

INTRODUCING THE AS-12

RUDY MOZER

During the past eight years the sailplanes produced by the Alexander Schleicher Segelflugzeugbau have made quite an impact on the American soaring public. The Schleicher Company is located in the foothills of the historic Wasserkuppe in the Rhoen Mountains, the acknowledged cradle of European soaring, and has been producing gliders since the Thirties.

The K-6B made its first appearance with unqualified success at the 1958 National Contest at Bishop, California. Continuing developments have brought forth a family of sailplanes that have enjoyed comparable success. The K-series now includes the K-6BR, K-6CR, K-8B and the K-7 two-place design. The K-6CR Rhoen-segler has been recognized as the standard by which new high-performance ships are compared—a most gratifying success for Rudolf Kaiser, its designer.

Worldwide demand for Schleicher sailplanes has brought forth confirmed orders that far exceed production capacities. Orders are ahead of production schedules by two to three years as witnessed by the Fall 1968 deliveries quoted on the K-6CR. Schleicher has been faced with a limited labor market in their attempts to hire skilled labor to boost production. Under current conditions the company is rolling out one sailplane per day. Management has worked out yearly allocation quotas in an attempt to evenly and fairly distribute these sailplanes to foreign countries.

Schleicher management recognizes that they cannot rest on their laurels but must continue to provide new products that will fulfill the dreams and the desires of the soaring public. To accomplish this they have been running development programs in parallel with current production. Schleicher is proud to describe in some detail three such programs, those concerning the K-6E, Motorsegler, and AS-12.

The Schleicher K-11 Motorsegler.



K-6E The designation K-6 is almost a misnomer inasmuch as the only feature this design has in common with the K-6B of 1958 vintage is the planform of the wings and the fact that it is still a Standard Class aircraft. The intervening years brought gradual changes to wings (Wortman modification of wing section), empennage (introduction of an all-flying elevator and increased aspect ratio of rudder) and fuselage (all new design with a lower silhouette, more reclined seating arrangement, longer canopy and lower position of the wings).

The result is a second-generation Standard Class sailplane that shows much promise for the future. While it is yet another example of Mr. Kaiser's concept of suitability for any weather condition, showing all the makings of a club ship, the K-6E nevertheless is a very competitive aircraft. This was very clearly shown in the few contests it has competed in since its maiden flight in April, 1965.

As more K-6E's become available to competition-minded pilots, this impression no doubt will increase. The present production of two K-6E's monthly is quite modest and is a direct result of the tremendous backlog on K-6CR, K-7 and K-8B orders. To date, four K-6E's have been delivered to the United States with another 12 on order. Based on present production schedules the delivery quotations are backlogged to the Spring of 1968. Schleicher is making a serious effort to increase production output of K-6's.

MOTORSEGLER The most recent project of Mr. Kaiser is an auxiliary-powered glider. In this design he has set out to achieve even better performance than was attained in the K-11 Motorsegler which first flew in 1964.

The K-11, which featured a 12.8-meter wingspan and K-8-type airfoil, as well as a modified K-8 welded-steel-tube fuselage, achieved the the following performance with a fixed, unfeathered prop:

Maximum rate of climb	2.5 m/sec at 140 km/h
Glide ratio	19:1 at 70 km/h
Minimum sink	0.97 m/sec at 61 km/h
With folding prop the performance increases to:	
Glide ratio	22.6:1 at 75 km/h
Minimum sink	0.86 m/sec at 61 km/h

The new design of 15-meter wingspan is based on the K-6E. It will use the wings and empennage of the E fuselage and will be of plywood monocoque construction with a semiretracted landing wheel. The calculated performance of this design, based on feathering prop, gives a glide ratio of 29:1.

The main appeal of the power glider is the independence it gives the pilot. You can pull your ship out of the hanger, take off under your own power and explore that suspected, but never-before-proven lift under those lenticular clouds ten miles from the airport. Or, on a cross-country flight, if that next thermal turns out to be too elusive, you can start up the engine and fly back to home base rather than chance a landing and a long sit in some farmer's field.

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