

was kept up in the "smoke tanks" by windmill pumps as fitted to the old Bristol Fighters and we shut the smoke on and off by a simple tap in the cockpit.

The system worked well but there was a certain amount of leakage. Freddie Guest (now Air Marshal Sir Charles) and his uniform took on a greenish hue, whilst I with my red smoke became salmon pink!

After many practices and rehearsals the event went very well on the day of the display, but we were doing our stuff fairly low, there was absolutely no wind to disperse our smoke trails and we heard afterwards that many summer dresses were nicely dyed in speckled form. Subsequently the equipment was improved and the following year (I think) was used in three Gloster Gamecocks.

Whenever I see the Red Arrows giving their polished performance I look back with nostalgic amusement and a certain amount of pride on this pioneering effort of ours, which was the result of big efforts by a number of enthusiasts amongst whom I must mention my faithful crew, Corporal Sarney and LAC Hopwood.

"Wendover," *Firtree Crescent,*  
*Hordle, Lymington, Hants* J. BRADBURY,  
Gp Capt, RAF (Ret'd)

### Hot Air Rising

SIR,—I hope this is not rude, but I was very disappointed to see that you mentioned Jo Philp's balloon records, and you never mentioned mine earlier in the year.

In your November 30 issue you describe Jo Philp's records of 11,300ft, 3hr 47min and 100 miles as world records for AX6-class hot-air balloons. They are only UK records, and to get them in perspective the relevant world records for an AX6 are 7,743m (approximately 25,000ft), 8hr 46min and 193 miles.

Also on July 14 I flew to 35,971ft in an AX8 hot-air balloon (G-AXVU) from Hereford, setting a new world record for AX8 and all larger classes of hot-air balloon. Confirmation from the FAI has just come and this is now the official record.

29 *Sheffield Terrace,*  
*London W8* JULIAN NOTT

### Experience Exchange

SIR,—In your issue of December 7, 1972, you published a team test on the Fuji FA-200. For us it was of great interest to read your testers' comments.

We are a newly formed club of some 30 private pilots and one of the first Swiss club operators of the Fuji FA-200. We just reached the 200hr mark after some five months of operation. We found our experience with the aircraft confirmed in your article, except we do not think that the Fuji FA-200 is a suitable basic trainer—it is just too simple to handle. A student pilot having had his basic training on a Fuji might have problems when transferring to another type of aircraft.

We would like to take this opportunity to invite other Fuji-operating clubs throughout Europe to contact us for corresponding with a view to exchanging experience with the aircraft. A further step might be to organise some sort of an "Inter-Club Assistance Service," e.g. to assist one club's member at the home base of another club in case of problems with aircraft or accommodation for an unforeseen nightstop, etc. We are looking forward to answers to the above idea, and we wish all readers happy landings in 1973.

*Basilisk Flying Club,*  
*P.O. Box 24, CH-4030 Basle,*  
*Switzerland* R. SIEGRIST

### Marvellous Mossie

SIR,—The recent correspondence referring to the handling of the Mosquito must have made many an older pilot feel nostalgic.

It is my opinion that, although the basic handling of all Mossies was similar, as one would expect from an airframe which varied very little through nearly 40 marks, the relatively low power and weight of the early versions made them more pleasant to fly than the later, paddle-

blade-propeller, two-stage, two-speed supercharged series of twice the weight. But if the handling of, say, the Mk34 was less than ideal in the circuit, the performance at 40,000ft plus was pretty good—England to Karachi in about twelve-and-a-half hours, non-stop, was only hard on the posterior.

The most pleasant was the Sea Mosquito, with four-blade pointed props, extended elevator horn-balances and an oleo undercarriage with smaller than standard wheels. Basically a MkVI, with single-stage blowers, flat screen and fighter-type control column, it was a delightful machine whose handling qualities put to shame many a modern aircraft.

The worst, without doubt, was the unusual TT39, the existence of which, I believe, de Havilland was reluctant to recognise! Modified extensively by another manufacturer for target-towing for the Navy, it was the ugliest Mossie ever, with a hideous extended nose consisting mainly of small flat pieces of glass, and a dorsal observation perspex dustbin, both of which interfered with the airflow over the late Sir Geoffrey's beautiful lines to the extent of giving the machine little of the handling of normal Mosquitoes. This was one mark which, for all practical purposes, had no safety speed, although the pilots' notes quoted a figure of 180 plus.

It is natural for one of your correspondents to describe an asymmetric approach as an "extremely fraught operation" if his experience of this exercise is limited, but as some of us taught single-engine *overshoots*, and at night, to pupils whose individual total hours were around 200, and who had previously flown only Tiger Moths and Harvards from a grass strip, it demonstrates the possibility of removing at least the word "extremely."

Certainly "fraught" could be applied to the job of instructing pilots on Beaufighters whose previous experience had been only single-engined. This was done by standing behind them with no ability to take over if things went wrong. Eventually, one carried out a demonstration, added 95 per cent for self-preservation and sent them solo with no dual. How bold are the young.

Thinking generally about handling, will there ever be a superior to the Bücker Jungmeister? If there is, please, God, make it soon, so that I can fly it before I am too old to want to.

*Henley Lodge,*  
*Yatton, Som* D. G. ADDICOTT

### DIARY

- Jan 11** IEE/RAeS lecture, "The Skynet Satellite System"; 7.30 p.m. RAF Halton.
- Jan 14-17** Helicopter Association of America: 1973 annual meeting, convention and industry showcase; Stardust Hotel and Convention Centre, Las Vegas.
- Jan 15** RAeS Air Law Group: half-day symposium, "International Accident Investigations"; 2.30 p.m. Lecture Theatre, 4 Hamilton Place, London W1.
- Jan 17** Society of Environmental Engineers: meeting, Prof Brian L. Clarkson; 6 p.m., Imperial College, Mechanical Engineering Department, Exhibition Road, London SW7.
- Jan 18** RAeS Rotorcraft Section: half-day symposium, "The Place of the Rotor in Civil Aviation"; 2.15 p.m., preceded by a.g.m. at noon, Lecture Theatre, 4 Hamilton Place, London W1.
- Feb 11-17** First World Hot-Air Balloon Championships; Albuquerque, NM.
- Feb 14** RAeS Astronautics and Guided Flight Section: all-day symposium, "The Impact of the Shuttle on Future Launching Systems"; 10 a.m., Lecture Theatre, 4 Hamilton Place, London W1.
- Feb 14** RAeS Main Society lecture at Preston Branch: "MRCA Project" by G. Madelung; 7.30 p.m., Harris College, Preston, Lancs.
- Feb 24** United Service and Royal Aero Club: Air Racing Symposium; Excelsior Hotel, Heathrow.
- Mar 7** RAeS all-day symposium; "Problems and Opportunities for Aerospace and Allied Technology in Europe"; 10 a.m. Lecture Theatre, 4 Hamilton Place, London W1.
- Mar 11-18** 1st World Para-Ski Cup meeting; Flims, Austria.
- Mar 12** RAeS Air Law Group: half-day symposium; "Probability Concept in Air Law and Engineering"; 2.15 p.m., Lecture Theatre, 4 Hamilton Place, London W1.
- Mar 15** RAeS: all-day symposium, "Flight Deck Environment and Workload"; 9.30 a.m., Lecture Theatre, 4 Hamilton Place, London W1.
- Mar 15** Fifteenth Israel Annual Conference: "Aviation and Astronautics"; Tel Aviv & Haifa respectively.
- Mar 21-Apr 1** International Exhibition of Electronics, Nuclear Energy and Aerospace Technology; Palazzo dei Congressi, EUR, Rome.