

PGC SUMMER TRAINING CAMP

By ALAN H. SCHMID

It is difficult to solo a glider! The actual learning to fly is the easiest part. Those who are fortunate enough to be able to join a club know it takes literally "a month of Sundays" to solo. If the enthusiast lived in an area without a glider club, his chances of eventually soaring are very slim.

Gliding is inexpensive, if many flights are made each year. It costs very little more, other than launching fees to fly a glider 400 flights instead of 100 flights per year.

The above two facts are basically the reason why the Philadelphia Glider Council (PGC) decided to have a Summer Training Camp at their field. Now that the first camp is past we would like to tell of our original plans, the week's activities, and things we learned.

The Planning Stage

It all started during the Christmas season of 1952 at the home of Wally Setz near Philadelphia. Wally had been to the Internationals in Spain and in his travels had observed British training camps in operation. He suggested that PGC do something similar. We were the logical group to experiment with this sort of operation since we not only had the equipment, but also the field, Philadelphia Gliderport, 35 miles north of Philadelphia. The summer of '53 was upon us before any definite plans could be laid. Rather than rush things, it was decided to make the big push for the 1954 season.

Much effort was put forth defining the size and scope of the camp. It was decided that a small success was much better than a big flop. A cost analysis was run, curriculum was studied, and the questions of food and shelter for the students were all looked into. What evolved were a number of alternate programs depending upon the number of students. The program decided upon was as follows:

Students flying one Schweizer 2-22

One towship

\$125 per student to cover at least 15 flights and up to 25 flights, plus textbooks, ground school notes, etc.

Plans to have the students stay at the field where practical.

An effort was to be made to have each solo before the end of the camp.

Publicity and Preparation

Once the program was decided upon publicity was handled using our club publication the *RELEASE*, by mailings to the SSA list for the eastern states, and notices in *SOARING*. From the *SOARING* calendar of events, *AVIATION WEEK* and the *AOPA NEWS LETTER* carried notices of the camp.

The six students at the PGC summer training camp with their Schweizer 2-22.

Photo—A. H. Schmid



In the beginning replies were very slow, so slow in fact, that a week before the camp we still had only four students. The sixth enrolled the first day of the camp. During the training week we received two more inquiries hoping to join the group.

The Camp

The plans for the camp were modified to allow a total of six students. This was possible since one of the students had 4000 hours power time and had spent a weekend at the field prior to the camp flying the 2-22. It was planned to have him transition to a Schweizer TG-2 as soon as practical.

The students were very interesting because of their varied backgrounds.

1. Williams Athis, 458 Martin Avenue, New Martinsville, W. Va.

Age 39

Profession: Electrician

Previous Flying Experience: 75 hrs. power 10 years ago

2. John Koerner, 112 Harrington Drive, Rochester 17, N. Y.

Age: 15

Profession: Student

Previous Flying Experience: 3 glider flights

3. Thomas L. Norris, Ph.D. 1944 Warren Avenue, Brockton, Mass.

Age: 29

Profession: Anthropologist

Previous Flying Experience: None

4. Carlisle E. McKee, M.D., 310 Park Bldg., Pittsburgh 22, Pa.

Profession: Ophthalmologist

Previous Flying Experience: 4000 hrs power

5. Gunars Bumurs, 3rd St. and 6th Ave., Brentwood, L.I., N.Y.

Profession: Lumber Yard Foreman.

Previous Flying Experience: 10 glider flights—mostly shockcord launches in Europe.

6. Bryce Pierce, Jr., R.F.D. No. 1, Claremont, New Hampshire

Age: 17

Profession: Student

Previous Flying Experience: None

Flying began Sunday, July 11, with each student getting at least one familiarization flight. The rest of the day was turned over to regular club activities. Monday morning started off bright and early with the equipment out of the hangar at 7:00 a.m. Throughout the rest of the week the flying was started early and ended late, but the scheduling of flights during the day was such that no one had to spend over two-thirds of the flying day actually at the flight line. Breakfast and lunch hours were staggered so that there were no breaks in the flying. Each of the three instructors had two students. The schedule worked

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