

UNUSUAL GLIDERS

by PETER M. BOWERS

The De Haviland Sparrow is an interesting ship in that it is one of the few club-designed ships to actually get built. Had there been sufficient demand, it would have been put into quantity production.

The Sparrow looks somewhat like a cross between the classic primary and a secondary, which it actually is. It was designed in 1942 by members of the De Haviland Aircraft Com-



pany of Toronto, who had formed a glider club under the leadership of Wacław Czerwinski, a refugee Polish glider pilot and designer. Czerwinski departed from the traditional European pattern and designed the Sparrow to conform to Canadian conditions. The tail was supported by booms, and was wire-braced in the



manner of primaries, but the wing was of semi-cantilever type, strut-braced, and tapered in plan-form.

Construction was entirely of wood. The surfaces were fabric covered while the pod was plywood covered. Span was 38'4" and length was 22'6". Empty weight was 280 pounds and gross weight was 460 pounds. The wing loading was quite light, 2.7 pounds per square foot. Gliding ratio was 16 to 1, which made the ship a very good secondary. From all available reports the Sparrow was a good soaring machine and almost in a class with the world-standard Grunau 'Baby'.



Spiraling

with E. J.

JUST WHAT I HAVE BEEN SAYING ALL ALONG.

The Michigan Soaring Association's Bulletin No. 5 was dated December, 1955 and among other things, told of a banquet meeting honoring one of its members, Mr. Kempes Traeger, America's Soaring Champion.

As is the usual custom in meetings of this sort, the honoree Mr. Traeger, either felt moved or was forced to make a few responsive remarks. In the case here, Mr. T. followed generally a standard pattern, but in addition thereto, Mr. T. extended his remarks above and beyond that usually expected of an honoree upon such an auspicious occasion. It is these extended observations of America's Soaring Champion that moves this wabbly old fugler to write as he does in this instance.

And . . . since these remarks on the part of Kemp agree so completely with this writer's (I use the term loosely) observations, I had the urge at this time to echo his thoughts per my opening blurb.

Traeger, among other nice and interesting things, says this: . . . "many of the glider pilots in this room tonight, have been to Lamesa, Wickenburg, Twenty-Nine Palms, Wichita Falls, California, Texas . . . all of the places that are known over the world as gliding and soaring spots. Many of us have driven thousands of miles just to get to one of these spots for a week's vacation and to get in some flying. Many of us indeed, have put more miles on our automobiles going to and from these soaring locations than we've ever put on the gliders themselves in the air. Really this is kind of odd because in my estimation, we are camped right on a spot that offers just as much possibility for cross country soaring flights as any of those you could mention. Right under foot every day is the place from which we could take off for some of the most enjoyable glider rides ever taken by anyone and perhaps to some of the best records that anyone could ever hope to set in a sailplane."

The above quote, let me remind you again, is from no less a person than America's current Soaring Champion. He is speaking from actual personal experience. He has, as far as I know, tested soaring conditions in just about as many different parts of the U.S.A. as any veteran soaring man. In addition to his wide experiences in many parts of the country with a sailplane, he was for a number of years associated with a firm in connection with whose work he traveled widely throughout the country, accomplishing this travel in a light single engine airplane. As any soaring pilot knows, the operation of a light airplane is almost as good a tool for testing soaring conditions as a sailplane itself. Therefore, all of this put together, affirms Kemp Traeger's remarks on this subject.

While my personal experience in motorless flying is very considerably less than the National Champion's, I did at the same time, go batting about the country in even a lighter-motored aircraft than the one enjoyed by Traeger, and, incidentally, sandwiched in a bit of sailplaning in various parts of the country. My findings coincide exactly with those of Mr. T.

We of the soaring movement in America should do everything possible to get the word around that very satisfactory soaring conditions prevail at one time or another, during the year, in every part of this land of ours.

I sincerely hope that every speaker or writer on the subject of motorless flight will join in this effort to let it be known that the sport of soaring from the standpoint of weather conditions, can be as widespread as golf, tiddley-winks or horse shoes.

EJ