

DEEP RIGGING IN A DIAMANT MINE

GILES GIANELLONI

Any resemblance to an African diamond mine was only a thought as we looked down the narrow ladder which led below to the ship's hold where Rene Comte's *Diamant* sailplane had been imprisoned since leaving Hamburg in May. Thanks to the strike called against several United States maritime companies, Rene's well laid plans for attending the U.S. Nationals at Adrian, Michigan and the Soaring Camp at Marfa came to a halt when his ship was caught aboard the *American Ranger* tied at Pier 76 in Manhattan. Calls to influential government and non-government persons were of no use, Rene finally gave up. No Nationals. No Marfa.

Seldom in the history of soaring has a sailplane been demonstrated in a more unlikely place. Rene met with Ozzie Maranta, Howard Larkin and Eric Kaiser of Ontario and Mr. & Mrs. Giles Gianelloni in the hold of the *American Ranger* to explain the assembly procedure. By arrangements with the U.S. Lines and help from Capt. Graham, skipper of the *Ranger*, lights were strung from an adjoining ship. The hold was empty except for the sailplane in its trailer and it was possible to remove the wings and fuselage for inspection.

Working in 100 degree temperature, Rene directed the operation of removing the ship from its very exotic trailer. We were able to check the reclining seat and it is very comfortable. Both Kaiser (6' 4", 160 lbs.) and

stalled in the wheel compartment. The wings mount easily and are held in place by one pin. Control connections are with pip pins. The trailer is well made but the wings must be removed first and laid on the ground before the fuselage can be removed. I have always felt that every time a part of a sailplane is moved it should go directly from trailer to its position on the ship and vice versa.



The cockpit of the *Diamant* provides ample room for all sizes. Here Eric Kaiser demonstrates how easily it will handle his long frame.

We all regret that a pilot such as Rene could not compete in the Nationals and we trust the next time he comes to the U.S. he will be allowed to demonstrate his sailplane in its element and not in a ship's hold on the Hudson River.



The rigging crew in the hold of the strike-bound *American Ranger*. The modern Swiss trailer is a notable feature of the *Diamant*.

Gianelloni (5' 7", 175 lbs.) were easily fitted by quick adjustments of rudder pedals and head rest. The visibility is superb and the instrument panel well below pilot's line of vision. The "stick" on the right side of the ship is no problem, much like a typical wheel control. One change the writer would make is on the canopy. It should be attached to the ship by slides or hinges. Landing away from help in a strong breeze and trying to remove or handle the very long canopy should be extremely difficult.

The instrument installaiton on this ship is excellent, with storage for bottles, radios, batteries under the pilot's knees and in the panel. Oxygen equipment is in-

Historical Notes

(The Poles) also carried out a lot of soaring with gliders flying in pairs or small groups, to see if by working together the luck element in searching for lift could be reduced. This team flying had other advantages as, for example, on one day in an international contest when six Foka pilots decided to fly together. It was a day of big cumulus, with widely separated areas of lift, so that it paid to climb in clouds to get enough height to cross the gaps. The six pilots went one after the other into the same cloud and avoided collision by calling out their heights over the radio. By using air brakes as necessary to control their altitude, each pilot was able to keep adequate separation from the next. On another occasion several pilots were being aero-towed back to Leszno, their base, at the end of a free distance day. They wanted to get back the same night in order to have some proper sleep before the next day's contest, but the towing aeroplanes could not arrive over the airfield until after dark. On arrival each pilot pulled off from its tug, again using radio to make his invisible whereabouts known to the others, and landed on the airfield by the light of car headlights.

— THE STORY OF GLIDING