

AVSIM Commercial Aircraft Review

Glasair III



Product Information

Publisher: [Australian Simulation](#)

Description: Kit-built, high performance single engine aircraft.

Download Size:
50 MB

Format:
Download - Auto Installer

Simulation Type:
FS2004 and FSX

Reviewed by: [Bert Pieke](#) AVSIM Senior Staff Reviewer - December 29, 2006

Introduction

Test System

P4 - 2.8 GHz
1 GB DDR 3200 Ram
Nvidia 7600GT 256MB
Video Card
17" LCD monitor
1280x1024 resolution
CH Products joystick w/
throttle
WindowsXP Professional

Flying Time:
12 hours

The Glasair III is a high performance kit plane designed and manufactured by "Glasair Aviation" in the United States of America. The Glasair product line started in 1979 when Tom Hamilton first built the two seat Glasair TD.

The Glasair III is the latest addition to this family of aircraft and has the highest performance. With a solo climb rate of around 3000 ft/min and a top speed at sea level of around 300 mph/260 knots, this aircraft is a kit builders dream.

Thanks to Australian Simulation, you do not need to spend years building this airplane in your basement - instead you can order it on-line and fly it the same day, in either FS9 or FSX.

Installation and Documentation

The package comes as a 50 MB download (40 for FSX), and can be found at [Australian Simulation website](#) . The auto-installer worked well on my FS9 system and installed three different paint schemes to choose from. I did not test this airplane in FSX, but since it ships

for both FS versions, the choice is up to you!

Once installed, the airplane starts up in the 2D cockpit with the radio stack enlarged for better readability. As you can see, the cockpit is nicely laid out and is well equipped with a Sandel electronic HSI and two single height GPS / radio units.

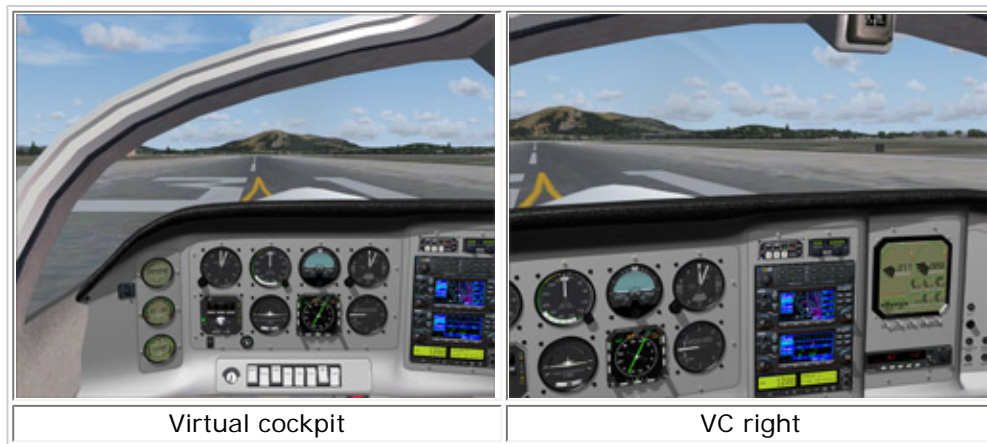


The documentation is one of the best features of this package - comprehensive and professionally put together. It includes a Flying Guide, a Pilots Operating Handbook, Checklists, and a Users Guide for the provided Aircraft Control Panel.

If you want to get up and flying quickly, the Flying Guide will step you through all the procedures required to start up and fly this airplane, using a GPS controlled flight from Innisfail (Queensland, Australia) to Chillagoe (also in QLD). This is an excellent way of getting to know both the aircraft and the advanced instrumentation.

Interior and Exterior Views

The virtual cockpit is nicely finished and matches the 2D cockpit in every detail. In addition, the VC provides handy access to the engine instruments, which are positioned to the right, beyond the radio stack and not readily visible in the 2D cockpit (although they can be popped up when needed).



All the gauges are custom made by Australian Simulation and by and large they are very good. I especially liked the smooth instruments in the VC, something only a few add-on aircraft provide. The addition of the Sandel Electronic HSI is also welcome, but unfortunately not as well implemented as the other gauges.

This is a very complex instrument and in an effort to include as much functionality as possible, the legibility has suffered. Even in it's enlarged form, it is hard to discern all the information, and as the aircraft turns, the map and symbols float around making it even more of a challenge. Luckily, there is an excellent Sandel HSI available from Reality-XP (www.reality-xp.com) and I found by adding the RXP Sandel, it totally transforms this aircraft.

