

SAFETY CORNER

There have been four fatalities in soaring so far this year, three to sailplane pilots and one to a tow pilot while towing. Although the final results of the various investigations are not yet available, enough information has been received from eyewitnesses to make a summary worthwhile so that other pilots may know what has happened and become more aware of the sudden and catastrophic results that can follow a moment of carelessness or inattention.

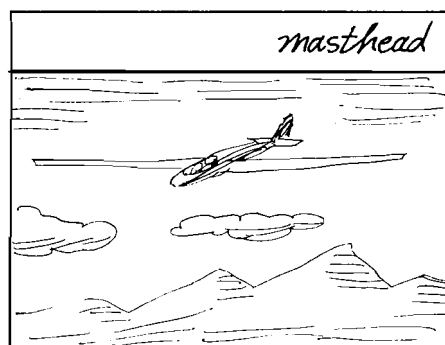
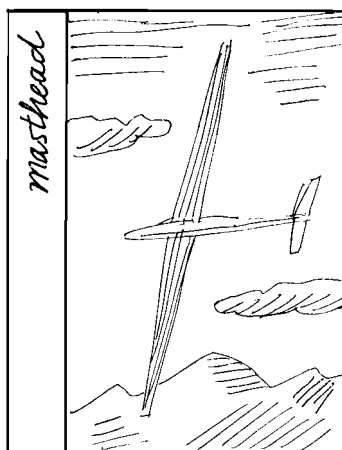
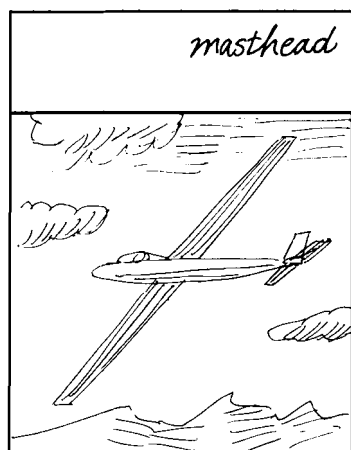
On June 18th Robert E. Campbell was flying a Cherokee II, which he had formerly owned, at the Harvey Young Airport near Tulsa, Oklahoma. He had earned his Silver badge and made many fine flights in this ship, and was of course completely familiar with it. During a winch launch at the end of the day, and at an altitude of 700 feet, both of the right hand wing centersection spars failed between the fuselage and the metal wing-attach fittings, resulting in the complete destruction of the aircraft and the death of the pilot.

Since preliminary reports indicate the sailplane was well built and airworthy, then two factors remain which appear to have combined to cause this acci-

dent: the first was the pilot's tendency to pull up strongly in a winch launch in order to get all possible altitude, and the second was his insistence on the removal of the weak link—so that it would not break and cause trouble!

Now winch launching under the best of conditions puts considerably more load on a sailplane than airplane tow, and the more sharply the sailplane is pulled up against the wire the greater is the load on the wings. Since the purpose of the weak link, regardless of the type of launch, is to prevent overloading either the sailplane or a towplane by allowing a rope break before the critical load is reached, it is obvious that a proper weak link must always be a part of every launching system. Refer to pages seven and eight of Chapter Four, *The American Soaring Handbook*, for a discussion of the rated breaking strengths of various ropes.

At the Saginaw Municipal Airport in Michigan on August 28th Alan E. Hartley, senior electrical engineer of Chevrolet's Bay City Division, had a fatal accident during a winch launch in his brand new Austria SHK. The first flight in the new ship had been by airplane tow, but on the second flight launching was to be by winch. After takeoff the sailplane pulled up very steeply and at about 250 feet altitude was stalled in an almost vertical attitude. After release the



SOARING'S NEW COVER

Those of you who recall the analysis of the Membership Renewal Forms (Who You Are and What You Want, *Soaring* for April, 1966) may perhaps remember the editor's confession that he had gone a little too far from time to time in the process of experimentation, but that changes in the future, *one area excepted*, would be less frequent. That area, it is now time to reveal, was the cover.

Effective with the January 1966 issue, *Soaring* will have a new masthead and three new cover formats. Photographs for the new cover(s) are needed immediately. The three formats are shown above. The picture sizes, from left to right, are: 8½ X 8½-ins. square, 7 X 11-ins. vertical and 11 X 7-ins. horizontal. Henceforth photographs submitted for the cover may be in any one of these three sizes. Prints may be in color as well as black and white and should be at least as large as they are to appear on the cover. Clarity

and sharpness are imperative, of course, unless some weighty artistic reason intervenes.

We would like to encourage photographers to concentrate on types of gliders that have not appeared too often on the cover of the magazine, or on types that have not appeared at all. We would also like to see unusual and varied backgrounds used. There are numerous techniques (camera attached to the sailplane, selective focus, use of infrared film, to mention a few) which could lead to very striking and worthwhile photographs if properly used. Contributors should have no hesitation about submitting work of a highly unusual nature.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that, effective with the change of format, a fee of \$25 will be paid for photographs used on the cover. We hope that this sum will make the trouble and expense of getting suitable cover pictures somewhat more worthwhile than it has been in the past.