

Foreign & News Notes

GERMANY

From Wolf Hirth, recently returned from Johannesburg, Winhuk, and Swakopmund in South Africa, where he made a few flights and gave lectures, we have first hand news of the Soaring Goal Flight competition from Westerland on the Island of Sylt in the North Sea, south-east to Breslau in Silesia. The first three days were marred by storms, low clouds and rain. The contest ended June 27th with the winning pilots as follows:

1. Hanna Reitsch in the Reiherr; 2. Kurt Schmidt in a Mü 13; 3. Max Beck; 4. Wiesehöfer; 5. Fick in a Minimoa; 6. Wagner in a Minimoa; 7. Huth in a Condor II. Also competing but not successful in reaching Breslau was a new tailless sailplane of 66 ft. span, "Horten III", flown by Werner Blech, a Rheinland from Aachen, a B-5 from Berlin, 2 Mü 13's, 3 Kranichs, a Rhoenadler, and 6 Minimoas.

Wolf reports that the new model Minimoa, completed for the Rhoen Contest, weighs nearly 100 pounds less than the earlier ship, and has a new wing section.

The first newspaper reports from the German National Contest, better known as the 19th Rhoen, are really astounding. Three pilots exceeded 17,000 ft. altitude. The first was Werner Blech, who was killed while flying in a thunderstorm in which he gained 17,700 ft. His chute brought his body down after he had evidently been hit by part of his ship. Herbert Fick attained 18,044 ft. and Walter Drechsel, a Lufthansa entrant, made a record of 23,196 ft.

The October issue will contain the complete results of this contest, held on the Wasserkuppe.

Soaring has suffered a great loss through the death of Werner Blech, whose article on altitude flying in the December, 1937 issue, will be remembered. A specialist in this type of soaring, it was jokingly said of him that the only distance he would make was straight up and down.



ENGLAND

THE FIRST CLUB TO CLUB FLIGHT

Mr. S. C. O'Grady, of the Newcastle Gliding Club, has been the first to accomplish what is probably every soaring pilot's ambition—to fly from one



Mr. S. C. O'Grady in the Newcastle Club's "Kirby Kite"

gliding club to another. Starting from Green Hill, near Rothbury, one of the Newcastle Club's hill-soaring sites, at 3 p.m. on April 3rd, he landed two hours later at Sutton Bank, the headquarters of the Yorkshire Gliding Club, about 77 miles away. Mr. O'Grady's annotated copy of the barograph record, reproduced below, gives an idea of how the flight progressed. Lack of blind flying instruments prevented anything like full use being made of the lift available.

RUSSIA

Alexis Dawydoff sends an account of the new world distance record for two-seaters of 640 kms or 400 miles, made from Moscow to Tchernigoff on July 22nd by pilot Kartasheff. The sailplane used was designed and built by the pilot.

"Kartasheff and his passenger took off by airplane tow from the Moscow Air-drome at about 11:00 a.m. They released at 3000 ft. altitude and started immediately to pick up thermals, which carried them up to 7000 ft. Upon reaching this altitude, they set their course directly south and down wind toward Kiev, 750 kms. from Moscow. Having difficulty in flying the straight course to Kiev, they flew towards Kalouga. Further south they had the impenetrable forests of Briansk, which stretch for miles, and in which a landing would be disastrous. Here a strong storm front helped them to get up to 8000 ft. and, flying over the narrow parts of the forests, they got out over the valley of the Desna River. Kartasheff then decided to fly over the fertile lands of the valley, inasmuch as the lift was strong, smooth and constant. Towards six o'clock this condition petered out and Kartasheff, with his passenger, landed in a field on the outskirts of Tchernigoff, having been in the air 7 hours and 30 minutes."

Gliding with a Light Plane

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trip it took me 30 minutes to get in position over Freehold from the airport and only 17 minutes to glide back. I jazzed the throttle only three times for less than a couple of seconds and when I landed, my oil thermometer showed barely sixty degrees temperature.

I think anyone who will try good long glides will agree with me that it is rare good sport. Outside of this, it teaches one, as no amount of lectures and talk can, the futility of trying to stretch glides into so-called "Graveyard" glides. It also teaches one the advantage of at all times flying fairly high, so that in case of motor failure one has plenty of time and space in which to pick a suitable landing place.

Washington Test Flight

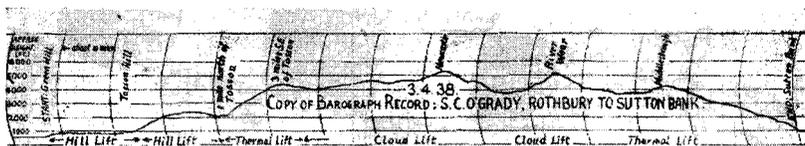
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Throughout the flight, blind flying was employed wherever rate of climb merited its use. The electric turn indicator functioned perfectly. The extreme longitudinal sensitivity of this particular ship made airspeed and pitch control difficult, and a decrease of flipper sensitivity would have been most welcome, and is a good feature upon which sailplane designers should meditate if blind flying is to be conducted successfully by their craft. In blind spirals, I used that rate of turn which I had found to be adequate for the particular cloud before I became blind.

Over Gettysburg at five, the mountains were behind, and so were all the interesting looking clouds. Ahead, two starved and emaciated specimens sprawled across the sky; beyond them, nothing but haze. Below were thousands of black dots and brown dashes too large for gravestones and too geometrically arranged for boulders, so they must have been army tents. Arriving under those bedraggled clouds just mentioned, with some four thousand feet, I was surprised, as on a previous flight, to discover the vigor they still possessed despite the late hour and their wilted appearance. Two days previously, over the Poconos, also late in the afternoon, I had attained my highest altitude under just a thin film of cloud.

Arriving at the clouds' last sentinel, I could see Baltimore and the Potomac, and imagined a blot on the southern horizon to be Washington. It was now six o'clock; Libertytown, Maryland, was beneath. Four thousand feet were still being zealously hoarded and nothing left to do but sit, hoping the wind would blow the cloud a bit further before it dumped me. It did both of these things. When the variometer said about a half meter drop, I set the airspeed on forty-five, the nose on Washington's monument, and my hopes on a tail wind, settling down to enjoy that phenomenal glide which terminates a late flight. The air is silky smooth, not a ripple to disturb one's equilibrium, no thermals are felt, yet some mysterious force seems to buoy the ship along while the altimeter takes a holiday, and refuses to drop. Nearer and nearer came the marble walls of Washington, doubt giving way to hope, hope at last to certainty as the spoked wheel of Washington's streets became clearly distinguishable.

Reaching the edge of the city, I had about three hundred feet, enough at this phenomenally flat glide to reach Pennsylvania Avenue's parks, but insufficient to reach Anacostia, across the river. Rather than mar an otherwise pleasant flight by hazarding a landing on the holiday packed lawns, I turned left, lazily circled a large, inviting golf course, pulled open the spoilers and dropped lightly on the eighteenth fairway, 7 hours and twenty-six minutes, and 219 miles from Elmira, tired, but eager to investigate the nearby nineteenth hole clubhouse. Well it speaks for air-minded Washingtonians that not once was inquiry made, "Did the motor break down?" A few more years and even the commonplace query, "Run out of gas, mister?" will be but a fragment of "remember when".



From "The Sailplane and Glider"