

Some Interesting Two-Place Sailplanes from Home and Abroad

AT last year's Annual National Soaring Contest perhaps the most outstanding entry was that of the California group, headed by Jay Buxton with his Buxton Transporter, in which new National endurance, altitude, and distance records for two-place sailplanes were established.

In preceding contests we have had many interesting multi-place planes, ranging from two-seaters, to a sailplane capable of carrying as many as four people. The desire to carry a passenger and introduce him to the thrills of motorless flying, even though he is not a pilot, along with the advantages of giving dual instruction in advanced soaring, and the practicability of carrying an observer who is free to make meteorological observations without being occupied with the actual flying of the plane, has led to many new developments in two-place sailplanes.

Much has already been said in past numbers of The Gliding and Soaring Bulletin concerning the Kranich High Performance two-seater in Germany, so it will not be necessary to go into further details concerning this plane, except to mention that it now probably represents the ultimate in proven two-seater design. Due to the distance between the cockpits and a solid bulk head, separating them, it has been found necessary to install telephone communication between pilot and observer, in order to carry on normal conversation. Ulrich and Wolfgang Hutter, observing this difficulty in communication, have recently designed a full cantilever mid-wing sailplane (the K-4) where pilot and observer sit side by side. A small cross-section is obtained in the fuselage by having the outside elbows of both pilot and observer rest in part of the wing root. At present a full size mock-up of the cockpit has been made at the Sport-Flugzeugbau Martin Schempp factory to determine comfort, ease of control, feasibility of dual control, etc., and it is expected that this plane will be on the market before the end of this year.

While Germany is stressing its attention on two-seaters of wooden construction, an entirely new type of

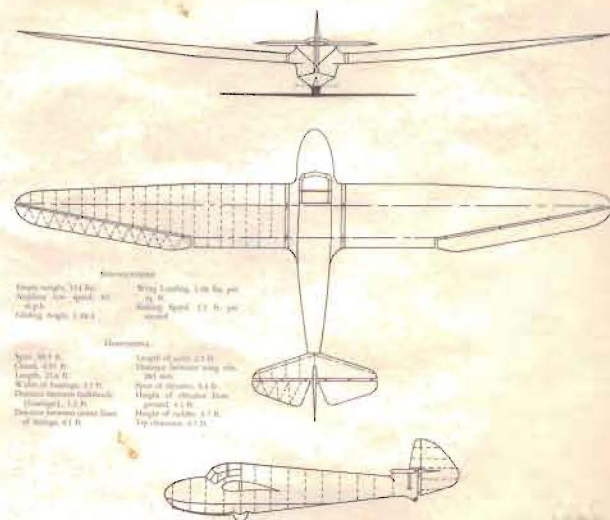


Jay Buxton's "Transporter", with Jay at the wing tip and Red Slatter at the controls



Kranich high performance two-place sailplane

sailplane construction is being undertaken in California. William Hawley Bowlus is now building an all metal two-seater. Mr. Bowlus has been rather secretive about the development of this plane and has requested that detailed information and photographs be withheld from publication until some later date. From photographs we have seen, however, it looks very similar to the Bowlus "Dragon Fly", which was cracked up at the beginning of the Fifth Annual National Soaring Contest, and which, from all previous flight tests performed on it in California, had astonishingly good soaring characteristics. This new plane, breaking away from the wood, steel tube and fabric type of construction, may be pointing the way to a new era in sailplane construction.



The Göppingen K-4 two-place sailplane designed by Ulrich and Wolfgang Hutter