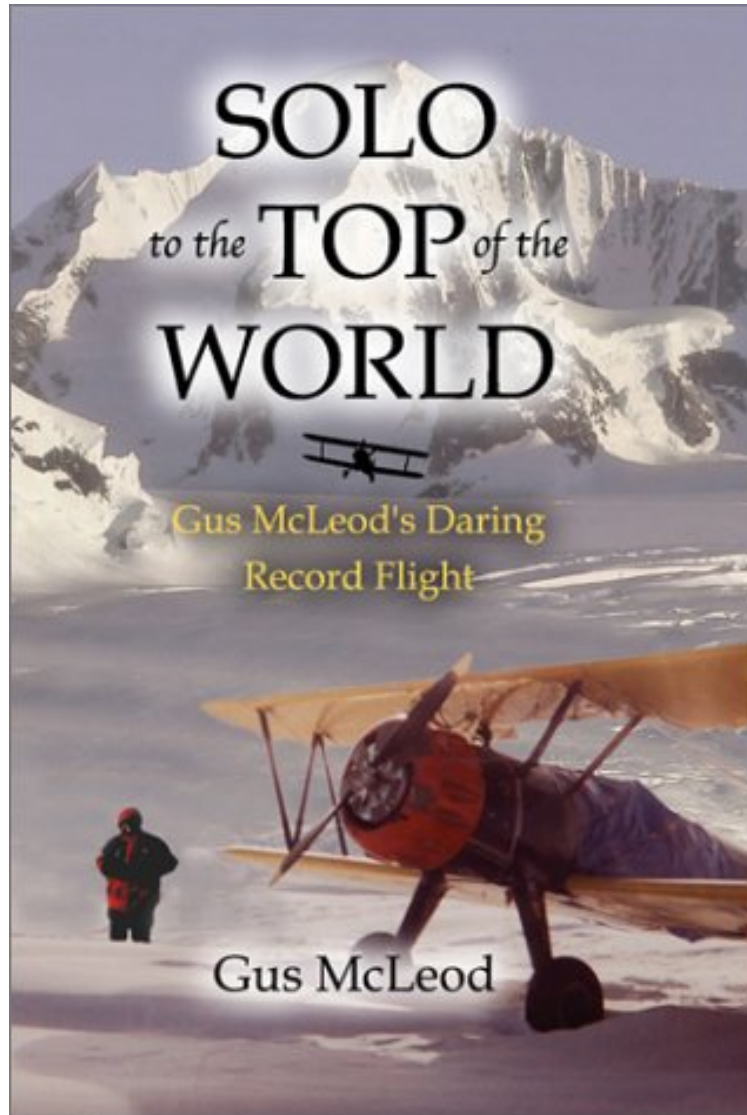


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## Solo to the Top of the World: Gus McLeod's Daring Record Flight

*Gus McLeod*

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#2327935 in Books 2003-03-17 2006-12-07Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 .80 x 6.30 x 9.30l, #File Name: 158834102X248 pages | File size: 41.Mb

**Gus McLeod : Solo to the Top of the World: Gus McLeod's Daring Record Flight** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Solo to the Top of the World: Gus McLeod's Daring Record Flight:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Courage, laughs and wisdom from another eraBy Peter J. AndrewsHow many of us have thought we were born at the wrong time? For most of us, the era of barnstorming heroes is long gone, but Gus McLeod brought those times back with his bare hands and an ancient biplane. The results are both harrowing and humorous. Gustavus balances wry wit with self-effacing humor. He also fills the story with

well-observed, quirky characters (including an Inuit, rechristened Studley, who need help handling the ladies). This is a FUNNY book. My daughter said she enjoyed listening to me chuckling out loud as I read it. At the same time Gustavus brings together bits of history and contemporary concerns to draw us into the meaning of his quest. This is a spiritual journey as well as a man against nature tale. Gustavus struggles with his identity in a society that wants to categorize him according to only part of his rich heritage, and he shows how to win some battles. He also survives against punishing odds, repeatedly tipped against him by frostbite, failing equipment, loneliness, exhaustion and unrelenting cold. The main creation of this book is a full, complex character, a man of charm and intelligent observations. You won't meet another like him. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great American Adventure Story By A Customer Solo to the Top of the World is a great American adventure story. This is a lively historic account of how the first person reached the magnetic and geographic North Pole in an open cockpit airplane, a 1939 Boeing Stearman biplane, respectively in 1999 and 2000, after several others had failed, died or disappeared in the Arctic. The book has all the elements of a great thriller- danger, excitement, high risks, success against tremendous odds, but it is even better than most thrillers because it is true. Readers will not want to put this book down.

A modern trailblazer conquers one of the last aviation records in this harrowing, hilarious, and stirring adventure On April 17, 2000, Gus McLeod circled the geographic North Pole in a 60-year-old, open-cockpit biplane, a goal that had eluded aviation pioneers for a century, and the climax of a two-year odyssey of harrowing physical, mechanical, and natural obstacles. Called crazy and worse, the irrepressible McLeod formed a team that included a car mechanic, a chase pilot who had just earned his license, and an historic Stearman trainer held together with duct tape, jerry-rigged ingenuity, and snow-blind faith. This nonstop page-turner will have readers laughing out loud, crying, and shaking their heads in disbelief as McCleod and his motley troupe of quipping, quarreling characters bounce from scrapes with disaster, to soaring triumphs, to side-splitting encounters with the revolving cast of eskimos, renegades, and bush pilots that await them at each stop on Canadas frozen tundra. With death only a gust of frigid wind or a gallon of bad gas away, McLeod learns life-transforming lessons about the importance of family, friends, and self- identity. Defiantly out of the ordinary and rich in human dimensions far beyond a death-defying flight in the frozen Arctic, Solo to the Top of the World is a soul-stirring, heart-warming adventure for all seekers and dreamers, winged or earthbound.

From Publishers Weekly McLeod was crazy about airplanes as a kid growing up in the 1960s. When he couldn't find a job flying for the airlines or the military, he started his own, nonaviation-related business, raised a family and flew as a hobby. At 40, he bought a Boeing Stearman, a two-seat open cockpit biplane designed in the 1920s as a military trainer. Then, in a fit of hangar bravado, he boasted he could fly the antique thing to the North Pole if he had to something never before done in an open cockpit plane. His friends called his bluff. Suddenly, he had a challenge on his hands. Despite flat, unsophisticated prose and an awkward structure, McLeod's enthusiasm for the sky is contagious, and occasionally the writing breaks through the clouds into eloquent clarity. He writes, for example, of looking down at a herd of caribou spooked at the sound of his old airplane: The herd kept running, until four caribou remained. Soon three dropped out. The last caribou continued on until he could run no longer. Then it too stood and with dignity prepared to face what it feared was death. Will forces us on, but it is courage that gives us the strength to suffer the inevitable with honor. The story of the journey itself contains a good amount of white-knuckle flying and Arctic hardship. On another level, McLeod struggles with the pain his risk taking inflicts on his family and the special disappointment that comes at the end of a successful adventure. 31 color photos not seen by PW. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. About the Author Gus McLeod is an entrepreneur and businessman, and has been a pilot since he was a teenager.