



The French René Leduc RL.21 (147 h.p. SNECMA Régnier 4L.00) recently established two class C1a world records for aircraft of under 500kg gross weight. The RL.21, which already held five other world speed records in the C1a and b categories, averaged 217 m.p.h. over a 100km closed circuit and 208 m.p.h. over a 500km course. Left to right: M Prosper, chief mechanic; M Leduc, designer and constructor; and M Raymond Davy, pilot

Beechcraft Duke Airborne The entirely new six-seat twin-engined pressurised Beechcraft Duke completed an hour-long first flight on December 29. Mr R. S. Hagan, chief of engineering flight test for the manufacturer, was at the controls. The Duke, which in size comes between the light-twin Baron and the Queen Air, has a gross weight of 6,400lb and is powered by turbocharged 380 h.p. Lycoming engines (it was pictured in model form in *Flight* for November 10, page 779).

Flight tests are aimed at FAA certification by late next summer, with production deliveries scheduled for October 1967. The Duke is an aircraft with exciting modern styling and spacious aisle-type seating layout for six passengers. Pressurisation to 8,000ft at 21,500ft is maintained by either engine, or by one engine alone in emergency. Estimated price of the Duke is \$175,000 (£62,500), including avionics.

Evening Class Navigation Starting on February 6, the Berkshire Education Committee is arranging a series of 12 Monday-evening class lectures in basic navigation designed for private individuals learning to fly or glide. The lectures are to be held at the Maiden Erlegh School, Reading; further details and enrolment forms from Mr I. Marks, 30 Woodside Way, Whitley Wood, Reading, Berks.

Cessna Crash Report The accident to Cessna 150 G-ASYH, which crashed on a hill near Millom, Cumberland, on February 22, 1966, "resulted from an error of navigation in poor visibility," according to the official report*. The pilot and his one passenger were killed and the aircraft was completely burnt out. It was flying under VFR to Ouston from Blackpool and hit Black Combe 120ft below the summit in a straight and level attitude under power. The report says, "it therefore appears reasonable to assume that the pilot was in control of the aircraft but . . . was either unaware of the proximity of Black Combe or of its height of 1,969ft."

Hughes 500 Deliveries In the December 15 issue of *Flight* it was stated that outstanding military orders for the Hughes 500 must be satisfied before civil deliveries are made. The exact position is that Hughes and the US Army have agreed monthly OH-6A production figures for the order involving 1,071 aircraft and so long as these are adhered to, civilian 500 deliveries can and will be satisfied concurrently.

*CAP 271: "Report on the accident to Cessna 150 G-ASYH at Black Combe, Silecroft, near Millom, Cumberland, on February 22, 1966;" HMSO, price 2s 6d net.



Piper's improved Pawnee C is rapidly adaptable for carrying and delivering either 150gal of liquids or 1,200lb of solids. Improvements include removable top decking, better cockpit ventilation and a "pressurised" fuselage to keep out chemicals

SPORT AND BUSINESS

Cessna's 1966 Sales totalled \$202 million (£72.5 million)—a \$53 million (£19 million) increase over the 1965 figure. During 1966 Cessna sold a record total of 7,922 aircraft—the 11th consecutive year in which the company has led the general-aviation industry in unit sales and the ninth year it has led in dollar volume. Export sales reached a record high of 1,459 units, worth \$28 million (£10 million). Military sales were \$22 million (£7.8 million)—almost equal to 1965's total. The military backlog at year's end was \$42 million—up \$18 million from the end of 1965. The company expects a significant increase in defence business in 1967; the recent US Army order for over 300 Super Skymaster push-pull twins for strike co-operation duties was a major boost to that programme.

More Powerful Super IV The Wassmer Super IV is being fitted with a 235 h.p. six-cylinder Lycoming O-540-B in place of the 180 h.p. Lycoming O-360. Designated the Super 4/21, the new version is expected to cruise at 186 m.p.h.

The first flight of the Super 4/21 is imminent, with deliveries to take place in May. Price in Britain, fully equipped with autopilot, radio, blind flying instruments and night lighting, is some £11,500, duty paid. The higher empty weight of the Super 4/21 is 1,760lb, while the gross weight is increased to 3,100lb for a useful load of about 1,340lb. The British distributors for the type are Altair Aviation, Ketton House, Kedington, Haverhill, Suffolk.

Shell Jet Not For Sale A Keegan "HS.125 for sale" advertisement that appeared on page A21 of last week's issue of *Flight* was illustrated by a photograph of a Shell HS.125. In fact the 125 that has come on to the market is HB-VAR, and not one of the Shell machines (two Swiss-registered HS.125s are for sale on behalf of M Roland Fraissinet, who is negotiating for later versions of the type). Shell say they are very pleased with the two HS.125s that they have operated since mid-September. Crew-training with the first began in July and flying hours have now reached 303 on that aircraft and 155hr on the second machine. The company reports extremely reliable service from the two aircraft—not one operation has yet been cancelled for reasons connected with them.

The HS.125s are flown mainly within Europe; for operations to the Middle East Shell would like more range for direct London - Cairo operation, which (given favourable winds and weather) is just possible with the company's Gulfstream 1. Incidentally, a development HS.125 is about to start flying with a ventral fuel tank on the aft lower fuselage.