

controls of our newly licensed Schweizer TG-3A and took off behind Dave Tobey towing him in a Super Cub. With a successful test tow behind us, we were actually in the air at last!

The soaring idea has been with many of us for years, but no one ever did anything about it. In the early months of 1960, Dave Tobey, Tom Bryant, Bob Edwards and Al Uhalt got to discussing the subject and, much to our surprise, discovered we'd all been thinking along the same lines for a long time—that is, getting a soaring group going in the Panama City, Fla., area. Ranging in experience from the Aeronca C-3 to the F-106, none of us had ever experienced the thrill of soaring (except, perhaps, to get the ol' C-3 over that next hill). We decided to do something about bringing flying in the purest form to the Gulf Coast. Thus the seed was planted.

Several organizational meetings were held during which time the group grew to 12 members. We gathered information from everywhere we could and presented it to one another. During one of these meetings, while a name for the new club was being discussed, someone jokingly passed a remark about one of us being a sorehead. This caught our fancy immediately. Spelled slightly differently, the name stuck. On 9 May 1960 we held our charter meeting and the Soarheads officially came into being. What a situation—a soaring club with no aircraft and absolutely no glider experience. Proceeding with caution, we decided to stay within our means and purchased a TG-3A in need of work. To get the "straight poop," Al Uhalt spent a week in August at the Schweizer Soaring School in Elmira and came home with his commercial glider ticket and the loan of the only known existing copies of the TG-3A Army Technical Orders. We had these reproduced and they have proved invaluable in rebuilding, rigging and maintaining our bird. All of us devoured as much material on soaring as we could lay our hands on. The end result, we feel, is as fine a TG-3A as you'll find anywhere (see cut) and a going, safe operation.

There are now 17 Soarheads, the newest being Bob Gravance, a Gold C holder from the Antelope Valley Soaring Club. Bob is here for a few months on a project at Eglin AFB and we are certainly profiting by his airmanship. On March 18th, we attempted to tow the TG-3A over to New Smyrna Beach, Florida, for a big air meet there. The combination of bad weather and an overheated tow ship made us turn back, so we missed that one and are still looking forward to our first encounter with others of the soaring fraternity. On March 26th, under the guidance of Bob Gravance, Johnny Reaver piloted our bird unassisted for a grand total of 15 minutes, thereby claiming the distinction of becoming the first Soarhead to solo here at Panama City and setting our first club "endurance" record. Earlier in the day, Bob Edwards and Bob Gravance formed the first lift of the season by gaining all of 50 feet in a weak thermal. We hope this heralds the arrival of the towering summer thermals for which the Gulf Coast is noted. Thus, with two excuses for a celebration, we packed the ship away at sunset and headed downtown for an evening with our "soaring widows."

Incidentally, we still have some TG-3A

T.O.'s remaining. Anyone may have them for 25c per order until we run out. The manuals are free. The two-bits helps us out on envelopes and postage. Address: Soarheads, Box 334, Parker Station, Panama City, Florida.
AL UHALT

Tulsa Skyhawks A Chapter of SSA

Plans are now 100% complete for the "First Great Plains Soaring Contest," July 1-4 at Harvey Young Airport, Tulsa, Oklahoma. The contest will be sponsored by the Tulsa Skyhawks. I firmly believe that this will be a milestone toward Regional Contests. Every club in SSA Region 10 has agreed on scoring and rules. About 75% of the clubs have agreed to bring their tow ships, which indicates further cooperation for this type of contest.

All ground operations will be controlled by radio. Receivers and transmitters will be furnished by Seisor Corporation and L. T. Starr, who is distributor for Webb Electronics of Claremore, Oklahoma. Scoring will be by Monroe calculators. About the only thing that is not electrically controlled is tow line hook-up—Anyone have an idea?

The way this contest has obtained complete communication between every club in this Region and nearby Regions has made all the work worthwhile. It is our firm conviction that this type of contest could be held three times a year by different clubs in the Region, thus finding

a true Regional Champion. It would also give each contestant an opportunity to fly over all types of terrain. Time will give the final answer.

Marshall Ragan is just about ready to put fabric and finishing touches on his Cherokee II. Yours truly has his L-K about ready for fabric—finishing date set for late May. The tow ship ("Miss-fire" L-5) and TG-2 are ready for final inspection before new licenses.

JAMES L. RHINE

Southern California Soaring Association, Inc. A Chapter of SSA

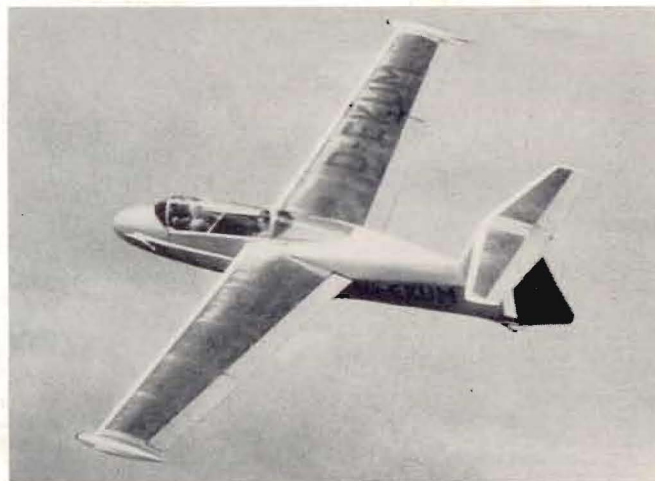
SCSA has recently changed the place of its monthly meetings to the California Museum of Science and Industry where SCSA President Jack Lambie is now Director of Education. The MSI is centrally located in Los Angeles, has excellent facilities and is rent free to SCSA. Meetings are held on the second Friday of each month.

At the April meeting, Dr. Joachim Kuettner and Hanna Reitsch were present and gave interesting talks. In addition, an SSA Film Library movie was shown and Max Dreher projected his Torrey Pines footage.

The Thermal will resume publication with the May issue after an unsuccessful attempt to include SCSA news in *General Aviation News*.

LLOYD M. LICHER

The German RW-3a "Multoplane" features a propeller in the vertical tail and buried engine. Tip tanks may be replaced with wing extensions converting it to an auxiliary-powered sailplane (RW-3b) with an L/D of 25 to 1, span of 50.5 ft. and gross weight of 1984 lb. Tricycle gear retracts. Price: \$7075 FAF.



TAKE A SOARING HOLIDAY

In a beautiful valley offering all types of soaring.

- SCHWEIZER APPROVED SCHOOL
- SCHWEIZER DEALER FOR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
- INSTRUCTION • RENTALS • SALES
- COURSES FOR BEGINNERS AND POWER PILOTS
- EXAMINER SERVICE AVAILABLE
- ADVANCED SOARING • 1-26's, 2-22C's

Fred Harris'
HOLIDAY SOARING SCHOOL
Tehachapi Airport Tehachapi, California