

# INTERESTING GLIDERS

by PETER M. BOWERS



Something more modern this time - the German LO-150 designed by Alfred Vogt and Produced by Wolf Hirth.

This high-performance ship carries on the prewar German tradition of an all-wood high wing design. The fuselage is made up of plywood skin over laminated formers while the wing makes generous use of pine in keeping with current German practice. Modern features include a moulded canopy cover and trailing edge flaps that are set according to the desired speed of the ship.

Published performance figures give a maximum glide of 34 to 1 at 60 MPH and a minimum sink speed of .68 meters per second (just over 2 feet) at 47 MPH. Tony Goodheart set a speed record of 47 MPH around a triangular course with one in Australia. Of great interest to the scientific types who debate at great length over the best airfoil is the fact that this performance is achieved with, of all things, a Clark Y! Of course, the use of a flap alters the characteristics of this 1922 model Old Faithful, but the use of an aspect ratio of 20.6 combined with an ultra-clean fuselage is mainly responsible.

Considering the high performance of this ship, the relatively low price (by U.S. standards) of \$2550 FOB Germany, and the fact that there are now several in this country, the author got to wondering why we weren't hearing more about them, either here or in Germany, and wrote

for further information. The answers, from Wolf Hirth through a translator, were very straightforward. The main reason that there are not many LO-150's in Germany is that they are by no means utility or general purpose ships while over 85% of the present German pilots are beginners. The price puts it out of range of most of the pilots over there who are qualified to handle it, with the result that it is generally considered an "Export" model.

Even the best pilots, Hirth goes on to say, require between 15 and 20 hours to get thoroughly familiar with it. Heinz Scheidhauer arrived at the German Nationals from the Argentine and flew a LO-150 without any experience in the type. At the end of his first day he was in 29th place, after which he moved up steadily through 18th, 13th, and finally sixth. He told Hirth afterward that with more time in the ship he could have assured himself of one of the top three places.

In spite of the long span, 50 feet, which puts it in the size class of the L-K, the LO-150 is a small ship, only 117 square feet of wing area compared to 166 for the L-K and 160 for the 1-26. The gross weight of 683 pounds gives the relatively high wing loading of 5.95 pounds per square foot. Unlike some of the equivalent German designs, the LO-150 retains the wheel type landing gear of such prewar Hirth designs as the Wolf and the Minimoa but there is a handicap in that lifting the leading edge of the stabilizer for ground handling is "verboten."

Red line speed is 124 MPH, aero tow speed is 93 MPH, and auto/winch tow speed is 62 MPH without flaps and 50 MPH with flaps.

## SAFETY FIRST

by JOSEPH M. ROBERTSON, *Chairman  
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Winter is here. Now is the time to do all the little things that need being done to make your ship air-worthy. Take a look at the ol' thermal-beaten glider sitting in its trailer out back. Is it ready to pass the annual inspection? If the ship can pass inspection, it is a fair bet to be safe.

Is the fabric up to snuff? Any tears, orange peel marks, cracks or worn spots should be repaired.

When was the safety wire in the turnbuckles last checked? The wire gets brittle with age when it has been cold worked.

How is the skid? Concrete and macadam runways will even wear out Stellite. There should be a full year's use left on it.

Have the instruments been acting up lately? Now is the time to dig in and see what the trouble is.

Is there any slop in the control system? It would pay to check cable tension and pulley brackets for tightness.

How do the control surface hinge brackets look? See if there are any hairline cracks where you have not looked before.

Are the glue joints sound? If the varnish shows signs of moisture or the glue has changed color, better look deeper.

This is only a partial list of items to look at. Your hours in the air next year will be far more pleasant if there are no small worries about the ship to nag at you.

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