

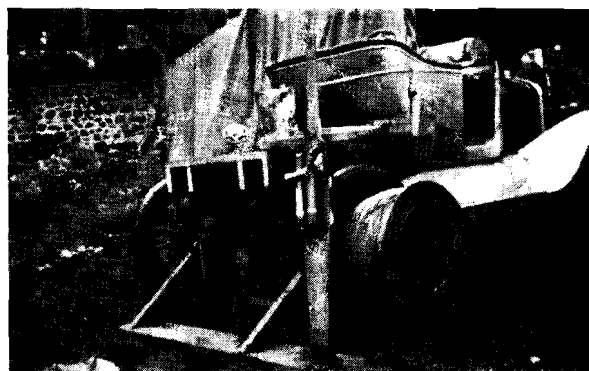
Auto Tow or Winch for **PRIMARY GLIDER TRAINING?**

by **Gustave Scheurer**

The winch has been, since its first appearance in Elmira, the center of arguments. Many are convinced of its value; others are still doubtful.

There are reasons to give the winch method more consideration. With increasing power flying, airports are more and more crowded and there is little room for glider flying. The result is that our activity must move to suitable farmland.

The Aero Club Albatross realized this as early as 1930, the year in which it was founded. We used a farm of about 150 acres, which had a rolling surface with one level strip in the east-west direction. This formed the only possible runway for auto-tow, but we had good winds in other directions and could have flown if we had something to send us up.



The granddaddy of all winches

Our first members were trained with the old shock cord methods; that is as long as we could find the necessary personnel to operate. Not only lack of help, but the fact that the students needed more height to make their turns forced us to do something about it. Auto tow was not practical, so we developed the first experimental winch. A 1917 Model T Ford was used. The principle was fine. When the mechanical bugs had been worked out, we had a practical device. With the winch, we could tow regardless of rough ground. We would use all wind directions with the same efficiency. Without a winch, this very good field would have been worthless. From the time we took up winch flying, we had no difficulties. In fact, to my knowledge, there has not been one mishap due to winch launching in this country.

Winch primary training is not as practical as auto tow training for the reason that you need two working

M.I.T. Winch at Elmira.

