

INTERESTING GLIDERS

by PETER M. BOWERS



Least known of the many Bowlus gliders designed between 1930 and 1945 are the two experimental cargo gliders turned out early in World War II when the U.S. Army embarked on a crash program to develop military glider operations. The industry was invited to submit designs for cargo gliders of various sizes, and quite a few interesting designs were built and tested.

This was shortly after the Germans had introduced troop-carrying gliders in warfare, and the operation had caught the fancy of the Sunday Supplement writers, who played it up as a glamorous operation whereby a skyfull of troops sneaked silently behind enemy lines and took the fortifications by surprise from the rear. It worked out something like this once — the first time, but then the surprise effect was lost, and troop-carrying gliders without benefit of almost total air superiority became sitting ducks.

The concept of long straight glides to distant landing points influenced the design of some of the cargo gliders to a great extent and some, like the Bowlus XTG-7 (illustrated) and XTG-8, were really large sailplanes, built with careful attention to aerodynamic refinement and using established sailplane-type of all-wood construction. Actually, however, developments took another course, and the cargo glider, instead of being able to go for short cross-countries on its own, became just a trailer whereby the towing airplane could carry a greater military load. The glider was just dropped off to land in an area pretty close to straight under the point of release. No long silent glide across enemy lines. The motorless craft were towed right over the drop zone, where they served more like extra-large parachutes than anything else.

Because of this type of operation, which placed no premium on lift-to-drag ratio, the Army chose to build the cargo gliders square in the in-

terest of fast production, and a glide ratio down in the utility range of 12 or 15 to one was plenty, so the slick sailplane types like the Bowlus never got beyond the test flight stage.

The XTG-7 and 8 were almost identical as to design and structural details. The major difference was in size, the 7 carrying 8 passengers and the 8 carrying 15 in a slightly longer fuselage. The bipod landing gear of each was jettisonable and landing was made in a level attitude on the conventional nose skid. Note the belly and aft fuselage design that keeps the tail off of the ground. Technical and performance details of these two designs are not available.

Letters

Kudos to Stan Hall

Dear Sir:

As well as being a reader of *Soaring* I am a member of the Auckland Gliding Club. As such, I am writing to suggest that Stanley A. Hall be elevated to the Soaring Hall of Fame because I consider that by designing the Cherokee II he has done more for the "Little Guys" of soaring who cannot afford to buy a factory-built ship than any other person in the past decade. I and two others have completed the fuselage of our Cherokee II and have started on the wings. Already two other Cherokees have been commenced here; shortly this number will increase to five.

In this country there are a lot of clubs who have no hope of getting anything other than their two-seater trainers, which are in constant use training new pilots, owing to lack of cash. Now, thanks to Mr. Hall, these clubs can build a fine second aircraft to which their trained pilots can graduate and earn F.A.I. awards years sooner than they would have normally been able.

Once again I would like to say "Thank you, Mr. Hall, for designing a sailplane we can build ourselves, thus putting us 'Little Guys' of soaring in a position to more equally compete against the pundits who have greater resources at their disposal."

HENRY C. CHRISTIE

9 Stafford Rd., Northcote,
Auckland, New Zealand

Comments on the Directory

Dear Sir:

I have just received the 1960 SSA Soaring Directory. It is the best and most complete issue to date. The sailplane census under construction list did not include a Cherokee II which my son and I have about 50% completed. You might add it to your records.

MAJ. ALAN B. THOMAS, USAF
96 Pondview Dr., Chicopee Falls, Mass.

Dear Lloyd:

You fellows did a really fine job on the new directory. I have half of it memorized already and never leave town without it in the glove compartment. Keep up the good work!

JOHN FLYNN

4308 T St., Sacramento 19, Calif.
Lloyd:

A job well done is the 1960 Soaring Directory - congratulations!

Makes real interesting reading; 'special' the new format.

Also produces nostalgia as the "F.A.I. Soaring Badges" list of Silver C's in the lower numbers is read through.

Very informative from the commercial angle. Will help knock down misinformation as to prices of craft and their availability.

Would the cost be prohibitive if those two empty back covers were utilized to list the names of all the "champs?"

EARL SOUTHEE

Athens, Pa.

Trading Stamp Plan

Dear Lloyd:

I have developed a new idea that should enable two-place training gliders to be procured for use by C.A.P. cadets and Air Scouts.

Basically, it is a drive to have all soaring enthusiasts and persons interested in the promotion of youth glider flight training programs donate their trading stamps of all kinds to a central depository. Arrangements have been made with the stamp companies to redeem stamps for gliders. The first glider will go to the Delaware Valley Soaring and Power Pilots Assn., as administrators of the plan, for use in youth training in eastern Pennsylvania. Depending on the response, the second and subsequent gliders will be given to appropriate organizations in the states from which the most stamps are received.

Everyone, please mail your trading stamps to the DVSPPA at the address below. Thank you.

JACK DEVINS, Chairman
Box 43, Abington, Pa.

Sealing Styrofoam

Dear Lloyd:

Stan Hall ("Letters," July) was really on the ball when he came back at me with the note on sealing styrofoam prior to application of polyester fiberglass resin. I believe, however that he will find that plaster of Paris will do a highly satisfactory job of sealing the styrofoam at a substantial reduction in cost over the "Weldwood" glue he used.

My thanks to Mr. Hall for bringing out the matter of sealing as I am sure it will be of help to quite a few of the fiberglass fans (and I number myself among the staunchest of them).

SCOTT HAMILTON
2118 Poplar St., No. Little Rock, Ark.