

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Pointed Protest

Sir:

This is a protest, I guess. Perhaps I am just jealous. However I really must object to an increasing trend which surely must make our gliding counterparts in England weep copiously. I refer to the practice of visiting a strategically located airfield, renting a sailplane, having yourself air towed into a wave from which one can hardly escape, then landing thirty minutes later having made a Diamond altitude gain. Somehow doesn't seem very sporting.

Suppose I drive my aging Piper Pacer into the wave, shut off the engine and turn the barograph on and make the required gain dead stick. Am I then eligible for an altitude badge? After all, that's soaring. Are there Lennie pins with crossed propellers?

Perhaps there should be an additional symbol on the badge showing where the altitude gain was made. For example a \triangle might be for Bishop or Sugarbush, and the like, \square might be for mountainous terrain not exceeding 3500-ft. variations, and — might do for level country like southeastern U.S.A. For England a nice little raindrop would be appropriate.

Well, as I said. Perhaps I'm just a little bit jealous. At our airport you've got to get your Silver badge from a launch by a '57 DeSoto and a length of rope. Someday I'm going to try that airplane tow. How about that Doc?

WM. E. CLARK, JR.

Noblesse Oblige

Sir:

This is just to rectify the small article on my being the youngest U.S. Silver badge holder. We must give credit where credit is due. On April 8, three days before we received our *Soaring* magazine, Tom Beltz of Lehigh, Pa. flew 50 miles in a 1-26. This flight completed his Silver badge five months and 20 days after solo on his 14th birthday. This beat my Silver by over four months.

A. JEFF YUND

Wyomissing, Pa.



Instruments and accessories from Germany at savings. Exporter of used sailplanes. Early delivery dates for new sailplanes available. Write for quotations. Your favorite sailplane modelled:

1/60 scale \$ 4.00; 1/50 \$ 5.00; 1/40

\$ 7.50; 1/30 \$ 10.00 postpaid.

STEVENSON-EBENTHEUER

16 Jaeger St. 8 Karlsfeld
West Germany

Long Flights

Sir:

The map of Long Soaring Flights for 1965 which appeared on page 20 of the May, 1966, issue of *Soaring* was an excellent feature. I enjoyed it very much.

Could I enquire, however, if the flight shown from Slayton, Minnesota, to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, was not in error? On August 1st, 1965, I flew from Stanton, Minnesota (44/32 N, 93/03 W) to Cedar Rapids. Perhaps someone confused Slayton and Stanton.

Let's have a map like that every year.

JAMES A. STRUTHERS

Minneapolis, Minn.

★ We're glad, it was, we will—ED.

Advisory Advice

Sir:

Your list of free FAA Advisory Circulars in the April *Soaring* was good, but you left out perhaps the most important one:

61-26 Flight Instructor Requalification Program and Increased Student Pilot Operating Requirements.

This is a valuable, detailed report of how the changeover from instructing on the Commercial Glider rating to requiring the Glider Flight Instructor rating in order to instruct in gliders after Sept. 26th, 1966, is accomplished. It also spells out the latest rules in regard to student pilot supervision, and the appropriate logbook entries required by the instructors. Anyone who is, or expects to instruct in gliders should have this circular as well as parts 61 and 91 of the FARs.

Some FAA Regional Offices are requesting the Commercial Glider Pilot to show that he has part 61 and 91, by checking his logbook, in order to issue the Flight Instructor Certificate with Glider Rating.

We have had no problem exchanging them here; I think five of LISA have obtained their Flight Instructor Certificate for gliders so far.

Keep up the good work on *Soaring*; I still haven't started to subscribe to Playboy. Maybe I'm just getting too old?

BOB SMITH

Bay Shore, New York

Dragonfly vs. Motor Spatz

Sir:

I would like you to know that I take exception to the NEWS NOTES on page 30 of the April issue of *Soaring*. You stated Germany has led the world in gliding matters and with this I agree. You also stated they are ahead in the field of power gliders and with this I strongly disagree. The reason is that I feel Ted Nelson's old Dragonfly is superior to any of the German powered sailplanes and this includes Scheibe's Motor Spatz, which I saw in Germany. Also, there is nothing that approaches the Nelson Hummingbird which was built six to seven years ago.

An article in the March *Soaring* described the Hirth engine which produces 26 h.p. at 55 lbs. I think it is a good

engine, but certainly one that could not be considered an excellent power plant. Little doubt that I am prejudiced but I am fairly factual.

In closing, let me add a word of good — I think you are doing an excellent job on *Soaring*. You certainly have the soaring interest at heart.

CHARLES R. RHOADES

Pittsburgh, Pa.

A Point Made

Sir:

As a new soaring enthusiast let me say that *Listen to the Wind* in the May issue told my wife more about soaring than two weeks of explanation. She is ready to join me. The aesthetics of soaring need to be presented more.

TODD JONES

Morgan Hill, California

Destruction Testing

Sir:

There has been some doubt expressed about the use of the fiberglass-reinforced plastic for structural parts for the manufacture of sailplanes. I would like to comment briefly on my experience to date with H-301 Libelle No. 13. I had some reservations about fiberglass and must admit I was blinded by performance curves when I decided to buy one. I intended to be very careful with the ship and treat it as if it were made of glass. So on my first flight I landed on the airport all right but with the gear up. Total damage: replacement of the catch of C.G.-release hook and fifteen square inches of fiberglass to the re-entry shield, (the belly).

On flight number seven, after descending from 19,000 feet where the temperature had been -34°C, I ran into some violent low-level turbulence that shook the ship three times in succession, registering plus four and minus two-point-seven G's. A careful inspection revealed no damage.

On April second, after an exhilarating five hour flight, I decided to attempt a short-field landing, and short it was, like 30 feet sideways! I caught my left wing in a clump of tall sage brush while slipping in a low turn between 50 and 60 mph. I speak with some authority when I say the resulting crash would have washed out the wing of a metal ship. Observers saw the wings flexing about like two anglers' flyrods. When the dust settled I could see, to my utter astonishment, a still whole sailplane. After wheeling it back to the hangar I discovered the landing gear was slightly bent and could not be retracted. With nothing more than an acetylene torch and a repair kit supplied by the manufacturer the ship was put back in service.

At this point I hope to conclude the destructive phase of my flight-test program and spend a little time comparing the high L/D and low sinking speed of the H-301 with that of the ships flown by my fellow contestants at Reno.

In my opinion Ing. Eugen Hänle has done an amazing job of pioneering a rugged, all fiberglass production sailplane, one that has outstanding performance and is simple to repair.

ED McCLANAHAN

Richland, Washington