

NEWS NOTES

ROLL YOUR OWN Meteorology, particularly that aspect dealing with weather modification, is one of the fastest-growing of modern sciences. *TIME* magazine, in its Essay in the June 29th issue, notes the sharply stepped-up spending in this field and the fact that the U.S. Government has published some 1,700 pages of scientific findings on weather modification so far this year. Among the more dramatic endeavors are *Project Stormfury*, in which the U.S. Navy is attempting to prove that hurricanes can be directed or entirely dissipated by seeding with silver-iodide crystals, and the Russian artillery bombardments in which tons of silver iodide are pumped into thunderstorms over the Siberian Steppes in an endeavor to halt them.

Undertakings of this nature are hardly likely to affect soaring pilots, at least not in an immediate way. *Le Météotron*, however, is another matter. This device, developed by French meteorologist Henri Dessens, is nothing less than a giant thermal generator covering 3200 square meters and generating 700,000 kilowatts of power. M. Dessens can apparently make thermals and cumulus without any trouble whatsoever. When he lights up all 100 burners he can even cook up a handy little cu-nim — one that rains! A kit version of *Le Météotron*, suitable for club use, has apparently yet to be developed.

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STOP! Don't drill that hole in the roof of your brand-new 1967 sedan or wagon. Not, in any event, until you've taken a look at the new Hy-Gain Magnetic Base *Magna-Topper* (a product of **Hy-Gain Electronics Corp.**, N.E. Highway 6, at Stevens Creek, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501). The substitute for the hole-and-bolt method of most roof-top antenna systems is the *Magna-Topper's* 25-lb.-pull alnico-base magnet which, the makers claim, holds the antenna in place at speeds in excess of 80 m.p.h. The special design of the antenna base plate is said to assure positive electrical coupling to the vehicle body for full one-quarter-wave-length performance. A mast tuned to 123 mc can apparently be fitted with little trouble. Price of the *Magna-Topper* (catalog No. 549) is \$14.95.

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LOW-ALTITUDE ORBIT James R. Bede, Chairman of the Board of the **Bede Aircraft Corporation** and moving force behind the on-again off-again Bede lightplane, has had more ups and downs in recent years than a 2-22 on a Diamond-distance attempt. Presently, "to gain public confidence in the efficiency and performance capabilities of light aircraft," Mr. Bede is planning to better the world's unrestricted distance record of 12,532 miles. That record, let it be noted, is held by a USAF B-52. Mr. Bede, let it further be noted, is out to double it, and with a Schweizer 2-32.

The glider is to be beefed up, fitted with a 165-h.p. Continental engine, nav/com equipment, autopilot, liquid oxygen and enough fuel (565 gallons) to cruise for a programmed 148 hours — something over six

days. The flight, which is to begin and end in Cleveland and overfly Paris, Perth, Australia, and Hawaii in a "low-altitude orbit" of 20,000 ft., is to cover 24,000 miles, a distance roughly equal to one circumnavigation of the Earth. Gross take-off weight is to be 4817 pounds, about four times the normal flying weight of the stay-at-home variety 2-32.

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HEAR IT NOW! **Thom Hook Associates** (Box 381, Annapolis, Md. 21404) offers an LP record entitled *Air Show* for sale. The disc features aerobatic stars such as **Bevo Howard** and **Bill Adams** with sound pictures of their aerial routines. Band two of the flip side is devoted to **Scottie McCray's** Schweizer Glider in an item called *The Wind and I*. Playing time: 3:08. A photo on the album jacket shows Scottie climbing into his aerobatic machine — a 2-22.

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RANDOM NOTES One **Rudolph Schuette** earned his C badge at the USAF Academy at Colorado Springs earlier this year. So what? So the height gain was 18,400 ft. and the absolute altitude 30,450 ft., that's what! ★★ According to the Kern Valley (Calif.) Sun a seaplane glider was recently flown over Lake Isabella in the Bakersfield area. The little ship, the article mentioned, was designed and flown by one **Bill Skliar** (who does not appear to be an SSA member) and more than that we do not know. ★★ Guess who one of the members of the newly formed Madonna Mountain Soaring Association of Jeffersonville, Vt. is? **Thomas J. Watson, Jr.**, Chairman of the Board of IBM, that's who! ★★ Were you wondering where the little musical phrase reproduced on the side of the BS-1 cockpit (page 10, September *Soaring*) came from? From the Beethoven D major violin concerto, that's where. And who told us? **Doug Lamont**, editor of *Zero Sink*, frequent contributor to *Soaring*, K-6 owner and, as it happens, a violinist of no mean talent himself.

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FIRST-CLASS THINKING A recent issue of *Skrzydlatą Polską* exhorted Polish glider pilots to use the very best weather they got on appropriate tasks. Attempts at 500 kilometers, it stated, should only be made in "second-class weather." There's a moral there somewhere, and Poland's frequent victories at the World Championships is undoubtedly the object.

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