

AND TALKS - - - - -

should be able to retain that invaluable liberty.

On Tuesday morning, there was a 25/30 mph westerly bouncing gently down onto the plains between the Blue Mountains and Sydney. 5/8th cu. was kept moving fast and without much vertical development. On take-off, Nancy worked hard, using both hands. Conditions were really rough. Fred towed us towards the area allotted to us by Control and I continued taking photos and familiarising myself with the terrain around Bankstown. Being completely motorless-minded, too, I nearly drove myself silly always keeping a suitable landing-field within view and not relinquishing it until I found another! It is very comforting to know that one's tow-pilot is similarly minded and is no doubt doing the same thing up ahead.

Usable green air was mighty scarce and it was all of forty minutes before we struck something that seemed a possibility. Fred raised his arm from the cockpit to signal he thought it was O. K. I did, too, so we released. In the next 25 minutes, I worked until the sweat streamed down from my brow (I know, ladies perspire, but believe me, lady glider pilots sweat). It was maddening. The air was dancing wildly; I'd locate good green air, apparently center it, start booming up at 10 fps then, BWAM, it was GONE, and there was that darned tug-pilot away a bit circling happily upwards indicating good lift to us. I tried every trick I know but I just could not get us above our release height of 1500'; often we were down as low as 500' and that's awfully low in a TG you haven't flown much before. The red air was sinking so violently that I didn't dare get too far away from the paddock I'd earlier picked out for a landing, if necessary. Finally, almost panting with exertion, I had to admit defeat and bring her in. The spoiler brakes again proved their invaluableity — and if that isn't a word, then it ought to be.

Fred landed and kindly didn't make any comments such as—what's wrong with these Victorian pilots anyway? We decided to tow off again and release next time a little higher. The paddock was dead into wind and plenty long enough so the take-off was made without much incident and before a crowd of people who appeared from nowhere. A couple of hours later, many miles away, Hinkler Club's Bob Krick heard that a glider called Swyzerdyzer had crashed upside down in a paddock at Werrington. The upside-down theory was no doubt because of the mid-low wing. All other Australian types have high wings. Needless to say, Bob grabbed the telephone, but fast!

Fred towed us back towards Fleurs Airstrip and, ten minutes later, at 3000' we released once more. Hated having to try it from so high, but it was really hopeless any lower. After a couple of tries we were down at 2500', at which point I got my mad up and decided that no ding-danged green air was going to push

me out whenever it felt like it. I gritted my teeth, snarled, said some rather bad words and next thing we were up at 5800' and cloud base. But by this time we had been carried way down wind over Bankstown Aerodrome and so, with Civil's request uppermost in our minds, we stayed clear of cloud. Well, that's not strictly accurate! I must admit that I was so determined to stay in the green air that I forgot our position and did my damndest to carry on into cloud, until Nancy's violent protests from the rear cockpit, made me realise what I was doing. "Oh, you . . . you . . . GLIDER PILOTS!" muttered Nancy as I grumbled and flew clear. I handed over to Nan then, and she practiced beautiful vertical turns.

Back at Bankstown, Nancy and I weren't going to claim our climb as an official record, but Fred pointed out that it WAS the first gain of altitude by two women pilots, as well as being the first time two of us had soared together in Australia, as well, come to think of it, as being the first official open two-seater altitude record, and also that one of the TG's big jobs is getting sound publicity for gliding—so the story went out to the press and the barograph chart went to the Associated Aero Clubs for an official Australian record.

Our "Explorer" chalked up her second record, which wasn't bad going for a glider that had only been in the country for thirty days.

Again on Sunday, club flying at Camden with the Hinkler boys and the two Grunau's, the clouds looked luscious, but they were forming over the mountains and not worth tuppence by the time they reached us. They made a pretty sky though. Our much loved Doctor G. A. M. Heydon, who's done so much over the years to promote soaring in this country, had a flight with Fred in "Explorer" and even Doc's moderately non-committal face showed distinct signs of the Schweizer Smile when he landed. I flew Sydney writer, Barbara Richards, on tow from Bankstown to Camden, Barbara's first time off the ground. She was a most satisfying passenger, falling completely in love with both "Explorer" and soaring.

Later in the day, Fred went up alone and tried "Explorer" out in inverted flying and flick rolls. Very pretty and very sound. We liked it. So did Fred and "Explorer". After she'd been inverted for a while, it became sort of confusing. You couldn't remember whether she was upside down or right side up. My last flight in "Explorer" for a while, was from Camden to Bankstown, homeward bound, my first flight as a two-seater instructor. Quite a change from instructing on primaries, I found it!

A couple of weeks later, Mrs. Veronica Platt, Assistant Editor of SAILPLANE AND GLIDER acquired that Schweizer Smile when she managed to spend a couple of hours at Camden with the Hinkler Club and the Sydney Soaring Club, on her fast

tour of Australia. Mrs. Platt had a flight with Nancy Ellis. Incidentally, the Schweizer was the first glider she'd seen flying in Australia, and she arrived in time to see Fred trying her out in an inverted loop. Rather a startling introduction to Australian gliding!

Last Sunday, 15th October, red and Keith Colyer (Sydney Soaring Club) tried "Explorer" in a cu. nim, when they released at 3400' and climbed 3000' in cloud to 7000'. Fred reports that Keith aerobatted all the way down from 5000', more or less crowing with delight.

Then Merv Waghorn and Sel Owen —also Sydney Soaring Club stayed for 35 minutes at 4000'.

John Patcha, who seems to speak perfectly good English but nevertheless has trouble in making us understand him, finally managed to get across something he's been nagging about for weeks, and "Explorer" was tried out sitting 15' below the slipstream instead of just above. Fred tells me the new position is very much smoother and allows a faster climb, the rope never getting slack at any time; even at speeds up to 75 mph, novice pilots were able to fly "Explorer" with ease, even hands off.

It is also much easier on the tug pilot and, surprisingly, does not tend to pull the tail of the plane down, even when the glider gets extra low. Fred sums up by saying it is safer, smother and more efficient. Many thanks to John for his patience in persisting to point it out!

"Explorer" is also reported to be a perfect lady in cloud, very easy to control and straightening herself out from a spiral.

On the same day, the Hinkler Club attempted to winch "Explorer" but the winch motor played up and Fred climbed to only 300', whereupon he had to do a tight circuit and land. However, he reports that the initial take-off was very easy and they hope to do better when the winch drivers have had more experience. Most of the Hinkler Club's launches are by aeroplane.

In conclusion: Those of us who've had the privilege of flying the lovely "Explorer" feel warmly appreciative towards Eugart Yerian, of Memphis, Tennessee, who went to a very great deal of trouble to help Fred get his TG, and to Paul and Ernest Schweizer, who also have our greatest admiration for designing this clean and delightful ship, so well suited to our Australian conditions. It's my belief that the TG will do a lot to raise the prestige of motorless flight and interest the general public in what we're doing. I'd like to see a G in every State. We've already seen "Explorer's" effect on Civil Aviation authorities and on power types. Besides, we think we've got a standing wave up our sleeves, too, and, while we don't expect to be rivalling Bishop, we hope to be doing some mighty interesting things out here in Australia with our U. S. Army Air Force glider.

THE END