

AS-12

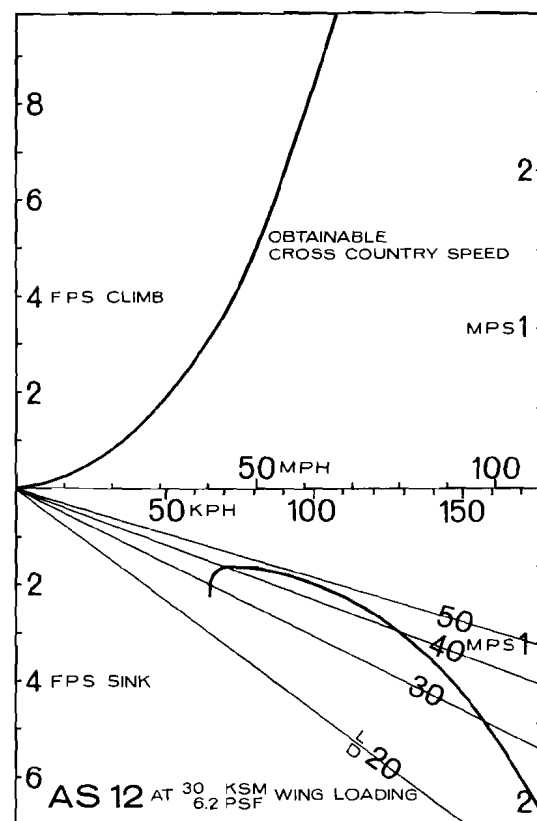
Three-view by Lynn Christensen

of grass surrounded by farm land and scattered groups of trees and farm houses. And frankly my muscle power was not enough to pull the starter handle all the way back. When I tried it on the ground the propeller wiggled a little but was stopped dead by the first compression stroke of the engine. This takes practice, I'm sure. Perhaps a spring-loaded device would be the answer, similar in principle to lawn-motor starters, with a shock cord for the spring suspended in the rear of the fuselage.

So I glided down from about 1500 feet with the engine sputtering. Shortly afterwards the variometer jumped to "up" when the ship circled in a thermal. Ignition off and the propeller came to a stop within a few seconds. The altitude could be maintained, but the upcurrent moved away rapidly due to the high wind velocity. Soon the nose of the K-11 pointed against the wind so we would stay close to the field. Handling characteristics were similar to a K-6, but a little snappier in the reactions due to the smaller wing span. The sinking speed could still be improved since the landing wheel was not yet in a streamlined shroud, as planned for the future. For reasons of simplicity and low cost it is not retractable.

Finally the thatched roofs of Westphalian farm houses were not far below the wings and a last sharp turn placed the K-11 into the final approach. The wheel touched some 100 feet from the end of the runway. A helpful soul dashed out of the line of onlookers far enough ahead, and the ship, still with the tail up, could be easily steered towards this man until the wingtip was safely in his grip.

—PETER RIEDEL



Drawing by A. J. Smith