

# T-BIRD TAKES TO THE AIR

by RAYMOND H. PARKER

The sailplane T-Bird was flown for the first time on June 23rd. It is not possible to use the old adage that it "flew right off the drafting board." It will be remembered by those who visited my garage during the period of construction that I did not possess a drafting board. Configuration of the aircraft when flown would certainly be considered unfinished. The wheel, nose skid and tail skid were unfaired and the gap covers were temporary: cardboard taped in place.

All tests flown were to investigate stability and control. No attempt was made to obtain L/D figures. Minimum sink was investigated but no calibrated data taken. Unfortunately detailed performance figures will have to remain unpublished until some time after the National Championships. Due to preparations for the contest there was no time available for these tests.

As of this writing, the T-Bird has flown 18.2 hours on two consecutive weekends. The results of the test flights indicate that the T-Bird has no unusual flight characteristics worth noting. It is a very pleasant machine to fly and has extremely

light control pressures. The T tail configuration performs as anticipated. The rudder effectiveness is sufficient but not quite as effective as my preceding aircraft, the Tiny Mite. Ailerons give more than a normal rate of roll at best cruising speed and appear to be effective to near stall. It is possible that the drag could be reduced by reducing the

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Ray Parker airborne in his sailplane T-Bird on one of the initial test flights.

Photo by Kirk Harris

