

FLIGHT

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AND AIRSHIPS

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EDITORIAL COMMENT



COMPETITIONS improve the breed. That is admittedly true of horses, cars, and aeroplanes. The Derby winner may be no use for anything but flat racing, but flat racing has been responsible for the excellence of British horses. Schneider winners are only freak aeroplanes, but the whole business of winning the Schneider Trophy has been of very great use to our designers, so far as producing high-speed aircraft is concerned. Hitherto there has been no special stimulus to British designers to produce machines with a high cruising speed, such as those in which Mr. Frank Hawks, the American pilot, has been astonishing the world. Other countries have not waited for some special event to stir them in this direction, and for this they deserve credit. We British have some leeway to make up.

The world has now begun to call for higher cruising speed. This is a natural development. Speed always begets the desire for more and ever more speed. That is as regards the passenger. In the very early days of air transport it was a mistake to lay too much stress on speed for passengers, for high speed was then a very expensive commodity. It was sufficient for, say, West Australian Airways, to carry their early passengers between Perth and Derby at a slow economical speed, for in any case the aeroplane beat other means of transport by such an enormous margin that there was no need to fly faster than was convenient. In that particular case the same argument could be applied to mails, but, as a general rule, mails ought to be taken at the greatest possible speed, particularly when the airway is in competition with railways. Of course, when there is competition with railways, the question of night flying becomes all-important. Without it, the ordinary aeroplane can beat the train for 12 hours, but may be beaten by it in 24 hours.

We have now got past that initial stage, at least in the more thickly populated parts of the world, when a slow flying speed was sufficient. The air mail system of the United States seems to approach the ideal, for machines with a high cruising speed are used, and night flying is common. Mailplanes and

DIARY OF CURRENT AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Club Secretaries and others desirous of announcing the dates of important fixtures are invited to send particulars for inclusion in this list:—

- 1934.
- Jan. 18. "Ethyl," Lecture by F. R. Banks, before R.Ae.S.
 - Jan. 19. Newcastle-on-Tyne Ae.C. Annual Ball, Barras Bridge Assembly Rooms.
 - Jan. 24. "Development of the Fleet Air Arm." Lecture by Wing Com. W. R. D. Acland, before R.U.S.I.
 - Jan. 30. Croydon Airport Annual Dinner and Dance.
 - Feb. 1. "Engine Cowlings." Lecture by J. D. North before R.Ae.S.
 - Feb. 2. Cinque Ports Flying Club Annual Dinner and Dance, Royal Pavilion Hotel, Folkestone.
 - Feb. 10. Services Rugby: R.A.F. v. R.N., at Twickenham.
 - Feb. 16. Bristol and Wessex Ae.C. Annual Ball, Grand Spa Hotel, Clifton.
 - Feb. 16. De Havilland Technical School Annual Ball, Stag Lane, Edgware.
 - Feb. 21. "Development of Aircraft and Its Influence on Air Operations." Lecture by Sq. Ldr. R. V. Goddard before R.U.S.I.
 - Feb. 22. Herts and Essex Ae.C. Annual Dinner and Dance, Wharncliffe Rooms, Hotel Gt. Central, London.
 - Mar. 15. "Some Developments in Aircraft Construction." Lecture by H. J. Pollard before R.Ae.S.
 - Mar. 21. "Some Problems of a Technical Service." Lecture by Wing Com. G. W. Williamson, before R.U.S.I.
 - Mar. 24. Services Rugby: R.A.F. v. Army, at Twickenham.
 - Mar. 29. "Results from the Compressed-Air Tunnel." Lecture by E. F. Relf, before R.Ae.S.
 - Apr. 27-May 6. International Aero Show, Geneva.
 - Apr. 5. "Engines." Lecture by Capt. A. G. Forsyth before R.Ae.S.
 - May 17-June 2. Royal Tournament, Olympia.
 - May 27. Deutsch de la Meurthe Cup.
 - June 1. Entries close at 12 noon for London-Melbourne Race.
 - June 30. Royal Air Force Display, Hendon.