

News Flashes from Abroad

RUSSIA

Recent news from one of our foreign correspondents states that there are now approximately 2,000 glider schools in Russia. (*This seems a little hard to believe, however, and we would like to check further into the validity of this statement.*)

Because of the mass production of pilots in Russia, primary training ships are made so they can be torn down in a hurry. They have hinged tail booms in order that they can be stored in as small a space as possible.

The general workmanship of Russian gliders and sailplanes is said to be rather poor, because more stress is being laid on quantity than quality.

Russia holds the unofficial world record for both altitude and distance. The altitude is said to be approximately 5,000 meters, while the distance is estimated at 600 kilometers.

FINLAND

Recently an expedition was made to Finland by a group of German scientists and sailplane pilots. It was found that Finland, due to its remarkable atmospheric conditions, has probably greater opportunities for soaring than any country in the world. It must be remembered that Finland's days, in comparison with countries of lower latitudes, are very much longer. Here it has been estimated that thermal conditions last on an average of from ten to twelve hours at a stretch, while in countries of lower latitude they last from five to eight hours. It has been reported that massive cumulus clouds build up during the night, due to the earth having been well saturated with solar heat during the daylight cycle. (It will be remembered that Finland has periods of daylight lasting for some three months.) At night the earth continues to radiate heat, which, when coming in contact with the night coldness, results in the formation of these gigantic cumuli. Another expedition is contemplated by this same group shortly, and it is expected that high performance sailplanes will constitute part of their equipment.

GERMANY

Statistics have come to us from Germany concerning pilots and gliders. They now boast approximately 40,000 "A" pilots, 20,000 "B" pilots, from 15,000 to 20,000 "C" pilots, and 250 men who hold the highly esteemed Silver "C". Germany is also reported as having from 8,000 to 10,000 Primary gliders, 2,000 secondary gliders and 500 sailplanes.

Wolf Hirth plans to come to America to attend our Open Soaring Contest this year and, if in good health at the time of the meet, he may enter the competition with a "Minimoo".

Red Slatters' suggestion that someone should invent a pair of goggles which would make thermal currents vis-

ible has apparently gotten beyond the stage of a joke. It has been reported that Mr. Nils Hiorth of 85 Bergstasse, Berlin, through experiments based on the refraction of light through prisms, is now well on the way toward creating a practical pair of thermal goggles.

The 1936 Rhön Contest

At the last Rhön Contest, although no outstanding distance flights were made, some remarkable performances for altitude and duration were recorded. Blech made the most outstanding flight of the meet when he soared to an altitude of 4,480 meters (14,698 feet), coming within 200 meters of the world altitude record. The greatest distance of the meet was only 157 miles, while the maximum duration was 13 hours and 45 minutes. The contest was limited to 61 sailplanes, among which the following types appeared: Rhön Sperber, Rhönadler, Condor, Minimoo, Rhön Buzzard, Mü-13.

The most sensational plane of the contest was Kurt Schmidt's Mü-13, "Atalante". This plane easily outperformed the other entries, as could be seen when it was flying on slope winds with a number of other planes near it. Strange to say, this plane seems to be more in keeping with American construction than German, since its fuselage is of steel tube and fabric construction and, except for the nose, is of rectangular cross-section. The wings are triangular in shape, somewhat similar to the Buxton Transporter.

AUSTRIA

Hinnie Hutter, co-designer of the H-17 sailplane, recently established an unofficial (but working) altitude record of 1800 meters in an H-17 at Griesberg. Altitude was gained inside a cumulus cloud, without the aid of blind flying instruments. (This speaks well for the stability of the plane.)

Incidentally, since the release of official drawings of the H-17, fifty of these ships have been built; twenty-five in Austria and the remaining twenty-five in Ireland, Germany and Canada.

ARGENTINA

The Zeppelin Hindenburg, on her last trip to South America, carried a "Minimoo" to the Republic of Argentina. The Argentine Government recently appropriated and spent 60,000 marks for glider schools, training sites and equipment.

Mr. H. Ott, a German, of Buenos Aires, holder of the South American duration record of 11 hours and 14 minutes, plans to make a flight along the Andes in a "Minimoo". He believes it possible to fly the mountain range for 650 miles and expects to reach such altitudes that it will be necessary to carry oxygen equipment with him.