Popular Science Awards Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II And Polecat UAV Best Of What's New For 2006

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The Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II stealth fighter and the P-175 Polecat Unmanned Air Vehicle (UAV) have received the 2006 Best of What's New awards from Popular Science, the world's largest science and technology magazine.

Popular Science Editor Mark Jannot said, "Best of What's New is the ultimate Popular Science accolade, representing a year's worth of work evaluating thousands of products. These awards honor innovations that not only influence the way we live today, but that change the way we think about the future."

The stealthy Lightning II is a supersonic, multi-role, 5TH Generation fighter designed to replace a wide range of existing aircraft, including AV-8B Harriers, A-10s, F-16s, F/A-18 Hornets and United Kingdom Harrier GR.7s and Sea Harriers. Three versions of the F-35 are under development: a conventional takeoff and landing (CTOL) variant for conventional runways, a short takeoff/vertical landing (STOVL) variant for operating off small ships and near front-line combat zones, and a carrier variant (CV) for catapult launches and arrested recoveries on board the U.S. Navy's large aircraft carriers.

"We're proud to have been selected for such a high-profile award," said Dan Crowley, Lockheed Martin executive vice president and F-35 program general manager. "With advanced stealth, fighter agility, powerful sensor fusion and greatly improved supportability -- all combined in an affordable package -- the F-35 is revolutionizing the way tactical fighters operate. We greatly appreciate Popular Science recognizing those attributes."

The Polecat UAV was developed to better understand flight dynamics of a tailless, 90-foot wingspan, high altitude unmanned air system. Risk mitigation to remove costs from developing UAV systems and reduce risk in pertinent technologies in support of ongoing research and development for the Air Force's future Long Range Strike Program and next generation ISR platforms were also explored.

The Polecat effort went from concept to flight in only 18 months by developing breakthrough management and manufacturing techniques to cut time and cost out of the development process. Frank Cappuccio, Lockheed Martin executive vice president and general manager Advanced Development Programs and Strategic Planning commented, "It took a tremendous amount of dedication and ingenuity from a small team of Skunk Works(TM) employees to get this project off the ground. Popular Science is read by many members of our Polecat team and to have our effort recognized in this publication is not only a genuine honor; it is a real source of pride."

Each year, thousands of new products and innovations from around the world are reviewed by the magazine's staff, and winners are chosen in 10 categories. A product or technology must exemplify a major step forward in its category to qualify to win. Founded in 1872, Popular Science is the world's largest science and technology magazine, with a circulation of 6.5 million monthly readers.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 140,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2005 sales of $37.2 billion.

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