

LYMPNE COMPETITION 1926



SHORTLY after three o'clock on the afternoon of Friday, September 17, Flight-Lieut. P. W. S. Bulman crossed the finishing line at Lympe Aerodrome as winner of the *Daily Mail* competition for two-seater light 'planes, having covered the total distance of 1,994 miles in a total flying time of 30 hours 41 mins. 15 secs., or at an average speed of 64.98 m.p.h. (104.6 km./h.).

The fact that during the last two days of the competition only four machines were left, did not tend to make for intense excitement, the more so as the relative position of these four remained unchanged, so that it may be said that from the morning of Wednesday, September 15, up to the end of the competition, the result was more or less a foregone conclusion, barring accidents resulting in the retirement of one or more of the remaining four machines.

Up to the time of the elimination of the Avro "Avian" the final issue had been somewhat in doubt, but by the time Hinkler was compelled to abandon, it had become quite obvious that the Hawker "Cygnets," with Bristol "Cherub" engine, would, barring accidents, retain its leading position to the end. The winning machine was, it will be recollected, designed and built for the 1924 Lympe competition, in which two of this type took part. It may also be recollected that the one flown by Raynham had engine failure during the last lap, otherwise there is quite a possibility of the first prize having gone to this machine instead of to the Beardmore "Wee Bee." Already when the two "Cygnets" were first produced by the H. G. Hawker Engineering Co., it was obvious that the machine possessed quite exceptional merit from the point of view of low structural weight, and this feature, combined with the clean aerodynamic design and the relatively large useful load carried, enabled the machine to win first place in this year's competition. In this connection the part which the pilot must necessarily play in the final results should not be overlooked. Flight-Lieut. Bulman is generally admitted to be one of the finest British pilots of to-day, and

there can be no doubt that his handling of the machine, his nursing of the engine, his excellent course keeping, and that sixth sense which tells a pilot which is the most economical cruising speed for any given wind condition, contributed to a very large extent to the success of the Hawker "Cygnets" in this year's competition.

A few figures concerning the winning machine may be of interest. The Hawker "Cygnets" as flown in the competition had an empty weight of 421 lb., and carried a useful load in the competition of 430 lb., while the weight of the fuel and oil carried was 49 lb., bringing the total loaded weight up to 900 lb. In carrying this load over the total distance of 1,994 miles, Bulman used 388.823 lb. of petrol, so that his economy figure was 2,203 lb.-miles per lb. of fuel. Taking petrol at 7.6 lb. per gallon, which appears to be the figures used officially at Lympe, for the weight of petrol, and not 7 lb. per gallon, which was the figure used in our special supplement to the September 9 issue of FLIGHT, this represents 7.47 ton-miles per gallon. On the same basis, the best of the 1923 single-seaters did 1,875 lb.-miles per lb., or 6.35 ton-miles per gallon, so that it will be seen that on this basis a two-seater Hawker "Cygnets" is considerably more efficient than were the 1923 single-seaters, the best of which did 87.5 miles to a gallon of petrol, but which carried no useful load other than the pilot. Bulman's mileage in this year's competition was 39 miles per gallon of petrol, which compares favourably with the mileage of a two-seater motor-car, and the useful load carried (430 lb.) corresponds to two people weighing 170 lb. each, and 90 lb. of luggage, &c., while the fuel carried was sufficient for probably somewhere between 125 miles and 150 miles.

The second best figure attained in the Economy Competition was secured by the Hawker "Cygnets" entered by the R.A.E. Aero Club, of Farnborough. This machine was presented by Mr. Sopwith and Mr. Sigrist to the Farnborough Club about a year ago, and has now been the means of winning



["FLIGHT" Photograph

THE FARNBOROUGH TEAM (Second in Competition): Left to right, E. Brame, S. O. Smith, Manning Harris, F.O. Ragg, Flight-Lieut. Chick, G. N. G. Peters, W. Baker, and the "Flying Marshal," Mr. Preston.