

two-place ships since they are vital to introducing new people to soaring. Commercial operations and clubs spreading throughout the country, furnish instruction, checkouts, ratings, and other services, and provide an effective way of increasing the activity in the sport. Although this is not the glamorous side of the sport it is a very necessary one.

The situation might be pictured as a triangle, or an iceberg. The top of the triangle is the part that is in view and gets the most attention and publicity. Yet the major portion of the berg is below the surface of the water—but very necessary to the support of the top. A lot more could be done by the SSA to help broaden the base. In the past it has probably been occupied too much with the top phases of soaring and has not done enough at the grass-roots level—attracting the newcomer and helping him to get into soaring. Those on the top of the triangle may be contented with the present lot, but if soaring is really to grow—if we truly are to have a U.S. soaring movement—we must broaden its base.

The movement also needs more wide-spread publicity so that the public will know more about it. There are some bright spots in this area. Soaring stories are scheduled for Readers Digest, Sports Illustrated, Flying and National Geographic magazines. Disney has filmed a soaring story at Fred Harris' Holiday Soaring School. With the growing interest in adventurous sports it seems that increasing numbers of persons should take up soaring.

As part of our co-operative dealer-promotion program we have scheduled, six full-page ads in Flying and the AOPA Pilot. They will feature a coupon which, with \$5.00, entitles the person to an introductory ride in a sailplane. Piper and Cessna have found this to be a very effective way of getting people to take up power flying and we think the same will happen in soaring.

It may be difficult for some to understand why, with the increasing number of foreign ships being imported, we have not yet come out with a new single-place sailplane. It's not from any lack of desire to do this, but rather due to the economics of the situation. To put into production a new sailplane at a competitive price requires a big investment in design, development, and tooling. Consequently we have to spread the cost over a reasonable period. Our engineering department continues its investigation and design studies. It is our plan to put out a new single-place as early as it is practical for us to do so.

In the meantime we are working on product improvement of our existing designs so that we can better develop this basic market and get our sailplane operations on a self-sustaining basis.

While talking of high-performance sailplanes, we again would like to point out that some pilots are jumping to high-performance sailplanes too quickly and are overlooking the fact that the pilot and his technique are the major factors in performance. We think that buying a sailplane is like buying a musical instrument—you can't perform well just by owning it. It takes a lot of practice and experience. A Stradivarius in the hands of a beginner doesn't assure a good musical performance.

Many pilots have found that the best way to improve their skill is by working their way up the per-

formance ladder and by flying with other similar sailplanes, so improvement can be measured. One-design sailplane flying is an ideal way to do this. Here one readily can measure his improvement and ability, and in 1-26's it can be done safely and at low cost and it is competition at its best. Pilots are beginning to see that there is real status in competing with other pilots in the same type of ships, rather than trying to buy their way to the top.

Sailplanes are going the same way as sailboats did earlier this century. When, in the drive to get more performance the cost became so high that sailing was available only to the very wealthy, and at the same time the sailboats became too specialized, one-design sailboats took over. They now account for the majority of sailing activity. We feel the same thing will happen in soaring.

We are pleased to see that the 1-26 one-design idea continues to make headway and in 1965 the first National Championship was held. The performances turned in were excellent and the competition tops. This year the 1-26 National will be held at Guthrie, Oklahoma, August 14 to 20. In view of the central location a good turnout is expected and as more good pilots are attracted to this event some top competition should result. The traditional Regatta will be held at Harris Hill on the Labor Day weekend. Through the issuance of the 1-26 yearbook, The Log, interest in the 1-26 Association has grown and the number of flights increased to 19.

The first CAP National Soaring and Flying Encampment was held in Elmira last summer. This was particularly noteworthy, since it was the first time

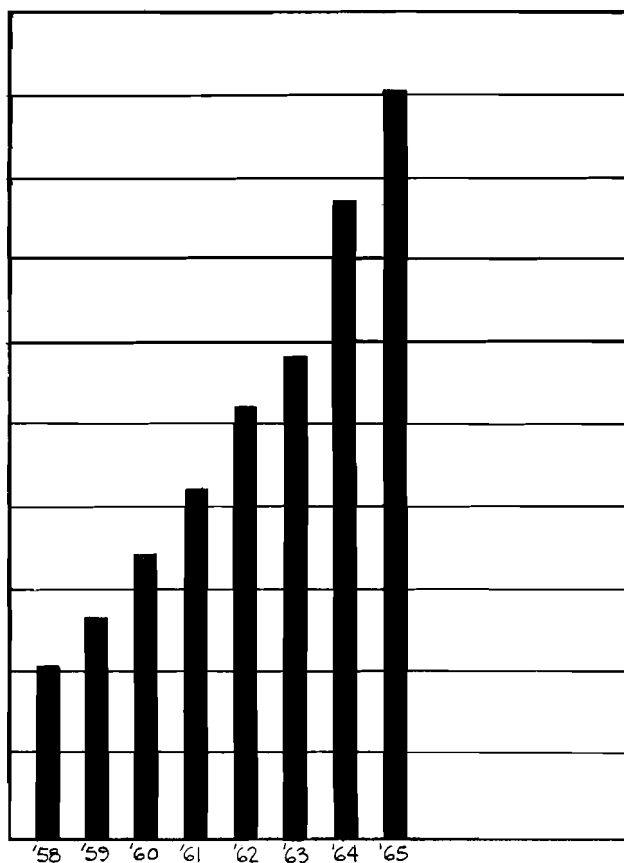


FIG. 1, SAC SALES SINCE 1958