

SSA NEWS

(Continued from Previous Page)

ing out a satisfactory solution for the use of this airspace.

The Los Angeles Regional Airspace Subcommittee at its January 6 meeting heard testimony from 16 persons who represented civil aviation interests. All stressed the need for civil flights in the area for such purposes as the following: Power line patrols, water resource evaluation, rapid business transportation to Los Angeles, San Joaquin, and Bay Area points, especially in the winter season. An extremely interesting use of airspace brought out at the meeting was meteorological research of the world renowned Sierra Wave, part of which was being conducted by glider flights reaching altitudes upwards of 40,000 feet in the northwest portions of the Restricted Area Complex. After hearing testimony, the Subcommittee undertook to reconcile civil needs with urgent military requirement for adequate airspace for flight testing research aircraft and missiles flying at extremely high speeds.

The solution worked out by the Subcommittee allows civil flights up to an altitude of 20,000 feet mean sea level except within the boundaries of the existing and proposed "Danger" Areas within the Restricted Area Complex.

Special arrangements will be worked out with appropriate military agencies to continue the glider operation during the soaring season.

The solution worked out by the Los Angeles Regional Airspace Subcommittee will soon be transmitted to the parent Washington Airspace Subcommittee for approval prior to implementation. The Regional Airspace Subcommittee consists of representatives of the Departments of the Air Force, Army, Navy, Commerce, the Civil Aeronautics Board, and the Federal Communications Commission.

This case demonstrates the excellent cooperation between the civil and military agencies of Government and civil aviation industry groups in solving a complex problem for the general welfare of all concerned.

The Society thanks Mr. J. S. Marriott, CAA Regional Administrator, for presenting our letter of intercession on behalf of our members to the Subcommittee. The Southern California Soaring Association further strengthened our position by personal representation.

ONE DESIGN COMPETITION

Jim Redway, Chairman of the SSA Air Youth Committee, submits the following on a one design soaring competition:

"Visualize the first soaring meet with ten 1-26 sailplanes entered. The contest committee sets up a one design schedule of events around these ten machines. On the day of the meet you walk down the flight line and look at the ten entries, each one of which has been purchased from Mr. Schweizer as a standard kit. Six of them look alike. The other four have widely varying configurations—all modifications of the basic design which have been made by the owners at additional expense and labor, expressly to 'wax' the competition.

"The meet is run off with the four odd-ball configurations fighting for the first four spots with no real competition from the remaining six. Hats off to these four men. Their ingenuity and effort has paid off.

"But is this what you want? Do you want competition to determine pilot skill or the best modification of a single design? Both, you say. If this is the case, regulation of design modification will be needed to keep the balance needed. If not, owners with ingenuity, hard work, and the almighty buck will walk off with all the silverware.

"Back in the thirties, the yachtsmen were just as broke as the next guy. This didn't hinder their love of sailing as a sport. They went to work and designed "new design" sailing classes in configurations to fit the varying depleted pocketbooks in their ranks. Each class was restricted by a set of regulations designed to allow the maximum design variation consistent with prevailing economic conditions. Thus the good sailor could compete with the good, well-heeled sailor.

"Has the soaring fraternity thought of this angle?"

We hope the time of the one design competition is coming soon. It is not too early to be considering the formulation of design specifications and rules.

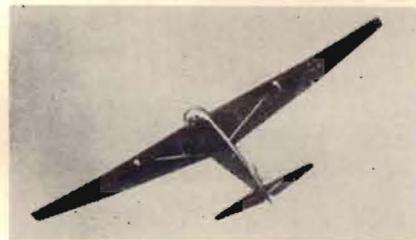
Dick Johnson has been temporarily assigned to Edwards AFB as Flight Test Engineer on Chance Vought Navy Day Fighters. He expects to be there about six months.

UNUSUAL GLIDERS

By PETER M. BOWERS

The Germans not only pioneered in glider and sailplane development in the years between World Wars and in military glider operations in World War II, they also did some pioneering in the field of outlandish sizes. Some experimental ships built before the war had wingspreads of nearly 100 feet, but nothing built before or since has matched the supercolossus of all gliders—the Messerschmitt Me-121.

It was big even for an airplane. Wingspan was 55 meters, or 180 feet, and the length was 28.4 meters, or 93 feet. The structure was conventional in the fuselage and tail. Fuselage was steel tube with fabric cover, and the tail surfaces were all wood. The wing was a bit unusual in that it was built up around a single girder spar consisting of four steel tubes with diagonal trussing. The ribs were wood, and the leading edge was plywood



covered with fabric from the spar to the trailing edge. A single strut braced the one-piece center section. Cantilever outboard panels were attached at points outboard of the struts.

Normal troop capacity was 130, or alternate loads consisting of two army trucks and an anti-aircraft gun, plus enough small cargo to bring the payload to 21,380 kilograms, could be carried. The available performance figures are in German and at present are not translated.

Launching the "Giant," as it was called, was a major operation. The usual procedure was to use THREE of the standard Junkers JU-52/3M tugs, a switch on the old practice of one tug towing three gliders. As a substitute for the Junkers trimotors, the Germans dreamed up a special tow-plane to haul the Me-121. This was the Heinkel He-111Z, consisting of two standard He-111 twin-engine bombers joined together by a special center section having another engine located at the center, making the

(Continued on Page 29)