

Government TRAINING

The C. A. A. experimental soaring training program is over. There are 20 more converts to the sport of motorless flight, and twenty airplane pilots who have learned much more of the significance of the medium in which they fly. In spite of many and varied obstacles in the way of efficient operation, all students received sufficient training so that the value of soaring in improving the quality of flying shown by power plane pilots may well be appreciated. Although plans are not definite as yet, statements by officials of the C. A. A. indicate that, provided we obtain type certificates for some of our ships, we may be quite safe in counting on the inclusion of soaring in the expanded program planned for the coming year.

Unfortunately, as we go to press, the information on the Frankfort unit is still rather meager. The following statement by Jim Smiley indicates that the test was satisfactory.

"Twelve Government students arrived during the period beginning June 20th and ending June 26th. The boys were from Alabama, Minnesota, Purdue, Michigan, and North Texas Agricultural College. The training was carried on in the Franklin Utility glider belonging to the Frankfort Soaring Association and in Joe Steinhauer's Wolf which Joe rented to us after my trip to Elmira. All boys present passed their flight and written examinations on Friday and Saturday, July 14th and 15th. Inspector Hensley was assigned to Frankfort during those two days to check the group out.

"The Frankfort organization learned a great deal from this government experiment. It will be possible, through the experience gained with this group, to not only train our private students throughout the balance of the season in a more satisfactory fashion, but also it has given us an education that will enable us to do a thorough job for the C. A. A. when next they ask for such a training program."

The students, who were picked from the best of those who completed the C. A. A. power plane training courses in their colleges, were as fine a group as any instructor could hope to work with. Their enthusiasm and willingness to help would have put many clubs to shame.

All training in the Elmira unit was accomplished in two Franklin gliders. Ships were rented from Mr. William McGrath, of Elmira, and Don Hamilton. The Soaring Society bought Gus Scheurer's Franklin to replace Mr. McGrath's ship which was cracked up. There were no other accidents.

The primary training was accomplished on the airport by winch and auto tow. Although one winch was reserved for the use of the students, the heavy traffic caused a great deal of delay to both students and contestants. It was felt, however, that the success of the training was important enough to the future of soaring to permit the student activity to be conducted while contest flights were in progress.

Some difficulty resulted from the fact that the boys arrived over a period of 10 days, and no two boys were doing the same things at the same time. Though this slowed down operations to a certain extent, it had the



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advantage of affording each one the opportunity of watching the progress of somebody who was just a little further ahead than he was. It was a little hard on Harold Pollacek and Ed Errickson, the first two, but they turned in excellent performance in spite of their role as guinea pigs for the other six.

In spite of the delay it caused, the meet was of untold benefit as a means of instruction. During the whole two weeks the boys had a continual picture of the final goal of the Soaring pilot. They were able to examine practically all of the outstanding designs at present in use in this country. They were able to observe the technique and listen to the discussions of the best pilots. It was possibly because of this that three of them acquired the necessary knowledge and skill to gain their "C" licenses on thermal flights from the airport.

Among these thermal flights, was one by Chester Phillips which caused some gray hairs to appear on the heads of several spectators. Phillips, taking off on winch tow, had been instructed to make a wide circle around the field, and attempt a precision landing. A local thunder storm was approaching. Chet cut loose at about 900 feet, started turning toward the storm, and began to climb at two meters per second. Observing his great height above the field, he increased the diameter of his circle and flew further toward the storm. Fortunately, the course he had adopted carried him back away from the area of lift before he gained enough altitude to be in danger.

Later, Phillips and Dick Bartlett, each flying a Franklin, made the two cross country flights of the training period. They took off within ten minutes of each other, both caught thermals within the first three minutes, and fifteen minutes later, were out of sight. Phillips made 13 miles and Bartlett, 10. Your editor was put very definitely in his place when he and his wife took off in the Schweizer shortly afterwards and landed five minutes later in the valley.

We were extremely fortunate in having a Northwest wind over Harris Hill for seven of the eight days following the contest, with excellent thermal conditions prevailing throughout. Most of the time the wind was too strong to permit any but the most advanced students to land back on the ridge, but the boys were so anxious to fly that very little time was wasted. Many excellent thermal flights were recorded.

(Continued on page 12)