Fuel tank leak test - 3/9/2012

Category: 2.5. Fuel Tanks
Published: Wednesday, 05 September 2012 08:42
Hits: 1953

Time for some testing of the fuel tanks.

I started by pressure testing the left fuel tank.

This procedure can be done in different ways :

- using a balloon on the vent line
- using a hose with water on the vent line
- using water and soap while the tank is pressurised to detect small leaks

I find the water test dangerous as it can actually damage the tank if you put too much pressure to raise the water level.
The water and soap is kind of messy and forces me to remove the tank again.
I decided to take the most simple way, which is the balloon. Vans sells a fuel tank test kit which contains some plugs that you can use to seal of the fuel tank line and a air intake valve that you plug in the tank drain valve.

It is good practice to tape some duct-tape over the fuel cap to prevent small leaks there.

I have tried this test a couple of times and failed each time. The balloon would be deflated after a day and sometimes after an hour.
It drove me absolutly nuts and I stated to get convinced that there was a leak in the tank.
I found out that all of these failures were not caused by the tank but by the guy setting up the test.

Some advise:

- use a new balloon (one of my tests showed a leak in the balloon (deeeeeuuuuHHhhh!)
- tighten the cap and the inflation inset well. (one of the test leaked air on the air intake)
- use a piece of scrap aluminumtubin of the vent line to make an extention on the vent airline output. There is no way you can attach a balloon to the AN fitting.
- use an elastic strap to attach the balloon to the aluminum tube (duct tape is not enough,another reason for failure).

I finally got all the details straight and inflated the balloon on friday 31st of August.

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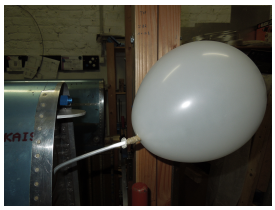
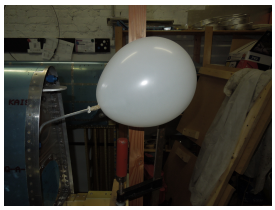


This is the balloon on wednesday 5th of September.



The difference in distance in which the picture was taken is misleading. The balloons are still equal in size.

I think I can easily conclude that the pressure test on the left tank is successfull and that there are no leaks !

Yeah ! High five for the good guys...

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