

# Private FLIGHT

## Fuji update

THE REGULAR SUPPLY of aerobatic Fuji FA-200s to Britain happily continues, with this year's model bearing some useful improvements. Air Associates, the distributor for the UK, Channel Islands, Eire, Spain and Portugal, is concentrating on the 160 h.p. version with fixed-pitch propeller and the FA-200-180AO, which combines the 180 h.p. Lycoming O-360 carburettor engine with a fixed-pitch propeller.

Standard equipment in FA-200s delivered to the UK includes blind-flying panel, night lighting, dual controls and brakes, corrosion proofing, external power socket, shoulder harness and two overhead windows in the sliding canopy. Thus equipped, without radio, the 160 costs £13,352 and the 180AO £14,850, so long as the Yen remains on the right side of Y650-£1. More spares are being imported with each aircraft to maintain an adequate back-up. A 180AO demonstrator is at present based with Mann Aviation at Fairoaks.

This year, the 180AO has a sleeker plastics engine cowling, in which the filter and oil cooler are repositioned and the exhaust outlet moved forward. A collector tank is attached to the oil breather so that oil spillage when inverted is recovered, but the engine is otherwise not adapted for prolonged inverted flight.

Flight's team test of an earlier FA-200 (December 7, 1972) proved to be a clear guide to two Flight pilots who tried the new 180AO without having previously experienced the type. The initial external resemblance between the FA-200 and the present generation of tourers should be immediately

put aside. The FA-200 flies like a real aeroplane, with excellent aileron control which is a pleasure at all speeds and an elevator which is not too heavy for aerobatics. The aileron wheel moves over a sensibly small arc and the throttle control is in a man-sized quadrant. Visibility, even through the rather narrow tinted overhead panels, is excellent and the nose keeps nicely out of the field of view. The inevitable adverse yaw is countered by a light touch of rudder, but yaw response to throttle is considerable, calling for good rudder co-ordination while looping.

It is quite surprising that such a very docile stall is combined with a vigorous, fast-rotating spin (four turns in 7sec) entered with classic control movements and preceded by a distinct preliminary wind-up. Recovery is immediate as soon as the controls are centralised. Any pupil would be duly impressed and improved by the experience.

About the only regrettable handling quirk is the Fuji's unwillingness to stall turn. We tried eight or more times, but the rudder virtually refused to pull the nose round, with throttle either closed or open. Twice the propeller stopped altogether as the aircraft fell sideways. Once it was started by diving at 150kt, and the other time by gliding slowly and using the starter motor.

The classic aerobatics were fun. Maximum r.p.m. at full throttle was exceeded at 120kt, so that an eye had to be kept on the unusually widely separated airspeed and r.p.m. indicators when working up to the "book" looping speed of 135kt. Slow and hesitation rolls were made especially pleasant by the "real" ailerons. Recommended entry speed was 110kt. Normal level cruise with 2,450 r.p.m. was a modest 97kt indicated, so that an initial dive was required for all aerobatics and height tended to decline gradually during aerobatic sequences.

Circuit work was routine. The mild available sideslip or a fast glide approach could be used to increase the modest descent gradient produced by full flap. A docile stall usually masks the degree of sink which occurs short of the stall, and the FA-200 tended to produce a last-moment sink when flaring power-off, but the controls were so responsive that a precise

touchdown could be achieved any time.

It seems a great shame that Fuji resolutely refuses to reinstate the floor-mounted control column as an optional extra. They say that too few people asked for it. Equally unaccountable is a rather tenuous four-strap harness, but this problem is being looked into. For anyone who demands a real aeroplane, professionally turned out, the Fuji is still one that he must fly before choosing.

### Malta Rally

Forty-two aircraft flew out over the Mediterranean Sea to Malta for the Sixth International Rally held on the island. Mr T. H. Rogers, who flew one of the twenty-nine aircraft from the UK, won the flight-planning competition in a club-owned Cherokee 180. Mr T. Kusnierz was winner of the precision-arrival trophy, and Mrs M. Dyne and Mr D. R. Wise won the Concours d'Elégance in a Robin HR100/210 and a Cherokee 140 respectively.

The overall winner was Herr W. Flade of West Germany, who scored consistently high points in all the competitions.

### Scottish Rally results

Dr Hamish Law, an Edinburgh physicist, was overall winner of the fifth Scottish International Air Rally held at Turnhouse Airfield on June 21. He flew a Cessna 150 to victory in the Drambuie Trophy, the rally having been sponsored by the Drambuie Liqueur Company. Other winners were Mr J. H. Fenton, who won the Millar Trophy for precision arrival; Miss L. M. Veitch took the Bailie Theurer Trophy for the highest-placed lady entrant, and Dr H. Schmitz was awarded the Airtour Trophy for the most distant entrant, after a flight from Lintfort, Germany, in a Cessna 172.

### Two-class hang-gliding championships

The UK Embassy Hang Gliding Championships, to be held on July 12 and 13 at Steyning Bowl, Sussex, will be divided into two classes. Class A will be for standard Rogallo designs and Class B for curved leading-edge boom, "second-generation" gliders and those with semi-rigid lifting surfaces.

Over 100 enthusiasts form the over-subscribed entry for the competitions, which are being organised by the Sussex-based Southern Hang-Gliding Club. There will be spot-landing, distance and slalom events, all with bonus points for clean take-offs and stand-up landings.

Great emphasis has been placed on safety. Competitors must declare their flying experience and the gliders must conform to the standards of the National Hang Gliding Association and of the manufacturers' association.

