

Fig. 3. "Atmosphere" achieved by photographing a glider about to take off from under the wing of another glider parked nearby. The people add interest to this type of picture.



Fig. 4. A side view "technical shot" completely devoid of people and cluttering background. Helper stands at far wingtip to hold wing approximately level and reduce photographic distortion.

jection to an edge-on view of the wing (see right-hand ship, Figure 1). Again, views from above will do much to overcome the ground-hugging characteristics of the ship and show off its true outlines.

The best effects in technical pictures are usually achieved through careful attention to such detailed items as undoing the tie down ropes, closing the canopy all the way, and centering the ailerons. These can, and generally have to be, ignored on long or group shots. Moving the ship to get a clear background will also do much to improve a technical shot. In a few cases, placing a light-colored ship in front of the hangar door and using the dark interior as a background will bring out outlines that would otherwise fade into a light sky if a filter cannot provide proper contrast. A few words of warning — don't do any of these things without the owner's permission, and be SURE to tie the ship down again when you are through with it.

A variation of the technical shot is the overall view of the ship with the pilot standing by it. With the camera outboard of the wingtip on a side view, the man will be almost too far away to recognize if he is right alongside the cockpit, which seems to be the favorite place to stand for a "Mug" shot. Have him move out toward the wingtip if he wants to be recognizable, as in Figure 6, or at least ahead of the nose so that he doesn't block out details of the ship.

When shooting views of a single ship, a little study of the situation can do much to improve the final result. Don't be in a hurry — look at the background as well as the subject. It is often possible to use some part of the ship to block out an undesirable background detail merely by moving the camera a foot or so to

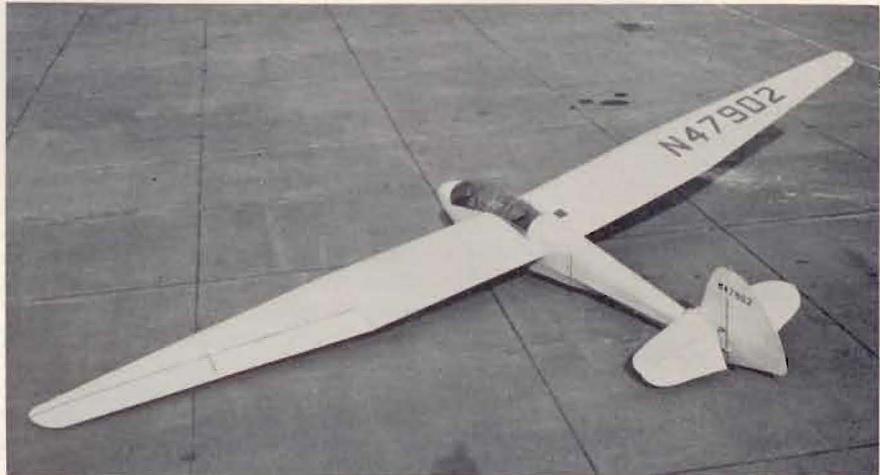


Fig. 5. Three-quarter rear view of Schweizer TG-2 shot from hangar roof to show outlines of wing and tail to best advantage. Lowering of near wingtip increases effective height of camera above ship.



Fig. 6. Author stands close enough to show happy grin resulting from successful completion of goal flight. Hangar in background included deliberately to identify particular airport selected as goal.

one side. Similarly, undesirable reflections from canopies or polished surfaces can be minimized or eliminated by changing the camera angle slightly. Filters may be desirable to change the contrast between the colors of the ship itself or the ship and its background, and can almost always be counted on to add "atmosphere" by emphasizing any clouds that might be in the background.

Remember, about three-quarters of

a good photograph is what the photographer sets up through his eyes. Consider some of the elementary points brought out here as they apply to the specialized subject of sailplanes. Take time to set up your pictures carefully. Soaring will be interested in the results.

A later installment will cover the problems of photographing airborne gliders from the ground.