

Private Flying

Formula 1 in Britain 1971 sees the second full season for Formula 1 air racing in Britain. This opens at war-time fighter base North Weald, where the RAFA is holding its display on May 31. Biggin Hill Air Fair organisers are keen to have some racing but no sponsor has yet been found. June 13 would be the date of the best F1 meeting yet in Britain—if a sponsor comes forward.

Next on the schedule comes the Viscount Portman trophy race at Shobdon, Herefordshire. This takes place with a flying display and handicap race on July 24-25. Formula 1 will also be flown at Halfpenny Green airfield during the bank holiday meeting on August 29-30, in conjunction with a flying display and handicap race.

Finally comes the Tees-side meeting on October 2-3. Better weather is hoped for this year in this pleasant location. Last year a very good course was laid out but the three-race meeting came to a sudden stop when fog drifted over after only one heat and grounded the whole display.

Seven aeroplanes are "definites" for the start of the season. This includes the three Rollason Betas and the two Airmark Cassutts that raced last year. The additions are a Cosmic Wind called *Little Toni* that was shipped over from America after racing successfully there for several seasons, and the new American-designed Owl racer, built by Farm Aviation Ltd, and which is having its first test-flights about now.

Another Beta and Cassutt are complete and only await buyers, while a second Cosmic Wind, a replica of the old *Ballerina* that crashed several years ago, should be ready to race sometime during the season. This brings the total to ten, made up of four different types, which should give some excellent and very varied racing.

Adding further interest to the racing, Rolls-Royce donated a championship trophy that will be presented to the pilot who, at the end of the season, collects the most race points. Altogether this should be a very good year, offering the satisfaction of knowing that Formula 1 is "working."

General-aviation revival Following a major recession last year in the general-aviation industry, signs of a healthy revival are appearing. An interim report from Beech Aircraft Corp declared that total sales for the first six months of its 1971 fiscal year ending March 31 reached \$65.5 million. After tax, earnings were \$2.2 million, compared with \$908,725 for the same period last year. Mr F. E. Hedrick, Beech Aircraft president, expressed his confidence that an upswing is occurring.

Both Cessna and Piper reported distinct improvements over last year with Cessna's March shipments totalling 395, 64 units more than in March 1970, and Piper's up by 36 to 215. Both companies are re-employing staff laid off because of the depression. *Business Aviation Weekly* reported general-aviation total deliveries in March as 784 units, compared with 747 for March last year. Student pilot starts, regarded as a distinct barometer of future sales activity, reached 10,314, as opposed to 9,871 by March of 1970.

In France, CEA Robin survived the year with a concentrated export drive and has now begun to step up production from 2.5 to 3.5 units per week. Wassmer Aviation,

however, has had to call in an official receiver in spite of a similar export effort. Only ten sailplanes were sold last year, compared with 60 in 1969.

FHI working west Fuji Heavy Industries is about to begin a sales drive in the UK and France of its successful FA200 Aero Subaru single-engined aircraft. They have already exported 70, of which 22 went to Australia, 43 to West Germany and three to Switzerland.

It is reported that the company is making strong representations in South Africa. Malaysia is also reported to be considering an agreement for 15 to 20 for use as primary trainers in the Malaysian Air Force. Production is running at the rate of 8 to 10 aircraft per month at the Fuji works in Tochigi Prefecture.

The FA200 is produced in 160 h.p. and 180 h.p. versions in normal, utility and aerobatic categories. Design of the aircraft began in 1964 and the first prototype flew in August the following year. Initially produced as a three-

The 160 h.p. version of the Fuji FA-200 shown in the "Flight" photograph below is equipped with a Lycoming O-320-D2A. The -180 is powered by a IO-360-B1B giving a 130 m.p.h., 209 km/hr cruise



seater, the -160 received certification as a four-seater as well as a two-seat aerobatic aircraft in September 1967. The -180 was approved in all categories in April 1968.

Clubs to combine Arrangements are under way between Mr Douglas Bunn, proprietor of the Southern Aero Club, one of the earliest flying clubs to be formed in Britain, and Mr Peter Hewitt, managing director of the Shoreham School of Flying, toward an amalgamation of the two clubs. Combined operations under the control of Mr Hewitt began nominally on May 1, and in the name of Shoreham School of Flying. It may, however, be some time before arrangements are completed.

The two clubs have adjoining premises at Shoreham Airport and a total membership of about 900. Mr Hewitt hopes that improved facilities for both private and charter flying will arise from the merger. Shoreham school in fact took delivery of a B-N Islander last week and this is expected to be in operation within two or three weeks.

BLAC clinic The British Light Aviation Centre's first flight proficiency clinic of 1971 is to take place at Bourne-mouth (Hurn) Airport from May 28-30. The clinic is offering a range of instrument flying courses for all pilots from the newly qualified to the business aircraft owner/pilot.

Lugano postponed The first International Aviation Salon which was to have been held at Lugano-Agno Airport at the end of May has been postponed until June 11-13 (*Flight*, February 18, page 228a). The change has been made to keep more clear of the Paris Salon which was otherwise likely to prevent many firms from taking part.