

REPORT ON SCHWEIZER AIRCRAFT CORP.

by PAUL A. SCHWEIZER

There are various developments at Schweizer Aircraft that we think may be of interest to the readers of *Soaring*, and so we again have written up a report for the past year. With the membership of SSA steadily growing, we hope that the oldtimers will forgive us if we occasionally fill in the background where necessary for the newcomers.

Interest in soaring continues to grow, and the SSA active membership curve looks like it has an exponential trend. There are many other indications of this growth, and it looks as though the soaring movement is on its way to becoming a more popular sport and flying activity. However, for a country of our size, soaring still is woefully small, and there is a great deal of missionary work to be done and a great deal of misinformation to correct. The average person still associates soaring with windy days and frail contraptions flown by crackpots or daredevils. Typical of this is the paragraph in the book, *Government By The People* by Burns and Peltason where they discuss the United States as a nation of "joiners" and give a typical list of "oddball" organizations that include such names as American Sunbathers' Association, Blizzard Men

of 1888, American Hackney Horse Association and—you guessed it—the Soaring Society of America.

Various ways must be used to help correct this situation and to get the public informed as to what modern soaring really is, as well as to attract the public to it. Soaring enthusiasts can get stories in newspapers and magazines if they try. Sponsoring of local meets and "open-house" affairs can do a lot to educate the public. For 1961, we at SAC already have arranged for several magazine writers to take courses at our school with the expectation that stories favorable to soaring will result.

Some enthusiasts may question all the fuss and talk about building up SSA membership—having membership contests, etc.—contending that the SSA is doing OK as it is. It seems to us that there is an overwhelming number of reasons for building up the soaring movement in this country. Bob Moore in his editorial in the February, 1961, issue of *Soaring* gives many reasons for this. Certainly, a national soaring movement that is too small even to make it economically practical to publish a soaring book has need of growth. Good progress is being made, but continuous selling is needed.

A project that we have been working on for some time, is our new film, "SKY SAILING," which will be introduced in April. This has been produced for us by Dick Hupertz, an SSA member from Pittsburgh, who has several other films to his credit. We believe that this is the first professional soaring film of this type produced in the United States since World War II. Its purpose is to initiate the newcomer to soaring at soaring club organizational meetings, as well as for general meetings where talks on soaring are to be given. We have tried to make it a "soft sell" and not an obvious commercial so that it will have wider interest as well as potential use on TV. It is in sixteen millimeter color with sound, and it will be available for showing from Schweizer Aircraft Corp. and our dealers.

One means of introducing people to soaring is through the commercial operator or soaring school. In our soaring school of 1960, we again broke our previous year's total of flights by a substantial amount. We had 4,137 flights and 1,425 hours of flying time. Bernie Carris, our chief instructor, issued 121 FAA ratings. Seven Silver C's and twenty Silver C legs were earned and 77 C awards were issued. We had 156 persons take courses and 256 took instruction or did further flying at the school. This year we are looking for another large increase in activity. We also expect to feature a course which will include all expenses at Elmira, with one plan featuring motel accommodations and the other, our "economy plan," using the

Clarence Chamberlain, of trans-Atlantic fame, gives soaring a try in a 2-22C at the Schweizer School. Instructor in the rear seat is Tony Doherty.



Capt. Fred Illston, chief pilot for American Airlines at Idlewild, and his three boys, Fred III, Jeff (in the 1-26) and Brian, all of whom completed courses at the Schweizer Soaring School.

