

## BOOK REVIEW

**ELEMENTARY GLIDING** is a manual for pupil glider pilots by Mr. Paul H. Blanchard. It is published by Thermal Equipment, Ltd., 17, Hanover Square, London, W. 1.

This booklet of some seventy pages includes any number of most interesting and clarifying illustrations, some very clever cartoons, and just about the meatiest reading matter that we have ever seen on this particular subject. It accomplishes more in its seventy odd pages than many a tome we have read on the subject.

Mr. Philip Wills, great glider man and eloquent writer in his own right, observes in a Foreword, "It is surprising that until now no one has produced a manual for the new pupil giving him all the basic information he needs . . ." While we quite agree with Mr. Wills that this work does all of that very excellently for the novice, it is our opinion that a careful perusal of the text would do the so called experienced pilot no harm whatever. It would remind all of us of some rather bad habits that have over a period of time crept into our flying.

The Author, Mr. Blanchard, was formerly the Chief Flying Instructor of the Cambridge University Gliding Club and The Surrey Gliding Club. The price of this book is something in the neighborhood of \$1 American. Perhaps SSA will be able to arrange its offering in this country, pending which time you may obtain one directly from the publishers or through the Editorial Offices of Soaring.

### Johnson Claims World Speed Record

Dick Johnson, flying his famous RJ5 sailplane during the annual Southwestern Meet at Grand Prairie, Texas, successfully completed a 200 kilometre triangular course from Grand Prairie to Weatherford Airfield, to Itasca and back to Grand Prairie. His average speed for the course was 44.48 miles per hour which, when homologated, will stand as a World Record for this distance. This event was one of two instituted by the FAI at its last conference.



## Spiraling

with E. J.

The ABC's of tournament soaring.

Do the clothes make the man—or is it the other way around? For many years soaring men have argued as to the weight assigned to each of three factors—(a) Pilot's skill, (b) excellence of machine, and (c) luck.

Time was when our National Contests saw a great variety of machines with a wide variance of performance capabilities engaging in these tests. Then to be sure the age old arguments as to weight percentages for (a), (b), & (c) waxed hot and heavy. Those contestants finishing well down in the scoring held out strongly for greater emphasis on the factor (b), with (c) running a good second.

Now at long last we can, to a great extent, resolve this argument once and for all. Our 22nd National just concluded at Elmira under extremely favorable conditions of weather, saw for the first time, most of the leading contenders operating machines of very similar quality. With few exceptions the flying went along the same routes at approximately the same time of day.

Lady luck, a desirable and most welcome companion in the cockpit of any tournament soarer, seems not to have played any particular favorites during the running of the 22nd. Although I would imagine that contestants Coverdale and Opitz do not consider that they were necessarily smiled upon by the fair lady in view of their unfortunate and unavoidable traffic mishaps. Others of the contenders may also have felt some abandonment by the fair one as they failed to stretch that final glide sufficient for clearance of the boundary fence surrounding a goal airport. But all in all the fair and elusive one can not be said to have been a very heavy factor in this competition.

I have been led to believe that the primary purpose of a soaring contest is to determine the skill of those operating the machine. Albeit there are those of us who would seem to participate for other reasons. The test of skill being the paramount purpose, it does indeed seem that we have arrived in tournament soaring in this country. Surely, all of this is to the general good. This will be a considerable spur to those of us who finished well down the list, even though we had at our disposal equipment equal to that operated by the front runners.

Another rather illuminating development from the 22nd has been the proving of some of our older basic designs in sailplanes. For quite some time now there has been a contingent who held out for the quality of some of these older designs. They have contended that these machines, given a proper clean-up and a bit of refurbishing, might do very well. This we think has now been rather conclusively proved, and is still further proof that the factor (a) of our formula is far and away the most weighty.

And so it is that all contest pilots will henceforward be requested to refrain from advancing as their standard alibi for their tournament shortcomings—or more correctly, short goings—sic (b) and/or (c).

It is indeed the man who makes the clothes—leastwise in so far as the case in point is concerned.