

ON BUILDING A SCHWEIZER 1-26

by
HARRIOT T. BROWER

As an interested wife who has a Private Glider license, I would like to put in a few words about the 1-26 kit. Stan and I are having a wonderful time working it out. We are the "anybody" who Schweizer says can build it. We've had no previous experience in construction and we're doing it in the cellar under far from ideal conditions. The most interference comes from the two year old who plays cowboys with "Daddy's cleco gun" and "needs" all the tools to play with as soon as Daddy wants one, but a puppy and four months baby cause their share of commotion too, and the whole family will be well up on glider construction when we finish. The instructions are clear and

work shop was well stocked and, besides the usual equipment, we have access to "the shop" tools as Stan runs his own business. Somehow or other though, few of them seemed to be on Schweizer's list of "unnecessary tools" which you receive after your initial deposit, and of course none of them were on the list of "useful additional tools" which mostly turned out to be necessary before we got very far. For a while there the budget was stretched badly out of line. In fact we were lucky to keep it under \$150.00 because we were able to borrow some things. If you are unfortunate enough to have to rent a shop to work in as well it begins to mount up. Actually in our

Harriot Brower, in spite of all the hidden hurdles she is having to cross, appears to be making good progress on the 1-26.



on the whole well worked out. One or two errors have been picked up, but we read through and work out the steps well in advance so that hasn't troubled us. We seem to be keeping up with the other more experienced kit enthusiasts in our area and although we aren't trying for a particular flying date we are making good progress.

Now don't get me wrong, I'm all for the kit. It's the only way we could have a new sailplane and it makes a wonderful family project, but I feel someone should explain that there are a few hidden hurdles that the advertising glosses over, and which took me, at least, by surprise. I suspect Stan foresaw more than I did. \$1,500.00 or thereabouts sounds fine, but it seems to me our cellar

case it has been well worth it, but I would rather have been prepared. Plywood benches run high too.

Also the work is not hard. I agree "anyone can do it." My husband is a perfectionist, measures every rivet for tolerance and drills out the ones I cream even just a little bit, but don't kid yourself. It takes hours and hours and then some, particularly if you're working alone and have to decipher instructions, locate blueprints, and do the work all at once.

In spite of it all, though, we expect to have an efficient little sailplane when it's done and are looking forward to the 1-26 meets of the future. And, oh yes, anyone for some "necessary tools" about a year from now?

NEW ENGLAND

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Mrs. Hiller from the very beginning has taken an extremely interested and cooperative attitude towards our whole idea, even though she already has a very active business in power flying in and out of her field. Over the winter she bought a Fleet so that there would be a tow ship available right on the field and now is considering buying another one of the Stearman type. Because of this, one of the major problems (and biggest initial financial drain) was taken right out of our hands. A successful business woman, who has managed the Hiller Airport for several years, Mrs. Hiller has offered many practical suggestions and a great deal of concrete help in forming our association, including leasing the Association land at a nominal rate for the erection of a hangar—one of the first projects we are considering. Earl Brooks has offered to rent the NESAs Pratt-Reed as a training ship for the first year, at least, thus deferring another financial burden until the organization is better able to get its own ship.

A couple of meetings in Boston with Jimmy, Bertha Ryan and Steve Blom of the M.I.T. Club, and George Sweeney, a New Englander who earned his silver "C" in, of all places, Egypt during the past year; some correspondence with Earl, Chuck, and Mrs. Hiller; and soon we had a charter and incorporation papers drawn up for the NESAs, the officers of which are Earl Brooks, president; Mrs. Hiller, treasurer; Connie Ripley, secretary, and Jimmy Klein, George Sweeney, and Don Taupier among the directors. Several of our members have started taking tests to certify as soaring instructors so that instruction will be available to members every weekend.

The meet, actually the fifth annual New England Soaring Meet, was our next step, the first one designed to attract new membership, to create interest in soaring in New England, and to put New England back on the soaring map—which after all we started when soaring (I suspect it was mostly "gliding" then) was first introduced to the U. S. over the sand dunes of Cape Cod, 30 or more years ago.

New England has a little bit of every kind of weather. We spotted some wave clouds over Mt. Washington last year, so hold on tight to those altitude and distance records, here comes New England!