

Sequoia F-8L Falco Model Guide

The Sequoia F-8L Falco is a two-seat, side-by-side, retractable-gear single-engine piston aircraft. Stelio Frati designed it, it first flew in 1955, and Sequoia Aircraft Corporation now supplies it as homebuilder kits. The flight manual example has a 180 hp Lycoming AEIO-360 B1E with a constant-speed propeller. Most examples are amateur-built, so condition and build quality vary by airframe.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Two seats side by side. An optional third seat in the luggage compartment is limited to 90 pounds.
- The flight manual's example aircraft has a 180 hp Lycoming AEIO-360 B1E and is described as both fast on cross-country and fully aerobatic.
- Service Bulletin 93-1 on flap flutter is mandatory for all Falcos built from plans or kits. Check flap balance and free play.
- Family-level figures reach 165 kt cruise and 860 nm range. Verify actual performance for the specific airframe you are buying.

FLAP FLUTTER BULLETIN (MANDATORY)

Service Bulletin 93-1 followed a flap that departed a Falco at 205 mph indicated. Ask for proof of compliance: flap trailing-edge weight of 20-21 oz desired and not over 23 oz, free play ideally under 1/16 in and never over 1/8 in, close-tolerance bolts, and reinforcing straps.

BUILD QUALITY AND INSPECTION

Sequoia's flight test guide stresses a systems-based final inspection and recommends an A&P mechanic. Check cotter pins and safety wire, control hookup direction, and aileron cable tension (45 lbs ± 2 lbs). Two of the first three homebuilt Falcos had governor controls hooked up backwards.

LANDING GEAR AND SYSTEMS

The tricycle gear is retractable. A single electric motor drives screw-jacks to each leg, and an emergency hand crank sits under a cover between the seats. Sequoia lists a 7-second (Model A) and a 13-second (Model B) gear motor, both 12 volt, so confirm which is fitted and that spares are available.

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine Power Hp	180
Third Seat Max Load Lbs	90

PERFORMANCE

Family Max Cruise Speed Kt	165
Family Max Range Nm	860
Family Max Service Ceiling Ft	19000

SAFETY NOTES

- The flap flutter event happened in a slight dive toward Vne. Confirm bulletin 93-1 work is done before flying near high-speed limits.
- Fuel-system faults were the most common cause of homebuilt engine failures. Check for contamination, blocked vents and leaks.
- One homebuilt main gear collapsed because the side load strut was not checked over-center. Verify gear rigging and emergency crank operation.