NEWS NOTES

MEN AT WORK "I didn't realize until reading the November issue of *Soaring*," the letter begins, "that I am a 'die-hard designer' who has 'something cooking.' Now that I have been properly identified I must confess that I *am* up to something." The letter writer in this case is **Stan Hall** and the thing he's up to is a graceful new creation with the very appropriate name of *Ibex*. As the accompanying photograph shows the ship combines several unusual features, namely a pod-and-boom fuselage, a gull wing and a butterfly tail. These are all justified, Stan claims, on the basis that the pod and boom and the V-tail reduce wetted area and the gull wing is pretty.

The area of the *Ibex* is 125 sq.ft. The wing features a rectangular box spar built in three sections. The gull section is to carry 30% slot-lip flaps and water ballast (125 pounds) provision. Stan claims that figuring out how to drive two flaps from a single point on a gull wing has altered his entire outlook on life!

The pod fuselage of the *Ibex* is elliptical in cross section and consists (inside to outside) of mahogany ply, plyfoam and fiberglass. The boom employs one length of four-inch diameter dural tubing held inside a section of five-inch diameter tubing by three machined dural rings. The all-flying tail surfaces are foam filled, plywood covered and 40% static balanced.

The *Ibex* seems to us a refreshing contrast to the super-functional performance-at-any-cost types. It is not, however, proving easy to build and Stan does not foresee selling plans as he did in the case of the *Cherokee II* (of which about 60 have been built thus far). Work has been going on for about three and a half years and the designer foresees another full year of labor before the *Ibex* is ready to take to the air.

° ° °

MODEL MATTERS Although their needs are not always so urgent as those of soaring pilots, model builders spend a lot of time thinking about thermals too. At the recent Willow Grove Nationals one **Stan Chilton** was on hand with a thermal indicating device which he used with considerable success. This inspired another chap, **Maynard Hill**, to go a step further; he has built a large glider equipped with a thermally-insulated, two-quart bottle which, when it exhales, closes a circuit which activates linkage which . . . well, the model ends up turning. And it keeps turning until the bottle inhales again.

Mr. Hill tells all about this unique application of the variometer principle in an article in the January issue of **Model Airplane News.** He also mentions—and this is what makes mentioning the whole business of special interest—that the cross-country free-flight record, presumably made with the help of some such system as he describes, is—hold your breath—371 kilometers! (The Russians hold it.) That's almost enough to make you go out and hook your variometer up to the rudder pedals, then sit back and watch what happens. Or—hmm—how about a glider big enough to carry a barograph . . .

Stan Hall at home with his latest bird, the Ibex.

MEN AND SHIPS FAA/Europe recently issued two new type certificates to sailplanes. G.7/EU went to the Dutch *Sagitta* on August 2, 1965, and was followed shortly by G.8/EU for the *Edelweiss*. The first American-owned *Sagitta* is the property of **Sypko Andrae** and **Steve Keachie** and is currently flying in the Bay Area. *Edelweiss* production is currently one a month with the entire 1966 production apparently spoken for. The first imported *SHK* was delivered to **William Foley** (Motorless Flight Enterprises) in late October. The second went to **Joe Conn** of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, the third is destined for **Paul Bikle. Steve duPont,** whose *Sailplane Glide Test Method* appeared in the December issue, reports the acquisition of an *SH-1*. **Ed McClanaham** has received (and made one gear-up landing in) his new *Libelle*. Damage was minor. **John Brittingham** is burning up Colorado and Wyoming with his new convertible 15/17 meter *Dart*, the one **Phillip Wills** flew at Marfa. **Vic Swierkowski** (Sierra Soaring) has taken advantage of **Hal duPont**'s leasing arrangement to the tune of a 2-32, this one with three oxygen bottles, two radios, transponder, a pair of A-15 pressure-demand systems, audio variometers and . . . lots more. Plenty of ships are being built as well. **Arthur Zimmermann,** who will emerge shortly as a *Phoebus* distributor, is well along with his fiberglass *SB-7*. The China Lake (Calif.) group that was burned out in a disastrous fire just about a year ago, has bounced back and is busy mass-producing *HP-somethings*. **Dick Johnson** is reputed busy on an *HP-12A* and several dozen other people are bringing *BG-12's, Cherokee II's, K-8's* and heaven knows what else to completion. There's so much going on, as a matter of fact, that you can hardly keep track of it all.

° ° °

ANOTHER MIRACLE MATERIAL If you are one of those individuals who feels that fiberglass sandwich construction is destined to play an ever-increasing role in the future of aircraft in general and sailplanes in particular you are likely to be somewhat excited about a new material called **Plyfoam.** Used in conjunction with fiberglass Plyfoam would seem to constitute a big step forward in the fabrication of components such as nose shells, wingtips and fairings, possibly even of complete sailplanes.

Plyfoam is a thermoplast, specifically a unicellular polyvinyl chloride plastic. It is available in 46 x 56 inch sheets in either ¼ or ½ inch thicknesses. At room temperature the material is rigid, although it will take