

two to four thousand feet. Here they use a huge winch with about 2000 feet of wire. They also tow in a Super-Cub, which puts you right on any one of the slopes. Once well up, there is a good deal of freedom for thermal-hunting but, in almost any wind, the "slope elevator" is available for another try if one fails to find the desired thermal lift.

Zell-Am-See is truly a glider pilot's delight, with everything including food and housing right at the field. The field is perfectly flat and large-all-way and 3000 feet plus. One standard procedure there, as in Germany and France in any wind up to 10 knots, is to return to a key point adjacent to the *upwind* end of the runway in use with 300 feet, and then, with full spoilers, land *downwind* towards the starting or take-off point to minimize ground handling and time loss. It appears to work well and, as they say, avoids students landing short and breaking up equipment. Various visiting pilots and visiting ships which had trailed in from Germany were at the field to take advantage of their summer holidays.

Following this happy Zell-Am-See experience my business schedule required me to be first in Munich and then Stuttgart, not too far from the site of the German Nationals then in progress near Karlsruhe, which I reached on a Sunday afternoon. Being a low-overcast day, only exhibition flying for the spectators was in progress, but there was much to see in the way of competition sailplanes. Also, I spent a pleasant hour with the late Wolf Hirth and was invited to an affair in nearby Ettlingen, attended by various contestants, including the eventual winner Herr Gunter-Haase, and others. A day or



Photo: Harry L. Kirkpatrick

Breguet 904 two-place high-performance sailplane at La Ferte-Alais (France) south of Paris. Only two of these were constructed, for competition flying. Maximum L/D is 35 to 1.

two later I visited the interesting Hirth glider factory at Kirchem-Tech and saw H. Jensen depart for the Danish Championships with Hirth's newest LO-150. What a loss to gliding when Hirth was killed a few weeks later in an accident, doubtless due to heart trouble to which he had been subject.

Proceeding to the famous and most scenic Hornberg gliding school site east of Stuttgart, I was made welcome by Herr Beck, the Chief Instructor, but I could not fly because of two days of heavy rain. With more forecast, I pushed on to France. There, through Assoc. Aeronautique de la region Parisienne, 7 Ave. Raymond Poincare, I was told to go to La Ferte-Alais, near Arpajon, not far south of Paris. This I did by way of a drive-yourself through perilous traffic which made flying seem very safe indeed. At La Ferte-Alais I saw much in the way of truly fine gliding equipment, both single and two-place, including the exotic Breguet 904. I saw it outfly various fine sailplanes and am willing to believe all I heard

about it. My more prosaic flight equipment was a Castel Mauboussin C-25S, a side-by-side job (performance-wise equivalent of our 2-22) in which I was checked out during a half-hour flight on aero tow from about 2000 ft. During the flight I casually asked my check-pilot why another ship of the same type was considerably outflying me and he turned and solemnly said that the other ship was being flown by an instructor with nearly 4000 hours of gliding time. Though squelched with my paltry total of twenty hours, I still felt pretty good to have been airborne for twenty-odd minutes. The instructor in question remained aloft for the balance of the afternoon, but — such is soaring!

I have previously mentioned that this French school also employs the downwind landing technique, and here it worked very well under the light wind conditions witnessed. A glider would land, change pilots, and be aero towed, all in a matter of three minutes. The result was that on the poor-lift day when I was there, each of two tow planes was making about five tows an hour and keeping from eight to ten gliders in the air on training flights of about 15 to 20 minutes duration. Naturally there was considerable traffic, but everything went smoothly. Each glider would land about 1000-1200 feet in from the upwind end of the field and run along on the ground a nearly equal distance before turning off and stopping. Meanwhile, the tow planes would drop their relatively short tow ropes, pull-up, do a mild wing-over, and then make a short upwind landing at the downwind end of the field near the gliders. They were then immediately ready for an upwind takeoff from a point to one side of the landing gliders.

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La Ferte-Alais (France) field south of Paris with a Castel-Mauboussin C-25S two-place side-by-side sailplane in the foreground. Fouga produced 170 of this type.

Photo: Harry L. Kirkpatrick

