraft) for Lend Lease to Britain under Requisition #5472. It was given RAF serial number **EW440** (block EW341 to EW610), but delivered to the RCAF as a **Cornell I**, for service with the BCATP. It was manufactured as a **PT-26-FA** at Fairchild's Hagerstown, MD, plant. **Cornell I's** replaced RCAF DH-82C Tiger Moths and Fleet 16B biplane trainers at Elementary Flying Schools, the Central Flying School at Trenton, ONT, and the three Flight Instructors Schools.

The **EW-** group of Lend Lease Cornell I's were to have gone to the RAF, but were diverted to the RCAF, Rhodesia, and Norway – the Norwegian aircraft used at "Little Norway" in Toronto, all part of the BCATP.

Model 62A's are registered under Approved Type Certificate No. 7245 of 3 April 1940.

N63568 was owned as of September 1981 by Dwaine E. Duis of Pleasant Hill, CA. It was restored by Vincent F. Bohn of Concord, CA, making its first flight after registration on 24 September 1981. It was issued a Certificate of Airworthiness on that date. By July 1988 it was registered to Snowden Barrie of San Ramon, CA. It came to Yellowstone Aviation on 22 July 1988.

The material on **EW440** is based on sources listing Lend Lease aircraft by Joe Baugher, John Andrade, Arthur Pearcey, and Phil Butler and Dan Hagadorn. The small bit of post war info is from Aerial Visuals-Airframe Dossier.

Manufacturer:	Fairchild
Model:	M-62A-3 Cornell II
Year built:	1943
Construction Number (C/N):	T43-4499
Aircraft Type:	Fixed wing single engine
Number of Seats:	2
Number of Engines:	1
Engine Type:	Reciprocating
Engine Mfctr and Model:	Fairchild 6-440 SERIES
Registration Number:	N63568