



## The Vultee BT-13 Valiant

### *HISTORY*

With retractable landing gear and a powerful engine, the Vultee V-54 basic combat trainer was too lavish for the cash-strapped United States Army Air Corps of 1938. So Vultee redesigned the aircraft and made it less complicated. The first order for 300 new BT-13 Valiants was placed in September of 1939, and it would become the most widely-used American training aircraft of World War Two.

The Vultee BT-13 had a continuous canopy with its crew of two sitting in tandem behind dual controls. It was also equipped with blind flying instruments to teach new pilots the basics of flying at night or in foul weather. BT-13 students soon gave the airplane a nickname which described its most memorable characteristic: Vultee Vibrator.

The only major variant of the BT-13 was the BT-13B, which featured a revised electrical system. Because of the speed with which the BT-13s were built, there was soon a shortage of Pratt & Whitney Wasp Junior engines. To overcome the shortage and maintain production levels, the BT-15, using a Wright Whirlwind engine, was then introduced. Two thousand BT-13s and BT13Bs were transferred to the US Navy, where they were designated the SNV-1 and SNV-2B.

When production ceased in 1944, 11,537 Valiants had been produced. The Valiant was retired at the end of the war, but over 100 of these aircraft are still registered in the United States today, although it is believed that less than half are actively airworthy. [History by David MacGillivray]

## BASIC SPECIFICATIONS BT-13A

Engine: One 450-hp Pratt & Whitney R-985-AN-1 Wasp Junior radial piston engine  
Weight: Empty 3,375 lbs., Max Takeoff 4,496 lbs.  
Wing Span: 42ft. 0in.  
Length: 28ft. 10in.  
Height: 11ft. 6in.  
Performance:  
Maximum Speed: 180 mph  
Ceiling: 21,650 ft.  
Range: 725 miles  
Armament: None

## NICKNAMES

The Vultee Vibrator, The Bee Tee



Number Built

11,537



Number Still Airworthy

~50



## WATCH THE BT-13 IN ACTION!



Valiant Genealogy - Jim Irwin's BT-13  
The Irwin family's BT-13 Valiant has come full circle for new caretaker Jim Irwin. From treasured memories in the early 1950s when his father, Bob, owned it to its three-year restoration at Aero Trader, this BT-13 has provided not only a great flying airplane with its iconic military lineage, but also a shining example of a son's quest to preserve his father's past.  
By: EAA



The Minnesota Wing BT-13 Return To Service Flight  
On May 22, 2020, our Vultee BT-13 took to the skies for her return to service flight after a 3 year restoration process.  
By:CAF Minnesota Wing

*Profile provided by Warbird Alley, with permission of Buck Wyndham*

**SHOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN THE VULTEE BT-13,  
CONTACT DARCY KAAPKE AT 815-229-5112 OR  
EMAIL [DARCY@COURTESYAIRCRAFT.COM](mailto:DARCY@COURTESYAIRCRAFT.COM)**

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