In keeping with the "kit-built" theme of this airplane, I also tried replacing the GPS units (which are based on the Microsoft default GPS) with the RXP equivalents and ended up with a fabulous cockpit which I used for most of my testing.



Cockpit with RXP gauges



RXP HSI



VC with RXP gauges

The exterior model is nicely detailed and gives a good representation of what a composite structure airplane looks like, with slightly curved shapes instead of the riveted aluminum skin that we know well from most general aviation aircraft.



On the runway

The interior of the cockpit is also well done, and it is a pleasure to pan around and look at the details. The design of the Glasair is quite modern, with a short stick for the flight controls and with all the switches nicely laid out and close at hand. What the engine controls lack in proximity, they make up for by being legible, even from a distance.



Interior detail

Flying The Glasair III

This is where the real excitement begins, because this airplane comes with a lot of power in a very light airframe and the performance is nothing short of spectacular. Never having flown the real thing, I cannot say how close to reality the flight model is, but I can say that it handles very well and is a blast to fly.

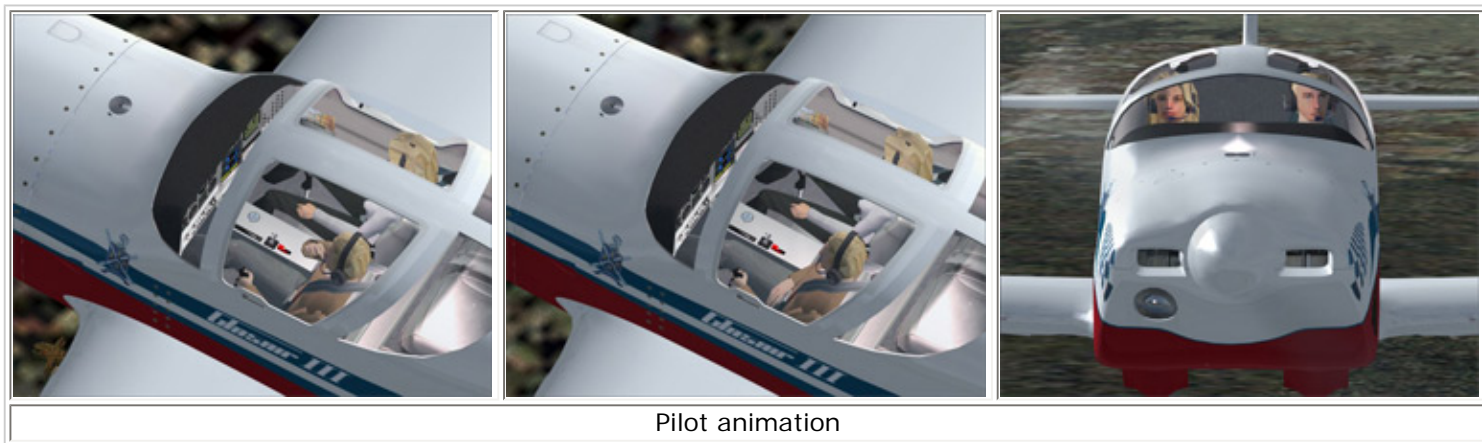
With the great IFR instrumentation, this is an aircraft to take on cross-country flights and hone your navigational skills. The documentation is both complete and well written so you can get into this aircraft as deep as you like. The provided Aircraft Control Panel allows you to configure your airplane with a load editor, to choose texture sets and details like a clean or dirty windshield. It also provides for adjustments to the virtual head latency effect, which will move your head position in the

virtual cockpit in response to g-forces, a nice feature!



Sounds and Effects

The sounds are well done and the pilot and co-pilot animation is worth a close-up look. The pilot not only moves his head in flight, but also relieves his flying position by moving his right hand to scratch various parts of his anatomy... I tried to catch him putting his hand on his co-pilot's knee, but that never happened while I was watching.. All in all, a nicely finished package.



Summary

This is a nice change from the many look-alike aircraft out there. A true high performance touring aircraft, which is fun to fly with the satisfaction of knowing that you could build one yourself, if you had the patience and the money.

The cockpit instrumentation that is provided is complete and ambitious, especially the fully coded EHSI. If you are serious about this aircraft, I would highly recommend to go all the way and upgrade with Reality XP gauges, it makes a real difference.

What I Like About The Glasair III

- Interesting high performance airplane, fun to fly
- Nicely laid out cockpits: 2d and VC
- Smooth gauges in VC
- Comprehensive documentation
- Nice change from Cessnas and Pipers

What I Don't Like About The Glasair III

- EHSI gauge legibility and "floating" symbols

Printing

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